



## **FaithWorks Counseling**

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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