Beyond the Breakfast Club: Discipline and School Culture

Rachel Althof & Aaron Frim
The Wellington School
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Psychology & Educational Theory

Popular Culture & Examples
B.F. Skinner

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l_ctJqjlrHA#action=share
Principal Seymour Skinner, at your service.
Skinner-Style Schooling

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z2WZrxuwDhs
Discipline – Historical Context

Corporal Punishment – “Spare the rod, spoil the child”

Assertive Discipline – systematic rewards and punishments

“Zero Tolerance”
Discipline – Historical Context

Concerns

• “One-size fits all” response
• Voice/input of the student are not considered
• Unequal treatment of members of different groups
Partner Up

Share a story from your own childhood that demonstrates a more traditional approach to discipline.
What is Restorative Justice?

I'm not angry; I'm disappointed.
History of Restorative Justice

- Premodern native cultures of the South Pacific and Americas approach to conflict/social ills focused on:
  - offender’s accountability for the harm they caused
  - plan for repairing the hurt and restoring the offender to acceptance.
- Growth in RJ in response to zero-tolerance policies
Restorative Justice

• identifying and taking steps to repair harm,

• involving all stakeholders, and

• transforming relationships in traditional discipline models
Yeah, but does it work?
Our Discipline Journey

The Infractions

- Uniform violation (untucked shirt, no belt…)
- Lateness
- Gum

Teacher Response

- Infraction slip, “write-up”
Our Discipline Journey

The Consequences

• Lunch Detention
• “Crumb-busting” – community service
• After school detention (homework vs. no homework)
• Saturday School
Discipline Bookkeeping

1 infraction = 1 write-up

3 “tardies” = 1 write-up

3 write-ups = detention

3 detentions = Saturday School
Upper School Minor Violation: Food in library; 10/2/08

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<tr>
<th>Grade Level</th>
<th>Advisor</th>
<th>Attendance</th>
<th>GLHeitk</th>
<th>Discipline</th>
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Eat My Shorts

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bTeYncx1xml
Partner Up: What aspects of your school’s discipline system do you find ineffective?
Schemas, Assimilation, & Accommodation

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xj0CUeyucJw#action=share
Forward-Thinking School Culture
**Willing Learner Metric**

**Voracious Learner**: very actively engaged in class and brings energy and optimism to new learning, while being a positive leader in the classroom.

**Active Learner**: proactive with his/her learning and with classroom responsibilities and seeks extra help voluntarily while approaching new learning opportunities with openness.

**Willing Learner**: open to learning and generally completes assignments but may not seek extra help or challenge him/herself to grow beyond meeting those fundamental classroom expectations.

**Disengaged/Reluctant Learner**: typically not contributing to the learning atmosphere voluntarily and is reluctantly productive, requiring specific prompting or direct guidance to engage with the material or complete assignments.

**Distracting Learner**: sometimes negative or dismissive of learning activities and may have a negative impact on learning atmosphere and others' work.
Growth Mindset

**GROWTH MINDSET**

- Failure is an opportunity to grow
- I can learn to do anything I want
- Challenges help me to grow
- My effort and attitude determine my abilities
- Feedback is constructive
- I am inspired by the success of others
- I like to try new things

**FIXED MINDSET**

- Failure is the limit of my abilities
- I’m either good at it or I’m not
- My abilities are unchanging
- I don’t like to be challenged
- My potential is predetermined
- When I’m frustrated, I give up
- Feedback and criticism are personal
- I stick to what I know
Positive Psychology

Theory of Wellbeing

P - The Pleasant Life
- Positive Emotion
- Feeling Well

E - The Engaged Life
- Positive Character Strengths

R - The Relational Life
- Other People
- Building Social Capacity

M - The Meaningful Life
- Core Motivations
- Purpose
- Meaning

A - The Accomplished Life
- Strive to Achieve Goal Attainment

Flourishing
Optimal Mental Health
Kudos and Concerns

Purpose

• To encourage teachers to give feedback
  ❖ Opportunity for recognition of positive behavior
  ❖ Unlike a “write-up,” a “concern” does not equal a strike against the student

• To create “the paper trail” to give the deans a better picture of each student
Kudos and Concerns

Purpose

• To recognize and celebrate the positive

• To work with the student, problem-solve a solution
New Feedback System --

Kudos and Concerns

Note of Concern

- Email notification to student, advisor, dean
- Option to notify parent

Kudo

- Email notification to student, parent, advisor, dean
Kudos and Concerns

https://portals.veracross.com/tws/behavior/new?type=behavior

Add behavior event or Cancel

Student

Select a student: Ian Frim (10)
Select a class (optional): --

Advisor: Curt Hansen  Homeroom: 10th Morning Meeting
Parents: J. Aaron, Jennifer

Incident

Type: US Concern  Date: Today

Notes:
You did not clear your area when you were done with your lunch. It was a mess, and another student had to pick up your discarded napkins and milk containers. Is this what you do at home?
Kudos and Concerns

Consequence – Conversation with Dean

- 1st Meeting -- student, advisor and dean
- 2nd Meeting -- student, dean and US head
- 3rd Meeting – Conduct Review Board (CRB)
- 4th Meeting -- student, US head, parents

Each meeting accompanied by communication with parents.
Conduct Review Board (CRB)

- 9 students and 2 faculty, plus faculty facilitator(s)
  - Self-nominated
  - 2 students from each grade level
  - Student Council President
  - Not a jury—determines consequences
Traditional CRB

• Student offender waited in hallway while administrator described the offense with CRB committee.

• Student entered to sit in front of room facing the committee.

• Punishments were determined based on precedents—majority ruled.
The Ecology of CRB 2.0

Meeting
Space
Circle
Listening
Questions
Reciprocity
Dialogue
Consequences
Consensus
Building Consensus

1. How to make a better decision next time confronted with similar circumstances

2. How to redress with those impacted
Partner Up

What are some potential pitfalls of this more contemporary approach to discipline?
Potential Pitfalls

- Lack of consistency
- Confusion about what it is and how to implement it
- Can take more time (e.g. one-on-one conversations)
- Too soft
- Can take awhile to implement (3-5 years)
- Equitable?
Current Inquiries

• How can we use our technology to track a more compassionate and nuanced system of discipline to ensure equity?

• Is there a segment of our population that is receiving more concerns?

• Is there gender imbalance (generally and particularly with dress code)?

• Are students growing and learning?


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