

Lecture No. 10

Nature of difficult/problematic students

All children have behavior problems, some being harder to accept than others. Some of these behaviors can cause children to be aggressive, hostile and difficult to handle, which may emphasize their respective limitations. As parents we are our children's first and foremost teacher. We need to establish our plan for accomplishing rules and expectations. When expectations are raised, children may become fearful that they can't accomplish what is expected. The fear may become overwhelming causing children to react to others in a negative manner. The type of aggression exhibited is determined by the problems that are presented. Sometimes subtle actions like not eating their food or bedwetting may be their response. Sometimes more violent actions become a way of controlling the situation. It becomes clear that even if the children can't communicate their frustration, they can act out the frustration and achieve attention.

Root Causes of Behaviour Differences

The following are the root causes of behaviour differences:

1. individual differences
2. differences in family patterns
3. impairment/disabilities
4. environmental factors
5. psychological factors

1. Individual Differences

Pupils change because of growth and development. This is likely to cause differences in them. Key aspects of these differences include:

- a) Sex differences
- b) Intellectual differences
- c) Physical differences
- d) Personal and emotional differences.
- e) Differences in family patterns

a) Sex Differences

Each of us is born a boy or a girl, and this in itself is a difference. However, the real differences are anatomical and physiological, i.e., the organs of the body and physique. These cause many differences in behaviour. While girls are regarded as soft and tender, boys are regarded as strong and vigorous. This tends to influence the kind of activities they indulge in when in school, and hence cause behaviour differences. Boys may tend to choose physical activities, e.g., a four hundred metre race, while the girls do not.

b) Intellectual Differences

You should be aware that there are intellectual differences among individuals. Some are bright, others dull, while some are geniuses. You may have noticed that those with low marks suffer from an inferiority complex. Others suffer from a superiority complex, and think highly of themselves. For your pupils to be able to work in harmony, you will need to guide and counsel both groups.

c) Physical Differences

People differ in:

- Physical appearance
- Facial features
- Growth and development rate
- Energy
- Posture
- Height, weight and volume.

You may have observed that physical differences make some people dull, others active, more able, etc. Similarly, with intelligence, those who are weaker may feel inferior and vice versa. This inferiority may result in behaviour problems, e.g., isolation from peers.

d) Personal and Emotional Differences

You may have observed that pupils differ in interests, ability, aspirations, belief, attitudes and other personality traits. If a pupil fails to develop his personality, he may fail to reach his goals. Such failure usually leads to emotional outbursts; and a pupil may become frustrated or desperate.

e) Differences in Family Patterns

Parents have traditionally been held responsible for their children's behaviour or character, until they reach adolescence. When youngsters misbehave, the natural tendency is to blame it on parental mismanagement or family disintegration. You should, however, note that your pupils' behaviour patterns can be influenced by family patterns and practices