

Teachers are Faced With Teaching Students Whose Parents Were Drug Addicts

By Lisa Chappell As a teacher, I have found it harder for my co-workers to teach at the same level they did several years ago. The curriculum hasn't changed, the hours haven't gotten longer and the teacher-student ratio hasn't changed; so why is it more difficult? Teachers are having to mainstream (putting children disabilities in the general education classes) children who are in some terms addicted themselves to the drugs of their parents. Where do the children of drug addicts go? To public school. Mothers who have been using drugs during their pregnancy have children who have special needs. Some drugs are alcohol, cocaine, marijuana, crystal meth, or any combination of drug. What's unfortunate is these children do not go to rehab, they come to learn at our public schools. Some schools have codes for these children with health problems which are: 403, special education, limited availability or at-risk. Many schools placed these children in special education classes to help them better adjust to life at school. As teachers we must be able to help these children get the quality education they deserve. We cannot judge these children by why their parents did. I experienced this myself, and the student grew each and every year. Learn a few tips on how to handle this situation;

1. Be open minded. Don't prejudge how the child will act in school.
2. Be extra sensitive to the student's needs. A lot of times you may be the only stability in their life.
3. Find out about the student's history, family life, grades in other classes and previous years, and who the student lives with currently.
4. What other languages do the student speak.
5. What are the educational needs of the student.
6. Follow the student's Individual Education Plan or Individual Behavior Plan.
7. Make sure others are involved to help the student in all areas of his/her school experience.
8. If the student has a social worker, get to know who it is and how to contact the worker.
9. Let counselor know about the student and that the student may need support.
10. Let the student know you care.
11. Treat the student like any other student in your class.
12. Give the student extra time to finish work, explain to the student what is expected more than once and offer help during class.

Teachers face difficulties everyday, just make sure you are making it a littler easier for the student who has a difficult life everyday.

About the Author

Lisa Chappell, Ph.D, has worked in the private sector as a MCH Consultant, Award-Winning Journalist and TV Host and public sector as an Educator. She has A.A. in Liberal Arts, B.S. in Criminal Justice, M.S. in College Teaching, a PhD in Communications and Management, a Certificate in Educational Leadership, and is currently working on a MAPD in Leadership and Counseling. She has been Certified as a Principal, Early Childhood Educator and English as a Second Language Educator. She lives in Texas with her 2 year old Yorkshire Terrier named Bogie. Her website is <http://www.lisachappellphd.com> If you have a question you can e-mail her at info@lisachappellphd.com.

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