

Time Out Case Example

Student: Stella

Grade: 1st

Presenting Problems: Aggressive, Hitting others

Intervention: Time Out

Background

Stella is a first-grade student who has recently started to hit her peers during unstructured times, such as transitions between activities and group work. This behavior has caused disruptions in the classroom and has made some of her classmates hesitant to work or play with her. Stella's teacher, Ms. Carter, has noted that the behavior often happens when Stella is frustrated or unable to get her way. Ms. Carter has decided to implement a time-out intervention to address Stella's behavior.

Getting Started:

- **Identifying behaviors:** Ms. Carter identifies that hitting other students will result in time out. These expectations were explained to the class at the beginning of the school year and reminded to students periodically.
- **Time out area:** A designated time-out area is a chair at the back of the room that is away from distractions but still in Ms. Carter's sight.

Implementation:

- **Teaching time-out procedures:** Ms. Carter spends a few minutes of the morning going over classroom expectations and time-out procedures. The expectations given include keeping everyone safe by keeping their hands to themselves, remaining quiet while on the rug, and staying seated on the rug until it is time to rejoin the group.
- **First Incident:** During a group activity, Stella became upset with another student because he used the marker she wanted to use. She hit him on the arm and grabbed the marker out of his hand. Ms. Carter saw the interaction and calmly said, "Stella, it is not okay to hit others. Remember, it is a rule to keep your hands to yourself. Please go sit on the time-out chair for 4 minutes." Stella reluctantly walks to the time-out area, and Ms. Carter starts a timer.
- **Reinforcement for the class:** During Stella's time out, the teacher positively reinforces students who are working appropriately by saying, "Great job to everyone who is keeping their hands to themselves and sharing with their classmates."
- **Rejoin class:** Once the timer goes off, Ms. Carter approaches Stella and says, "Okay, Stella, your time in time out is now over. Do you remember



why you were in time-out?" Stella replies, "Because I hit." Ms. Carter reminds Stella of the expectations and why it is not appropriate to hit. She then asks Stella what to do next time if she feels upset about sharing. Stella responds, "Ask for a turn or tell you." Ms. Carter ends by saying, "Now that you are ready to rejoin the class, you can go back to your seat." Later, Ms. Carter praises her for keeping her hands to herself, reinforcing positive behavior.