

## MAKE YOUR DAY

A SCHOOL-WIDE CITIZENSHIP PROGRAM THAT ALLOWS  
TEACHERS TO TEACH AND ALLOWS STUDENTS TO LEARN



### Earl's Corner - The Whys of Step 4s

Veteran schools using MYD discover that escalating Step 4s diminish over time and Automatic Step 4s may run in cycles, but will always be with us. Spontaneous behaviors by definition occur more as a reaction to perceived threats or, on occasion, an outburst without provocation. We will never eliminate Automatic Step 4s completely.

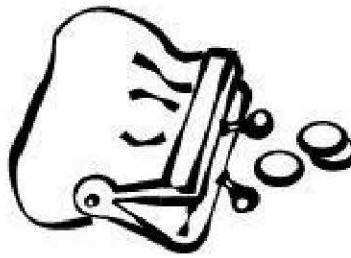
When exploring the motivation for students who find their way to Step 4s we can categorize some of our students' circumstances.

1. Naivety - Students who don't get it or who innocently supersede the limits.
2. Testers - Students who need to be convinced that the limits exist.
3. Bravado - Students who know the limits exist and find greater status in being "in trouble."
4. Reactors - Students who have not yet developed alternative strategies to confrontation or what they perceive as unfair circumstances.
5. Victims - Innocent students who have been pushed by adults or wrongly accused.
6. Other - The many other spontaneous events that would take too long to categorize.

Although, it is always important to honor all of our students' requests for Steps, it will serve our students' best interests to explore the nature of their circumstances beyond the behaviors. We are aided greatly in becoming proactive when we know how best to prepare. Repeat offenders dominate our statistics and may be best

served by determining which preventative measures might help our student make alternative choices. Too often, especially when we are stressed, we revert back to coercive thinking and strategies. Our students mirror our responses. Maintain the high road. Err on the side of our students and their parents.

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### Cheryl's Two Cents - The Schoolwide Rule

*"Why is 'the rule' phrased in a negative verbiage (what they shouldn't do) as opposed to an active/positive rule? For example: Everyone should respect people's learning, safety and well-being. I've wondered this for years!"*

This question is commonly asked, both by teachers who have used MYD for years and those who are just beginning. While there are a few schools that have reworded the school rule along the lines of "Everyone has the right to..." most, after much discussion, have stayed with "No one has the right to..." What difference does it make?

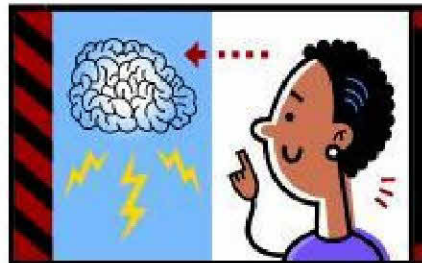
The way in which a schoolwide rule is developed, taught, and enforced is far more important than the wording. During the initial training and facilitated by the MYD Trainer, the school's staff makes a decision about the wording of the school rule. Using examples, doing further brainstorming, having an open discussion, and, finally, voting is the process used to arrive at a consensus. At that point, there is an understanding of what the school is trying to achieve with their schoolwide rule and the intent behind it when working with their students for the initial buy-in.

Should schools revisit this process periodically? Absolutely. In order for the staff to support the schoolwide rule, an understanding and buy-in is needed. If the staff can't buy in, then neither can the students. Can the students provide their perspective for this discussion? Absolutely. Using a survey or input from the MYD Student Committee adds greatly to this process. Even if the wording of the schoolwide rule doesn't change, it's still important for a school community to renew its vision of school climate.

When should a school do this? Any time between now and the end of the year would be a wonderful opportunity to review the current schoolwide rule and determine if it still fits the needs of the school community. If the wording is changed, it can be implemented this

year or the next...based upon what the school community feels is best. Bottom line...in order for MYD to prosper in a school, the current school community must have the same buy-in that the first staff did when they decided to bring MYD to the school.

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### Brainstorm

The annual MYD Conference that was held on February 27-28 was a great success thanks to the enthusiasm and participation of the presenters and attendees. School budgets were tight this year so many schools were not able to send staff; however, those who were able to attend brought a spirit of collegiality and sharing to the conference that made for a lively, interactive atmosphere.

If you would like a copy of handouts or PowerPoints, follow this link <http://www.makeyerdays.com/conferencehandouts.htm>.

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