

## Agendas

One of the key components to creating a safe threat-free environment is the daily agenda. It is a mindmap or visual representation of the important activities during a class period or a day. For very young students, it can be entirely graphic, but even secondary students appreciate and remember things better with graphics added. It is the structure around which the class operates, but in no way replaces the teacher's lesson plans. The agenda is also a tool for helping students learn sequencing as they can easily see what is coming as well as what has been accomplished. It should not include specific times unless there is a special event happening. If the times are posted, some students become clock watchers and may not become immersed in the lesson. The purpose for making the agenda visible is so students can connect both backwards and forwards. It serves as a tool for reflection for both students and teachers and should be used as such.

(SEE SAMPLES ON PAGES 100 AND 101)

## Procedures

Written procedures are an excellent learning environment and classroom management tool. If students know the procedures for accomplishing tasks, they feel safe and able to learn. Having established procedures frees up time during the day for learning and makes collaborative learning possible. Procedures also teach students the personal and social skills they need to be successful. **Procedures should answer the question, "What should students know and be able to do in order to be successful at a given task?"** Written procedures eliminate the ambiguity that often leads to discipline issues when students have not "learned" teacher expectations.

Procedures should be developed for any activity that students engage in regularly. Procedures should be established for both the classroom and the entire school. School-wide consistency of procedures helps students feel safe as they move throughout the building. They know what is expected. Some procedures should be developed by the teacher and in place on the first day of school. Others can be developed with the students as the need arises. Some of the activities that need written procedures include:

Entering and Leaving the Classroom  
Assemblies  
Learning groups  
Homework

Restroom Passes  
Community Circle or Class Meeting  
Study Trips  
School-Sponsored Activities

Initially, it is best to make procedures visible so students can refer to them regularly in order to internalize them. After they have become internalized, procedures should be available to each collaborative learning group in a reference booklet. Written procedures should be:

Easy to read  
Sequential  
Illustrated

Easy to understand  
Positive