

STRATEGIES FOR PROMOTING TEACHER-STUDENT RELATIONSHIPS

EXAMPLES OF MICRO-CHANGES IN ROUTINES AND PRACTICES

- Create brief moments when teachers and other adults check in with students – to share a student’s successes and struggles, and show interest and respect.
- Warmly greet students at the beginning of class, quickly review the day ahead, and remind them of one thing that they can do to make the day successful.
- Actively listen to students during brief conversations – reflect back what they have said to show that you have truly listened.
- Hold regular classroom meetings to make decisions, prepare for classroom changes, and gather student perceptions of challenges
- Play games with students – learning games, playground games, waiting games – and inject more fun into the classroom.
- Celebrate students’ strengths and interests. Draw attention to their successes, explain why they are likely to succeed again, and remind them of how much they have accomplished in the last week or month.
- Match struggling students with an adult at school who meets regularly with them regularly and pays particular attention to them.
- Add more humor to the classroom – tell jokes, post cartoons, or read funny stories. Have a ‘bad joke’ moment each day.
- Give students a chance to cool off when things get tense, and then return to work once they have collected their sense of control.
- Hold high expectations for students and make sure that they know you do.

EVIDENCE-BASED INTERVENTIONS

- Students, Teachers, and Relationship Support (STARS) Program (Pianta & Hamre, 2001). This is one of the few teacher-student relationship programs. It describes a systematic procedure in which teachers enhance their relationships with students by scheduling positive interactions each day (banked time) and then mastering effective conduct management strategies. Evidence shows that the program strengthens teachers’ relationships with the students, reduces discipline problems, and enhances students’ attachment to school.

