

ROUGH EDITED COPY

JFK CENTER WEBINAR

MANAGING BEHAVIORS DURING AN ARTS RESIDENCY

JULY 23, 2013
3:00 p.m. EST

CAPTIONING PROVIDED BY:
ALTERNATIVE COMMUNICATION SERVICES, LLC
P.O. BOX 278
LOMBARD, IL 60148

* * * * *

This is being provided in a rough-draft format. Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART) is provided in order to facilitate communication accessibility and may not be a totally verbatim record of the proceedings.

* * * * *

>> LISA DAMICO: Hello, everyone, and welcome to Meeting Behavioral Challenges and Teaching Artist Residencies, What Shall I Do Next??. I'm Lisa Damico, your moderator and Webinar organizer. Today's Webinar is part of a monthly Webinar series that comes out of the VSA and Accessibility Office at the John F. Kennedy Center for Performing Arts. This series addresses topics related to arts, disability and education. If you would like to view live streamed captioning of this Webinar, you can follow link that you see on this slide and in the chat box of the control panel located on the right side of your screen.

Before we get started, let's take a moment to ensure that everyone is ready and familiar with the GoToWebinar control panel that you should see on the right side of your screen. If you need to leave the Webinar early, you can exit out of the program by clicking on the "X" in the upper right corner. Make sure that you have selected telephone or mic and speakers to correspond with how you're connected to the Webinar. You also have the ability to submit questions using the chat pane located near the bottom of the control panel. Your questions will come directly to me and during the designated question and answer time at the end of the presentation, I'll relay them to our presenters.

I'd like to emphasize that following the presentation, I'll send out a follow-up E-mail with a link to the recording of today's presentation, a copy of the PowerPoint presentation, and a copy of the transcript. This means you don't need to worry about frantically taking notes during the presentation.

There we go. A little technical difficulty.

I'd also like to let you all know about next month's Webinar. We have Stephen Yaffe, who is a wonderful arts and education consultant and teaching artist himself who will be talking about what you need to know before the special education residency. So if you haven't done so already, I would encourage you to register for next month's Webinar as well. We'll have a question and answer time at the end of the presentation, but feel free to type in your questions as they come to you in that chat pane at the bottom of the control panel.

And so with that I'd like to turn it over to our presenters, Deborah Stuart and Janice Hastings.

>> JANICE HASTINGS: Hi, everyone. This is Janice Hastings. I just wanted to give you a quick two seconds about my background and Deborah will do the same, and then we'll go ahead and get started. I have 25 years, or so, hard to believe, in non-profit working with middle and high school age youth primarily. Many of those years were with VSA New Hampshire, facilitating residencies, and helping to build that bridge between artist and educators to help make sure that everyone had the information they needed and residencies were successful.

I'm currently working in after school, and as you can imagine, we have continuing discussions about behaviors and the strategies that we use to help kids be successful. And with that, I'm going to turn it to Deborah.

>> DEBORAH STUART: Thank you, Janice. I have worked with VSA for many years, in many different capacities. As some of you know. But I also have a long history, probably about 30 years, as a teaching artist and the artist in residency program on several different state arts councils, and for the last ten years I've been doing a lot of training on the road at the arts play in inclusive learning, in a lot of different settings. And Janice and I have worked together both in this country and in other countries, and we put this -- we put the information in the Webinar together. I'll be the voice of the presentation that we're going to do, and I'm delighted to be here. This is quite a topic. My -- where Janice's expertise is more with middle and older school kids, mine is more with preschool and elementary school children. So between us, we kind of run the gamut.

So let's get started. I think we're getting a first slide at this point.

>> LISA DAMICO: Yes. I'm going to switch this over. It should go to your screen, Janice. There we go.

>> DEBORAH STUART: I think the first thing that you should know is that this is not going to be a presentation that's theoretical. It's really going to be a practical look at what's worked for us for the TAs and teachers that we've worked with. We're going to talk about strategies that have been tried, and that have been successful, how we got there, how we figured things out, and we'll give you some real-life experiences. So a couple things you should know. This is not a laundry list of problem behaviors and emotional and neurological behavioral disabilities because that's not a useful way to approach this topic in my experience. Every child is unique, and the labels don't tell us what we need to know about understanding what's going on with them and managing those challenges that come up in residency.

So here's the critical question. What shall I do next? That's really the most valuable thing you can ask yourself, because there are no formulas. If there were formulas, we could just send you a paper with a list of things to do, but there are common sense strategies, and there are some over-arching things that you can know and be mindful of. But a lot of what makes it possible to understand and manage what's going on for a student is being brave enough and realistic enough to say to yourself, when you try something and it doesn't work, well, that was a miserable failure, what shall I do next.

So what we're going to do is we're going to talk about how to answer that question. Anybody who's been in a workshop with me is going to recognize the three "C"s. It's a takeoff,

obviously, on reading, writing, arithmetic. But, you know, over the years that I've been doing work and training in schools with teachers and with teaching artists, these just are the touchstones for me. They're not a formula. But they bring us -- they give us the three kind of touchstones that help us find ways to solve what comes up for us. So we have communication, choice, creative problem solving, and you're going to see that as we go along in some different ways.

I think a really good way for us to start working together is to think, what is it that students want. These things are important to remember because they really are the key to making a learner your partner when you need to solve situations that come up, when behavior is disruptive or it's preventing a child or a young person from participating successfully, and/or the whole group making things difficult. These are the things students want, even when it looks like they don't.

I think the other thing that helps us design successful residencies is to think what the students love. What really motivates learning. It's kind of obvious, because it's what motivates all of us. Everybody on this call really all the time in everything we do, we love to explore. We want to communicate. We certainly want to have fun. We love to be surprised and amazed and we want to express the creativity that's inside us. So if students love this, what are the barriers that come up in residencies which spur difficult behaviors, and they keep exploration and creativity and learning and so on from happening?

Kids don't come into your class wanting to misbehave or drive you crazy. I know that's sometimes really hard to accept, but they don't want to fail. They don't want to be excluded. They don't come in saying to themselves, I think I'll see how terrible I can be, and I know that this is difficult to believe, and I sometimes get challenged by it when I do teaching artist workshops, particularly if teaching artists are working with older and really challenging teenagers. It looks like this is their aim in life. But if you think about it, it doesn't feel good to be defiant or disruptive. It doesn't feel good to be a failure. So if students have these behaviors, they really often can't control them on their own. They need help to get past them.

So will we always be able to do this? No. But it's critical to remember, I think, that challenging behaviors are not choices. They come from places of either anger or frustration, low self-worth, emotional or neurological instability or disability. But these things are not the child. They're a situation with which the child or the young person is dealing, and they need help finding their way back to a positive place.

So if these things are happening, what triggers these difficult behaviors?

Well, you know, there are a whole number of things. One is just unmet needs. And we often don't know anything about these, and in a way, we couldn't do anything about them even if we did. Is the child hungry? Has the youngster not had enough sleep? You know, is it just a really bad day for them? Because something that they needed in their life didn't happen. And I think a partner to that is has there been a distressing or disturbing event? And it could have been at home. Maybe it was at school. Is the young person's family going through a tough time? Was there a blow-up in class before you got there and you don't even know about it?

So long-term patterns may have taken over, and the child or young person might not have the resources to get past the neurological or disability with which they're living that is triggering these things. And there are so many things that can be triggered.

Well, you know, so then we know that it's not their fault, and it's not our fault, but how do we know what's going on? Well, we often, I think as teaching artists -- [Inaudible] -- as teaching artists, we often don't have access to the back story, and we often don't have any way of knowing what's going on. Teachers have that kind of information. They have that kind of history, but we're not privy to family situations. We often, if not always, don't have IEP information, individual education plan information, that's been designed to address disabilities and special learning needs, and often we don't even know what the goals and objectives are that have been set for students. So we as teaching artists are temporary visitors to the class. The other thing that we often don't have information about is the classroom culture. There may be challenges and behavioral strategies that teachers and specialists are using. We maybe get a bit of an overview, but we haven't really experienced that classroom culture, and we may or may not have been properly prepared for what it is.

So the third thing you'll recognize, we're new to the class, and students with behavioral issues will often test us to see how we react to them, if we mean what we say, if they can trust us, if they can feel secure.

You know, a continuing discussion I have with teaching artists is whether it's worse to have too much information or too little information. So look at these two little girls. How would you ever know what the child has for any impulse control, difficulty with focus?

Well, in your class, if you saw it in action, you know, then you would know. But what if nobody told you ahead of time? And in class you never saw it? What's interesting about these two girls is that one of them has these issues in school. And she was in a residency with me this winter and it was just very difficult for her to stay with what we were doing. But I'll tell you an interesting story about her. Her mother enrolled

her in a dance class and didn't tell the teacher of the dance class anything about her, anything about her issues that were behavioral, and she did fabulously. There was no problem at all. And what was an interesting side bar is that it really -- there was a noted change, both at home and in class. That's kind of a side one, but I thought you'd like to know it. However, my question is, if the teacher had had those labels, would it have been helpful? Would the expectation of poor behavior created a different way of her approaching that little girl? And I tend to think that it might. So I think there's a time when too much information is as difficult as too little information.

You know, expectations will kill you. It's just -- we have to be really careful when we're giving this information. So we see a situation that needs addressing and we put on our creative problem solving hat. And rather than focusing on what's wrong or what we've been told, we look for solutions. But we do need practical information, and we need to be up front about asking for it. Are there any special communications systems for students with speech and language disabilities? That's a critical thing that you would need to know. Are there any ESL kids in the class, kids whose English is not well developed yet who might need more assistance with directions? Are there students in the class with defined motor skills challenges that you would need to be aware of as you designed what you were doing. So that's important information. How do you get it?

Well, I have a grandson who's now a grown-up. Anybody who was ever at a VSA conference would have met Travis, a youngster with very severe learning disabilities and low vision, and he traveled a lot with me as I did VSA work, and just strategy for getting through life would be if we got in a difficult situation, whether it was in another country, or whether we were in Washington, and I didn't know which bus to take or where to go, he would look at me and he would say, Grammy, just ask! And I realized that he had something to teach me. I mean, it really -- that stuff -- I realized that very often I didn't do that. I didn't ask for what I needed, you know, to figure out where I was and what needed to happen. So teaching artists going into a residency need to find the key people who have the information that they can use that is important to making the residency successful. But the one thing I'd add to that is that it's really important to ask in a positive way, particularly if you begin to get an outpouring of all the things that are wrong with the student. And that happens. It's easy for a teacher just to let loose, partly because they want you to know and partly because they feel frustrated, you know, it's really -- this is a challenging student for them or a challenging class. So I would suggest that when that happens -- and I had a teaching artist tell me that in a workshop last month, you let those negative

comments and predictions go in one ear and out the other, just what you don't need set aside. That's the, so you don't believe everything you hear advice, that you take the information with a grain of salt and you don't fall into negative expectations. And I put this picture in here because two of the four children in this picture have IEPs. And it's kind of interesting because one of them came into kindergarten with such severe speech disabilities that you really couldn't understand what he was saying, and it would have been very, very easy for a teacher to assume that there were developmental delays for that youngster. And happily, he had a really terrific kindergarten teacher who knew enough to notice that not only was he not developmentally delayed, but that his reading and comprehension and expressive skills, when he could show them in other ways rather than speaking, were way ahead of anyone else in the class. But what if the expectation was taken on, you know, just the surface. And then there's another boy in this picture who has had an incredibly disrupted family life, and yet, you know, again, a school counselor was able to look past that and say this is a really marvelous kid. And what we found with this child is that if you give him a task of any kind, and the arts are just terrific for this, that he shines. So again, just be really careful about falling into these negative expectations. I think that's one of the most valuable pieces of advice I can give you in this.

Would it be helpful if we were apprehensive about things? No. It doesn't help us at all, because as teaching artists we have a really terrific advantage. I love this picture! We're new. We have engaging faces and activities. We bring wonderful experiences to the students that we're coming to, you know, ways for them to find new ways of learning, new ways of expressing themselves, and it opens doors for students to learn differently. And so the best expectations -- it's interesting. I often in workshops hear teaching artists say that they don't find students falling into bad behaviors during residency classes and I think it's because the arts by definition bring both opportunities for choice as one of -- as explanation and exploration for new ways of looking at things, new ways to show what the student observed, and it really values alternate points of view. And the interesting thing is this really benefits the teachers because we offer the teachers a whole new way to look at students. They can see as we work with a wider variety of modalities, a wider variety of allowing expression and engagement. They can see the possibilities for success for those students. They can see what they love. They can see what they're good at, and how this mitigates difficult behavioral patterns. So it's the creative problem solving. Better not to work with negative information. Better to work with all the things that we bring that are positive.

So that brings us to the teacher and the teaching artist as partners, and is, I think, a real key part of making a residency work well.

Okay. Janice and I are in two different places. Janice, you're doing wonderfully. She's running the slides.

I think establishing good connections with the teacher is perhaps the most critical thing about working well in the classroom, and that includes becoming familiar with what the classroom protocols are. They may differ from what you do, but you need to know what they are because that will really inform how you shape a lot of what we do, and I think when you also make it clear to the teacher that you know -- that you want to know what his or her goals are for the class, that that's an indication to them that you really care about the learning that's going on, and that you're really interested in making what you do with arts -- your arts activities support those learning goals. And I think the other thing is to -- very important, is to agree on ahead of time discipline strategies. Now, the thing is your strategies, and the teacher's maybe be different, but you need to know one another so that you aren't working at cross purposes and I think one of the important things is to let teachers know if your classes are going to look somewhat different than their classes. You might allow more math than they would allow. You might allow more noise. By definition, what you're doing may be outside what the regular parameters are for behavior in the class. But you and the teacher have to agree on that. And you also, I think, have to agree that if a student or a couple of students are being really difficult and it's either beyond your ability to handle it, or it's interrupting the experience of the class, that the teacher will take over because that isn't your job as a teaching artist. You've got the whole class to think about.

So working with teachers and students. Just a couple of practical points. Never go into a class without a backup. And then I think it's Nicole in Massachusetts who said we should also have backups for the backups. I think it's important to have -- to establish early on what signal you're going to use for the class for an, I want your attention, time to quiet down. You want to know what the teacher uses and you want to let the students know that you know what the teacher uses. But I have teachers tell me that they really like it when the teaching artist brings a new way of signaling eyes on me. And it's different, you know, it can be different depending on your art form or it can be different depending on the age group you're working with.

Two of the things that I've used, I've used a little five-note pattern on something I wear around my neck that doesn't sound like anything they've ever heard before. And for very young children, if we're doing a lot of music that has movement and it tends to get out of hand, I have them put hands on knees because

the very first thing we do starts on our knees. Whenever you put hands in the air, wiggle fingers, do hand movements, and come back down to knees and breathe.

Janice, let's go back to that other slide because I didn't mention something on there. I thought I'd say something about energizers or cool-downers. My husband calls them light and livelies. That's what you need if you have a high school class and they just had lunch. What you need for the younger kids when you're trying to transition them back to their teacher so that it isn't cruel and unusual punishment for them to go back completely -- you need to figure out what your cool-downers are going to be. So there's something I wanted to put in.

Okay. Paraprofessionals. This is a big deal topic. And I would say every workshop I do, whether it's with art and music teachers, whether it's with classroom teachers, whether it's with teaching artists. And interestingly, I do workshops for paraprofessionals, and it's a big topic for them. And I think one of the things that we need to remember is that we need to respect their experience with their students. They are really low person in the total scheme of things in any setting.

I put this picture in because it was one of the best examples I ever saw of a one-on-one aide working with -- this is a young adult, not a student. This is in an older class. But the one-on-one aide here working with a young man who was very involved, with no ability to communicate true language, and with a tendency to whack things away whenever they were put in front of him, and with very, very poor motor skills, his one-on-one aide never gave up. He was so engaged with his learner in terms of talking with him, making sure that he experienced what was happening when partnering was going on. He supported the young man but didn't take over and do hand over hand. So aides can be a terrific support. And really, in a residency, will you have -- where you have students or learners who are quite involved, you absolutely -- you need their help.

You know, the thing that we hear, or that I hear is they don't do anything. They sit in the back room and do nothing, or they do way too much. They do the work for the learner. They do a lot of hand-over-hand, and so I think it's really important for us to work with them in a respectful way, so we know they're the ones who know the student best, but that we're really teamed to offer in this arts activity a wide range of choices about ways to do things, and let's work together to help that happen. I think one of the things stressed of paraprofessionals is ways to offer choice. Because choice is the thing that learners with disabilities and behavioral issues lose first. Their lives are very regimented. Their choices are often made for them if there are developmental delays. And choice, you know, one of our three "C"s, is second nature to us as an artist. But for learners with disabilities, it just -- it often doesn't happen. So paraprofessionals have a lot to learn in arts residencies

about allowing the student that they're working with, a wider parameter of ways to do things and a wider parameter of ways to be more independent and express their own choices.

Okay. We need to talk about strategies. That's what you guys want. You want strategies. And so one of the things I did to prepare for this Webinar was to talk to the best teaching artists and art music teachers that I knew to say, okay, what strategies do you use. And I would say the one -- I got a lot of good ones. The one that won the prize came from Andrew Rayside, who teaches art and music. He sees students several times a week, in a residential facility for students with extremely severe both neurological and behavioral issues. Now, when I said to Andrew, what's the most challenging thing for you and your students? And what do you do about it? He said the most challenging thing for me is that when they come in to my art or music room, I don't know what's gone on earlier in the day. They bring a classroom culture in that in that particular setting often can involve explosions in the classroom, confrontations with other students or with teachers, a really upsetting or difficult day, and so the class brings that with them and I don't even know what it is, so I have to get them in the first two minutes.

And I said to him, well, what do you do?

And he said, well, what I do is I have something ready to show them, and sometimes I'm holding up a work of art, sometimes I'm holding up an object. It can be a little piece of sculpture. It can just be a tool. It can be some art materials. Sometimes I have something on the smart board. Sometimes I have a few notes to a piece of music, and essentially what he does is have I got something for you. And he said it takes them about two minutes for the heads to begin to turn to him. And he said I always start my classes that way.

Now, if you look at this picture, would you not sign up for this? I don't think Andrew did this. But it's interesting. He doesn't just do it -- he doesn't just do it by speaking. He does it by engaging them on all kinds of levels, with words and with visual support, and with a whole aspect that says aren't we glad to be here. And to me, this was creative problem solving, one of our "C"s, at its absolute best, and a really terrific communication tool.

Here's just some more strategies. I think having things ready and ready again and ready again is key to a good residency. You absolutely do not want to be scrambling around wondering where you put stuff. There's a security of good prep because you don't have to -- you can stay completely engaged with the students.

I think another really important point is not to rush. Students with disabilities and different learning needs, we know, often need more time to process things. So for those students who are often told to be -- to take things one step at a time, to be

careful how many directions we give, and what I think I've learned over the years is actually this is really important for all learners. We can give them time to really enjoy what they're doing, to reflect, to have time to ponder, think through how they want to do something, and I think the thing is this is very rare in the lives of children and young adults these days, and it's a gift that we can give them.

And then the other obvious thing is to just keep your antenna up and really, you know, be very alert to what's going on.

We've seen some examples of our three "C"s as we went through, and, you know, I was putting this together, and Janice and I were talking about all the things that we thought needed to be covered, and it suddenly dawned on me that two of the things that we realized needed to be in here also began with "C," so I've added two "C"s. Consistency.

In a session where we're talking about classroom management, this is really a key, because without it -- if you're not consistent, students will never know anything you say when you talk about expected behaviors and they'll be insecure and they'll think that they can break rules because it's possible that you'll let it go because sometimes you do. So it provides a safe and secure environment for them. And I guess the one thing that I would add to this is this doesn't mean that you're inflexible. If you set up rules with the students ahead of time and expectations for behavior, you may decide to change one. But say so. Don't just change it and not tell anybody. And tell them why. I think that's really -- trying to be flexible. And here's the fifth "C." This may be the hardest to do, and it might be the most important. When something explosive happens with a student or in a classroom, the best advice that Janice and I can give you is to keep completely calm. The only, only exception to this would be if there's a fire in the building. You're allowed to yell get out. But other than that, this is your best tool. And I think the way to make this happen is to think about what sends you over the edge. You know that better than anybody else. And have for yourself a plan about what you're going to do if you feel that beginning to happen. If children who are really -- are really rude, or are just saying that drives you nuts then you need to have language that you can use that's completely calm that makes it clear that that's not all right with you, that that's one of our rules, is we're going to be respectful to one another, but that you do it with a really flat affect, with a quiet voice, because you can be firm and still be completely calm. And honestly, that's the only thing that works. Responding in like manner is completely ineffective, and so calm is your friend.

And I think the other thing that's your friend is redirecting. Redirecting is not the same as ignoring. It's not the same as denial. You know, pretending something isn't happening. It's often just what a child needs and wants. It's safe space. It

turns things around in the right direction. So that if you begin to see a child move towards a behavior that you know is going -- has the chance of escalating, you can say a word or two about -- that either acknowledges that that's happening or you can actually bypass that. I think sometimes remembering that this is not what the child wants, talking right past this to what the child does not, you know, I really need somebody to mix these paints over here for me. These brushes need washing. I need Xs on the floor where we're going to start. So that redirects the students, and it brings us to my next slide. I told one of my sons, I just wanted to put this in. This is the Grammy Deb talk it over method. I have nine children, six grandchildren, and it took me a long time to realize the power of talking it over. But what I've discovered over the 45 years that I've been doing this is that students with disabilities -- I think students in general, this is particularly students with disabilities, are their own best problem-solvers. The best solutions can come involving the students in talking over the problem. So examples are just to be able to, in a quiet time after class, maybe seek them out at recess with a little bag of peanuts and offer them one and say, you know, it's really not working very well for you to sit next to your friend Joe. It's hard for you guys to get your work done and things are beginning to escalate. So I'm wondering what you think would be a good solution for that. Or I can see that when your art isn't flowing the way you want it to be, when your pottery isn't going the way that you want it to go, you get really angry and you tend to scoop it up and wreck it. And let's you and I talk about a way that you can -- we can step back from that and find what needs to happen so that you can go forward and not get so frustrated. And I really would like your ideas. I mean, you probably know better than I do what would work for you.

Will this always work? No. But we need to go back just for a second, Janice. Sorry. Say one more thing about this Grammy Deb method. I just want to say that there are times when you don't appear to get any response to this. But I think it's really important to start with this, and believe me, even if you don't get a response to students, I encourage you, and if you need to bring in other people, a school counselor or teacher or whatever, then tell the student. Say, you know, I think we need to talk with Mrs. Jones about this because I'll bet she'll have some ideas on it.

So this is not a hard and fast formula, but for me, it's the place that you start.

Okay. Thanks, Janice.

One of the things Janice and I agreed on is to make sure that you love what you do. Once in a while in my past life I've done things because I thought I should do them and they were slightly boring to me, and they certainly didn't go as well as the things

that I really love and that you should be really well prepared. You should have tried things out ahead of time, and find places where there might be sticking points, or where there might be difficulties. So don't do things that you haven't done before, except occasionally. It's pretty risky in a class unless you know them really well, and you have confidence that they can go along with something that's experimental and doesn't come off as planned. If you know the class well enough to know that will work, then you can go ahead and, you know, be as spontaneous as you want.

Working with students who have learning differences, who have behavioral challenges means that we have to think really carefully about what the barriers might be that would prevent anybody, any student, from succeeding in this class. What are you planning that might make it frustrating or difficult or not engaging? For example, too much information at once? No alternatives for students with poor motor skills. The space is tight or inappropriate. And so on. And you need to really think this through from the point of view of the students who you know have special needs. And also from the point of view of situations that might arise that you don't know about. And so after you ask yourself that question, you say, okay, what do I need to offer to do the other option so those areas aren't there? Do I need to simplify things? Do I need to slow down? Do I need to make sure I'm going for a quality experience and not get hooked on product? Am I offering multiple ways to do an activity? Am I encouraging choice? Am I encouraging exploration? And am I open to completely new ways of -- that a student might participate.

I put this picture in because everybody else in the class, this is a class I'm working with doing model teaching, and everyone else in the class was doing an activity. But this child, just seeing them and exploring them was where he was at. He wasn't where we were. And it's really important as teaching artists that we let this happen, that we're flexible enough that when we see this, we honor it. And for me it was learning that everybody in the class benefitted by saying I wonder how they sound like if you just rubbed them together. I wonder if some words he's used to describe how they feel, you know, it really led me to a new way of looking at how to introduce that instrument.

And it's a completely different way of thinking, because I think in teaching traditional, the approach has been well, what's wrong with Sam, and what are the things that Julie can't do, and what are Sarah's limitations and so I better think about those when I do that.

But the approach is how can I make this lesson so helpful, provide as many ways as possible to share what we're going to do, and allow as many ways to let students show what they are learning and what they know as possible. And this is the

creative problem solving. So we design a lesson where there are no barriers, and in which a student stands the best chance of succeeding. And when those barriers come up, we say oh, right. Okay. That's the barrier that needs to go down, not what's wrong with Bill.

Nifty tips from experienced teachers and teaching artists. Okay. One is to make sure that there's a way to find space for students who are distracted or distracting because that is a really common behavior. And one art teacher told me that she keeps her desk clear, and if somebody's really having trouble with the distraction element, she said, no, I think you'd work really well at my desk today. Let's bring your stuff and come on over there. And occasionally you'll say to a student who's doing really well, oh, I bet you'd like to work at my desk. So it's not a naughty chair kind of approach. It's just meeting a need.

Another teacher said that when there was a lot of grabbing of material, she told students ahead of time they could take as many -- they could take as many materials as they had here. And another one said that when she had a class with students repeatedly asked her to repeat directions, she instituted a rule that you had to ask three other students before you could ask her again.

Another teaching artist has a good news postcard she sends home when a student is really working well and has gotten past some things. Another used a quick written agreement, this didn't work so well and this is what I plan to do with it and the other is going back to be the redirecting. Have lots of tasks for itchy hands. It really helps some students.

I'm going to take about three minutes now to talk about an activity that I do called "The Magic Music Rug." This is a series of teaching -- model teaching classes that I did in a rural school, where half, 50% of the kindergarten, first and second grade have children who have IEPs, and a lot of those issues are emotional and behavioral. And I wanted to help teachers find some strategies to change the classroom culture where there was a lot of really negative interaction among the group. And this activity comes from years ago when the way that I introduced a variety of instruments in classrooms to children that I was meeting for the first time, I needed to find a way to keep it from being chaotic because all this exciting stuff and everybody was grabbing it so I developed the Magic Music Rug, which is really kind of a ritual about where instruments go and how they rest, how they're quiet, how you pick them up. I'm not trying to get you to do them, I'm just saying that I had to use a creative strategy for finding a way to introduce students. So, the next picture shows the children have done the magic music mat, and now I'm laying out a whole variety of music instruments and they know that they're going to get a chance to play them, but they know that while they're on the rug, it's a

resting place, and they don't reach out and touch. I do counting outlines, the students have a minute to play. And then in the next one I think you'll see I give them rehearsal time, they turn their backs. This is completely magic. I don't know how I ever thought of it. And practice what they're going to do. When they're ready, they turn back and they play that -- I have all kinds of exercises that I do. And I want you to know that the little boy with the pot lids, when I started my third to six classes in this classroom could not stay in the room. He was so distressed by anything that was new and different and here he is playing again. I mean, I don't think anybody would call this distracted.

Now, does he still get distracted? Yes. . I use a really wide variety of modalities. I use movement. I use acting out. I use theatre. I use a lot of visual props and books. My little girl on the right there is very ADD. If you look at her labels. But it really helped her to have visuals. And as you can see she responds well to pictures and stories. But that's just an example. More an example of the kinds of things that I had to work through as a teaching artist with a lot of exciting stuff. It was how I exercised my creative problem solving.

So that's my overview. And now it's time for questions.

>> LISA DAMICO: Well, thank you, Deborah. We've had a few questions that have been coming in as you've been presenting. So I want to go back up to the beginning of your presentation, when you were talking about asking for information in a positive way. When talking with the teacher. How do you do that?

>> DEBORAH STUART: Well, I think if you simply say so tell me about if there are any kids in the class who have developmental or behavioral issues that might be -- make it difficult for them to do the activities, the residency that we're going to do, I think you can just turn that around and say, you know, it's helpful for me to know if there are any special considerations but while you're telling me those, tell me what strategies do work well for them. So right off the bat, you're asking not just for what a child's problem is, but what the child's strength is and what the strategies are that works. And that defuse as lot of the negative information you're going to get. That's helpful?

>> LISA DAMICO: I think so. If not, I'll let you know.

>> DEBORAH STUART: Okay.

>> LISA DAMICO: Another question. This comes from Sandy. My teaching is most frequently a stand-alone three-hour workshop. Do you have any additional ideas for this type of situation? And I think by this type of situation she means it's a one-time workshop that's sometimes only as long as a high school class period. So she's not working with a lot of time.

>> DEBORAH STUART: When I do that and I actually see classes a lot, Sandy, because I do a lot of what's called model teaching. So people that have been to my workshop, I go into their class,

and it's a one-shot deal. I try, I use -- introducing what I'm going to do in a way that really catches people's attention. I use a lot of eye contact. I have a variety of if you're going to do a three-hour workshop, you need really ways to break when you sense that a break is needed. Whether it's on topic, I don't know what kind of workshops you do, but it can even with difficult, light and lively, it can be holding up and sharing. It can be a stretch. I think you just -- because the class you're going into, you might not know much about so you're going to have to really use that, you know, that antenna that says, okay, how are we doing, where is everybody? Do we need to calm down? Do we need to kind of stir ourselves up a little? Do people need a five-minute break. There's no formula for that. But when I do the one-time class -- and mine aren't as long as three hours, you know, mine are generally an hour. I try to have different pieces that I can pull in. I may plan to read a book and do a song with it and I may see I need to do it a lot sooner than I had planned on doing it, and I just do that by how things are going. So I would say have things in chunks that you can mix and match. Janice, do you want to add to that?

>> JANICE HASTINGS: I do. The other strategy that I've used is if it's possible, I don't know what your art medium is, but if it's possible to have time throughout that three hours when different groups are working on different pieces and then coming back together. If you can split things out that way and bring the group back together, that can be sometimes just enough to break up the time. So not only varying the activity, but the way in which they're going through it. So sometimes it's full group, sometimes it's smaller groups. It just depends on -- you know, I don't know if that works for your medium.

>> LISA DAMICO: Great. Well, the questions are pouring in now so I'm going to push our way through them. Eliza would like to know can you give an example of a cool-downer activity?

>> DEBORAH STUART: Right. Yes. Mine will be -- Janice, you be thinking. I'm going to do one for younger children. And I have, as a children's musician, I have songs and activities that, within the song, the whole thing quiets down. I have one where it's very -- you're really kind of jiving in the beginning, and then it gets -- the next thing that you do gets a little slower and then the thing that you do after that gets very -- I do whisper. Request we do this when we're on our chick toes and in the end of this particular song, we pretend to go to sleep, and a wake-up is instead of a wake-up, it's the quaking up slowly -- waking up slowly and stretching our arms up, up, up. So within your arts discipline you need to think is there anything that I can do for theaters musicians and physicians, and I think it's easier as a visual arts person, I'm now thinking off the top of my head, you might do an eyes closed kind of looking at something, making a picture in your mind. Janice, you take over.

>> JANICE HASTINGS: So aye often used music, particularly music that has no words that sets whatever mood it is you want. And in a cooldown, it's, of course, something a little slower. And then the other thing I've done is to do a bit of processing about how they liked what they just did, and that can be anything from we're going to go around, I'd like to hear, you know, literally sitting in a circle, I'd like to hear one word to describe what you just did. Sometimes that kind of -- and I'm talking kids who have language who can, you know, give you a word. Sometimes that's a way to break from the activity that was happening, and it gives you good information.

>> LISA DAMICO: Thank you. Our next question comes from David. How often would you send an older student out of the room?

>> JANICE HASTINGS: Oh, there's no straight-up answer for that. That's really situational. I would know ahead of time when -- like under what circumstances that would happen. Sometimes I would give students -- I had one student in particular that needed to make her own choice. We came to understand she had a choice about stepping out. She didn't abuse it, so we let that happen. And there was some days she would leave four or five times, other days she didn't leave at all. There was no one answer to that. I wish I could give you an easier one, and I think it just depends on the culture of the class that you're in, what you're doing and what the student needs.

>> DEBORAH STUART: I think also, absolutely find a way to talk to the student out of class and say, you know, I'd love for you to be in class as much as possible, and I think you understand that it's not fair to the other kids when things are disruptive. I mean, I don't know what the issue is, but so let's you and I work towards helping that not to happen so much. And, you know, what are your thoughts on that. I just -- I think that's a place where you really, really need to let the child know that you really care about the fact that something's going on that's hard.

>> LISA DAMICO: Thank you. For our next question, this is from Nadia. For the magic music rug, is it only for children? Or can I use it for adults with intellectual disabilities, too?

>> DEBORAH STUART: Oh, what a wonderful question. I have a four-page handout on all the things you can do for the magic music rug and yes, Nadia, hi. I know where you are. You absolutely -- you can even use it for adults who -- I used it once with a group of scientists over at Dartmouth College who were gathering to do improvising. I just used a very grown-up version of it and I'm happy to answer more questions about that specifically and about the things that I do. But absolutely. And it's interesting, in a couple of classrooms this year where I've been doing model teaching where there were kids who had real control issues, the classroom teachers are using it for putting materials out for projects, which I found fascinating.

>> LISA DAMICO: Great. For our next question, this comes from Kim. As a teaching artist with VSA, do you first meet with the school's administrators or cooperating art or music teacher to get background info about students before coming up with a proposal for the specific music, art activities that the students will complete, or do you first come in with the proposal and adapt your ideas once you meet the students?

>> JANICE HASTINGS: I would say if you have the chance to meet before your proposal, I would take advantage of that. Sometimes that's not always possible. But the more voices that are in the proposal that can help shape what's going to ultimately happen and be beneficial for everybody, I think the better. Sometimes that's not possible, but when it is, I've found that to be really helpful.

>> LISA DAMICO: Thank you. Our next question is from Amy. Have you ever worked with older adults with disabilities, in creative settings? Do you have books, strategies?

>> DEBORAH STUART: I've done a fair amount of work with adults. And, in fact, currently work in two settings where there are adults. And I don't so much get what I do from books as I do thinking about the things that I've done, say, in improvising. I do a lot of instrument building with other artists and just thinking about how to age that up. It's kind of related to what Nadia said the magic music rug. I wouldn't call it a magic music rug. You would take your language and your approach and you just make it age -- you know, you make it very age appropriate. So I don't think that's probably -- that doesn't really point you to resources that I used, but it's not so much that I do different things, but I do what I do differently.

>> JANICE HASTINGS: Although I would say much of what we talked about would still apply, the communication. I think a lot of what we talked about would still apply. I don't know how helpful that is.

>> DEBORAH STUART: Write us if you want us --

>> JANICE HASTINGS: I know. Yeah.

>> LISA DAMICO: Well, I think we have come to the end of our big batch of questions. We'll give people a second or two more if they want to type something in.

>> DEBORAH STUART: Lisa, I'd like to just let people know that on the VSA New Hampshire Web site, vsaartsnh.org, there are many, many, many handouts including some about behavioral strategies just in general, and there are some that apply to dance and there's a long handout on the magic music rug. So there are resources there, and when Lisa sends the follow-up E-mail, I'll make sure that the link to that Web site is in it so people can explore that.

>> LISA DAMICO: I've already had several participants that were very excited to hear that you would be sharing your handouts. Great. Well, I think we will wrap this up. We're getting all kinds of good feedback pouring in already.

I would like to thank you both, Deborah, and Janice, for your presentation and questions. I think this has been very helpful for everyone and I would let you all know that after the presentation ends, I will archive the recording, and then about an hour afterwards, the link will be available, so you're welcome to watch it again, to share it with other people you think might be interested in the information in it. And I'd also like to ask you to remain on the Webinar a few minutes after we say good-bye because I'll have a short eight-question evaluation that I'd like you all to complete. I definitely take your comments and suggestions into account, and that helps us to plan next year's season. So thank you all again, and I will hopefully see you all again next month. Good-bye.

(Webinar concluded)