

Managing the Psychosocial Environment in the Classroom

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Six Critical Life Messages

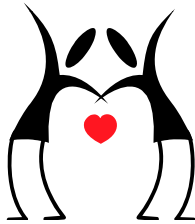
- "I Believe in you..."
- I trust you...
- I know you can handle this...
- You are listened to ...
- You are cared for...
- You are very important to me."

Barbara Coloroso

The Psychosocial Environment Is:

The overall emotional climate or feeling tone that exists in every classroom:

- Pleasure - Distress
- Intrigue - Boredom
- Happiness - Sadness
- Excitement
- Love – Fear



The Psychosocial Environment

- Is intangible,
- All teachers are aware of it,
- Powerfully affects student learning, productive work & their self-concept
- Effects last longer than the classroom's physical environment

Psychosocial Environment

~POSITIVE~

- Warmth
- Caring
- Supportive
- Friendly
- Pleasant
- Sweet
- Encouragement

~NEGATIVE~

- Cold & uncaring
- Harsh
- Punitive
- Aloof
- Sarcastic
- Threatening

Students in Threatening Environments:

- Fear making errors
- Hope they will not fail or be embarrassed
- Pray that if they do the teacher will not take reprisal against them

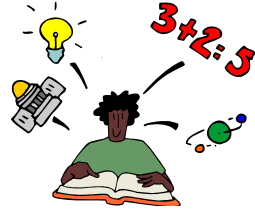
Fear has been used to motivate. But, for the most, achievement is suppressed; pleasure is nonexistent.

(Charles and Senter, Elementary Classroom Management, 2002 p.48)

Optimal Psychosocial Environment

Fraser & O'Brien, 1985

- Satisfaction
- Friction
- Competitiveness
- Difficulty
- Cohesiveness



The Research Results Suggest:

- Classrooms Function best when:
 - Positive,
 - Structured,
 - Reflective Climate full of...
 - Warmth
 - Support
 - Pleasant Circumstances
 - Low Levels of Fear



Factors That Contribute to the Psychosocial Environment

- Human relation skills
- Teacher & student responsibilities in human relations
- Maintaining the psychosocial environment

Human Relation Skills

Good human relations enable people to:

- Interact productively
- Get along well

Both are essential to a participative environment that promotes learning

General Human Relations Skills

<u>Friendliness</u>	<u>Positive Attitude</u>	<u>Ability to Listen</u>	<u>Ability to Compliment Genuinely</u>
Calling others by name Smiling Speaking in a considerate way	Looking on the bright side of things Problem solver	Show genuine interest in the other person	Provide explicit compliments

Four Aspects of Teacher/Human Relations Skills



- 1) General human relations skills
- 2) Human relations skills with students
- 3) Human relations skills with colleagues
- 4) Human relations skills with parents

Teachers with Students

- 1) Regular Attention: speak personally with each student everyday
- 2) Genuine Caring: verbal and visual
- 3) Willingness to Help: all students
- 4) Verbal and Behavioral Reinforcement
- 5) Modeling Courtesy and Good Manners

Teachers with Colleagues

- 1) Supporting Others
- 2) Sharing the Load
- 3) Compromising
- 4) Leading or Following



"If you want to build yourself up, the way to do so is by building others up."

C.M.Charles & Gail Senter

Teachers with Parents

Teachers have the responsibility to communicate and work with the parents of the students they teach.



Teachers Must:



- Communicate regularly and clearly with parents
- Describe your program and expectations
- Emphasize the child's progress while downplaying his/her shortcomings
- Mention future plans for child's instruction
- Arrange for productive parent conferences

Teacher Responsibilities in the Psychosocial Environment

- | | |
|------------------------------------|------------------|
| ■ Creating the desired Environment | ■ Responsibility |
| ■ Sustaining the Environment | ■ Consistency |
| ■ Enthusiasm | ■ Friendliness |
| ■ Importance of each student | ■ Success |
| ■ Sense of Belonging | ■ Understanding |
| ■ Fairness | ■ Help |
| | ■ Humor |

It is the Teacher's Responsibility to Establish and Maintain a Positive Psychosocial Environment.

What are the student's responsibilities?



Student Responsibilities

- **LEARN**
- Contribute
- Responsible Choices
- Dependability
- Consideration
- Support
- Relate Positively
 - Good Manners
 - Polite
 - Courteous



Maintaining the Psychosocial Environment

- Modeling
- Verbal Reinforcement
- Classroom Meetings
- Class Building and Team Building Activities
- Private Discussions