

“IT’S THE SQUEAKING WHEEL THAT GETS THE GREASE”

It’s sad, but true, that usually it’s the misbehaving child that gets all our attention. The disruptive child keeps us so busy we are often forced to ignore the attentive child-- which is the one who should be rewarded by our attention.

We want to reinforce positive behavior whenever we can. If a usually disruptive child is better than usual one day, we need to be sure to compliment him for it. If we don’t notice his efforts to be good, he will probably go back to the behavior that did get your attention.

Some teachers choose the best-behaved children to be class officers, hold pictures, etc. to reward their good behavior.

Some teachers choose the problem children to do these things to give them the attention they so desire and in an effort to bring out their good qualities and keep them busy and active.

Both methods have merit. If you prefer the second method, care must be taken to give the attentive children attention in other ways-- or they might come to the conclusion that good behavior does not pay.

Some ways to do this are:

1. With younger children, you can quietly pin a little badge on them that says “Thank you for being reverent.” They are rewarded and the other children get the message without you saying a word to them.
2. Tell him or her often when they are acting well.
3. Tell their parents how you appreciate their child’s reverence. The child will hear it from his parents and get complimented by them also.
4. Write them a personal note or letter. I know a boy that was so pleased with a letter from his teacher, saying how much she appreciated his reverence and attention in class, and that it was children like him who made teaching a joy.
5. Invite them over one or two at a time to make cookies, etc. and get better acquainted with them.

WANT TO GO THE EXTRA MILE? (Of course you do!)

1. Remember each child on his birthday and special occasions.
2. Attend his baptism (only about ½ hr).
3. Get to know each child outside of Primary. Invite each child to your home to do something fun. You often see a whole new side of his personality and can truly learn to love him. And he gets to know you better. You become more of a person to him, with problems and feelings of your own.