

SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL INTERVENTIONS

My student is new to Moorestown

STRATEGIES: We have all been the new kid on the block at one time in our lives. Here are some strategies that might help a new student feel more welcome.

1. **Check records with guidance:** The guidance department might have background information to help you touch base with the student.
2. **Assign a mentor:** Contact the Student Assistance Coordinator if you think the student could benefit from having a teacher mentor to assist with the adjustment to a new school both socially and academically.
3. **Peer buddy:** Assign a peer buddy to assist the student during class. Encourage the peer buddy to check in with the student during the day, especially at lunch. It would be even better if you could find a peer buddy that shares some common interests with the student.
4. **Clubs and Sports:** Encourage the student to get involved with extracurricular activities.
5. **New student group:** There is a group for new students. This group meets periodically during the first months of school.
6. **Lunch room angle:** The lunch room can be the most intimidating place for a new student. Encourage the peer buddy to seek out the new student in the cafeteria during lunch.



Don't forget to click on Private "EYE" to take another "look" at your student's problems.

My student is experiencing loss.

STRATEGIES: Even though our students are so young, many of them have already experienced grief. Keep in mind that grief does not only have to be death. We experience grief through any kind of a loss, it might be a divorce, a death in the family or any kind of abandonment.

1. **Identify the type of loss:** The guidance department would be able you determine the type of loss the student has experienced.
2. **Support group:** On an as needed the basis, WAMS has created grief groups. If you think a student could benefit from a grief group and one has not been established, please see guidance or the student assistent office.
3. **Stages of grief:** Remember there are four stages of grief: anger, denial, depression and fear. Keep in mind that boys and girls deal with grief differently.



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My student seems isolated from his/her peers.

STRATEGIES: I know your heart breaks when you see a child eating lunch by himself or herself. It breaks when one child is working alone when everyone else is working together. Here are some strategies that you can use break that isolation.

1. **Peer buddy:** Is there another child in your class that would welcome the child who is isolated. Or have the isolated child act as a peer to help another student that might be struggling academically. Maybe the two could help each other.
2. **Help the teacher:** Give the student the responsibility of acting as a teacher's aide for an activity.
3. **Differentiate your groupings:** Try various groupings to determine the situation in which the student is most comfortable.
4. **Have the student act as a mentor:** Have the child act as a mentor for younger children.
5. **Interactive environment:** Structure the environment so that the student has many opportunities to interact with peers.
6. **Sports/Clubs:** Involve the student in extracurricular activities in order to encourage interactions with peers.
7. **Reduce competition:** Reduce the emphasis on competition. Failure may cause the student to be reluctant to interact with peers.
8. **Behavioral contract:** Write a contract with the student specifying what behavior is expected. (sitting near another student, talking to another student) and what reinforcement will be made available when terms of the contract have been met.



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My student seems depressed.

STRATEGIES: Depressed mood is a common part of the human experience. Children can report or

display feelings of unhappiness, sadness, dejection or irritability, but most children recover quickly from these periods. For others, however, depression can be severe and long-lasting. There are many types of depressions and many strategies, below are some general strategies to help children cope with depression. If you need more specific strategies please go to guidance or the student assistance coordinator.

1. **Guidance:** Please stop by guidance for possible history.
2. **Nurse:** The nurse might also have some information that he or she is able to share with you about the child.
3. **Avoid public confrontaiton:** Many depressed children want just fade into the background. We don't want that to happen, but at the same time try not to single out the child in front of the entire class.
4. **Positive interactions:** Try and promote posititve interactions with the child, even if the interactions aren't related to the subject that you teach. Try and "reach" the child.
5. **Remove stressful situations:** Decrease the amount of stress the child is experiencing in your class.
6. **Time-out area:** Provide a safe place for the child to go if he or she feels the need for a time out. This should not be used a punishment, but as a place for the child to regroup and hopefully return to class.
7. **Parent contact:** This might be a touchy situation, but parental contact is important. You might try and intiате parental contact through guidance.
8. **Be aware of suicide ideation:** Be on the look for the possibility of suicide. Contact guidance, the nurse, the principal ASAP if you suspect suicide.



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My student doesn't want to go to school.

STRATEGIES: School phobia is different from truency. Approximately 2% of school aged children refuse to attend school. Student who refuse to attend school might have had a recent family crisis, might have social issues or some might rather just stay home and play rather than work in school. At WAMS we have some specific steps for students with poor attendance. There also some strategies that teachers can implement in the classroom.

1. **Steps for poor attendance:** On the first day of each month the nurse identifies students with 6-10 absences. These students receive a letter home about the attendance policy at WAMS. If a students continues to be absent the student is referred to the I-Team and a hearing with the attendance committee is scheduled. The school then decides whether to pursue truency.
2. **Contact the nurse:** If you are concerned about a child's attendance, please contact the nurse. There might some medical information she can share with you.

3. **Provide a caring and supportive environment:** When the child is in school, try and create a welcoming place where the student feels comfortable. Begin the class period with a success-oriented activity which is likely to be enjoyable for the student.
4. **Give the student a job:** Give the student a preferred responsibility to be performed at the beginning of each day.
5. **Extracurricular activities:** Involve the student in clubs or sports.
6. **Reduce competition:** Reduce the emphasis on competition. Repeated failure may cause the student to remove himself/herself from the competition by not attending school.
7. **Behavioral contract:** Write a contract with the student specifying what behavior is expected and what reinforcement will be made available when the terms of the contract have been met.
8. **Make up work:** As the days pile up so does the work. Try and work out a schedule for make up work to avoid adding more anxiety.
9. **Parental contact:** The key to success is a rapid intervention. The longer the behavior occurs the harder it is to treat.
10. **Cause of the problem:** Outside services might be used to figure out the cause of the problem.



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