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### ***How to Use Micro-Rewards in the Classroom (K-1 Friendly)***

*At first, this approach is slightly time-consuming, but as the child masters new skills, the intervention by the teacher decreases. Teacher's time is an investment to help the student build confidence, prevent meltdowns, learn self-regulation which helps the student to remain in the learning environment.*

#### **What "Micro-Rewards" Mean**

*Micro-rewards are:*

- *Small*
- *Frequent*
- *Immediate*
- *Effort-based (not perfection-based)*

*They help the ADHD brain stay regulated, motivated, and organized across the day.*

#### **Step 1: Set the Time Blocks**

*Use short success windows:*

- *10–15 minutes (start with 10 for this student)*

*Use:*

- *Visual timer*
- *Sand timer*
- *Teacher phone timer (silent)*

*Tell the student: "We're going to try for 10 minutes. Then you can earn a star!"*

#### **Step 2: Choose ONE Target Skill Per Block**

*Do not track everything at once.*

*Examples:*

- *"Raise hand"*
- *"Calm body"*
- *"Listening ears"*
- *"Stay in learning spot"*

*Say it out loud: "This time we are practicing calm body."*

### **Step 3: Deliver the Reward Immediately**

*At the end of the block: If the child mostly tried:*

- *Give the reward right away*
- *Praise **effort**, not **outcome***

*Script: "You worked hard to keep your body calm. You earned a star!"*

*If the child struggled:*

- *Still give the reward if **effort** was present*
- *Frame it as learning*

*Script: "That was hard, but you kept trying. You earned your star."*

 *Avoid: "But you lost focus twice."*

### **Step 4: What the "Reward" Actually Is**

*The reward should be tiny and predictable.*

*Examples:*

- *Sticker on chart*
- *Smiley face*
- *Checkmark*
- *Token*
- *Stamp on hand*

*The real reward is the **positive attention**.*

### **Step 5: What the Stars Lead To**

*Do NOT wait until end of day only.*

*Use:*

- *3–5 stars = small choice*

*Examples:*

- *Pick a book*
- *Line leader*
- *Choose a brain break*
- *Sit by a friend*
- *Teacher helper*

*This prevents emotional overload.*

## **Step 6: Never Take Rewards Away**

*Once earned:*

- *Stars stay*
- *Tokens stay*
- *Stickers stay*

*If behavior falls apart mid-day, say: "Your brain needs help — let's reset."*

## **Step 7: Reset Without Punishment**

*If a block goes badly:*

*Teacher says: "That one was tricky. Let's start fresh."*

*Then:*

- *Short movement break*
- *New timer*
- *Same or easier goal*

*No discussion of failure.*

## **Step 8: Gradually Stretch Time (Later)**

*Only after success:*

- *Week 1–2: 10 minutes*
- *Week 3–4: 15 minutes*
- *Later: 20 minutes*

*Never stretch during stressful days.*

## **Step 9: Keep It Private**

- *No public charts*
- *No announcements*
- *Quiet praise*

*ADHD kids do best without an audience.*

### **Bottom Line for Teachers**

*"Catch effort early and often."*

*Micro-rewards:*

- *Build confidence*
- *Prevent meltdowns*
- *Teach self-regulation*
- *Keep the child in class and learning*