

Name of the activity: _____ Praising and Naming _____

This idea comes from: _____ Heinrich-Böll-Schule, Frechen _____

(Name of school)

Aspect of relationship (focus): _____ Pupil/Teacher-Relationship _____

Short description of the activity (How to do?):

Due to the level of their emotional and social development a lot of pupils with special needs are not able to stay in groups. These pupils normally need a person for themselves to feel safe and seen. But they need to go to school and share their teacher with others. Bad behaviour is often a very successful possibility to keep the attention of the teacher. Praising and naming the good behaviour is a possibility to make them feel seen without the need of behaving badly.

How to do it?

If there are pupils in your class who have got a very low frustration tolerance, who don't show effort in working, who give up very quickly and don't try to find solutions for problems or who might act in an aggressive way... try to find very, very small aspects, you could praise (e.g. "you took your pen", "you looked at me" or "you are sitting on your chair" -> things which are normally self-evident). Try to name every tiny little bit of good behaviour you can find. You give the child orientation about your expectations and you give him/her the feeling that you see him/her as a person who tries his/her very best. Connect these namings with praise (e.g. "you have started work, that's great!"). It depends on the child how much praise they need. Normally it can't be enough! There are some children who can't deal with praise. In this case, use only the naming of good behaviour.

The praising is good for children who don't have any feeling for "good" or "bad". Often they think they are doing everything wrong. And often they get so many reproaches by adults that this impression is not unrealistically. By praising them you help them to build up a new view on themselves as children who are able to do a lot of things right. AND it is really good for teachers nervs! 😊

For exercise: Choose a pupil with whom you have a difficult relationship. Practise your perception and find very small aspects of good behaviour. (Keep in your mind: Nothing is self-evident, everything is a skill.) Start to name these aspects. Give a lot of praise. Take some moments at the end of the lessons and remember how often you were naming the good behaviour and how often you have given praise. After some time: Try to realise the reaction of the pupil on your comments.

Requirements (What do we need? Staff, material, rooms, time, ...)

Nothing but good will and a lot of practise.

What else?

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