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Accentuating the Positive Gets Results in Laurens School

Lynne Todd remembers the day she wanted to cry with the mother of a 7-year-old second grader at a Laurens County elementary school.

It wasn't bad news that brought the tears – but good news. The woman's child had been acting out in class, but thanks to Todd and the Triple P – Positive Parenting Program, the child's behavior had improved.



Lynne Todd is the parent coordinator at E. B. Morse Elementary School in Laurens County.

"The mother cried when the teacher had finally come and told her everything was starting to work out. I wanted to start crying with her because she was so excited," Todd, the parent coordinator at E. B. Morse Elementary, said.

That's just one of the many success stories Todd has to tell since she began to use Triple P in the school system.

"I've been using Triple P with four- and five-year-olds who are having behavior problems in the classroom. I work closely with teachers and parents on how to work problems out," she said.

The Triple P - Positive Parenting Program offers suggestions and ideas to help parents build positive relationships with their children. Grounded in 25 years of research, Triple P gives parents simple strategies for handling common behavior problems and preventing future problems.

Todd has been using Triple P to decrease the number of in-school suspensions so children won't lose classroom time.

"We've had good luck so far this year. I've had a lot of positive feedback from the parents."

Todd has achieved this success by using "behavior charts" that award children points for good behavior. If children achieve the set point goal for the day they can earn a reward like a

favorite snack or special game. Failure to meet the goal, however, can result in a consequence like losing a privilege or not being allowed to take part in a favorite activity.

A behavior chart helped turn around one girl who was playing rough with her fellow classmates. Todd worked out a behavior chart with the girl's father, complete with rewards and consequences.

"He'll call every now and then and let me know how things are going and she's doing great. She's doing her work and things are working out," Todd said.

Todd said Triple P has also helped teachers at the school by teaching them to give more positive feedback to their students.



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Page 2 -

"The children want to please their teacher and their parents. Hearing more positive feedback really helps. It's easy for us to say, 'No, you can't do that,' or, 'Stop it.' I'm trying to get them away from negative comments and to make a conscious effort to find more positives in their students."

Todd does, however, warn both parents and teachers that it can take time to make changes in children's behavior.

"I tell them that this is not going to happen overnight or in a week or two weeks. You have to continue to be consistent with your positive praise," she said.

Todd is one of more than 30 Triple P providers in Laurens County. To find a list of providers or learn more visit the Triple P Web site at <http://tpinfo.sc.edu> or call 1-877-KIDZWIN.

- 30 -

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