

Nine Stages of Reclaiming Youth

Stage	Key Student Behaviors	Key Helping Behaviors
1. The Honeymoon	Checks things out. Observes. Determines social order. Conforms to rules.	Clearly communicates systems and expectations. Build relationships. Enforce natural consequences.
2. Limit Testing	Tests authority. Splits staff. Disruptive. Oppositional. Difficulty managing their lives.	Avoid staff splitting. Establish safe and predictable environment. Effectively set limits. Recognize positive behavior.
3. Active Resistance	Openly defiant. Avoids interpersonal closeness. Creates conflict. Projects blame. Passively or overtly aggressive. Gets personal.	Remember the conflict cycle. Decode behavior. Use effective behavior management strategies. Implement effective crisis intervention and management strategies.
4. Beginning Trust and Achievement	Begins to participate positively. Behaviorally inconsistent. Right attitude/wrong behavior. Starts to build positive relationships with others.	Measure and share data on progress. Instruct in prosocial skills. Build on progress. Maintain clear personal boundaries.
5. Program Acceptance and Progress	Develops a sense of belonging. Demonstrates academic and behavioral progress. Positive relationships with others.	Fade external rewards and increase expectations. Continue prosocial skill instruction. Help student define and measure own progress.
6. Negative Personal Demands and Jealousy	Retests boundaries and relationship. Demanding. Sabotages own progress.	Decode behaviors/emotions. Understand dynamics of closeness. Teach skills for coping with change.
7. Clear Academic Goals and Progress	New skills and behaviors stabilize. Intolerant of others with problem behaviors. Ready for new challenges.	Reinforce emerging sense of self-esteem and progress. Encourage independence. Self-management strategies. Increase mainstreaming.
8. Separation and Regression	Anxious about future. Experiences separation anxiety. Substantially regresses to avoid change.	Decode and address underlying issues. Understand and support the process of letting go.
9. Attachment and Sadness	Experiences mixtures of emotion. Displays sadness about leaving-attachment to program. Proud of accomplishments yet wary of future.	Ceremony/rite of passage to mark progress and change. Reinforce and support new skills. Good transition planning.

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