



Answer the questions below

1. Think of a specific interaction with a child where they behaved in a way that challenged you. It could be something that you wish you could do over, that is likely to reoccur, or that you would like help with. Write down (briefly) what the student did that challenged you.

2. What were you feeling when they did this?

3. How did you respond? What did you say and do?

4. What did they do next in response to you?

5. Using the Understanding Behavior tool below, what might be the student's mistaken belief and the unspoken request?

6. Using the Understanding Behavior tool below, What ideas for prevention or responses do you want to try?

Adult's Feelings

The behavior we see is often a solution to a problem we don't see. It is a misguided attempt at getting a sense of safety, belonging or significance.

To understand what might be going on for our students, we start by using our own emotional response. →

In response to student's behavior, I'm feeling:



ANNOYED, IRRITATED
Body feels itchy, like fingernails on a chalkboard



CHALLENGED, DEFEATED, PROVOKED (ANGRY)
Body feels like a mini volcano



HURT, DISBELIEF, SPITEFUL (ANGRY)
Body feels like you've been gut punched or may have a lack of sensation because it's protecting from hurt







DISCONNECTED, FUTILE
Body feels low energy

Student's Mistaken Belief ←

	BELIEF (Out of Awareness)	A MISTAKEN WAY TO	UNSPOKEN REQUEST
UNDUE ATTENTION 	I count or belong when I'm getting attention or others notice me.	Increase connection and belonging.	"Notice me." "Involve me."
MISGUIDED POWER 	I count or belong when I'm the boss.	Feel significant/know I matter.	"Let me help." "Give me options."
REVENGE 	I don't think I belong so I'll hurt others as I feel hurt.	Relieve my hurt.	"I'm hurting, validate my feelings."
INADEQUACY 	I can't belong or matter because I'm no good. There's no use trying.	Relieve a sense of inadequacy.	"Don't give up." "Show me small steps."

Prevention & Responses

	PREVENTION	RESPONSES (in the moment)
UNDUE ATTENTION 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intentional relationship building with educator and peers • Provide opportunities to contribute • Teach connection skills • Set up routines • Class Meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "I care about you and ____" (e.g: I care about you and will spend time with you later.) • Redirect by assigning a task so student can gain useful attention • Use problem-solving • Touch without words • Set up nonverbal signals • Connect before correct: "I notice _____ and _____."
MISGUIDED POWER 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide opportunities to contribute in useful ways • Set a few reasonable limits (Connected & Firm) • Give choices • Develop mutual respect • Mutual problem solving • Practice follow-through • Class Meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redirect to positive power by asking them for help • Don't fight and don't give in • Withdraw from conflict (leave and calm down) • Be connected and firm • Act, don't talk • Decide what you will do (vs. what student should do) • Use Calm Down Zone
REVENGE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teach/use self-regulation tools • Show you care • Teach/use "I Statements" • Avoid blame or shame • Model and teach repair skills for whole class • Encourage strengths • Avoid taking sides • Teach and practice repair • Class Meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connect: validate their feelings • Emotional honesty • Make amends • Avoid acting on hurt feelings • Avoid punishment and retaliation • Clear and appropriate follow through
INADEQUACY 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give responsibilities • Do an encouragement 2x10 • Teach routines • Teach how to break tasks into smaller pieces • Model mistakes: it's okay to be imperfect • Encourage their interests • Class Meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show small steps • Meet them where they are (don't try to convince them of anything about themselves) • Remind of past successes and strengths • Show faith and confidence • Go slow, make room for silence • Use "I notice" statements • Ask, "What do you need?" • Take care of yourself and get support