



**pax** | Good Behavior Game

# What Is It?

Visit [www.GoodBehaviorGame.org](http://www.GoodBehaviorGame.org)

**P**AX teaches students self-regulation, self-control, and self-management while collaborating with others for peace, productivity, health & happiness. PAX is not a classroom management program *per se* or about consequences and control, yet it does make classrooms joyful again for learning. PAX combines the science from PeaceBuilders®, Good Behavior Game (GBG) & other studies. How does PAX GBG work? PAX nurtures self-regulation in peer-contexts in order to improve attention and reduce impulsivity, thus wiring the brain during any school activity for long-term gain.



1. With facilitation from adults, the children create a large, visual word-map of what they would see, hear, do and feel **more** of in a wonderful classroom. The children create a similar chart of what they would see, hear, do and feel **less** of. This task is done carefully, publicly posted, and refreshed or revised often to keep it alive.



The things happening **more** are called PAX™ (Peace, Productivity, Health and Happiness). The things that happen **less** (unwanted behaviors) are called SPLEEMS™. Very soon, children start to discriminate between PAX™ and SPLEEMS™ for learning sustainable self-regulation and attention—helped by these novel words in each new situation.

Unlike common school “rules” such as raise your hand, stay in your seat, etc., PAX and SPLEEMS are contextually based on the activity. So, PAX and Spleems are quite different during silent reading, cooperative learning, gym, working in groups, in computer lab, in the hallways, in the cafeteria, in the lunchroom, in art or music, etc. Remember, these contextual, lifeskill discriminations take time—just like reading or math skills take time to evolve.

2. The job of teachers and other adults is to notice PAX positively and often, plus record SPLEEMS very accurately during PAX Games. Teachers and adults also set up conditions of success among students to create PAX, and not to foster SPLEEMS either intentionally or unintentionally. Adults learn not to nag, scold, or lecture about SPLEEMS—lest students learn to play “Teacher Nintendo”—pushing buttons for attention.

- Adults notice unwanted behaviors (Spleems) in a neutral way and use positive cues like the harmonica for quiet or hand signals for voices to reduce Spleems. These PAX strategies reduce accidental re-traumatization of children exposed to harsh faces, voices, coercion, and perceived threats from others. Thus, PAX prevents future trauma.
- Children practice making more PAX and “sweeping away” SPLEEMS in cooperative rotating teams to “make their world a better place.” Teachers ask students to predict what PAX and Spleems would be for each specific activity and debrief after a PAX Game.

Ask students to **predict** PAX and Spleems for new activity and **debrief** after activity...



- A classroom educator or other adult acts as a gentle “umpire” during PAX games, which happen several times a day during any normal classroom or broader school activity. PAX games might occur during math, reading or any academic task. The PAX Game can be played during transitions, in the library or going to bathroom breaks, on a field trip, in the gym, in cafeteria and even school buses as children gain PAX skills.
- A classroom typically has 3-5 PAX teams at any given time. Teams can be ad hoc for hallways, etc. These can be structured in different ways to suit particular needs. PAX is designed to teach students how to cooperate and get along with all types of people—a critical lesson for life, the teams are “balanced”, including different types of children. The “problem” children should never be placed on one team, nor should they be excluded from playing. The teams are frequently rotated so that children learn how to help each other succeed. PAX is inclusive for all children, having many adaptations and supports.
- EVERY team can win if it has three or fewer SPLEEMS during a PAX Game. The teacher or adult is the umpire of SPLEEMS. The game will not work well if the adults try to make it a winner-take-all situation, in which only the team with the fewest SPLEEMS wins. It will not work well if the adults have fits over SPLEEMS. Remember, just like everyone poops, everyone SPLEEMS—including adults.
- The structure of PAX mimics successful anthropological, cultural practices around the world by using rotating teams of diverse children who work toward a common good for all. PAX helps teach students to avoid blaming others, and encourages them to try again when one or a group stumbles in achieving a goal. *(Please continue on the reverse side)*

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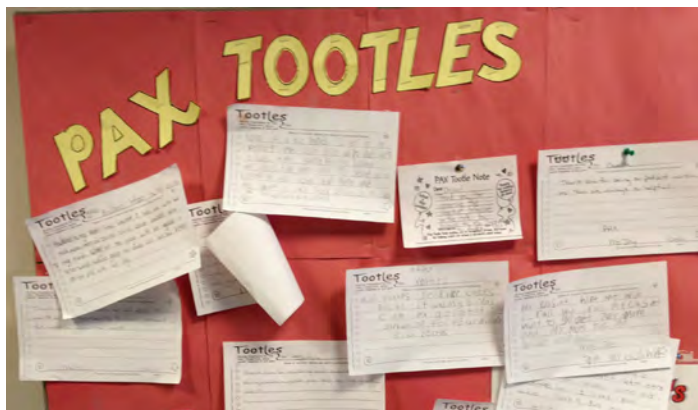
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9. The PAX Game should be played at least three times a day during normal classroom activities. Students typically learn PAX skills quickly, though need practice to play longer. Wise teachers make a daily ritual of planning when to play the Games with their students.
10. PAX Games start very briefly—a minute or two, increasing in time as students win 12 out of 15 games (or 85%) each week. Eventually, First Graders can “play” the PAX Game for 30 to 45 minutes, vastly increasing fully engaged teaching and learning. Older children can learn to play longer.
11. Teams and the classroom accumulate PAX minutes by playing the game for longer times, while still only getting three or fewer SPLEEMS for any given game. The students love seeing themselves making more and more PAX, which brings them peace, productivity, health and happiness. The students and the adults also have a lot of good old-fashioned, fun—without any batteries.
12. When the kids win a PAX game, they earn a randomly selected, fun, and intrinsically motivating, play-based (“brain break”) for a few seconds or minutes. They might earn a 10-second giggle fest, or a 30-second dancing jig, or one minute to whisper to their friends. There are hundreds of these activities that the adult can choose to put in the “Granny’s Wacky Prize” bag, and the children will eagerly invent new suggestions that don’t involve material, extrinsic rewards. These active, fun intrinsic rewards teach children two related skills: how to self-regulate under conditions of excitement and how to self-regulate when one doesn’t “win” or achieve a desired goal immediately.



13. Students and adults learn to write Tootle™ Notes (the Opposite of Tattles) to each other: student-to-student, student-to-adult, adult-to-adult, and adult-to-student. This helps sustain and build PAX. The procedure for Tootle Notes from peers reduces bullying and increases positive friendships as well as support for helping each other. Tootles also help spread PAX to families.
14. As both the adults and students become adept at PAX, the students develop an extraordinary ability to turn on their attention voluntarily; to go up and down in excitement with grace; to handle distractions and disappointments well; and to cooperate for common goals with other people of differing abilities and skills. Both adults and students start to savor the daily joys they created. In a word, the young people become “everyday scientists” to better their world and themselves.
15. PAX trained teachers and their PAX Partners (mentors) have access to special web-based supports to broaden benefits of PAX, for problem solving, and for monitoring results as well as implementation.

## Common Questions and Answers

**Does PAX take away time from teaching and learning? No,** after you and your students learn to use PAX well, you will gain 1-2 hours a day for high-quality teaching and learning. Students learn more with PAX. Playing the PAX Game increases reading test scores.

**Does PAX work for children who come from very difficult or chaotic situations? Yes.** In fact, PAX has largest effects on the children with the most disadvantages or existing problems, but also benefits all children by reducing exposure to bullying, problem behavior, etc. PAX reduces Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs).

**Can PAX GBG work for children of many ages? Yes.** Empirical studies show benefits from Pre-K through High-School. The long-term studies focused on younger children. PAX has variations and adaptations for stages of development, from pre-k to grade 12.

**But We Have A Good School and Families?** Bullying, mental illness, drug use and suicides are increasing and happening among families and schools from every walk of life. PAX can prevent those tragedies by early reduction in anxieties, impulsivity, poor peer relations, etc.

**Do I have to give up what I am doing right now for classroom management? No,** though most teachers find that they no longer need all the negative consequences like the red, yellow and green cards. PAX teaches self-regulation and control so that you don’t have to be a cop, the judge, and detention monitor.

**Does PAX transfer to home situations? Yes,** and there are tools to help with that. The children will spread it. Prior studies shows it improves family life, and the kit includes a Family Book for home.

**Why is the special language of PAX, SPLEEMS, Granny’s Wacky Prizes, Tootles, etc. important?** The language: 1) is fresh and reduces automatic, conditioned negative behavior; 2) helps the students rapidly generalize their self-regulation skills; 3) unites children in a bigger purpose than “following the rules”; 4) appeals to children; and 5) provides a common language for the school community. This special language helps children generalize their skills.

**Can PAX be part of an IEP or Individual Educational Plan and/or Positive Behavioral Supports?**

**Yes.** Special materials and training provide additional supports, using a simple “functional behavioral assessment” that sites can link to previously proven practices to support children with higher needs. In most jurisdictions, licensed professionals may bill health insurance for providing these additional services. PAX is a very powerful Tier I PBIS & RTI strategy.

**If I am a good teacher and my students are doing well, will PAX still help? Yes!** This has been shown to be helpful in almost every case. It makes a great teacher even better, and makes good students better—too. PAX reduces teacher self-reported stress.

**How can I learn more about PAX?** Visit our website. Then, secure training, copyrighted materials, and web-based supports – only available from PAXIS Institute. Please read your manual, as it contains much wisdom from thousands of teachers who learned to use PAX before you. Our websites have additional supports, only for teachers and PAX Partners with licensed PAX Good Behavior Game® manuals and training.



To learn more about PAX GBG, visit [GoodBehaviorGame.org](http://GoodBehaviorGame.org) or call 1-877-GO-PAXIS, or send an inquiry email to [gbg@paxis.org](mailto:gbg@paxis.org). You may view videos about PAX GBG at: [GoodBehaviorGame.org](http://GoodBehaviorGame.org), [promoteprevent.org](http://promoteprevent.org), or [www.gov.mb.ca/healthychild/pax/](http://www.gov.mb.ca/healthychild/pax/). The scientific studies for the recipe for PAX GBG can be found at [www.pubmed.gov](http://www.pubmed.gov), search under “Good Behavior Game”; Peacebuilders, and “evidence-based kernels”.