

Do's and Don'ts for Managing Opposition/Defiance

Externalizing behaviors typically observed in the classroom include the following:

Opposition/Defiance: *Arguing, not following rules, refusal to follow rules/shutting down, doing opposite of what asked to do, quick to anger/short temper, easily annoyed, vengeful, lack of caring/apathy (to consequences, other people's feelings), blame others for mistakes or misbehaviors, mean or disrespectful to staff.*

Please consider following these do's and don'ts when managing a student who is exhibiting Opposition/Defiance:

DO

- Move student to front of class. Consider student's proximity to peers and surroundings.
- Diminish power struggles as these just fuels student's behavior.
- Provide simple directives and choices.
- State pre-determined consequences clearly before problems occur.
- Listen to the student before reacting.
- Give brief and direct instructions in a clam tone.
- Discuss the problem privately with the student. For tips, reference **Tough Conversations: Do's and Don'ts When Talking with a Suicidal Student** article on the Penn State PRO Wellness website.
- Walk away before the situation gets too "hot."

DO NOT

- Debate/argue with the student as this just fuels student behavior.
- Make threats/ultimatums that you cannot follow through with the student.
- Demean, including laughing, at the student for their actions, especially in front of other peers.
- Ignore issues that are brought to your attention. Address them appropriately based on the specific situation.
- Discuss or address situation in front of other students or in public.
- Respond emotionally (i.e., getting angry or sarcastic).
- Respond quickly.
- Bribe or try to "convince."
- Take comments or actions personally.

