

# SCHOOL LIBRARIAN'S GUIDE TO BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

Behavior management in the library looks different from the classroom. The library is a shared, flexible, and less formal space where students explore, collaborate, and learn in unique ways. Effective behavior strategies in the library are less about control and more about community and creating an environment where students want to be engaged and respectful. This guide provides librarian-specific approaches to help keep your library welcoming and productive.

## Core Principles for Behavior Management in the Library

### 1. Build Relationships First

- Students behave better when they know you care. Learn names, greet them at the door with a smile, high-five, or fist bump, and take time to chat about their interests.
- Show genuine enthusiasm for their presence.

### 2. Fewer Rules, Clear Expectations

- Keep rules simple and easy to remember. For example:
  - Be safe.
  - Be respectful.
  - Be responsible.
- Tie library expectations back to school-wide norms, so students hear consistency across settings.

### 3. Community Over Control

- View the library as a shared community space, not a silent classroom. Allow conversation, collaboration, and movement while setting boundaries for noise and safety.
- Model the energy you want students to match - calm when you want calm, enthusiastic when you want engagement.

## Practical Strategies

### Provide Choices

- Offer seating choices ("sit where you can be successful") or activity choices through stations, choice boards, or varied materials.
- Choice reduces frustration, increases engagement, and minimizes disruptive behavior.

## Use Technology Tools

- [Classroomscreen.com](https://classroomscreen.com): Display timers, noise meters, or visual instructions to guide group activities.
- **Too Noisy App**: Helps students self-monitor their volume levels.

## Structure and Routine

- Consistency is key. Establish routines for entering, checking out, transitions, lining up.
- Use signals like clapping rhythms or chants to regain attention or end class calmly. But make sure it feels genuine and authentic to you!

## Engagement as Prevention

- Plan lessons that are interactive, hands-on, and appropriately challenging. When students are engaged, behavior issues decrease.
- Incorporate STEM tools, board games, or fidget-friendly activities that provide structured outlets.

## “Drop, Thank, and Walk”

- Avoid power struggles by redirecting behavior quickly and positively:
  - “Right now you are \_\_\_\_\_. Please choose to \_\_\_\_\_. Thanks so much!”
- Then walk away. This keeps the tone calm and reduces escalation.

## Positive Reinforcement

- Acknowledge students who are modeling expected behavior (“I love how this group is using shelf markers!”).
- Use privileges (like library jobs or helping younger students) as rewards.

## First/Then Visuals

- For younger learners or students who need extra support, try a First/Then chart (e.g., *First listen to a story, then choose an activity*). This sets clear expectations.

## Fidgets and Flexible Tools

- Keep small fidget toys, flexible seating options, or board games available as positive outlets. Removing or rotating them when misused reinforces responsibility.

## When Behavior Escalates

- Stay calm and consistent. Speak in a conversational tone rather than raising your voice.
- If behavior persists, remove access to privileges (like beanbag chairs or games) rather than punishing the whole group.
- Document behavior factually and follow up with teachers or admin when necessary.