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Understanding the Implications and Addressing Defiance in the Classroom

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Research Question

What are the effects of defiance and how can strategies be used to address these behaviors in the elementary setting?

Methodology

- Participants included twenty-six second grade students in a self-contained classroom from a suburban, K-5 school in the fall of 2015.
- Events that occurred over a sixteen week period were documented for this self-study.
- Data from field notes and observations, anecdotal notes, observation write-ups, and school behavioral policies were evaluated and analyzed along with relevant literature.
- Themes were identified using the techniques of repetitions as well as similarities and differences (Ryan & Bernard, 2003).

Literature Review

- There is not adequate preparation for classroom management in preservice teacher education programs (O'Neil & Stephenson, 2013; Smart & Igo, 2010).
- Defiance from students causes major stress and is a factor in high teacher burn out rates and poor job satisfaction (O'Neil & Stephenson, 2013; Pisacreta, Tincani, Connell, & Axelrod, 2011; Pullen, 2004).
- Teachers with more positive attitudes toward their students are less likely to experience defiance. When behavioral issues do occur, punishments are found to be more fair when there is a positive teacher-student relationship (Bratter, 2006; Glass, 2012; Way, 2011).
- When used correctly, *Check-in/Check-Out*, a Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) program, has been found to be effective at all grade levels with appropriate adjustments to behavioral needs (Miller, Dunfrene, Sterling, Olmi, & Bachmayer, 2015).

Results and Data Analysis

- Respect must be earned not assumed.
- Family involvement as well as supporting faculty foster improved behavior.
- Check-In/Check-Out was found to be an effective behavior intervention at the second grade level to address defiance in the classroom when adjusted to individual needs.
- Best practices methods must be determined based on individual behavioral needs.
- Building strong relationships with students positively affects classroom behavior and student acceptance of management techniques.
- Preservice teacher education and professional development on defiance are beneficial.

Conclusions

- Further education is needed in classroom management for preservice teachers in order to find success and confidence managing the classroom.
- Forming positive relationships with students is effective in preventing defiance.
- Best practices still need further investigation, this will lead to stronger preservice education and greater confidence in classroom management.