

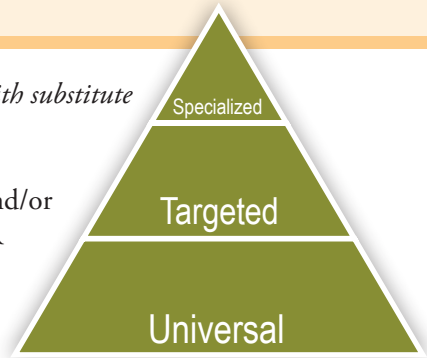
Substitute teachers



Being able to respond positively to substitute teachers allows students to more fully participate in learning and social activities.

Choose the statement below that best describes how this student manages with substitute teachers. This will help you identify a starting point for selecting strategies (e.g., 1=specialized, 2=targeted, 3=universal).

- 1. Requires one-to-one assistance to facilitate social interaction and/or appropriate behaviour when substitute teachers are present OR poses a safety threat to self and/or others in situations when an unfamiliar adult is acting as the classroom teacher
- 2. Requires frequent (e.g., more than three times per school day) reminders to demonstrate appropriate behaviour and to cooperate with substitute teachers who are replacing the regular classroom teacher
- 3. May require occasional (e.g., once before substitute begins, less than twice during school day) reminders to demonstrate appropriate behaviour when substitute teachers are replacing the regular classroom teacher



Universal Supports benefit all students

- Prior to having substitute teachers to the classroom, communicate clear expectations about behaviour when substitute teachers are taking the place of the regular classroom teacher. Consider introducing the term “guest teachers” to create an understanding that these teachers should be made to feel welcome and be treated as guests of the class. Ask for student volunteers who will be responsible for helping substitute teachers with specific tasks, such as distributing or putting away materials, explaining where materials are stored or using the classroom computer. Post a chart with assigned tasks and student volunteers. If possible, provide the name of another staff member who has agreed to provide assistance, if needed.
- At the beginning of the school year, develop a substitute teacher plan (that can be used in unplanned absences) that contains class schedules, seating plans, and identifies individual students who can provide reliable assistance. Keep this plan in a file on your desk. Include relevant information about specific students, and if behaviour support plans are in effect include copies in the file. Update this file at regular intervals throughout the school year.
- For planned absences, develop clear and detailed plans for substitute teachers that include engaging and manageable learning activities that students are familiar with. Identify individual students who have volunteered to provide assistance and include copies of any behaviour plans that are in effect.



- Ask the substitute teacher to provide feedback on how well the class cooperated and completed learning activities. On your return, share this feedback with students, and pair with descriptive feedback to acknowledge positive behaviour of individual students, groups of students and/or the class as a whole. If appropriate, celebrate this success with a preferred activity or other reinforcing activity and tell students why you are doing this.



Targeted Supports benefit students with more specific needs

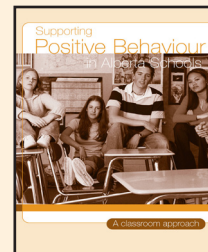
- When planning for a substitute teacher, pair individual students with positive peers who can serve as role models and offer support. Consider changing their seating so they are located nearby for the time the substitute teacher is with the class.
- For students who require more structure and reassurance, develop and review **social stories** about having a substitute teacher.
- Use a **Check out /Check in strategy** for individual students who have experienced difficulty when substitute teachers are in the classroom. Students check in with the classroom teacher (or other school staff member) the day before the substitute arrives and verbally commit to following one to three targeted rules or to three things they can do to be helpful to the substitute teacher. The student then checks in the next day to report on how his or her day with the substitute teacher went.
- Develop personalized visual checklists to reinforce behaviour expectations related to substitute teachers. Some students may wish to carry the checklists with them.
- For students with chronic difficulties adapting to substitute teachers, develop **self-monitoring strategies** students can use to reflect on and keep track of their own behaviour during the time the substitute teacher is with the class. Consider how a systematic approach to **reinforcement** could support this strategy.



Specialized Supports benefit the small number of students with sensory, physical, cognitive or behavioural needs that require intensive, individualized interventions

- In exceptional situations, it may be necessary to provide 1:1 adult support to facilitate social interactions and communication between the students and other school staff, including substitute teachers.

For more information and strategies, see:



LearnAlberta.ca
(Keyword: Positive Behaviour Support)

