

Forty Ways to Make a More Positive Classroom Climate

January 2019

From the Book, *The Bully Free Classroom*
by Allan L. Beane, Ph.D.

The classroom teacher is the person on the front line that can make a huge difference in the social climate of a school. There are many more strategies in the above-listed reference than can be listed here, but some of the ones that stand out are noted below:

1. **Name bully behaviors. Take a class pledge of what *not* to do.**
2. **Share stories about bullying to build empathy.**
3. **Set specific rules regarding what will and will not be acceptable.**
4. **Designate your classroom as “bully-free.”**
5. **Respond effectively and quickly to reports of bullying.**
6. **Intervene to incidents in real time if you witness bullying.**
7. **Teach friendship skills.**
8. **Set high expectations.**
9. **Learn more about your students.**
10. **Identify roles models.**
11. **Provide adequate supervision to classes and events.**
12. **Reward cooperation.**

13. **Keep grades private.**
14. **Encourage random acts of kindness.**
15. **Explore the lives of famous peacemakers.**
16. **Change seating assignments when necessary.**
17. **Affirm your students. Take every opportunity to say something positive to your students throughout the day.**
18. **Assess the week. How did things go, are there areas that can be improved?**
19. **Use humor where possible. It can be disarming and change the chemistry of a classroom.**
20. **Get students involved in service.**
21. **Provide counseling when needed and opportunities permit.**
22. **Empower parents. Share tips, tell them of your efforts. They can be a teacher's best allies.**
23. **Mobilize witnesses. Minimize the number of "standbys" willing to do nothing.**
24. **Provide safe havens.**
25. **Get students involved in groups.**
26. **Give students opportunities to shine.**
27. **Have students keep journals.**
28. **Have clear consequences in place.**

29. **Teach power skills. This may involve demonstrations, roll-playing, discussion, and guided practice.**
30. **Get other students involved.**
31. **Set up a bully court. (This is more appropriate with older students.)**
32. **Help select students find mentors.**
33. **Utilize older students.**
34. **Use "Stop and Think."**
35. **Teach them to "Talk Sense" to themselves.**
36. **Give students meaningful responsibilities (Care of a project, an animal, etc.).**
37. **Be a good listener.**
38. **See your classroom through your students' eyes.**
39. **Network with other teachers, perhaps in a PLC environment, to ensure anti-bully protocols are in place.**
40. **To sum up the above thirty-nine book recommendations: Be the kind of teacher that lives the behavior you want to see in your students.**