

TOP 10 POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT STRATEGIES

- 1. Keep 'em busy! (KeB)** The very best way to avoid behavior problems is to keep kids so busy that they don't have time to misbehave! Let the kids help you set up. Give everyone a task. Know your games and rules so you don't have to spend time trying to figure it out on the field. Keep your instructions SHORT and ALWAYS SHOW the activity as you tell it - either yourself, or with a demonstration team.
- 2. Explain and demonstrate** (at the same time! Don't explain first, then model, MODEL WHILE YOU EXPLAIN!) the rules QUICKLY and **GET THOSE KIDS MOVING!!!!**
3. Establish clear **expectations** with clear **consequences** (and rewards). "I expect you to play fairly and according to the rules. If you choose to play unfairly or to break the rules, it will not be possible for you to continue playing until you are ready to do so."
4. **Set your expectations high**, and don't settle for less. If your students are not meeting with your expectations, have them repeat the task until they do. It's that simple. Don't move on until you have achieved your goal. During your first lesson, you need to establish your expectations for what the students will do when you blow your whistle. If you spend the entire first lesson blowing your whistle, hustling in, getting into the desired formation and getting ready to listen... then the kids are talking... taking too long to settle down - send 'em back out, call them back in, and try it again. Do it again and again and again until they come in quickly (by the time you count down from 5), quietly, and in the right formation. Next lesson, if they forget, do it again!
5. **Praise, Praise, Praise!!!** When they finally get it right, or if they remember to get it right the next lesson, praise them with all of the enthusiasm you can possibly muster - and then some!!! Gush all over them! "I AM SOOOOO PROUD OF THE WAY YOU DID THAT!!!!!! I think the whole class is going to get stickers today! That was absolutely FANTASTIC!!!!!" (By the way, that method also works on adults - set your expectations high, repeat the task with more specific directions, then praise praise praise! Try it - you'll be surprised at the results you get!)
6. **Set the tone.** Use a low, firm tone of voice when you are looking for compliance. Get down on the student's level, look him/her in the eyes and maintain eye contact. Repeat your expectations, warning of the consequence, then follow with "Do you understand what I'm telling you?"
7. Use a higher tone, and a lighter voice for **praise** - and use it **frequently**. Remember, your goal is to catch kids being good! Find your "worst" kid, then watch for every opportunity to reward him/her with praise for a legitimate good job - and watch that student's attitude change before your eyes!
- 8. Use the following phrases frequently:**
 - "I like the way Johnny is..."
 - "I'm looking for..." (behavior, form, sportsmanship, etc.)
 - "I am so impressed with the way you all..."
 - "How did I get so lucky this year with ALL of you fantastic students in ONE class?!?!"
Say it like you mean it, and soon enough you will! Tell the students often that you enjoy seeing them every day, that you would never want any other job in the world because they are so incredible and valuable and that they are precious treasures, and that you feel blessed and honored and fortunate to be their teacher/coach. (How do

you think that would make them feel? How do you think they would want to behave knowing that you believed in them and valued them THAT MUCH?)

9. **Use positive reinforcement, rewards, and incentives as motivational tools.** Some ideas might include:
- **Team points** that are randomly awarded groups who show teamwork, cooperation, and good effort.
 - Individual **stickers** awarded to students to keep on their own sticker page in their PE journals. In a journal, they can keep it private and can cash in full pages for a reward if you'd like to set it up that way. Do not keep stickers on a chart for all to see.
 - Monopoly-type **money** used to randomly reward students who show good sportsmanship, fair play, enthusiasm, etc. Print and copy our "Tandalay Tender" and use it whenever you catch kids being good! This way kids cannot compare cash with others, since some will spend as they go and others will save up.
 - **Random drawings.**
 - During the daily cool-down, or even at the end of the school day, give students an opportunity to compliment someone else, or to **express appreciation** for one another. When a student gets mentioned for doing a good deed, receives a compliment, or gives encouragement to another student, both students write their names on a piece of paper (or the coach does it for them while the students are talking) and drops the names in a jar for the next drawing. Students may not compliment the same student more than one time.
 - Enter students in the drawing who are particularly helpful that day, who are nice to their peers, who exhibit good leadership skills, etc. Be sure to tell why each student is getting his/her name in the jar, and allow the class to **celebrate** (clap for them, high-five, etc.). Keep track of the students whose names are going in, and be sure to find some way to **compliment** EVERY student in the class prior to each drawing.
 - **Use the drawing jar** for students who perform extra-curricular fitness activities. If a parent or guardian fills out your short little form that verifies that the student exercised or played actively outside for 30 minutes or more, the student gets entered in the drawing.
 - Send a **"Caught Being Good"** or "Good Job" note home to mom and dad. Have them sign it and return it to be sure the student gets kudos at home.
 - DON'T use charts on the wall, or any methods where students can compare themselves to other students or other students to each other. While this method builds the self-esteem of the top TWO students, or at least the leader, it does not make anyone else feel better. This is not only true for PE, but for all aspects of learning. Public display of the "losers" is simply not a good idea.
10. **PRAISE! PRAISE! PRAISE!** Empty praise is meaningless drivel. Be sure your praise is legitimate and meaningful. Be specific. Find something REAL to praise your most difficult students for, and do it as often as possible! Yes, PRAISE is worth mentioning twice. Acknowledgement of effort and a job well done is something everyone appreciates. Try it at home!