

Attention seeking/needy

Concern

Demanding, needy behavior characterized by constant interruptions and plays for attention, frequently coming up to your desk, pleading to be called on, and not working as soon as your attention drifts from him or her to another peer.

Description:

Students who clamor for attention may appear demanding, but they're usually very needy underneath. They often have been "shorted" on positive attention. Indeed, they may have learned that negative behavior is the only thing that really gets a response and connects them to others. A natural response to neediness, especially when a teacher is annoyed, is to withdraw emotionally from the student making the demands. This rarely works. The needy student usually responds by escalating their annoying behavior, which leads to increased emotional withdrawal by other students and the teacher, and so on in a seemingly endless loop.

Help break the negative loop by having these students identify their genuine strengths, so they can become more satisfied with themselves and less dependent on the attention of others. At the same time, direct them to training in interpersonal skills that will make them more attractive to their peers – things like listening skills and giving compliments. Often the kids who are most hungry for attention are the ones least skillful at doing the things that naturally attract it.

Remember, problem behavior is often a sign of strong needs that aren't being met in a student's life. Help them fulfill these needs in appropriate ways and everyone will win.

Goals of intervention - students will:

- Develop self-confidence
- Identify personal strengths
- Build positive links to other people
- Better understand their own attention seeking behavior

A suggested scope and sequence - Teens

Strengths	Conversation	Alone
Learning style	Joining a group	Cause and effect
Self-esteem	Active listening	
Connecting with others	Giving compliments	

A suggested scope and sequence - Kids

Strengths	Conversations	Clingy
Learning style	Group - joining	Lonely
Self-esteem	Listening	Consequences - predict
Connecting with others	Compliments	