PAX teaches students self-regulation, self-control, and self-management in context of collaborating with others for peace, productivity, health and happiness. PAX is not a classroom management program, but it makes managing classrooms a breeze. How Does PAX GBG Work?

1. With facilitation from adults, the children create a visual map of what they would see, hear, do and feel more and less of in a wonderful classroom. This task is done very carefully, and it is revised often to keep it alive. The things that would happen *more* are called PAX *(Peace, Productivity, Health and Happiness)*. The things that would happen less are called SPLEEMS. Very soon, children automatically discriminate between PAX and SPLEEMS, vital for learning sustainable self-regulation and attention.

2. The job of teachers and other adults is to notice PAX often, and record SPLEEMS very accurately. The other job of teachers and adults is to set up conditions of success for 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.”

3. Children learn to practice making more PAX and “sweeping away” SPLEEMS as cooperative teams to “make their world a better place.”

4. A classroom (or other) adult acts as “umpire” for “playing” a PAX game during normal classroom or broader school activities several times a day. These PAX games might occur during math or reading, during transitions, in the library or going to bathroom breaks, on a field trip, and eventually in cafeteria and even buses.

5. A classroom typically has 3-5 PAX teams at any given time. These can be structured in many different ways to suit particular needs. Because PAX is designed in part 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. All of the “problem” children should never be placed on one team nor should any be excluded from playing. The teams are frequently rotated, so that children learn how to help each other succeed.

6. Every team can win—if the team has three or fewer SPLEEMS during the time they play 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 SPLEEM wins. It will not work well if the adults have fits over SPLEEMS, since just like everyone poops, everyone SPLEEMS—including adults.

7. PAX Games start very briefly—a minute or two, then increases in time as students win 12 out 15 games each week.

8. Teams and the classroom accumulate PAX minutes by playing the game for longer and longer times, while still only getting three or fewer SPLEEMS. The students love seeing themselves making more and more PAX, which brings them peace, productivity, health and happiness. They and the adults have a lot of good old-fashioned, fun—without any batteries required.

9. The PAX Games should be played at least three times a day during normal activities. The kids learn this quickly, although adults
sometimes take a bit of time to get the hang of all this.

10. When the kids win a PAX game, they earn a randomly selected, silly, fun, and intrinsically-motivating activities 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 that the adult can put in or not into the “Granny’s Wacky Prize” box, and the children will eagerly invent new suggestions that don’t involve material, extrinsic stuff. 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. Again, these are lifetime skills, which involve different neural circuits than paying attention to learning tasks.

11. 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.

12. As both the classroom 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; to cooperate for common goals with other people of differing abilities and skills; and to notice and savor the daily joys of life that they created. The students become mindful of themselves, each other, and the adults around them. In word, the young people become good students of themselves and their world.

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.

Does PAX work for children who come from very difficult or chaotic situations? Yes. In fact, PAX has biggest effects on the children with the most disadvantages.

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.

Does PAX transfer to home situations? Yes, and there are tools to help with that. The children will spread it.

Is it important to use special language of PAX, Spleems, Granny’s Wacky Prizes, Tootles, etc.? Very, for many reasons: 1) it’s fresh and reduces automatic, conditioned negative behavior; 2) it rapidly helps the students generalize their self-regulation skills; 3) it unites children in a bigger purpose than following the rules; 4) it appeals to children; and 5) there is a great deal of science behind it.

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

If I am a good teacher and my students are doing well, will PAX still help? Absolutely, this has been shown to be helpful in virtually every case. It makes a great teacher even better.

How will I learn more about PAX? The manual and training have many tips and techniques for PAX, available from PAXIS Institute. Please read your manual. It contains much wisdom form thousands of teachers who have gone before you learning PAX. A new website will have additional supports.