



50 Constructive Alternatives to Detention and Punishment

Parents and Educators can guide the child to:

1. Write down all of the things he loves or that make him feel safe.
2. **Create a safe base** for him to go to when he's upset.
3. Practice deep breathing. Try out **hot chocolate breathing**.
4. Run, jump, get exercise.
5. Punch a punching bag.
6. Cry or talk aloud privately in a sound-proof music room.
7. Write in a journal.
8. Use a handout to guide reflection. I've created one for your use.
9. Talk to a caring adult who will listen with compassion.
10. Talk to a caring peer who will listen with compassion.
11. Go to a peer mediator who can facilitate working through conflicts. (School can train students.)
12. Walk outside.
13. Brainstorm ways to heal the hurt caused.
14. Sweep or clean the environment (not as punishment but as a contribution to the classroom - repairing harm and getting out physical energy too.).
15. Paint or draw.
16. Listen to beautiful music on headphones.
17. Watch video of kids' breathing.
18. Watch video of kids doing service.
19. Make a contribution list of all the ways you can contribute to others.
20. Brainstorm ways to directly help a classmate, parent or teacher.
21. Teach a younger child ways they can express anger without harming another. Roar? Stomp? Breathe?
22. Create characters for your emotions (such as in the movie, "Inside Out.").
23. Retrace steps. Role play alternative choices.
24. Read a book about expressing anger. Ask, "How do you want to express anger without harming others?" (such as, "**When Sophie Gets Angry - Really, Really Angry.**")
25. Run hands under warm water. Listen.
26. Create emotion room or space for being alone with feelings.
27. Dance with music and/or with a music video.
28. Play instrument.
29. Read about characters with similar feelings and similar challenges.
30. Examine gratefulness. What do you like about your family? What do you like about school, your teacher, your classmates?
31. Imagine what gift you could give the class or your family that would be uniquely from you. Draw it or write about it.

32. Think of a person who you admire. What about them do you admire? What would they do in this situation? What would be their next choice? Write.
33. Practice forgiveness. Reflect on those that have hurt you. Write names, reasons they might have hurt you and try to understand the others' perspective.
34. Offer a new choice or set of choices.
35. Make reparation with the guidance of a caring adult. How can a new choice help heal the relationship?
36. Talk about hopes and dreams and what actions will help you reach them.
37. Write a new ending to the story of what happened. Could you make a new choice that replicates the story you created?
38. Set a goal to do twice as many positive actions and name them.
39. Share with a feelings buddy (could be a friend or a stuffed animal).
40. Talk to or pet a gentle animal.
41. **Practice impulse control.** Look for small ways with the whole class/family to practice waiting.
42. Talk privately with a trained professional - a counselor, psychologist or social worker.
43. Create an anti-bullying poster.
44. Contribute to lunch preparation or clean up with a kind lunch lady.
45. Talk with a caring adult who uses coaching questions.
46. "You break it, you fix it." Employ restorative justice. If you've hurt another's feelings, how are you going to make it up to that person? If you've destroyed property, how will you replace it, repair it or work on it?
47. Ask child/student to do teacher/parent a favor and help out. Set them up in another room to cut out shapes or do some activity that directly contributes to the class but allows child his own space away from the classroom for a time.
48. Keep a journal for each student/child in which they can write reflections and action plans anytime they are upset.
49. Meet with both parent and teacher to express concern, show support and work to understand child's needs.
50. Plan for re-entry into the classroom or family community if child has taken time away. How will he reconnect with others? How can the adults show he is welcomed back? How can he make amends and communicate with the one he hurt?