

Rules for the classroom

It is extremely important to set the tone and build a solid foundation for everybody to be heard and to express themselves. Children need to know that everywhere in the world there are rules and consequences.

To address misbehaviour of children you only see once a week is difficult, but you as a facilitator can be prepared to deal with difficult situations. Steer a process for your children to come up with their own rules to learn inclusion and have ownership.

Keep the age of your children in mind when you start developing rules.

As effective CAFs you need to instil consistency and lead by example. For example, starting the art class on time, cleaning class tables when done or folding aprons away after use. All children are different, and you need to use what works best for you in your classroom setting.

Here are some suggestions about how to collectively come up with rules that consider all the stages of an art class, from beginning to end:

Materials needed: newsprint or flip chart paper, masking tape, board markers

Time: 30 mins

Step 1 - Welcome everybody in the room and ask them to take their seat.

Step 2 - Explain the importance of rules and that the group will come up with their own set of rules for the classroom.

Step 3 - Start off by saying that without rules in the world there would be complete and utter disorder and confusion. If you get into a train or airplane there are rules so that everyone feels safe. Ask them what the basic rules of the road are. Is there a rule for crossing the road? What were the rules for COVID-19 Lockdown? Do they have any rules at home? What would be the rules for our art class? Come up with 5 – 6 good rules together and what the consequence/s would be if rules are broken. You must make sure that there is consistency from the start to the very end of each class.

Step 4 – You prepare a flip chart or newsprint with "OUR RULES" as the heading which explains the set rules of the art class.

Step 5 - Now ask the children to come up with their own 5 rules are more than enough.

Here are some rules:

1. Respect everybody and look out for each other.
2. We care for our classroom and the art materials.
3. We will have creative fun and clean-up together afterwards.
4. No fighting and swearing.
5. No late coming.



Step 6 - With rules we also have consequences. This is another opportunity for the group to think about their own consequence/s. The children need to own these rules and consequence/s and start creating a safe space for themselves and others.

Step 7 – Ask the group if they are all in agreement with the rules and consequence/s and allow all of them to make a personal mark on the rules. This document will serve as a group contract and everybody will be kept accountable for their behaviour.

Have Fun!