



REPORT to PARENTS

RP 28:8

Bad Behavior

Disrespectful, disruptive behavior that begins as early as kindergarten has become a very serious problem in many classrooms across the country. Schoolchildren who once uttered “yes ma’am” are now openly challenging and defying teachers, “acting out” in class, and turning important instructional time into a battle for control. In a time when school districts are facing teacher shortages, bad behavior among children is driving teachers away from the classroom.

While principals and teachers have roles to play in teaching proper behavior, parents should lead the way. Children learn what is and is not acceptable from their parents. It’s not an easy task, but without parental and home support, classroom disruptions will continue to increase.

Respect begins at home. Make sure your children are raised to respect all adults. It may sound old-fashioned, but children need to know their “place.” As much as they would like to be, they are not the equals of their parents, teachers, or other adults.

Do not allow rudeness and disrespect. Most children try to challenge the authority of adults. The ones who get away with it are the ones who become the most disruptive in school. Parents need to be firm and consistent from the very beginning. When a child is defiant or rude, he or she needs to face consequences, such as a “time out” or a loss of privileges.

“You can’t make me.” We never advocate violent punishment like spanking or slapping. However, children need to know that parents and teachers do have authority that they must respect. Don’t allow your children to get into the “you can’t make me” mindset. Let them know

what nonviolent punishments they will receive if they disobey you or their teachers. And follow through with the punishments every time they disobey, or they will soon realize you are not serious.

“Stop or I’ll sue.” Some parents turn a deaf ear to the teacher’s point of view. Children and parents use the threat of a lawsuit as a weapon against teachers who are doing nothing more than trying to maintain or restore order in their classrooms. It is important that all children learn in a peaceful environment.



Communicate with the teacher. Parents should set up a method of communicating with their children’s teachers. Send an e-mail or note to the teacher once a month, asking about your child’s academic strength or weaknesses, as well as about his or her social skills and behavior. If anything troubles you, set up a

meeting as soon as possible.

Schedule a meeting. If what the teacher is telling you about your child’s behavior differs a lot from what your child says, the best thing to do is to set up a meeting with all of you so that everyone gets the story straight. If there are serious problems, include the counselor and principal or assistant principal. The key is to do your best to keep your emotions and temper under control—getting angry at your child in front of the teacher or at the teacher in front of your child is no way to resolve the situation.

By teaching your children to respect teachers and behave in the classroom, you’ll be helping to create a better learning environment for your children and all of their classmates.