



REBUILDING COMMUNITY

Us/Not Us

HELPS WITH: Rebuilding Connections and Community
Total implementation time, with discussion: 15 minutes

Research supports the importance of empowering the voice of youth to help them establish a sense of control. One simple but effective way to involve students in the rebuilding process is through the creation of classroom norms called Us/Not Us. This student-generated list outlining agreed-upon classroom norms can address student needs and successfully re-engage youth in learning.

Materials Needed: A large sheet of poster or flipchart paper, markers

How to Play:

- Introduce the idea that some classroom behaviors support learning while others may impede the ability for learning to happen.
- Invite students to identify examples of thinking and acting that contribute to success in the classroom. For example, students may identify behaviors like clear communication or patience as those that support learning.
- Additionally, ask students to identify behaviors that will impede learning.
- After a warm-up discussion, divide a large sheet of paper in half by drawing a line down the center of the page creating two columns. Label one column "Us" and the other "Not Us."
- Brainstorm, discuss and record agreed-upon positive behaviors in the "Us" column.
- Next, brainstorm, discuss and record agreed-upon negative behaviors in the "Not Us" column.
- Review the two columns and make any refinements before moving on.
- Ask students to commit to working hard on following the agreed-upon norms outlined in this exercise.
- Display the list in the classroom as a reminder of the agreed-upon classroom norms.

Questions for Discussion:

Use the Us/Not Us list as a reflection tool throughout the year.

- How are we doing as a class in terms of living out our norms?
- Which norms are we following well? Which norms could we do better at following?
- Do we need to change or amend our list?