

Boost: CARE Plus Implementation Guide

Our approach to Increased Support

We increase our support for children who - through their past experiences at school, observed challenges early in the school year, or personal trauma histories - show that they may benefit from a deeper sense of safety and connection at school. These early supports often alleviate the need for tailored interventions.

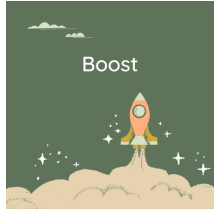
CARE Plus Implementation Guide

Classroom CARE Plus means identifying and implementing a set of strategies meant to help individual children strengthen their feelings of safety and connection, and to support them in building the skills they need to manage their emotions and handle conflict. These strategies are extensions of your class-wide CARE strategies.

How to do this well:

1. Identify children who are not responding to your class-wide CARE strategies to build safety, connection, and executive functioning skills. Students who are struggling to feel safe and connected as evidenced by challenging behavior, past experiences at school, or trauma history may need CARE Plus classroom strategies. If you have prior knowledge of students who may need these supports, start at the beginning of the year.
2. Ensure you are assuming the best about the child. Make an effort to send positive communications to the child's family.
3. Work to maintain your own composure. Increase your self-care so that this is possible for you.
4. Implement a classroom strategy that aligns to the child's area of need. Here is a list of strategy types; examples are provided later in this guide.
 - Extra time for relationship-building
 - Complete fidelity to and consistency with all routines
 - Additional verbal recognition & encouragement
 - Additional visuals
 - Additional classroom jobs
 - Strategic seating or placement
 - Extra support in the Centering Space

It often takes 2 weeks (or more) of consistent implementation to see an impact on relationships or behavior. Starting these strategies early on allows time to gather information and determine whether the child needs the RTI process.



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Why this works:

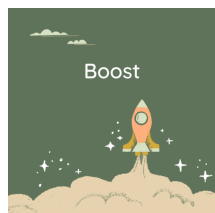
We give additional CARE in the classroom because:

- Children exposed to trauma and toxic stress benefit from greater consistency in their environment to minimize triggers and foster a sense of safety.
- Some children need more positive interaction time in order to form the trusting connections that create a sense of belonging.
- Children with under-developed executive functioning skills need greater support in building and practicing those skills.

Strategy Details & Connections to Challenging Behaviors

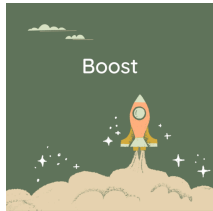
[*See examples here!](#)

Strategy	Detailed Strategy	Challenging Behaviors Helped	Why this works
Extra time for relationship building	Find or make time to talk and connect with the child: extra conversacenters, eat lunch with tion at greetings, dedicated play time at them, or create a station rotation group.	• hard to connect with • peer verbal aggression • teacher verbal aggression • non-compliance • elopement • refusal to enter classroom or go to specific room/place • hard to focus on teacher/ instructional presentation • destructive • clingy/separation anxiety • peer conflict (not sharing, getting in others' space) • easily loses temper/emotional outbursts • withdrawn/not participating	Some children may be wary of new adults, and take longer to develop trust. They may need more examples of your care and emotional consistency before deciding to invest in the relationship.
Complete fidelity to and consistency with all routines	Make sure you stick to your daily schedule. Use a timer to establish how much time each activity will take, and post it so children can see it count down. Teach, practice, and uphold the expectations for each routine throughout the day. This will likely involve the strategy of	• difficulty with transitions • disorganized, messy • hard to connect • not completing work • non-compliance • elopement • refusal to enter classroom or go to specific room/place • wandering/off-task	Safety is fostered through predictability (chaos is unpredictable and scary for many children who have experienced trauma). Predictability builds children's trust in you as a consistent, safe adult. Additionally, keeping routines & procedures efficient gives kids



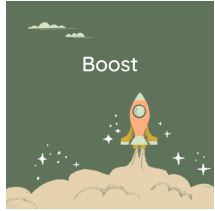
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	using additional visuals to teach and uphold expectations, and of increasing your noticing & naming.	• destructive • clingy/separation anxiety • not completing routines • peer conflict (not sharing, getting in others' space) • easily loses temper/emotional outbursts • calls out without raising hand • gets out of seat when not supposed to • distracting others from learning	less time to get off task and find unhelpful things to do.
Additional verbal recognition & encouragement	Increase the amount of noticing & naming you do for the child. Notice and name every little thing they do right, especially during the most difficult times of the day. For extra encouragement, add an adjective to describe the impact of their behavior: "You are using walking feet. That's a <i>safe</i> way to move in the classroom."	• difficulty with transitions • disorganized, messy • hard to connect with • not completing work • non-compliance • refusal to enter classroom or go to specific room/place • wandering/off-task • hard to focus on teacher/instructional presentation • clingy/separation anxiety • not completing routines • peer conflict (not sharing, getting in others' space) • calls out without raising hand • gets out of seat when not supposed to • withdrawn/not participating • distracting others from learning	Children can benefit from increased verbal recognition because it shows them that you are paying attention to them and see them for their positive contributions to the class. Verbal recognition can build their sense of self-efficacy through recognizing what they are doing right. It can also ease difficulty with compliance-type challenges (transitions, following directions, focus) by acknowledging when they are doing something right and encouraging them to build on that success.
Additional visuals	Ensure you have effective visuals for your daily schedule, expectations in various settings (carpet, seats, centers), steps in routines, social stories, etc. This will benefit the whole class. To support individual children, create additional detailed visuals featuring those children doing the right thing, and put them	• difficulty with transitions • disorganized, messy • non-compliance • elopement • refusal to enter classroom or go to specific room/place • wandering/off-task • hard to focus on teacher/instructional presentation • clingy/separation anxiety • not completing routines	Additional visuals support children who may have limited working memory or auditory processing because seeing something helps them remember what will happen or what to do. Seeing <i>themselves</i> meeting expectations in those visuals also builds their confidence that they can succeed again.



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	where kids will see (e.g., desk, cubby, lanyard).	• calls out without raising hand • gets out of seat when not supposed to • distracting others from learning	
Additional classroom jobs	Create jobs to meet the specific needs of your children, targeting the executive function skills they might need to develop, or creating extra opportunities for safety or connection. Give children as many jobs as they need to meet their needs. It is okay for one child to have 5 jobs (for example) while others have 1 each. See examples here	• difficulty with transitions • disorganized, messy • hard to connect • non-compliance • elopement • refusal to enter classroom or go to specific room/place • hard to focus on teacher/instructional presentation • destructive • noise/light/other sensory sensitivity • not completing routines • calls out without raising hand • withdrawn/not participating • distracting others from learning	Additional jobs help children because making an important contribution to the class can build self-efficacy and self-esteem. By successfully completing a task, children receive positive brain chemicals (oxytocin, endorphins, and serotonin). This bridges the gap to when they are able to find it meaningful and fulfilling to connect with another person. It is also more effective to keep children busy than to give extensive redirections, and jobs can develop specific skills that children may be lacking.
Strategic seating or placement	Assign the child to a seat that meets their needs. Perhaps this is near you, away from other children who create conflict, next to a specific child who helps them out, or in a specific area of the room that is more calming, less distracting, or any other quality that meets their needs. Students may benefit from a special chair, stool, desk, or delineating an area with tape to maintain personal space.	• disorganized, messy • hard to connect • not completing work • non-compliance • elopement • refusal to enter classroom • wandering/off-task • hard to focus on teacher/instructional presentation • destructive • clingy/separation anxiety • noise/light/other sensory sensitivity • peer conflict (not sharing, getting in others' space) • easily loses temper/emotional outbursts • calls out without raising hand	We can use the environment to support focus & self-control when students don't yet have those skills. Strategic seating can minimize distracting people or things, support focus, reduce conflict, and maintain safety for everyone. It can also build connection for the child whose strategic seat is near you.



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		• gets out of seat when not supposed to • withdrawn/not participating • distracting others from learning	
Extra support in the Centering Space	Join the child in the Centering Space any time they need to go and coach them through the steps. Work out a plan ahead of time so that the rest of the class can continue learning while you support this child. Note that with pre-K students (3-5 year olds), teachers should consistently offer support to all children at the beginning of the year, and as needed throughout the year. With older students, only those with acute needs may need this one-on-one support.	• hard to connect • peer verbal aggression • teacher verbal aggression • elopement • destructive • clingy/separation anxiety • peer conflict (not sharing, getting in others' space) • easily loses temper/emotional outbursts • withdrawn/not participating	Extra support in the Centering Space is helpful when students do not have the independent emotional management skills to work through the steps on their own. It also builds connection as you show students that you care about them even while they are upset, and that you can be a secure person for them to remain with during a time of stress (rather than eloping).