

# PROBLEM WITH REWARD SYSTEMS

## MATURATION

- Students are “good” for the reward and not because they “want to”
- Can make an unselfish behaviour into a selfish behaviour
- Use what students value to try to get “good behaviour”
- Gains are lost as soon as the power of the reward diminishes

## VULNERABILITY

- Increases frustration
- Increases alarm
- Can provoke disengagement when the reward is not possible or less than expected

## ATTACHMENT

- Makes it feel that the relationship contingent upon performance
- Can be insulting to the children who naturally want to behave
- The students can feel manipulated or their effort unrecognized



## USING A DIGITAL BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT SYSTEM What does it really do?

- i. Puts the child into state of facing separation – keenly imagining the DISAPPOINTMENT of the parent if they didn't EARN “enough” points or if points are removed.
- ii. The child in such a classroom is now very aware of what behaviour is expected, and wishing to be “acknowledged” will put a lot of effort into acting in a way that will get noticed by the teacher.
- iii. When children focus energy on acting appropriately, **CONSEQUENTLY** they will have less energy to engage in real learning. They may look more engaged in the task assigned, but are their brains fully engaged in the learning process?



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iv. What if:

- a student is having a bad day (they are tired, feeling sick, were just rejected by a friend)?
- a student is immature and over-reactive and finds the behavioural demands of a full day in school overwhelming?
- a student is trying very hard, and the teacher doesn't notice?
- a student consistently receives fewer points than their classmates?

**HOW DOES NOT RECEIVING POINTS MAKE  
THOSE STUDENTS FEEL?**



# USING A DIGITAL BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT SYSTEM What does it really do?

- v. If the parents can receive the “results” before seeing their child – they can start to question their child’s performance.

Now, instead of a “happy face” that summarizes the day, Mommy and Daddy can know exactly how many times the child behaved appropriately.

A child said to his mother,

*“Mommy, I could have gotten 45 points today, but I only got 35 points. CAN YOU STILL LOVE ME?”*

- vi. “Good” children can become alarmed – fearful of not getting enough points = Sunday night meltdowns.
- vii. The adults at school are not seen as “safe” because they are the ones reporting the behavior to the parents.
- viii. Children’s anxiety increases or they start not caring.

# ALTERNATIVE: ADULT SUPPORT

- Improve STUDENT–ADULT RELATIONSHIP to increase the student’s NATURAL DESIRE TO BE GOOD for those to whom they are attached.
- Provide “rewards” JUST BECAUSE:
  - Attachment increases when students are provided with MORE than what is being pursued.
- Use incentives sparingly:
  - To provide extra motivation for something that HAS TO be done
  - But make sure to recognize EFFORT so everyone can participate

**Instead of REWARD SYSTEMS**