

The “2 x 10” Strategy: Building Positive Relationships Through Intentional Connection

What is the “2 x 10” Strategy?

The “2 x 10” approach is a powerful, research-supported method for building **positive relationships**, promoting **matter**ing, and establishing **relevance**—especially for students who may feel disconnected or struggle with behavior, engagement, or academic performance.

It’s simple:

Spend **2 minutes a day**, for **10 consecutive school days**, engaging in personal, **non-academic conversation** with a student.

Why It Works

Research and practice show that **students thrive when they feel seen, heard, and valued**. The “2 x 10” strategy:

- **Builds trust and emotional safety**
- Increases **engagement and motivation**
- Improves **behavior and classroom climate**
- Helps students feel that they **matter** to adults in their school

Backed by Research:

- Developed from studies on relational teaching and behavior interventions (Robert Pianta, James Comer, and Allen Mendler among others).
 - Demonstrated improvement in student behavior by up to **85%** in early studies using consistent adult-student connection (Raymond Wlodkowski, 1993).
-

Step-by-Step Directions for School Staff

1. Identify a Student

- Choose a student who appears disconnected, acts out, or could benefit from a stronger adult connection.

2. Commit to 2 Minutes Daily

- Spend 2 uninterrupted minutes with the student each school day.
- Choose a consistent time (e.g., homeroom, hallway, recess, lunch, before class).

✓ 3. Keep it Personal & Positive

- Ask about hobbies, favorite games, music, pets, or dreams—not academics or behavior.
- Use open-ended questions: *“What was the best part of your weekend?”*, *“What shows are you watching?”*

✓ 4. Be Present and Genuine

- Show authentic interest—body language matters.
- Avoid distractions (put away your phone or clipboard).

✓ 5. Repeat for 10 Days

- Consistency is key. Even if the student is resistant at first, stay committed.

✓ 6. Reflect & Follow Up

- After 10 days, reflect on changes in the student’s mood, participation, or behavior.
- Continue informal check-ins weekly or re-start the cycle.

Who Can Use It?

- Teachers
- Administrators
- Counselors
- Bus Drivers
- Custodians
- School Culinary Team Members
- Paraprofessionals
- Coaches
- Office and Support Staff

Every adult can make a difference. One relationship can change a student’s life.

♥ **“Kids don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care.”**

— Theodore Roosevelt