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THE  
*Responsive Classroom*®

APPROACH is a nationally used, research-backed way of teaching that improves students' social and academic skills and raises teachers' instructional quality.

FOR ALL SCHOOLS

Urban, suburban, and rural schools nationwide use the *Responsive Classroom* approach and consistently experience higher teaching quality, increased student engagement, academic gains, fewer discipline problems, and a stronger, safer school community.

EVIDENCE BASED

Research by the University of Virginia confirms the benefits of the *Responsive Classroom* approach.

*(For more on research, see page 8.)*





# The Goal: Optimal Student Learning

The goal of the *Responsive Classroom* approach is to enable optimal student learning. Developed by classroom teachers and continually refined to meet schools' needs, the *Responsive Classroom* approach is based on the premise that children learn best when they have both academic and social-emotional skills. The approach consists of classroom and schoolwide practices for deliberately helping children build academic and social-emotional competencies day in and day out, year in and year out.

Schools that want to adopt this approach usually:

- Begin with getting *Responsive Classroom* training for teachers. Classroom implementation of the approach is the initial focus.
- Next extend the principles of the approach to all areas of the school.
- Foster, among the adults at school, a sense of community that's consistent with *Responsive Classroom* principles.

Schools that make a multi-year commitment to schoolwide *Responsive Classroom* implementation are most likely to see success.



*"The Responsive Classroom approach provides prime evidence that social and emotional teaching strategies, when well constructed, lead to improved classroom behavior and academic growth."*

ROGER WEISSBERG, President, Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL);  
Professor of Psychology and Education, University of Illinois at Chicago

# Classroom Implementation

Students learn best when their classrooms are places where they feel safe, challenged, and joyful—places that free them to learn. At the heart of the *Responsive Classroom* approach are ten classroom practices that help teachers create such an environment.

## CLASSROOM PRACTICES

**Morning Meeting** ■ gathering as a whole class each morning to greet one another, share news, and warm up for the day ahead

**Rule Creation** ■ helping students create classroom rules that allow all class members to meet their learning goals

**Interactive Modeling** ■ teaching children to notice and internalize expected behaviors through a unique modeling technique

**Positive Teacher Language** ■ using words and tone to promote children's active learning and self-discipline

**Logical Consequences** ■ responding to misbehavior in a way that respects children, guides them to recognize the effects of their actions, and helps them develop internal controls

**Guided Discovery** ■ introducing materials using a format that encourages creativity and responsibility

**Academic Choice** ■ increasing student motivation and learning by allowing students teacher-structured choices in their work

**Classroom Organization** ■ setting up the physical room in ways that encourage independence, cooperation, and productivity

**Working With Families** ■ inviting families' insights and helping them understand the school's teaching approaches

**Collaborative Problem-Solving** ■ using conferencing, role-playing, and other strategies to resolve problems with students



# Schoolwide Implementation

Individual classrooms are the primary influence on children's school life. But classrooms exist within the context of the larger school, and consistency in climate and expectations between classrooms and the larger school is vital. When the adults at school work as a community to achieve such consistency, children can learn at their best.

## SCHOOLWIDE PRACTICES

Schools implementing the *Responsive Classroom* approach schoolwide typically adopt the following practices:

***Aligning policies and procedures with Responsive Classroom philosophy*** ■ making sure everything from the lunch routine to the discipline policy enhances the self-management skills that children are learning through the *Responsive Classroom* approach

***Allocating resources to support Responsive Classroom implementation*** ■ using time, money, space, and personnel to support staff in learning and using the *Responsive Classroom* approach

***Planning all-school activities to build a sense of community*** ■ giving children and staff opportunities to learn about and from

all school members through activities such as all-school meetings, cross-age recess or lunch, buddy classrooms, and cross-age book clubs

***Welcoming families and the community as partners*** ■ involving them in the children's education by maintaining two-way communication, inviting parents and others to visit and volunteer, and offering family activities

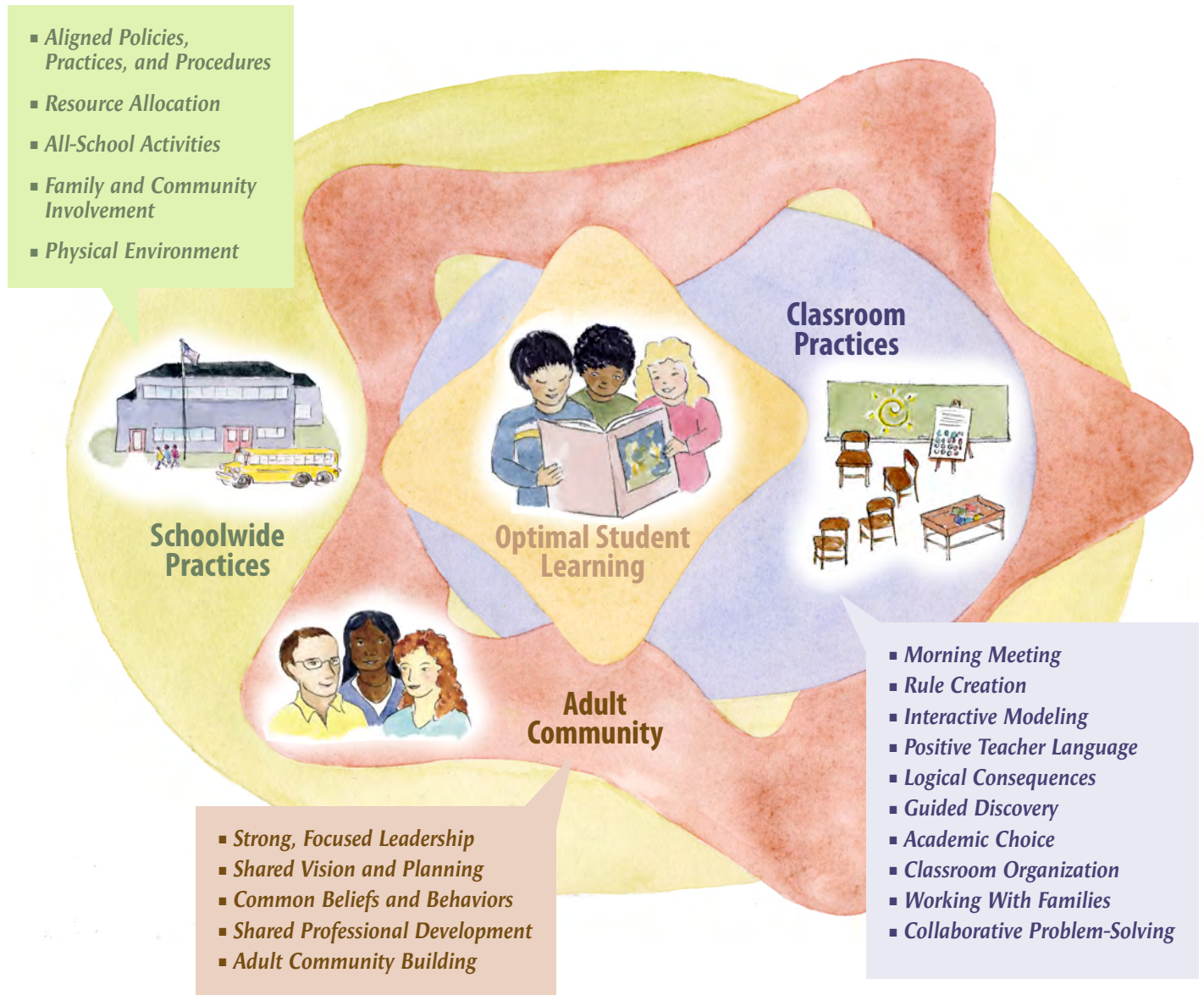
***Organizing the physical environment to set a tone of learning*** ■ making sure, for example, that schoolwide rules are posted prominently, student work is emphasized in displays, and every space in the school is welcoming, clean, and orderly



"The *Responsive Classroom* approach is one of the very best social-emotional learning efforts in America. This approach is grounded in the day-to-day, moment-to-moment lives of teachers and learners. It translates research and best practices into wonderfully practical, loving, and wise guidelines."

JONATHAN COHEN, Adjunct Professor in Psychology and Education, Teachers College, Columbia University;  
Adjunct Professor in Education, School of Professional Studies, City University of New York

## ELEMENTS OF A RESPONSIVE CLASSROOM SCHOOL



The goal of the *Responsive Classroom* approach is to enable optimal student learning. This is achieved when the adults at school, working as a community, consistently implement a combination of classroom and schoolwide practices that support children's academic and social growth.



Each year,  
over 10,000  
elementary  
teachers and  
administra-  
tors attend  
Responsive  
Classroom  
training in  
locations  
across the  
country.

# Learn About the *Responsive Classroom* Approach

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

### **Introductory One-Day Workshops**

***Responsive Classroom Sampler*** ■ For classroom teachers and other school staff. Participants experience a Morning Meeting, explore *Responsive Classroom* foundational ideas, see practices in action, and investigate *Responsive Classroom* approaches to discipline.

***Overview for Administrators*** ■ Offers a broad look at how the *Responsive Classroom* approach can enhance teaching and learning in individual classrooms and throughout the school.

***Child Development, Bullyproofing, and Other Topics*** ■ A variety of one-day workshops zero in on these and other topics of high interest to elementary educators.

### **Week-Long Institutes**

Two levels of institutes provide intensive training in *Responsive Classroom* strategies. The Responsive Classroom I institute covers basic practices and is a prerequisite for Responsive Classroom II, which covers more advanced practices.

### **Follow-Up Consultation**

After a week-long institute, schools can arrange follow-up services for their teachers and support staff. Possibilities include demonstration lessons, advanced workshops, and individualized consulting.

### **Responsive Classroom Schools Conference**

At this national conference, administrators and teacher leaders learn about schoolwide *Responsive Classroom* implementation, hear other schools' successes and challenges, and network with educators from throughout the country.

For more information about *Responsive Classroom* professional development services, contact Allison Henry, Manager of School Services Contracts, at 800-360-6332 ext. 143 or [allison@responsiveclassroom.org](mailto:allison@responsiveclassroom.org).



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## PUBLICATIONS

### ***Books and DVDs***

Teachers and administrators use our highly practical books, DVDs, and Professional Development Kits to:

- Begin learning about *Responsive Classroom* philosophy and practices, or deepen their understanding after a training
- Guide study groups
- Introduce colleagues and community members to the *Responsive Classroom* approach

### ***Free Newsletter***

- Practical articles about classroom teaching and school issues written by educators
- Excerpts from new *Responsive Classroom* books

### ***Responsive Classroom Website***

[www.responsiveclassroom.org](http://www.responsiveclassroom.org)

- Hundreds of free articles on a wide range of topics
- Online bookstore and course registration
- Free samples from our books and videos

### ***Responsive® Blog***

[www.responsiveclassroom.org/blog](http://www.responsiveclassroom.org/blog)

- Ideas and advice from *Responsive Classroom* consultants, authors, and program developers

To learn about these offerings, visit  
[www.responsiveclassroom.org](http://www.responsiveclassroom.org)  
or call 800-360-6332.





# Research on the *Responsive Classroom* Approach

Research by the University of Virginia's Curry School of Education has found that schools using *Responsive Classroom* practices see:

- *Improved teacher-student relations*
- *Higher-quality teaching*
- *Improved social skills in children*
- *Greater student achievement in math and reading*
- *More positive feelings toward school among children and teachers*



Findings are from the Social and Academic Learning Study (2001–2004) or the Responsive Classroom Efficacy Study (2008–2011), or both.

For more information, go to  
[responsiveclassroom.org/research](http://responsiveclassroom.org/research).

