Negative Attention Seeking
Young Adolescents

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Characteristics

- They realize and know the behaviors that teachers cannot ignore; such as:
  - Blurting out
  - Making random noises
  - Distracting other students
  - Throwing things, etc.
- Misbehaviors
- Inattentive
- Shows lack of interest in content
- Does not follow directions
Q: Why do students do this?

- Most will seek attention in a positive way but there are a handful of students who will seek it in a negative way.
- A child who wants attention will get it by some means.
- There are just some children who have a never satisfied desire for attention.
- Many students who value teacher attention do not care if it is gained in a positive or negative manner.
What the Student Thinks...

- Cognitively the child believes: “They do not get enough attention!”
- They seek attention in the negative manner because more than often positive behaviors are over looked
- Negative attention is better than no attention at all!
- Mindset of “I DON’T care!”
Interesting Facts

- These students who act out in a negative way normally receive lots of attention, much more than many of the other students.
- Attention seeking children come from all different backgrounds.
- Often these students get caught in the ‘reprimand’ trap and stay there.
- These students can often be referred to as difficult or challenging students.
As a Teacher...

- You can spend ample amounts of time with the student but yet it feels as though it is never enough!
- On average intervention with the student is needed every 2-3 minutes
- Be observant of the students behaviors for changes
What we as Teachers can do...Intervene

- This is an extremely powerful tool!
- For intervention to work we as teachers must:
  - Be patient with the process
  - Be willing to try different strategies
  - And carry out the process, consistency is KEY!
- Ignore the behaviors, if possible
- Try to cut out negative attention and focus on positive attention
- The school counselor and or social worker may have to be involved past a certain point
- Approaching the child every 10 – 15 minutes
“Special Time”

- 10 minutes everyday, if possible, or make a schedule
- Letting them do something reasonable with you one on one for about 10 minutes
- Making them aware of the starting and finishing times
- This is a time where the teacher is to observe and not teach. They are to praise the student for the positives they see.
- Soul focus should be on the student
Random ‘Positive’ Attention

- Works best for breaking the ‘reprimand’ trap!
- Starts with ignoring the students’ attention-seeking behaviors
- At the same time ‘randomly’ giving the student positive attention
  - These are not to be connected with misbehaviors
- This way the student(s) are getting the attention they crave
- These ‘random’ acts of positive attention need to be sporadic and based upon the observation of good behavior
Random ‘Positive’ Attention

- A pat on the shoulder
- Making eye contact with the student and smiling
- Checking in with the student on their progress on an assignment
- Call on the student in class, when confident they know the answer
- Praise or compliment
- A few simple words of encouragement
- Talking briefly with the student
- Selecting the student to help with classroom tasks, etc
Reward system

- Select a group of rewards the student can earn for their positive behavior
- Give the student a ticket, something tangible for them to keep up with their reward

These rewards can be:
- Working with a group
- Free time
- A book
- Free homework pass
- An award, etc.

- Once they have earned these rewards they can also be taken away for negative behaviors

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=utnnHCv9Jik
Sources