

# Classroom Practice: Relationship Development



## Description

It is essential to have strong, positive relationships with students. “Students don’t care what you know until they know that you care.” Relationships will help improve student outcomes because students will recall how you made them feel long after they have forgotten the consequences they earned as a result of their actions.

## Critical Features

- Show an interest in your students' personal lives
- Noticing individual accomplishments and important events in student’s lives
- Interact with students as individuals
- Physical gestures and movements: eye contact, moving around the room, looking and listening
- Empathize with students
- Positive relationships are the foundation to a strong discipline system
- Don’t leave it up to chance, relationships are so critical you should have a plan on how to develop relationships

Marzano says, “Don't Leave Relationships to Chance. Teacher-student relationships provide an essential foundation for effective classroom management—and classroom management is a key to high student achievement. Teacher-student relationships should not be left to chance or dictated by the personalities of those involved. Instead, by using strategies supported by research, teachers can influence the dynamics of their classrooms and build strong teacher-student relationships that will support student learning.” And **“the most effective teacher-student relationships are characterized by specific teacher behaviors: exhibiting appropriate levels of dominance; exhibiting appropriate levels of cooperation; and being aware of high-needs students.”**

### Elementary Example

- Greet every student by name
- Morning meetings
- Keep a log of your reactions to student behavior, and identify your triggers. Do your reactions build or break relationships?

### Secondary Example

- Attend afterschool performances and sporting events
- Greet every student by name
- Circles and use of restorative practices and class meetings
- Create a student interest survey, and incorporate results into lesson planning

### Non Examples

- Not taking the time to follow up with students and repair any harm done when a correction or reprimand was given
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### Research and Resources

Secure attachment to one or more adults has also been shown to improve students' emotional and social development (Bergin & Bergin, 2009).  
 Bergin, C., & Bergin, D. (2009). Attachment in the classroom. *Educational Psychology Review*, 21(2), 141-170. doi:10.1007/s10648-009-9104-0

**Resources**

Classroom Management That Works, Marzano

<http://k12engagement.unl.edu/strategy-briefs/Staff%20Student%20Relationships%2010-18-2013.pdf>

[http://www.ascd.org/publications/books/105124/chapters/Developing\\_Positive\\_Teacher-Student\\_Relations.aspx](http://www.ascd.org/publications/books/105124/chapters/Developing_Positive_Teacher-Student_Relations.aspx)

<http://www.ascd.org/publications/books/101236/chapters/An-ASCD-Study-Guide-for-Connecting-with-Students.aspx>

Self-Assessment					
<b>6. Maximize positive interactions.</b>	<b>Sect. total /3=</b>				
a) I maintain a ratio of 4:1 positive interactions	1	2	3	4	<b>CEC5</b>
b) I positively interact with every student at least 2-3 times per hour on average.	1	2	3	4	<b>CEC5</b>
<b>9. Develop caring and supportive relationships.</b>	<b>Sect. total /4=</b>				
a) I learn, use and can correctly pronounce student names by the end of week 2.	1	2	3	4	<b>CEC6</b>
b) I use explicit activities to learn about students and their cultural backgrounds.	1	2	3	4	<b>CEC6 CEC7</b>
c) I communicate with students/families before school starts and continue frequent contact.	1	2	3	4	<b>PCC3</b>
d) I speak to students with dignity and respect—even when providing correction!	1	2	3	4	<b>CEC6</b>