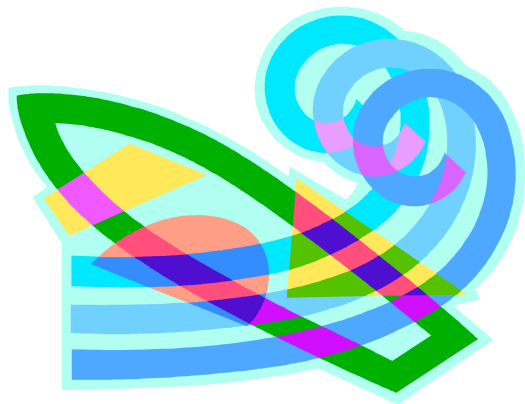


Positive
Behavior
Supports



POSITIVE BEHAVIOR SUPPORTS

All Behavior serves a function! Children communicate their needs in many different ways - verbal and behavioral expressions are most common. While verbalizations are the clearest, behavioral expressions take a little more "insightful looking" to decipher their meaning. As teachers, you have the unique experience of spending many hours each day with your students. A key to understanding behavior expressions from your students - if you are experiencing an emotion when talking with a particular student (e.g. anger, frustration, excitement) that student is more than likely experiencing the very same emotion. Usually, just understanding what the child is trying to communicate to us and reflecting this need in our intervention can circumvent many potential behaviors from escalating.

It is essential that teachers have a systematic way to promote positive student behavior and address challenging student behaviors. Teachers should have a consistent behavior management system in place. This will enable all students to know what is expected of them and to feel secure in their learning environment. Structure and consistency are key. Children do best when they know what is expected of them.

Occasionally, a student will present with behaviors that are challenging in that they persist despite our best interventions. When this occurs, A Child Study Team-Re-evaluation (CST-R), and/or the Student Support Team (SST) should be convened to further explore more detailed and creative behavioral interventions. At the CST-R/SST, a Functional Assessment of Behavior (FAB), can be recommended and when authorized by a parent in writing instituted.

Following are suggested interventions that will be helpful in the classroom:

FAB - Functional Assessment of Behavior

A successful Functional Assessment of Behavior requires a team approach comprised of the persons in the school who know the student best and who can provide relevant information about the function of the problem behavior. The team also will have some responsibility for developing, implementing, monitoring and revising the intervention. Not every member of the team will be involved in the day-to-day implementation of the intervention; however, all members should support the intervention efforts based on their individual roles. A team approach requires shared ownership of a student's problem and shared responsibility for the solution of the problem.

Too often, school based efforts to resolve problem behavior are seen as requirements that need to be completed before children can be placed elsewhere, as if lack of success was needed to support a change in placement. A referral orientation provides strong negative reinforcement to school personnel for sending students "somewhere else." FAB has a problem solving focus rather than a referral focus.

The student's teacher is an obvious and essential member of the team. Parents also need to be part of the FAB team. To coordinate the effort, a facilitator is needed. The facilitator should be the member with the most knowledge and experience conducting a Functional Assessment of Behavior, but is no more responsible for the evaluation and intervention than any other team member. The facilitator should be part of the student's school, although it is recognized that district and regional support personnel will have to be available for assistance while local schools build this capacity.

With Functional Assessment of Behavior there is an expectation that preliminary interventions are likely to need revision, and that lack of success often times provides as much information as the initial Functional Assessment of Behavior. Lack of improvement is a cue for adjustment.

For further information about conducting a FAB, please refer to the FAB Manual, which is available from the administrator, counselor or FAB trained teacher at each school.

Source: Division of Psychological Services

The Behavioral/Instructional Support Triangle

The graphic on the following page is a guide for planning behavioral and instructional supports in any classroom. As the graphic suggests, the largest amount of support should be implemented at the proactive level, where strategies are put in place to prevent behavioral problems from happening. These strategies would include classroom setup, classroom rules, appropriate, interesting and relevant curriculum, parent involvement, classroom schedules and structure, etc. For some students, supportive strategies need to be implemented. These include individual/class-wide reinforcers, incentives and motivators, positive referrals, peer reinforcement, etc. For a very few number of students who experience difficulty despite appropriate proactive and supportive strategies, remedial strategies are used. These include individual contracts, Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPs), parent conferences, the use of the Code of Student Conduct, contact with outside agencies, etc. Keep in mind that the more effort that is made to provide a safe and appropriate learning environment to support all children, the less time that will be required for addressing individual challenging behaviors.

The Behavioral/Instructional Support Triangle



PROACTIVE



SUPPORTIVE

REMEDIAL



Brookner and Viera 2002

Nonphysical Interventions

The following material was taken in part from "Managing Surface Behavior of Children in School," by Nicholas Long and Ruth G. Neuman. A variety of nonphysical interventions should be used (when feasible) before physical interventions are tried. This list is in no way meant to include all possible interventions, but rather to provide samples of some that have been effective with disruptive students.

Nonverbal Interventions

1. **Planned ignoring** - In this intervention, the staff member ignores the inappropriate behavior of a student, at the same time reinforcing the appropriate behavior of other children. This intervention is called planned ignoring because the staff member continues to monitor the child and is prepared to reinforce the first appropriate behavior that occurs. Often, ignored behaviors will exhaust themselves and the frequency of occurrence will diminish.
2. **Proximity control** - The physical proximity of a non-threatening adult can lend support to a student who is having difficulty exhibiting appropriate behavior. In this intervention, staff positions their body in such a way that appropriate behaviors are encouraged. In some cases this intervention may involve physical contact in the form of a hand on the shoulder or some other physical expression of support.
3. **Signal interference** - This intervention involves the use of nonverbal techniques to communicate expectations to the child. These may include eye contact, hand gestures, snapping fingers, clearing one's throat, frowns, and body postures. These signals serve to interrupt the child and remind him that the behavior he is exhibiting is inappropriate. This technique is most effective at the beginning of misbehavior.
4. **Removing seductive objects** - In setting up an area for students to use, it is important that objects that will distract the student are removed. Certain objects have a magnetic appeal, and if visible, the student will often be unable to resist the impulse to pick them up or play with them.

Verbal Interventions

5. **Peer reinforcement** - This intervention praises other children for the behavior that you want the off-task student to exhibit. Peer reinforcement serves two main tasks, and it demonstrates to the off-task child the expected behavior.
6. **Modeling** - Modeling is another way of demonstrating to the off-task child the expected behavior. Modeling can be accomplished either verbally or nonverbally and involves showing or telling a student the behavior you expect. Modeling gives the student an alternative way of regaining the teacher's attention appropriately and receiving reinforcement. At times, the teacher may model the desired behavior, or another student may be asked to demonstrate the appropriate behavior.
7. **Interest boosting** - Often the teacher can re-motivate a child in a given activity by showing some genuine interest in the task. This intervention can also be used to tap a child's knowledge base (such as sports, cars, etc.) in assigning tasks or to redirect him back to the activity at hand.
8. **Humor** - If good rapport exists between a staff member and on-task students, humor can often be

an effective intervention. Tension can be relieved and anxiety reduced by showing a student the humor in a given situation. When utilizing this intervention it is important that the staff member avoid sarcastic comments and focus on truly humorous parts of the situation.

9. Hurdle help (Verbal clarification) - This intervention is used when the inappropriate behavior is the result of frustration with the task or activity at hand. The student does not understand what to do and rather than asking for help, chooses to engage in inappropriate behavior. By assisting the child with the assignment or providing clarification of the assignment, the teacher can prevent inappropriate behavior.

10. Restructuring - Sometimes it is helpful for the staff member to change either the activity the student is assigned, or the location where he is working. By modifying the task it is often possible for the student to continue working successfully.

11. Changing the scheduled activity - At times, it is obvious that a scheduled activity is appropriate for the activity level of the group. Staff are often hesitant to change activities because they feel that they should follow the schedule regardless of circumstances.

12. Support from routine - Students feel more secure and comfortable in a structured setting. A daily schedule that is routine and predictable is essential for preventing misbehavior.

13. Direct appeal to values - Sometimes a staff member can return a student to appropriate behavior by appealing to certain values the student may have internalized. Some relationships the staff member may use are: the relationship the staff member has with the child, appealing to reality consequences, and awareness of peer's reactions.

14. Antiseptic bouncing - In antiseptic bouncing, the goal of the teacher is to remove the child for a short period of time from the potentially disruptive situation. There is no intent to punish the child, but rather by giving him an errand to run or suggesting that he get a drink of water, the teacher can prevent inappropriate behavior.

15. Problem-solving - This intervention is useful when the staff member feels that it might be helpful to speak with the student individually about the problem that is interfering with the student's ability to work on-task. It is often possible to avoid off-task behavior by identifying a solution to a particular problem area.

16. Time-out from the activity - If a student's behavior becomes so disruptive that it is difficult to manage within the classroom setting, then a short tune-out from the activity can often be used successfully. In this intervention, the student is requested to move to a more isolated part of the classroom, or in some cases removed from the classroom. To be successful, the following guidelines are suggested:

- a. Time-out from the activity occurs only after the student's behavior exceeds a limit that has been clearly stated and after one or more other interventions have been tried.
- b. Time-out periods occur with emotional control on the part of the staff member rather than exasperation.

- c. Time-out is presented to the student as a constructive aide to learning rather than as a punishment.
- d. Time-out intervention involves a specified period of time rather than open-ended exclusion from activity.
- e. Once the time-out period of time has passed, the student immediately returns to the activity or classroom without holding grudges, or attempting to get him to "promise to be good from now on."
- f. When the student returns to the activity, every effort is made to select a task that has a very high probability of interest and success. Also, the child is immediately eligible to receive reinforcement for appropriate behavior.