

What are standards/norms?

- **Those behavioral standards that are expected of all members of the classroom community, adults and students**
- **Cover large sets of behaviors**
- **Apply to all situations all the time**
- **Stated in a positive tone**
- **Few in number**
- **Developed by the classroom community**

About Norms Versus Rules

A caring community relies on a positive classroom climate that enhances student interaction. An important step in creating this climate is generating norms for the class. Unlike, rules, which are set by the teacher for classroom safety and efficiency, norms arise from the students' own feeling about how they want to be treated by others. Norms are agreement among the members of the community about how they will treat one another. Over the year, the norms help the students to be accountable to the community and to act on the prosocial values of responsibility, respect, fairness, caring, and helpfulness. In an environment in which students live by norms of their own creation, they have many opportunities to take responsibility for their own behavior.

Both norms and rules are necessary in any classroom. Examples of each are shown below. Rules should be established by the teacher on the first day of school. Phrasing the rules using a positive tone contributes to the sense of community.

The class sets the norms after the students have had time to get to know one another and to learn the classroom's rules and procedures. During Norm Setting Class Meetings, students explore how they are acting on prosocial values, and how they want to be treated and to treat others this year. Then the class will adopt a set of classroom norms.

NORMS

- **We will talk nicely to one another.**
- **We will treat one another with respect.**
- **We will include one another.**
- **We will help one another.**
- **We will solve problems fairly.**

RULES

- **Always walk in the classroom.**
- **One person speaks at a time.**
- **Use indoor voices when in the classroom.**

