

CLEAN-UP

Include students as much as possible in clean-up. Take a few moments to teach the skills, monitor their progress, and praise their results. The investment of time and patience will not only help with today's messes, but will teach them skills of independent living which can make them proud. Some of the most challenging students can show behavioral improvement when they are trusted with responsibility and recognized for their efforts. That excess energy can be channeled for positive results and better relationships.

Suggestions for developing "clean-up skills":

- Monitor children's use of toys and supplies and require them to clean up before starting another activity.
- "We have several jobs that need to be done (markers, legos, games, books, etc.) Which one do you want to do?" You could list them on the board and let students sign up for the one they prefer. Or ask students to look around and write a list of clean-up duties for the group.
- "I wish I could find somebody who knows how to ...(vacuum, sort game pieces, wash chalkboards, wipe tables, etc.)"
- "We need a "librarian", "board washer", "block collector", etc. (Give each duty a title.) Is there any one who can do that?"
- "We could use a good helper today for ... Who will it be?"
- "Would you do me a favor and ...?" "Thank you so much for your help!"
- Have a daily chore list and rotate the responsibilities, by a) assignment b) choice c) chance (pick out of a box).
- "Before we ...(go to the gym, outside, start a new project, have snack, etc.), we need to..."
- "After we... (clean-up project), we'll be ready to...(do something fun)."
- "... needs to be done now. Do you want to help or would you rather sit while I/we do it?" (Many students would rather not sit still after they've been seated all day, so they will join in.)
- "You seem too tired to put away... why don't sit and rest awhile. When you get the energy to finish... then you'll be ready to...(something fun)."
- "If you would like to use..., you need to show me that you can clean it up when you're finished with it. Can I count on you to do that?"
- "Let's take good care of this game, so you, or someone else can use it again later."
- Make clean-up a game:
 - "We're getting ready to go on the playground but I'm charging admission. If you bring two pieces of paper from the grounds, you will be admitted free!"
 - "I have a challenge for you. ...needs to be done. When I say "go", let's see how fast we can do it. (First, give instructions for safety, like "don't throw blocks into the box", etc.) Then announce the time, and have a big cheer for the group upon completion.
 - "I see this room needs help! We'll have two teams. The first to finish their half of the room, carefully, will bat first in the game.
- Rewards are more effective if used only on occasion, not repeatedly. Use occasional rewards such as candy, pencils, raffle tickets for a prize drawing, certificates, names written on chalkboards, etc.
- Praise good helpers. Thank them for their efforts. Describe the improvements you see in the building, or the care you see they have taken with games or supplies. Feel free to tell them that when they take good care of games and toys, we will be able to spend money on new and different things instead of repairing and replacing broken and lost things. Tell their parents about what they have done to help or to set a good example.