Objectives

- Use effective communications skills to develop good student behaviors.

Communication Skills

- The set of strategies that focus on communicating clearly and effectively with students to help bring about a change:
  - in their behavior
  - in their thinking
  - in the situation that has caused the problem.

- In addition, communication also means being open to information, so teachers also need to be:
  - good listeners
  - try to understand the student's (or parent's) concerns and feelings.
An effective communicator needs three related skills:

Skill 1:
- Constructive assertiveness.
  - Communicating your concerns clearly
  - Insisting that misbehavior be corrected
  - Resisting being coerced or manipulated.

Skill 2
- Empathic responding.
  - Listening to the student's perspective
  - Reacting in ways that maintain a positive relationship and encourage further discussion.

Skill 3
- Problem solving
  - Reaching mutually satisfactory resolutions to problems
  - It requires working with the student to develop a plan for change.
The elements of constructive assertiveness include:

- A clear statement of the problem or issue
- Unambiguous body language
- Insistence on appropriate behavior and resolution of the problem

Assertiveness is not:

- Hostile or aggressive behavior
- Argumentative behavior
- Inflexible behavior
- Wimpy, wishy-washy, doormat behavior

Empathic Responding

- Allows you to show you are aware and accepting of the student's perspective as well as to seek clarification of it when necessary.
- Helps keep the lines of communication open between you and students, so that problems can be understood and resolved in mutually acceptable ways.
- Especially appropriate when students express their concerns, show stress, or display other strong emotions.

Assertiveness allows teachers to express their concerns,

Empathic responding solicits and affirms the student's viewpoint.

The use of empathic responding skills does not imply that misbehaving students are entitled to "do their thing" without regard for others

The implication is that the student's views should be taken into account in order to reach a satisfactory solution.
Problem solving

- A process used to deal with and to resolve conflicts.
  - Conflicts arise between teachers and students because different roles give rise to different needs, and because individuals have different goals and interests.
  - If conflict arises, teachers need a way to manage it constructively so that teaching and learning can continue in a supportive classroom climate.

Steps in the process

- Identifying of the problem
- Discussing of alternative solutions
- Obtaining a commitment to try one of them.
  - A problem-solving session may also include attempts to identify the basis for the problem and may specify the consequences of following or not following the plan.

Problem Solving

- A problem-solving session is usually conducted during a conference with the student.
- Often, the skills of constructive assertiveness and empathic responding are helpful in reaching a workable agreement.
Parent Conferences

- Approach parents as team members.
  - Both you and the parents want what's best for the child.
- Respect parents' knowledge of their children.
- Show appreciation for parents' efforts to rearrange work schedules to meet with you.
- Use the time wisely by being prepared and organized.
- Stick to descriptions of behavior rather than characterizations of students (e.g., "Abigail calls other children names," rather than "Abigail is mean").
- Document your concerns.

Parents who had difficulty in school themselves may be intimidated by schools and teachers.

- This may come across as avoidance, anger, or defensiveness.
- Be respectful and nonthreatening.

Quiz October 18th

- Study Questions will be posted on Web site
- Over Lectures 1-10
- Short Answer and Essay Questions
- Bring a Blue Book.