

During my field placement I observed a student who is very unique when he expresses his disruptive behavior. “Michael” is a student who shouts out in class and cannot sit still. While I was talking to the teacher she told me that he is a very hyperactive child and has a hard time keeping an “indoor voice.” I noticed “Michael” is a very active learner. He is eager to express his opinions whenever the teacher poses a question. He does not raise his hand and shouts when he talks. In my opinion his misbehavior results from a short attention span. While observing “Michael” I noticed he does all of his school work but is easily distracted. He does not have a long attention span and that is very common in children. While talking to his teacher she told me that his disruptive and inappropriate behavior resulted from his short attention span. Since “Michael” is an English Language Learner (ELL) and he has a hard time understanding what is expected of him.

“Michael” is very eager to learn and shows much enthusiasm when he is answering questions from the teacher. He also wants praise and attention whenever he enters a room. While talking to his teacher we discussed that “Michael” needs to be reminded of the rules constantly and that he needs to raise his hand when he has something to say. While talking to the teacher we should show a lot of encouragement for “Michael’s” efforts by focusing on the positive. “Michael” needs to be encouraged by his teacher, peers and family members. By showing encouragement there are opportunities for him to feel like he is capable of doing any task. Moreover, showing encouragement to “Michael” will contribute to his success in life. While I was talking to him I noticed he was shouting because he wanted to go get a drink of water instead of doing his work. I encouraged him to finish his work by telling him that I really liked it when he writes in his journal because he writes “cool stuff.” In order to see him write he had to stay in his seat and use an appropriate voice whenever he wanted something. I also encouraged

him with a hug and a pat on the back telling him that he writes very well. It was nice to see him smiling after I did that. According to *Positive Discipline*, “Encouragement can be as simple as a hug to make someone feel better.” Also, according to the book it is not simple to show encouragement and I strongly agree because as a teacher or parent you just want to go right for the punishment. I caught myself doing that with “Michael” when I first met him. I told him in a more critical tone to finish his work because he was misbehaving and shouting in class. I should have been less authoritative. I should have been firm but kind at the same time because that is what positive discipline is all about.

Not only is encouragement helpful for “Michael’s” success in the classroom but also understanding his point of view and how he feels. Showing empathy is very vital when understanding how children feel. Showing understanding to “Michael” will allow him to feel like he is important. For example, while I was talking to him about finishing his work I told him if he felt tired and he told me “yeah.” I responded to him by saying I was tired and it had been a long day, but I still had to finish my job and so did he. After that conversation with “Michael” he followed me back to his seat to finish his journal entry.” I felt proud about that because I had learned from the book *Positive Discipline* that understanding children’s points of view will allow them work more cooperatively and will help diminish their misbehavior. Furthermore, I also showed sincerity while talking to him because I did not want him to feel discouraged or feel intimidated by me. I learned that it is not good to be strict, authoritative or permissive to a child because that could result in a child becoming rebellious, revengeful and resentful (Part of the four R’s of punishment.) I wanted him to feel comfortable enough for us to understand one another. His attitude and behavior is improving with me because he is starting to get to know me more and starting to understand that I know how he feels (empathy).

Showing encouragement and understanding to children like “Michael” is a positive step forward in helping him with individual improvement. While talking to the teacher she told me that she allows “Michael” to answer multiple questions she poses to keep him engaged. “Michael” also needs to stay engaged on a continuous basis to stop him from being disruptive. I had an idea that whenever “Michael” is involved in group work he could be the group leader. By becoming the group leader he needs to stay on task so that the other students will model him by staying on task. According to the book *Positive Discipline*, “We have to look for the strengths in children and help bring those strengths out.” “Also, children who are disruptive often have good leadership skills.” Lastly, by being a group leader much engaged in the schoolwork because he will be doing multiple tasks. A plan like this will make him learn responsibility that would result in respect, dignity and kindness towards others

In conclusion, “Michael” is very unique despite his misbehavior and he has been a joy to observe. He seems to enjoy working, yet he is not able to do much of the work because of his short attention span. He does try hard and that makes him more aware of things. Being able to show encouragement and understanding is a great plan to allow for him to diminish his misbehavior and allow him to work cooperatively with others and with the teacher. Another great plan is to allow “Michael” to become a group leader which will keep him engaged and will help extend his attention span. The teacher and I both agreed that keeping a positive attitude with “Michael” will bring out the best in him and it will show him respect, responsibility, cooperation and how to become a capable student.

Bibliography

Nelson, Jane. (1996). *Positive Discipline*. New York: Ballantine Books.