

POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT SOLIDIFIES LEARNING

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What is positive reinforcement?

Positive reinforcement is anything that occurs after a behaviour that increases the likelihood that the behaviour will reoccur. It comes naturally in everyone's daily lives from infants to the oldest adults. For example, an employee who works hard will be compensated with good pay check. A person who is kind to others is rewarded by kindness offered back to him. These rewards will make people do what is expected them to be. This is the reason why most of the teachers do not believe in positive reinforcement but rely on punishment.

Is it really important to use positive reinforcement inside the classroom?

According to Maag (2001), techniques which are based from positive reinforcement are often perceived to threaten individual's freedom as autonomous human beings. Reinforcement is sometimes viewed as externally applied to an individual and therefore as coercive in nature. If positive be compared to punishment, punishment is externally applied as well but it is more widely used because it is quickly and easily administered. Though punishment works to majority of students, it is ineffective to those students who are having chronic behavioural difficulties. Punishment can make the classroom vibes with negativity and may result to ineffective learning.

Teachers must be aware that students who are showing behavioural problems are usually with problems at home. Checking of family background will help the teachers to understand their students. After doing what has to be done, educators must find what is

truly reinforcing the students. It is true that what is motivating to one group may not be motivating to others. Positive reinforcement such as giving encouragement, rewards and incentives is much more effective way of improving the overall behaviour of all students in the classroom. It is also a way for a student to do better in his studies. Teachers that show kindness to students will be rewarded with kindness offered by her students back.

References:

www.specialconnections.ku.edu