

THE CONNECTION

Contracting

Contracting has been an effective tool in handling discipline problems. Self-discipline is the key to making this method successful.

Written contracts are very useful for older students. Students like contracts because both parties get to negotiate outcomes that have been mutually agreed upon.

The contract notes the pinpointed behavior to be improved and the consequences to be received for specific amounts of improvement.

One must remember that a contract is a goal-establishing agreement between a minimum of two concerned parties (teacher-student).

When making out a contract, the following items should be included:

1. Specific tasks to be completed.
2. Specific desired consequences selected for their high motivational value for the contracting student.
3. Student deadlines for completion which reflect realistic assessment of the student's learning or behavioral rate.
4. Signatures of participating parties as well as a witness.

The type of contract you might use will depend on the age of the student. A contract that includes pictures might prove more successful for younger children, while a standard form might better reach an older group of students.

If used properly, contracting can be an effective means of handling discipline problems. Make sure you and your student understand fully what a contract is and that once it is signed, it becomes a binding document.