Classroom Strategies for Behavioral Health

Joseph H. Evans, PhD
Professor, MMI & Pediatrics
University of Nebraska Medical Center
LB 556: Behavioral Screening Results – 19 months data

**Childhood Behavioral Screening**
N = 3098

- Negative: 77%
- Positive: 23%

**Percent of Parents Requesting Assistance**
(N = 3098)

- Yes: 17%
- No: 83%

**ADHD**
- Inattentive: 9%
- Hyperactive: 7%
- Combined: 5%
- Oppositional Defiant: 9%
- Conduct Disorder: 3%
- Anxiety/Depression: 6%
Anxiety & Depression
Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
Conduct Disorder
Oppositional Defiant Disorder
Academic Problems
Who is Responsible???

- **Parents’ Perspective:**
  - School is responsible for school behavior

- **Teacher’s Perspective:**
  - Parents haven’t taught children to behave and follow adult instructions

- **ANSWER:**
  - Kids learn better and faster when there is consistency in Tx between home and school
Probability of a BH Disorder in the Classroom

16% to 20% OR
One in 6 to One in 5

85% of BH problems can be handled in the Classroom
Behavioral Health Problems Presenting in Schools:

**Externalizing:**
- Arguing
- Aggression
- Non-Compliance
- Inattention
- Hyperactivity

**Internalizing:**
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Lack of Friendships
- Rejection by Peers
Teacher Strategies

- “Don’t Smile Until Thanksgiving”
- Demerit Cards
- Humiliation (Dunce Caps)
- Recess Restriction

HINT: If you are looking for NEW PUNISHERS you are going in the wrong direction
DEMERIT SLIP

Last Name: ___________________  First Name: ___________________

Date: _______________  Room: ____________

Teacher: ___________________

MISDEMEANORS

☐ Demerit(s):
☐ Disrespect
☐ Disturbance
☐ Tardiness
☐ Running
☐ Damaging Furniture
☐ Whistling
☐ Improper Attire
☐ Loitering
☐ Tussling
☐ Disregarding Rules

DEMERIT STUB

Last Name: ___________________  First Name: ___________________

Date: _______________  Room: ____________

Teacher: ___________________

☐ DEMERIT(S) FOR: ___________________
Classroom Management:

“The main cause of teacher mortality, accounting for 20 percent of all teacher failures, is lack of discipline in the classroom.”
Classroom Management:

“The main cause of teacher mortality, accounting for 20 percent of all teacher failures, is lack of discipline in the classroom.”


ONE HUNDRED and ONE YEARS AGO!!!!!!
Classroom Management
Impact on Classroom Management on Student Achievement

Effective Classroom Management is Key to Student Achievement

0.5 = Medium Effect Size

Achievement
Treatment for Overall Classroom Disruptive Behavior

The “GOOD BEHAVIOR GAME”

- A group treatment contingency
- Procedure in which a reinforcer is contingent upon the behaviors of a classroom group
- Why group?
  - Time efficient
  - Economical
  - Impractical individual plans if too many BH problems
  - Quick remedy for disruptive classroom behaviors
  - Uses Peer influence
The “Good Behavior Game”

Summary:

• Classroom (or group) divided into two teams
• Teams compete against a set criterion for a prize.
• Encourages within group cooperation
• Social pressure from peers
Is GBG Effective?

• 750+ Studies
• e.g., Baer & Richards (1980)
• Reduced classroom disruptive behaviors from baseline
• Good during an instructional period (i.e., math, reading)
• When game in effect, talking and out of seat behaviors occurred at lower levels from baseline
• When game not in effect, disruptive behaviors occurred more frequently
Guidelines to Implementing Good Behavior Game:

1. Choose a meaningful reinforcer (Extra 5 minutes recess; Line up first for dismissal; Go to lunch first)
2. Target a specific behavior/set of behaviors to target
3. Set an appropriate performance criterion --- you want to see success!!
4. Select an instructional period (
5. Tell children about the game and the point of the game is to “see who can follow classroom rules best”
6. Go over the rules before each game period
Guidelines to Implementing Good Behavior Game:

7. Sample Rules:
   Hands and feet to self
   No talking out
   Stay in seat
   Start work on time

8. Explain the game each time

9. Monitor Performance (Baseline and Intervention)
Procedure for Good Behavior Game

1) Divide into 2 teams
2) Make a “Score Card” on the chalkboard to keep track of both team “tallies”
3) Tally disruptive targeted behaviors during “game time”
4) “Winning Team” is the one with lowest number of negative tallies
5) If both Teams are below criterion, Both get Rewards
6) Lower limits for criterion gradually
7) Deliver daily rewards at first and gradually fade to weekly
CAUTIONS
(During the Good Behavior Game)

• Separate disruptors to balance the groups

• Make sure Criterion for rewards is reachable

• Make sure that Reinforcers are delivered as promised

Expand game to other instructional periods!!!!
Good Luck!
Individual School Behavior Interventions:

Externalizing Behavior Problems
Individual School Behavior Interventions:

School Notes

Address Problems With

- Academic effort
- In-class behaviors
- Assignment completion
### School Behavior Interventions:

#### Home School Note Targets:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Behaviors</th>
<th>Social Behaviors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>➢ Working on assignments</td>
<td>➢ Out of seat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Completing homework</td>
<td>➢ Talking without permission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Handing in assignments</td>
<td>➢ Disrespectful behavior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ All work up to date</td>
<td>➢ Bothering peers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ On time for class</td>
<td>➢ Following instructions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>➢ Hands to self</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
School Behavior Interventions: School Notes

Procedures

- Identify target behaviors.
School Behavior Interventions:

School Notes

**Academic Behaviors**

- Working on assignments
- Completing homework
- Handing in assignments
- All work up to date
- On time for class
### Home-School Note for:

________________________

Date:______

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavior Category</th>
<th>Arithmetic</th>
<th>Lang Arts</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Social Studies</th>
<th>Science</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stayed in Seat</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raised Hand to Talk</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete Assignments/Homework</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appropriate Peer Interaction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
School Behavior Interventions:

School Notes

Procedures:

- Identify target behaviors.
- Design school note form.
- Identify reinforcers and consequences.
- Rate school target behaviors every period.
If possible, Use Home-Based Reinforcers

Examples:

➢ Wear an outfit of your choice to school.
➢ Get out of a chore.
➢ TV/video games/telephone/computer time.
➢ Allowance.
➢ Token toward weekend activity.
School Behavior Interventions:

School Notes

If NOT possible, Use School-Based Reinforcers

Examples:

• Additional computer time
• Classroom reporter/runner
• Teacher helper
• Line leader
• Special individual time with teacher
### Examples of backup reinforcers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Natural</th>
<th>Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attend special period with another class</td>
<td>Pencils</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be first in line</td>
<td>Pens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Care for class pets</td>
<td>Notebooks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extra time with class games</td>
<td>Folders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sit at the teacher’s desk</td>
<td>Paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eat lunch in a special location</td>
<td>Small toys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sit next to a friend</td>
<td>Stamps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take shoes off</td>
<td>Stickers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skip one homework assignment</td>
<td>Baseball cards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special display of work</td>
<td>Markers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spend time in another classroom</td>
<td>Gel pens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tutor a younger student</td>
<td>Art supplies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use the teacher’s special pen</td>
<td>Erasers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visit the principal (for praise)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water class plants</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wear a hat to school</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extra computer time</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
School Behavior Interventions:

School Notes

Procedures

- Identify target behaviors.
- Design school note form.
- Identify reinforcers and consequences.
- Establish criterion for reinforcement.
School Behavior Interventions:

School Notes

Procedures

- Identify target behaviors.
- Design school note form.
- Identify reinforcers and consequences.
- Establish criterion for reinforcement.
- Increase criterion as progress is made.
School Behavior Interventions:

School Notes

Procedures

- Identify target behaviors.
- Design school note form.
- Identify reinforcers and consequences.
- Establish criterion for reinforcement.
- Increase criterion as progress is made.
- Plan for generalization and maintenance.
What makes it effective:

- Frequent, immediate feedback (Occurs at school)
- Highly structured (Short time frames for appropriate behavior)
- Salient consequences (Occurs at home and/or at school)
Individual School Behavior Interventions:
Internalizing Behavior Problems
Internalizing Behavior Problems

Social acceptance problems

New Student Syndrome

Excessively shy

Anxious/Depressed child
New Friends Procedure

Dx: Playground Observation

Playing Alone?

Playing With Group?

What Activities?

Preference to Stay Inside vs Recess???
New Friends Procedure

• Identify a POSITIVE Classroom Leader
  – Usually a:
    ➢ Bright student
    ➢ Best Athlete
    ➢ Most Popular Girl
    ➢ Empathetic & Kind

If necessary, use a Sociometric measure
New Friends Procedure

INDICATE to the chosen child that he/she has been identified as a Leader

ASK the Leader to assist a fellow student in getting along better with his/her peers

Leader’s instructions are to make sure that the youngster is “included” in activities at recess, during free time at school and during lunch
New Friends Procedure

• Leader is also asked to defend the youngster from criticism and bullying

• For his/her efforts, the Leader can earn a commendation from teacher as a NEW Friend

• Take additional playground/lunchroom data re: Group activities and participation
Cautions:

- Target youngster may develop a dependency on the Leader (can switch Leaders)

- Target youngster may need social skills training to “fit in” better with peers (Teacher or Counselor education)

- Try to “generalize” to activities outside of the school day (Girl Scouts, sports, over-nights, play days. etc.)

- If possible, get parent involvement for out-of-school activities