

BETTER

TOGETHER



CEEDAR
CENTER

WHAT ARE HIGH LEVERAGE PRACTICES?

High-Leverage Practices (HLPs) were developed in partnership between the CEEDAR Center and the Council for Exceptional Children. The HLPs are organized around four areas:

- Collaboration
- Assessment
- **Social/Emotional/Behavioral**
- **Instruction**

There are 22 HLPs which have been shown to improve outcomes for students with disabilities in PK-12 schools.

McLeskey, J., Maheady, L., Billingsley, B., Brownell, M. T., & Lewis, T. J. (Eds.). (2019). High leverage practices for inclusive classrooms. Routledge.

HLPS: SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL/BEHAVIORAL



7. Establish a consistent, organized, and respectful learning environment.
8. Provide positive and constructive feedback to guide students' learning and behavior.
9. Teach social behaviors.
10. Conduct functional behavioral assessments to develop individual student behavior support plans.



HLP 7: Establish a consistent, organized, and respectful learning environment

Overview:

Age-appropriate, culturally responsive expectations lead to positive teacher-student relationships, increase engagement, and decrease challenging behaviors.

Strategies:

- Acknowledge challenges (schedule changes, absences, short-staffed, etc.), then focus on what can be done to cultivate a predictable environment for students.
- Prioritize expectations and routines from the very beginning.
- Teach, reinforce, and re-teach after extended breaks from school.
- Use visual cues, non-verbal cues, proximity, and pre-correction.
- Create frequent opportunities for students to be positive role models.
- Collaborate with colleagues - share what works and generate cohesion across settings.



HLP 8: Provide positive and constructive feedback to guide students' learning and behavior.

Overview:

Effective feedback relates to students' goals and guides their learning and behavior, increasing motivation, engagement, and independence.

Strategies:

- Formula for feedback: acknowledge effort + tell them what you want to see (see examples on next slide).
- Create coaching opportunities to work with teachers on increasing positive and constructive feedback.
- Utilize peer support strategies: take frequency counts of feedback and set goals for improvement.
- Use devices to prompt more frequent feedback (e.g., MotivAider).



TYPES OF FEEDBACK

Negative

No.
Stop that.

You know
that's not
how we do
that.

Positive

Great job!

Yup! You got
the answer
right!

Corrective

Instead of
pushing, say
"excuse
me".

You're
missing an
answer for
#3.

Positive + Corrective

I can tell you're trying really
hard. Remember to use your
words instead of your body.

*You've gotten so much done
on your own!* Let's take
another look at # 3 together.

HLP 9: Teach social behaviors.

Overview:

Explicitly teach appropriate interpersonal skills (communication, self-management), then prompt and reinforce.

Strategies:

- Remember that behavior = communication.
- Approach behavior challenges with curiosity and view them as a skill deficit that needs to be taught, practiced, and supported.
- Align social emotional/behavioral goals with school-wide expectations.
- Embed social skills instruction across academic subjects.
- Collaborate with key stakeholders (social workers, psychologists, counselors, etc.) to develop and implement social skills groups.



STEPS FOR TEACHING SOCIAL SKILLS

1. Identify students and define target skills
2. Break skills into teachable steps
3. Use and sequence relevant examples (examples, non-examples, role-playing scenarios)
4. Facilitate student engagement through strategic instruction
5. Provide performance feedback
6. Guided practice with scaffolded support
7. Maintenance and generalization

HLP 10: Conduct functional behavioral assessments to develop individual student behavior support plans.

Overview:

When inappropriate behaviors are chronic, intense, or impede learning, evaluate the function and develop a plan to teach and reinforce replacement behaviors.

Strategies:

- Create a support team (special education and general education teachers, behavior specialist, social worker, etc.).
- Regularly collect progress monitoring data to inform plan.
- Emphasize focus on controllable environment.
- Recognize and celebrate major and minor successes.



HLP 11: Identify and prioritize long and short-term learning goals.

Overview:

Provide meaningful access to and success in general education curricula.

Strategies:

- Determine which skills from the general curriculum must be prioritized.
- Use data from multiple sources (families, students, formal and informal assessments, etc.) to create individualized plans.
- Take advantage of existing technology to make data collection and analysis easier (see Resources slide).
- Look for ways to overlap curriculum goals with individual goals to maximize instructional time.

HLP 12: Systematically design instruction toward a specific learning goal

Overview: Develop and sequence lessons that build on each other and activate students' prior knowledge, making explicit connections in planning and delivery.

Strategies:

- Determine long- and short-term learning objectives based on individuals and the curriculum.
- Teach big ideas before details following a logical hierarchy.
- Teach distinctly different skills to mastery before introducing similar skills that will require discrimination.
- Focus on frequently encountered concepts first.

HLP 13: Adapt curriculum tasks and materials for specific learning goals

Overview: Assess individual needs, select and adapt materials and tasks to help students meet instructional goals.

Strategies:

- Types of adaptations: simplifying task directions, altering amount of material, altering difficulty level of material, highlighting relevant material (e.g., important ideas and concepts).
- Provide guided notes, graphic organizers, and mnemonic devices.
- Focus on implementing adaptations from IEPs first, then add more as needed
- Collaborate in grade-level teams to create and share resources.
- Use assessment data to determine if adaptations are needed or sufficient.

HLP 14: Teach cognitive and metacognitive strategies to support learning and independence

Overview:

Integrate explicit instruction on strategies to support memory, attention, and self-regulation into academic content.

Strategies:

- Pre-teach pre-requisite skills.
- Explain how, when, why, and where to use the strategy.
- Break the strategy into chunks.
- Conduct step-by-step strategy demonstrations while scaffolding supports.
- Model self-talk when using the strategy.
- Create multiple opportunities for practice and provide feedback and positive reinforcement.
- Allow students to practice the strategy in multiple contexts over time.

HLP 15: Provide scaffolded supports

Overview: Provide temporary assistance to students so that they can complete tasks they cannot yet do independently with a high rate of success.

Strategies:

- Provide visual, verbal, and/or written supports.
- Use supports flexibly and adjust based on students' needs.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of supports and gradually remove them.
- Pre-planned supports: rubrics, posters, graphic organizers, etc.
- In-the-moment scaffolding: stepping in to add support or stepping back to reduce support based on the students' performance.

HLP 16: Use explicit instruction

Overview: Make content, skills, and concepts explicit by showing and telling students how to think through problems, enact strategies, complete tasks, and clarify concepts.

Strategies:

- Use instructional transition statements (“Let me see if you remember how to...”, “Watch and listen while I show you...”, “One, two, three, eyes on me!”)
- Collaborate with grade level teammates to develop a distributed practice schedule (teach a skill, practice it at scheduled intervals).
- Embed retrieval practice activities to help students commit concepts to memory (exit tickets, flash cards, jeopardy, self-check quizzes).

HLP 17: Use flexible grouping

Overview: Effective teachers assign heterogeneous and homogeneous groups based on explicit learning goals and peer interactions.

Strategies:

- Use classroom-level assessments to create multiple groupings (e.g., same-level groups, mixed-level groups).
- Seek/provide professional development opportunities on [Kagan](#) strategies.
- Pair flexible grouping with other HLPs (e.g., strategies for student engagement, intensive instruction, etc.) to maximize student learning.

HLP 18: Use strategies to promote active student engagement

Overview: Effective teachers build positive teacher-student relationships, connect learning to students' lives, and use a variety of instructional strategies to motivate and engage students.

Strategies:

- Increase opportunities to respond using choral response or response cards.
- Tailor response strategies to meet student needs, use assistive technology, make accommodations to response options (printed response cards vs write-ons).
- Incorporate other strategies, such as guided notes, classwide peer tutoring, games, digital tools, and group contingencies.

HLP 19: Use assistive and instructional technologies

Overview: Effective teachers select and use assistive and instructional technology to promote student learning and independence.

Strategies:

- Collaborate with other professionals to learn about and share new technologies for assisting students.
- Set aside time to explore new technology and reflect on ways to embed it into the school setting.
- Include the assistive technology (AT) administrator when deciding if students require AT and which AT is most appropriate for their needs.

HLP 20: Provide intensive instruction

Overview: Effective teachers provide intensive instruction to match students' learning and behavioral needs.

Strategies:

- Systematically design instruction that is data driven, matches the intensity of student need, and individualized
- Implement data-based individualization (DBI), which is designed to support students with intensive needs that are not met in tiers I or II in a multi-tiered system of support. Resources [here](#)

HLP 21: Teach students to maintain and generalize new learning across time and settings.

Overview: Teachers design instruction to ensure students apply concepts to multiple settings, systematically use schedules of reinforcement, and teach skills that are naturally reinforced outside of the classroom.

Strategies:

- Explicitly teach students how to use skills in multiple settings, help them recognize natural reinforcers (e.g., teach them to ask “How am I doing?” to gain feedback), have students monitor their own progress
- Use various reinforcement schedules (continuous, intermittent, thinning).
- Avoid assuming generalization will occur naturally - make plans to ensure it happens.

HLP 22: Provide positive and constructive feedback to guide students' learning and behavior.

Overview:

Effective teachers provide feedback to guide student learning and behavior and increase student motivation, engagement, and independence, leading to improved student learning and behavior

Strategies:

- Use various modes: verbal, nonverbal, or written
- Aim for timely, contingent, genuine, meaningful, age appropriate feedback
- Provide feedback at rates commensurate with task and phase of learning (i.e., acquisition, fluency, maintenance).
- Provide ongoing feedback until learners reach their established learning goals.
- Feedback should strategically delivered and goal directed

CEEDAR COLLABORATING CENTERS

- Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports
- National Center on Intensive Interventions



National Center on
INTENSIVE INTERVENTION
at American Institutes for Research ■



RESOURCES FOR ADMINISTRATORS AND TEACHER EDUCATORS:

For unedited examples of teachers' implementing the HLPs in action, visit: <https://highleveragepractices.org/unedited-clips-teachers-implementing-hlps>

For guidance on how to incorporate HLPs into teacher preparation and professional development, view this webinar: <https://highleveragepractices.org/webinar/using-hlp-videos-activate-implementation>

For printable guides designed to help school leaders support staff in implementing HLPs, visit: <https://highleveragepractices.org/hlp-leadership-guides>

For professional development resources on research-based cognitive strategy instruction, visit: <http://cehs.unl.edu/csi> or <https://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu>

For resources to incorporate into teacher preparation and professional development: <https://cedar.education.ufl.edu/cems/classroom-and-behavior-management/>

RESOURCES FOR TEACHERS:

For engagement, data collection and analysis:

www.achievethecore.org/

www.masteryconnect.com/goodies.html

www.socrative.com/apps.html

<https://nearpod.com/>

www.plickers.com/

<https://kahoot.it/>

<https://goformative.com/>

<http://versoapp.com>

www.quizsocket.com

www.polleverywhere.com

www.mentimeter.com

*For teaching cognitive
and metacognitive:*

www.centeroninstruction.org

www.pbis.org

<http://ebi.missouri.edu>

www.interventioncentral.org

