

Title of Session: Alt/Correctional Education Forum

Moderator: BJ Berquist

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BjB: let's start with introductions, please. Tell me where you are located and what you teach or hope to teach

BjB . o O (and what interests you in this topic...or are you fulfilling a requirement?)

JenniferB3: Jennifer UH Student Teacher at South Houston Elem. Teaching 1st grade. Hope to teacher kinder

JakeA: Katy, Texas Secondary Science, KISD

LeslieAW: I am at Pecan Grove Elementary in Richmond Tx-EC-4

AndreaLV: I'm student teaching at pecan grove elementary, Richmond Texas

TrinhN: Hi, I'm from Houston, student teaching at Rice School

LeslieAW: I want to teach any grade 1-4

BjB: I teach in a male juvenile correctional facility in Pennsylvania

TrinhN: 4th grade math/science

AndreaLV: that's interesting

TrinhN: that's awesome Bj

LeslieAW: what do you teach specifically

BjB: and you will find that after a while you will be able to ID students in kindergarten who will be headed in my direction

BjB: I teach communication

LeslieAW: I already see a few

AndreaLV: wow that's kind of sad to think about

LeslieAW: It's sad

BjB : a huge percent of my students are special ed

BjB : and all are at risk. Do you know how to identify a child who is at risk?

TrinhN : not really..

AndreaLV : I would imagine to watch their behavior carefully and watch for any unfamiliar changes

LeslieAW : I have a student that takes medicine for the emotionally disturbed- it's scaring to think what he could do one day if he misses his meds- he's come a long way since the beginning of the year- but it's the meds

JakeA : economically disadvantaged, LEP, Bilingual, ever reported to CPS or ever retained in a grade

BjB : if you look on the web window that is above this chat or behind it if you have detached....

BjB : you'll see a folder for at risk students

BjB : when you click on the folder you will see quite a few resources

AndreaLV : wow these look helpful

JenniferB3 : How do you handle parents of those students? My situation isn't as serious, but the parent just doesn't want to believe

TrinhN : oh I can see it's under animal assisted therapy

BjB : you will find that the parents often have the same problems as the child

JenniferB3 : I see. That would make sense

BjB . o O (often the problems are hereditary)

LeslieAW : makes sense

BjB : if the child is experiencing abuse, the parents will deny that

BjB . o O (as will the child)

BjB : a two parent home will lessen the risk

JenniferB3 : The other students seem to know, that that child is "different" and it doesn't

bother them. They usually just ignore.

JessicaMu: hey! children at risk need so much support..

JenniferB3: But, even the parents don't want to deal

TrinhN: I agree Jessica

LeslieAW: I agree, so many children have problems bc their parents are split

BjB: sometimes the parents are in survival mode as it is...

JenniferB3: The mother told me not to call her, to call the counselor because she didn't want to deal with him

BjB: working to keep food on the table

BjB: and they don't know what to do

LeslieAW: so many children have emotional problems bc of what goes on at home

BjB nods to Leslie

TrinhN: I agree Leslie

AndreaLV: yes I can agree with that.

TrinhN: one of my students is going through a tough time

JenniferB3: I see. I just don't know what to do. He will run out of the room, once the school. Then ten minutes later he acts as if nothing happened.

JessicaMu: that is a difficult situation, having the parents on board is crucial to the child's success

LeslieAW: Some of mine are too

BjB: take a look at the NAREN website

JenniferB3: I'll do that.

TrinhN: b/c of their parent

BjB: <http://www.atriskeducation.net/>

BjB: I am currently at a correctional ed conference...

JessicaMu: got it..what exactly are we looking for?

BjB: one of the speakers talked about risk and resiliency

BjB: Jessica, the NAREN site lists risks

JessicaMu: I can't believe that the number of teen pregnancy is that high! wow

BjB: I've not visited this site yet, but this was included in one of our handouts: <http://resiliencyinc.com>

TrinhN: wow.. that is a lot Jessica

JessicaMu: Is anyone under 18 considered a child?

TrinhN: not me..

TrinhN: I'm not ready..

BjB: 18 and under is considered a juvenile....

TrinhN: yes it is

BjB: with special ed, the child can be eligible for services until they are 21

TrinhN: that's true.. b/c my older bro was in special ed.

JenniferB3: the second website provides information on a lot of trainings.

TrinhN: and he graduated w/ me

JakeA: Does the 21 age limit apply to all Spec. Ed or just those that are identified MR?

TrinhN: at the age of 21

BjB: I think it's all special ed

BjB: look at the documents at <http://resiliencyinc.com/documents/>

JakeA: ok

JenniferB3: nice! I think these will be very helpful

JakeA: thanks

AndreaLV: neat.. thanks

BjB: some simple things to remember....

BjB: all children want to be successful

BjB: all children want to feel respected

JessicaMu: I am going to check out the bully article, It is a huge problem in my school!

LeslieAW: very helpful

TrinhN: I skimmed through the brain based approach, and I like the icebreaker

JenniferB3: My problem isn't with bullying. It's specific instances with a student in the class. If he doesn't get his way he'll start stabbing himself with a pencil

JessicaMu: Actually the bullying in my classroom is worse for the girls, than the boys. It has been an interesting semester

TrinhN: it's good to help student feel comfortable

JenniferB3: Or threaten to put a paper clip in the outlet

AndreaLV: that can be dangerous for all students

BjB: even with a lot of risk factors, if there are enough resiliency factors, the child may overcome the risk factors

JessicaMu: Wow. He sounds like he needs some attention or help!

JenniferB3: yesterday he was hitting himself in the head with a library book

AndreaLV: has he had any counseling?

JenniferB3: I'm afraid that he is going to hurt himself and I don't know what to do

TrinhN: aww man

BjB: wonders that also

JenniferB3: He has had counseling. He just switches moods instantly.

LeslieAW: what age

JenniferB3: One minute fine...next he runs out of the room

AndreaLV: are there meds?

JenniferB3: 1st grade, retained.

JessicaMu: that is what I was wondering...wow only first grade!

JenniferB3: sometimes he has meds for ADHD, not sure what exactly

JakeA: Sounds like he may be FAS

BjB: you need to find out what the triggers are that set him off

JessicaMu: what is FAS?

JenniferB3: he wants to be on computers

BjB: and maybe remove stimulation

LeslieAW: Sorry I don't know FAS

JakeA: Fetal Alcohol syndrome

TrinhN: ohh..

LeslieAW: oh

JessicaMu: how sad..

JenniferB3: He is very aware when someone is upset with him, because he will say it.

JakeA: they are usually very explosive and triggers are difficult to identify

TrinhN frowns

BjB: teachers are not allowed to diagnose

AndreaLV: wow I did not realize it could do that much

TrinhN: same here...

BjB: so be very careful with labeling

JenniferB3: Of course...I NEVER try to diagnose him. I just want to do the right thing. TO protect him, the students and myself. (physically and legally!)

BjB : try to structure the child's activities so that there is no stimuli

JakeA: sometimes parents will admit to FAS and often foster parents know

BjB : maintain a routine that is familiar

BjB : and try to provide opportunities for success

JessicaMu: Did you say that this student is in special ed? or just being retained?

LeslieAW: I agree

BjB . o O (I realize these sound like platitudes, but that is about all you can do as a classroom teacher)

JenniferB3: no, he was rejected for special ed and retained. he is suppose to be in 2nd

JenniferB3: they also said that he will not be retained again because they can't retain him twice

TrinhN: aww that is sad..

AndreaLV: and how do the other kids feel about him? do they interact with him?

JessicaMu: good question!

JakeA: I thought that NCLB allowed multiple retentions

BjB . o O (doomed to fall through the cracks of the education system)

JenniferB3: The kids are surprisingly great! They do not get disturbed by his actions

JenniferB3: They still interact with him....when he has his good moments

AndreaLV: are there any that try to calm him or befriend him? maybe he needs some positive relationships

BjB : maybe this child needs a safe place to go when he feels impulsive

JessicaMu: how do you promote positive interactions for him?

JenniferB3: When he has his "episodes" the students back off.

JenniferB3: I praise...praise....praise and give him extra computer time when he follows the rules.

AndreaLV: that is understandable if I was in his class I may be scared of what was to come

JenniferB3: That seems to work for the most part

AndreaLV: Have the parents tried to help with the situation? what do they think?

JenniferB3: Absolutely not

JessicaMu: Can you get him to do any work?

TrinhN: praise does help students feel good

BjB: unfortunately, you also have the rest of the class to worry about

JenniferB3: sometimes he will do his work

JenniferB3: this is true Bj.

JenniferB3: Are there any other issues that anyone else has?

BjB: I would document behaviors and then submit to the principal

JenniferB3: documentation is ongoing

BjB: . o O (or the counselor)

JenniferB3: with counselor and principal

TrinhN: throughout my student teaching, I haven't seen my teacher do any documentation

BjB: good.

JenniferB3: I don't hesitate now to call the office in a second

LeslieAW: As I mentioned earlier, I have a student that takes ED meds-it keeps him calm but we can tell when they mess with his meds

LeslieAW: the other kids are good with him-they are going to try to keep this group together

BjB: what grade, Leslie?

LeslieAW: We praise him a lot and I get him excited to do the work

LeslieAW: 2nd

JakeA: Is keeping the group together fair to the other students?

BjB . o O (ultimately, you have to make the child accountable for his behavior...can't blame behaviors on drugs. But 2nd grade is pretty young)

JessicaMu: I have a student who is medicated for ADD only during school days, and on Mondays she has an extremely hard time concentrating

LeslieAW: there were days he came in so dazed and acted weird so we figured they messed with his meds-when we asked him if he took a different pill he said the box was different

BjB nods to Jessica and Leslie

LeslieAW: Jake-the other kids support and want to help him

JessicaMu: Trihn-do you have any students on meds?

BjB: you have no control over medication...so what you have to do is focus on an established routine

TrinhN: I don't think so Jessica..

JakeA: I understand the others like him and want to help, but they are only 2nd graders and that is a big responsibility to put on them

LeslieAW: I did get him focused on the lesson bc he did seem to snap out of it

LeslieAW: My teacher wants the principal to keep them together

BjB: sometimes if you give the child a 'job' to do when they enter the classroom, that helps with the focusing

JessicaMu: Trihn - you must be at a really good school!

BjB . o O (and the routine)

TrinhN: no I'm not..

TrinhN: but thanks for the comment!

TrinhN: I tried to be though

LeslieAW: I agree with assigning a job

JakeA: If I was a parent, I might not like that

JessicaMu: have you tried pairing him with a partner to keep him on task?

TrinhN: that's true.. I have a student who is usually quiet, but he got a job which is put down the projector screen

AndreaLV: Yes I believe giving a student something important to do will keep them on task because they will feel the responsibility

TrinhN: everyone in my class has a job in which they like

BjB: what kinds of jobs, Trinh?

LeslieAW: we have student of the day-each child will have assigned jobs when it is their day

TrinhN: such as bathroom monitor, librarian, line leader, messenger. etc

JessicaMu: yes, I am curious as well...does bathroom monitors really work?

JessicaMu: for what grade?

TrinhN: yes it does..

LeslieAW: what grade

BjB: very important jobs!

TrinhN: it keeps the kids in and out the restroom

TrinhN: quickly

TrinhN: since some students takes forever in the bathroom

JakeA: lol..I don't think that would work on the secondary level

TrinhN: the bathroom monitor make sure everything goes well

JessicaMu: My kids totally abuse the privilege and give their friends extra time to chat!

TrinhN: 4th grade

BjB chuckles. I agree, Jake

AndreaLV: I have a problem with restroom breaks. a lot of my boys take advantage of the time and choose to act up

LeslieAW: I believe it Andrea

TrinhN: I would just don't let them go..

AndreaLV: they wrestle in the restroom

TrinhN: I would take my whole class to the restroom

TrinhN: well..

LeslieAW: and your class is right by the bathroom

AndreaLV: yes so it is prime playing room

JessicaMu: Andrea- I ask my students if they need to take a break or really go to the bathroom? when they need a break I let [them] get water after their work is done..

TrinhN: what you can do is.. don't let the student that wrestle each other go into together at the same time

TrinhN: separate them

AndreaLV: but they will find a wrestling buddy regardless

AndreaLV: its the kid you wouldn't think

TrinhN: have him go to the restroom by himself??

AndreaLV: there are also other kids from other classrooms that cause problems. our restrooms service the whole second grade

TrinhN: you should find a time that other classes doesn't go the same time as your class does

TrinhN: you can talk with other teachers to set a time..

JessicaMu: We make our students go as a whole class, They all take their work and pencils, and restroom breaks are then productive and quick!

LeslieAW: They do work during bathroom break?

TrinhN: it is a good idea to have them work during bathroom break that way they can be busy

BjB . o O (I wondered about that too, Leslie)

TrinhN: at the same time, they are not wasting time

AndreaLV: yes my class has seat work to finish as they take bathroom breaks

JessicaMu: yes! usually writing assignment. they sit against the wall with their work, and three kids in the bathroom at a time...works like a well oiled machine!

BjB smiles. Sounds good, Jessica

LeslieAW: what grade

TrinhN: I agree too

JakeA: whole new way of thinking of "seat" work

AndreaLV: we usually call them to go by table. the restroom is right next to my classroom so it is somewhat of a routine

LeslieAW: we call by table too

TrinhN: i c..

LeslieAW: they work in the classroom while the others go quickly and quietly-I have a good class

BjB: sounds like clear expectations and an established routine work well

LeslieAW: my SBTE did a good job

TrinhN: just as long you have a routine is good..

TrinhN: my SBTE too..

AndreaLV: yes my students should know to follow the routine by now or my sbte chews into them

AndreaLV: but even that doesn't seem to work sometimes

TrinhN: Jessica, you had a great comment!

LeslieAW: oh yeah

JessicaMu: thanks Trinh! wink wink..

JessicaMu: Andrea- you let your students go to the bathroom by tables?

JessicaMu: sorry just confused?

BjB: I think you mentioned in Teachers in Training about the problem of establishing authority in the classroom

TrinhN: I think it's better if you go w/ the students to the restroom that way u can monitor them..

TrinhN: but it just depends on others..

JessicaMu: Yes.. especially for new teachers.. gaining authority is hard enough!

TrinhN: yes..

BjB: when it's YOUR classroom, you will be better able to establish your expectations

BjB: . o O (always easier to start strict and then relax)

LeslieAW: I have learned that!

JessicaMu: Bj- how long have you been teaching?

TrinhN: thanks for the suggestion..

AndreaLV: yes I agree with you because it seems that sometimes me and my sbte are on different pages

BjB: this is my 24th year

JessicaMu: WOW!

TrinhN: wow..

LeslieAW: wow

JessicaMu: what grades did you teach?

BjB: yeah, that's how I feel too!

TrinhN: it's always good to start out strict that way the students won't be out of control

BjB: the reading levels go from pre K to post high school

LeslieAW: true Trinh

BjB: the boys are 11 years old to 18

BjB: so it's mostly middle/high school

JakeA: Is it a residential facility?

BjB: yes

JenniferB3: I think that staying consistent is key and follow through.

JenniferB3: Also. model behavior

TrinhN: I agree..

JessicaMu: oh..so you are a reading specialist?

BjB: no, Jessica. I'm actually an art teacher

BjB: but I try to integrate the arts across the curriculum

JakeA: My mom is a reading specialist!

JenniferB3: interesting

BjB: and include writing and reading in my classes

TrinhN: cool

JessicaMu: I just realized that our school does not offer art class for elementary students!
how unfortunate for them..

AndreaLV: well that is not right

JenniferB3: the one thing my student does love is art

TrinhN: sorry to hear that..

JakeA: In Katy all classes have music and art

BjB agrees with Jennifer...so you need to try to use art in your classroom ...

LeslieAW: Our school has art only twice every other week

TrinhN: I guess you can integrate them in you lesson..

JakeA: A lot of students like it when you play music

JessicaMu: Yes.. I have incorporated it into many social studies lessons!

LeslieAW: Art is integrated everyday

BjB: you have to provide ways in which you can provide a variety of disciplines in your class...visual and auditory

LeslieAW: they do enjoy music

AndreaLV: Yes I found that they enjoy artsy activities the most during lessons

JenniferB3: I integrate it everyday....even with their journals.

AndreaLV: they take real pride in the work they produce

TrinhN: yeah.. my students really enjoy the art activities.. especially right now because they are drawing types of fish tails..

JenniferB3: Especially when I display it. I make a big deal about it. that helps

BjB: sounds like you're all doing a great job!

TrinhN: I hope so :)

BjB: using the arts to teach is a K12 requirement...it shouldn't end in elementary school

BjB: . o O (one of the reasons I do the monthly arts and literacy discussions)

BjB looks at the clock on the wall

JenniferB3: This has been very helpful. I feel confident that my situation is not a lost cause!

JessicaMu: I agree... I am going to find out why it is not offered!

TrinhN: oh no its time

BjB: this has been a brilliant discussion. Thank you all for such enthusiastic participation

TrinhN: almost..

JenniferB3: Good luck to everyone!

JenniferB3: Thank you.

JessicaMu: it is...has gone by so fast!

TrinhN: thank you Bj

JakeA: thanks

LeslieAW: thank you

JessicaMu: thanks guys =)

TrinhN: the resources are helpful

TrinhN: thank you for your time!

AndreaLV: thanks for the info

TrinhN: good night everyone and good luck!!

AndreaLV: good night

LeslieAW: good night!

BjB: remember that graduation doesn't mean you don't need prof. development and collegial support!

JakeA: good night

TrinhN: bye everyone

BjB waves goodnight

TrinhN: okie

AndreaLV: ok