

# EFFECTIVE School Practices

VOLUME 17, NUMBER 4

PRICE \$5.00

SPRING, 1999

FOCUS: DISCIPLINE AND SCHOOL SAFETY, PART TWO  
GUEST EDITORS: MACK D. BURKE AND SHANNA HAGAN BURKE,  
UNIVERSITY OF OREGON

A VIEW FROM ASKANCE	
Bob Dixon, ADI Executive Director .....	1
LETTERS .....	6
OVERVIEW	
Systems for Change: Increasing Schools' Capacities to Provide Effective Behavior Support	
Mack D. Burke and Shanna Hagan Burke, University of Oregon .....	7
RESEARCH	
Discipline and Behavioral Support: Practices, Pitfalls and Promises	
George Sugai, Robert Horner, University of Oregon .....	10
Effective Behavior Support: Strengthening School-Wide Systems Through a Team-Based Approach	
Anne W. Todd, Robert H. Horner, George Sugai, Jeffrey R. Sprague, University of Oregon .....	23
Effective Behavior Support: Designing Setting-Specific Interventions	
Timothy J. Lewis, University of Missouri-Columbia Linda Garrison-Harrell, Southwest Missouri State University .....	38
Using Data to Guide Decisions about Program Implementation and Effectiveness: An Overview and Applied Example	
Terri Lewis-Palmer, George Sugai, Stephen Larson, University of Oregon .....	47
Universal School Discipline Strategies: Facilitating Positive Learning Environments	
Terrence M. Scott, C. Michael Nelson, University of Kentucky .....	54
Providing Administrative Leadership for Effective Behavior Support: Ten Strategies for Principals	
Geoffrey Colvin, University of Oregon Randall Sprick, Teaching Strategies, Eugene, Oregon .....	65
Individualizing School-Wide Discipline for Students with Chronic Problem Behaviors: A Team Approach	
Anne W. Todd, Robert H. Horner, George Sugai, Geoffrey Colvin, University of Oregon .....	72
CONFERENCE NEWS	
Awards—The 1998 National Direct Instruction Conference at Eugene	
Jocelyn Warren, <i>Effective School Practices</i> Staff .....	83



## Philosophy of *Effective School Practices*

1. Teachers are responsible for student learning.
2. The curriculum is a critical variable for instructional effectiveness.
3. Effective teaching practices are identified by instructional research that compares the results of a new practice with the results of a viable alternative.
4. Experiments should not be conducted using an entire generation of Americans. The initial experimentation with a new practice should be small in scale and carefully controlled so that negative outcomes are minimized.
5. A powerful technology for teaching exists that is not being utilized in most American schools.

*Effective School Practices* is published quarterly by the Association for Direct Instruction. The mission of the Association for Direct Instruction, as stated in the by-laws, is to promote the improvement of educational methods.

The name *Direct Instruction* originated with the highly effective instructional model first developed by Zig Engelmann in Project Follow Through during President Johnson's Great Society legislation. Although the evaluation of Project Follow Through showed the Direct Instruction model to be far more effective than the other models on every identified outcome, education in America remained generally unchanged.

A few educators, impressed by the extraordinary results of the original Direct Instruction model and the programs that were developed as DI evolved, formed the Association for Direct Instruction in 1981.

Today, this organization is a vanguard in promoting school practices that have been validated as effective through the use of the scientific method in educational research.

The Association for Direct Instruction was incor-

porated in 1981 in the state of Oregon for educational purposes. ADI is a nonprofit, tax-exempt corporation under Section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code and is a publicly supported organization as defined in Sections 170(b)(1)(A)(ii) and 509(a)(1). Donations are tax-deductible.

A copy or summary of the current financial statement, or annual report, and registration filed by ADI may be obtained by contacting: ADI, PO 10252, Eugene, OR 97440 (503-485-1293). ADI is registered with the state of Oregon, Department of Justice, #79-16751. Copyright © 1999 Association for Direct Instruction.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION RATES: \$20 U. S.; \$25 (U. S. currency or equivalent) Canada; \$30 Europe; \$40 airmail to Europe.  
(ISSN 1068-7378).

Editor ..... Bonnie Grossen  
Assistant Editor ..... Jocelyn Warren  
Proofreading and Typing .. Jocelyn Warren  
Layout ..... Bryan Wickman  
Printing ..... Springfield News

<http://www.adihome.org>

# A View From Askance

## Standards and Assessments—Assess This!

Bob Dixon,  
Executive Director, Association for Direct Instruction

In a theoretical sense, we should all be in favor of some form of educational standards, and some means for assessing the extent to which a given set of standards is achieved. However good standards and assessments may be in theory, they have been generally ludicrous in practice. Insane. Inane. Ridiculous. Farcical.

No, actually they're generally worse than that. Fraudulent. Duplicitous. Deceitful. Dishonest. No kidding. Something that's simply ludicrous could be considered funny in some sense. There isn't anything very funny about common standards and assessments around the country.

Somewhere along the line, behavioral objectives fell out of favor. But by and large, behavioral objectives were pretty good things to have around—especially if someone else had to write them. Clearly, the odds of any endeavor succeeding are better when someone knows what the purpose of the endeavor is. Objectives or goals or standards or aims are clearly useful—theoretically—but they're never adequate. That might be part of the reason that behavioral objectives fell out of favor. People expected too much from them. "Gee, whiz. We have a beautiful set of behavioral objectives. Now let's sit back and watch student performance mysteriously improve as a result."

Okay. Let's just say that "standards" are a lot like behavioral objectives. In the best case, if a set of standards is really good in some sense, there still is no insurance that those standards will improve achievement. And if standards are not good? Then there is a pretty good chance that achievement will not only fail to improve, but will deteriorate. There aren't many examples of good standards.

What makes a set of standards good? I can think of four criteria for good standards.

1. The standards must describe *outcomes*.
2. The outcomes must be something that society actually cares about.
3. The standards must be as clear and unambiguous as our language allows.
4. There must be some legitimate way to assess whether or not standards have been achieved.

That's all. Doesn't sound very difficult.

But achieving these criteria is difficult. Start with number 1. Apparently, lots of folks wouldn't know an *outcome* from an outhouse. Going back to behavioral objectives for a moment, we can see that the problem has been around for quite a while. Does anyone remember trying to discriminate between *enabling* objectives and *outcome* objectives? There are gray areas, to be sure.

Nonetheless, generally speaking, a standard describes an *outcome* if it describes a *product* of some sort. *Processes* are the ways we use to attempt to achieve a certain outcome, and the actual outcome is the *product* of those processes. If you ask me.

Unfortunately, education is overwhelmed with people who are "process oriented." I can't follow their argument. They seem to feel that the *process* is more important than the *product*. Excuse me? If you love phonics for beginning reading, you're not going to claim that using phonics is more important than being able to read.

That most educators these days are in love with processes should not, technically, influence standards. But it does. The committees that make up standards are made up of educators, primarily. Those educators have, to a great extent, described their favored processes in "standards" documents. Not outcomes. "Students will use a variety of strategies to figure out what the words in a story means." Who cares whether students use a variety of strategies or not? What we care about is: can they decode words in running text? If they can do that by sticking a finger in their ear, what do we care, as long as they can read.

What about focusing standards on things society actually cares about? Shouldn't that be easy? It should be. My guess is that society wants children to apply fundamental knowledge and skill in a variety of applications. Implicit in this description is the assumption that children have some fundamental knowl-

edge and skill to apply—to ANYTHING. Anything. Higher level thinking. Gutter thinking. Thinking on both sides of the brain, and right down through the brain stem—to the extent that is possible.

I have this problem with higher level thinking and problem solving and creativity. My problem is that I think these things exist, but I'm not very certain about what they are—exactly. Well, I have two problems. My other problem is that *I DON'T THINK YOU COULD STOP HUMAN BEINGS FROM SOLVING PROBLEMS AND THINKING HIGH AND BEING CREATIVE IF YOU TRIED.*

Okay. Maybe you *could*, if you really, *REALLY* tried hard. If you systematically prevented human beings from acquiring knowledge and skill, that might do the trick. Deny them the raw materials of problem solving and creativity.

I got carried away there for a minute. Let's get back down to earth. Do the citizens of your state or province care a lot about whether a grade two student can add *with a calculator*? I don't think so. Do they care about whether a grade three student can "multiply" simply by counting? Do they care about whether a grade eight student writes stories well enough to be a published novelist? Do they care more about whether a student of any age is having a love affair with reading *as opposed to being able to read*? Do they care whether a student can conduct a science experiment competently *as long as he or she has three other kids to help*?

What about writing standards that are clear and unambiguous? Well, for starters, that can't be done. I think standards should be as clear and unambiguous *as possible*. That's what all the rules about behavioral objectives were about. Clarity. Lack of ambiguity. Nonetheless, whenever ten people read the clearest standard or objective, there is a fair chance of getting ten interpretations. One can reduce the ambiguity by writing very long, detailed standards or objectives, but that still won't completely eliminate the problem.

The clearest way to illustrate a standard is to show the assessment items that will be used to determine whether or not the standard is achieved. That is a *REAL TRICK* for standards that can't be assessed. My favorite is, "Lifetime love of reading." Let's see the state-wide assessment tasks for that one.

Personally, I don't really care whether students love reading their entire life or not. No kidding. What kids love and hate is really none of my business. All I care about is whether kids can read or not. If they can read, then I'm happy. Once they can read, they can choose to love reading, or just like it as a

friend, or for all I care, hate it. When did educators get the idea that it is important for the schools to dictate life-long loves and likes and dislikes for children?

I got carried away again. What is the point of having a standard or objective that can't be measured? Yes, I'm sure that makes some people feel really good, but beyond that, I don't get it.

Apparently, the people (educators) behind state-wide tests have a very simple way of looking at things. They think, for instance, "Students *take* assessments sometime after standards are established, *SO* standards should be developed before assessments." I don't think so. Standards and the measures to assess them should be developed *simultaneously*. Doing that would result in better standards and better assessments both. After all, *standards and the measures to assess them are really just different manifestations of the same thing*. Isn't that right? Standards (should) describe tasks. Tasks should define standards.

For instance, let's say we had a verbal standard like this:

Students will correctly compute any addition or subtraction problem consisting of two digits derived from 0 to 9, and will do so at a rate of X problems per minute.

We *don't* have a standard like that in any state I'm aware of, but let's just say we did. I'd test this baby with assessment tasks the fast way. Immediately. In so doing, I'd discover the ambiguities in the standard. What form will the problems take?  $2 + 4 = \underline{\quad}$  or a vertical form? Or, either of those, and something algebraic:  $2 + \underline{\quad} = 4$ ? Will addition and subtraction problems be mixed together or will they appear separately? Big question, that one is. Just how many problems will appear—how many does it take to (a) amply sample the range of problems described in the standard, and (b) accurately determine rate? Will students choose answers from a multiple choice list, or will they write them out?

Don't you think this approach could help both the people writing the standards and those developing the assessment? Obviously, I do.

This isn't much of a segue, but ... all these performance tests around North America and beyond are pure and utter nonsense. Because they are nonsense, they are doomed, eventually. The only question is, how many children are going to get completely screwed over in the interim?

Really. Another name for "performance assessment" is "authentic assessment." (Somewhere in the back of my head, I keep hearing the word *relevant*. Shows my age.)

Is it just me, or do you, too, find a problem in trying to think of a contrived assessment tool of any description as being *authentic* in any sense of the word at all? Performance assessment is big in business, and well it should be. In business, one can assess another's performance on the job. How, exactly, does that transfer to education? It doesn't.

I've had the extreme displeasure in recent months of looking at some of the most "non-authentic" tasks from state-wide performance tests that anyone could possibly imagine. For instance, in one task from one state, grade three students are supposed to show on a grid where a watering trough could be placed in a cage for a giraffe. That's *potentially* a pretty authentic task for all those kids who will grow up to design zoos. But here's the real catch: the only way this task can be completed "correctly" (according to the state's scoring guide) is to place the watering trough in a place that would allow the giraffes exactly *ONE FOOT* of space between the trough and the wall of the cage.

So the *real*, authentic correct answer is, "there is nowhere one could place the trough that would allow the giraffes to get a drink of water." That answer will yield a score of zero. The state's (wrong) answer gives the students a score of two. Because this test doesn't have very many tasks, and the tasks are all scored from zero to, at the most, three, two points makes a big difference in the final score.

And just how authentic is it to write out a long explanation of how one completed a mathematics problem? "Show your work" makes a lot of sense in various *instructional* situations, but how about in authentic situations? A few years ago, I had to reach back to my backward basic education to figure out how many packs of shingles I needed to buy for the playhouse I was building for my daughter (which she didn't want and hasn't ever used). I think that was a genuine, authentic application of mathematics. But the only thing that counted *was the right answer*. The wrong answer would result either in not having enough shingles, or having way too many—at great expense.

There is nothing authentic about any of the performance test items I've seen so far—hundreds of items from several state-wide performance tests. Who really cares about authenticity, anyway?

Not me. Do I care about whether or not students can *apply* fundamental knowledge and skill in a wide variety of ways? You bet. That's what generalization and transference are all about. That's what *Direct Instruction* is all about. Generalization. Transference. When we do that well, we have nothing to worry about. Students become *fluent* in valued knowledge and skill, and then learn to generalize

and transfer that knowledge and skill. They can use it later in life, in genuinely authentic situations, or in highly contrived situations. If they've learned well, *it doesn't matter*. And, moreover, *it isn't any of our business*. We're in the business of giving children as many choices in life as possible. We are not in the business of dictating what those choices ought to be.

I think I ought to close with one concrete example of a standard and assessment that meet the criteria I think are important. After all, it's cheap and easy to be a critic.

Here I go. Grade three, the end of the year. "Students will read five hundred words of grade appropriate text at the rate of X words/minute and an error rate of 2% or less." That's my standard. (I don't know the best rate. I'll ask a PT friend who does know. But I do know the rate would be *fast*.)

For my assessment, I'd probably have students do this twice: once with a story, and once with "textbook-like" material.

Grade appropriate? Yes, that's sticky. I'd just look at all the indicators I could find of grade level appropriateness, then I'd err in the direction of greater difficulty.

Personally, if the reading fluency were really good, I wouldn't even worry too much about reading comprehension. In my narrow view, when fluency is really good, we're no longer talking about *READING* comprehension; we're talking about *language* comprehension.

But I don't mind giving in to political pressures, to some extent. How about asking some comprehension question? For the story, I'd ask about who the protagonist is, what his or her or its problem is, attempts to resolve, the antagonist, and the resolution. Really original stuff. For the non-fiction piece, I'd ask about what the passage was mainly about, and I'd ask for recall of some facts, and for some inference. Really original stuff.

And that's about it. In a (wrong) sense, this is in part a "performance" test. The reading fluency test would have to be administered to children individually. The children would have to *perform*: they'd have to *construct* their "response," as opposed to choosing it. I guess the test isn't very authentic; in that no one checks my fluency when I read murder mysteries on airplanes. But then, I contend that all tests are contrived: that's one of the reasons we call them *tests*.

My fluency test would be expensive and time-consuming to administer and score—just like state-wide performance tests. However, my test would be reliable and valid—*unlike* state-wide performance tests.

My comprehension test would be simple and cheap. Multiple choice. Performance test experts would claim that my multiple choice test just assessed rote knowledge. And they'd be stupid. If students have never seen the reading passages, then the test *could not possibly be rote*. Period. Impossible.

I'm serious about the really terrible consequences of performance tests on the lives of children. This one is too close to home. I live in Washington State, where some clever person decided to make up a new word—"learnings"—and develop a set of "essential learnings," rather than Standards. Then long after the "learnings" were developed, the State hired a testing firm—also known as a house of ill repute—to develop a performance test around the "learnings."

This year, my daughter's school district is using a new adopted math program called *Math Trailblazers*. If you can find a math program with less math in it than this one, I'll be amazed. Like fat-free potato chips, this thing is math-free math. Why did the district adopt it?

Last year, a neighboring district adopted the program, and their performance test scores in math went up. I should open a side business: how to raise performance test scores without improving student achievement—or, even as student achievement deteriorates.

I'll give this to *Trailblazers*: they are very clever at creating the *impression* of kids learning math while learning no math. I noticed on one worksheet my daughter brought home that the kids were doing multi-digit subtraction with re-grouping. Amazing, I thought, for a kid who *used to know her math facts*, but does no more. When I gave my daughter a new problem of the same type and asked her to solve it, she said sure. Then she asked me to get out a bag of beans. I did that, then watched my *second grade* daughter do tons of counting. Tons of it.

I am certain now that my daughter can count, at the age of eight. At least *some* skill she learned when she was three is being kept alive.

I asked her if she could do the problem another way. "Sure," she said. "Wait a minute while I get out my '200 chart'." Then I watched her count some more, using the 200 pseudo prompt.

This is criminal. First, the state gets a bunch of dilettantes together to develop "learnings." Then they pay a lot of money to some company with no scruples to develop a "test" void of reliability and validity, but that at least is expensive to develop, to administer, and to score. And then, school districts adopt "instruction" to improve performance on a worthless test because the stakes are high for *not* improving performance on a worthless test.

*And I know for certain that all of this will go away, sooner or later.* I'm saying so right here, in this printed publication, with a date on it. How *soon* it goes away depends upon how quickly the public begins to realize what's going on.

For the sake of "security," it isn't easy to get a look at most of these state-wide performance tests. Unhappily, that makes it difficult for the public to see what's going on. What a coincidence. Washington, for instance, practically begged the public to examine the "learnings." Of course, the "learnings" are more or less rhetorically impressive, if largely empty. The rubber hits the pavement in the performance test, but the state isn't bending over backward to share *that* with the public.

In a state I can't name right now for various reasons, no citizen is allowed to view the performance test, but the tests are distributed to the schools *two weeks prior to testing*. Anyone at the school can look at the test (so I've been told) during that time. Anyone could copy it. Anyone could *teach* it. The test in that state is high stakes: the state can take over schools that perform poorly on the test. Does this smell to you, or is it just me?

Well, to be fair, a citizen can look at the test, under security, in the state department's offices.

Back to my daughter. I must confess that she has some advantages that might not be readily available to children of poverty. There is a decent chance that my wife and I can repair this gigantic blunder our school district has made. *But why should we have to?* And who is going to repair the damage to children of poverty? Who is going to do that? Who?

I shouldn't just complain. Here's something specific you can do if you live in a performance test state. Sue—as in, file a law suit. No kidding. That will be a particularly effective approach if you are associated with a school that hasn't done well on a performance test, and has had "sanctions" of some sort imposed.

There is no possibility whatsoever that any of the performance tests I've seen could hold up in a court of law, where reality is certain to infringe upon the opinions and beliefs of educators. No possibility. The tests simply are neither reliable nor valid. What's left? The states bend over backward trying to sell constituents on all the efforts that have been made to ensure reliable scoring, *but they have neatly avoided investigating the extent to which the scoring is, in fact, reliable.* Many of the performance test items are more like IQ items or aptitude test items. Because IQ and aptitude are not supposed to be influenced by instruction, how can such items measure the effects of instruction.

I really do hope people will start going to court. And, I really do hope that when they do, they'll call me. I want to sit in. I can't wait to hear someone from some state department sitting on the stand, trying to explain items and tasks and scoring to twelve normal (non-educator) people. HA, HA, HA. See? I'm laughing already, just thinking about it.

Right now, no one from a state department has to explain to anyone how a giraffe could squeeze between a wall and a watering trough just one foot away. Right now, no one from a state department has to explain to anyone how a mathematics test

item with no mathematics in it can assess mathematics. Wouldn't it be just plain fun to see someone—anyone—from any state department—have to explain these types of things?

In closing, I'll just reiterate a couple of major points. First, performance testing will go away. Second, performance testing is the tail wagging the dog. And kids suffer for that. You could raise the math performance test scores in any state by increasing the time you spend teaching kids to write, while *decreasing* the time you spend teaching math. Something criminal is going on, but it can be stopped most effectively, and the soonest, in courts of law. No kidding. ♦

♦ ♦ ♦



## Meaningful Differences—

To the Editor:

The Winter issue of *Effective School Practices* presented cogent arguments for teaching children academics in kindergarten and even preschool. This is contrary to general practices in the United States and typical recommendations from State Departments of Education.

In support of the premise that early academic focus in preschool enhances intellectual development lies the extensive longitudinal study of early language by Betty Hart and Todd Risley. Their work is published in a book I recommend everyone interested in education read titled *Meaningful Differences in the Everyday Experiences of Young American Children* (1995). They recorded two and a half years or more of monthly, hour-long observations of parents, mostly mothers, interacting with children from 13 months to 36 months of age. They present sobering evidence to support the link between early language experience and later intellectual growth in the exhaustive study of 42 families. Their families were from welfare, working class and professional settings in Lawrence, Kansas.

From an earlier intervention study in the 60's, Hart & Risley found they could increase the size of the vocabulary of the children in poverty but they could not accelerate the rate of vocabulary growth beyond their direct teaching. This led them to the current study of language differences among the three groups: approximately 14 families of upper, middle and lower socio-economic status. Different racial groups were distributed among all the groups and found to be a nonsignificant variable in language development. It is noteworthy that Hart & Risley found much similarity among the families. They said, "Raising children made all the families look alike" (p.53). What was a significant difference among the groups was the *amount* of language—"how much more some families talked than others" (p. 58). In short, the higher the SES level, the more parent utterances per hour and the greater rate of vocabulary growth of the child. In fact, the child in the higher SES family consistently got three times more experiences with language and interaction than the child in the welfare family.

There were qualitative differences as well. The higher SES families provided more language diversity (defined as the variety in nouns, adverbs and adjectives), more affirmative feedback (with significantly fewer prohibitions, such as "Don't," "Stop," etc.), symbolic emphasis (past tense verb usage, references to recalling and relating information), gentle guidance ("Can you...?" "Do you...?") and responsiveness.

The authors conclude, "By the time children are three years old, even intensive intervention cannot make up for the differences in the amount of such experience children have received from their parents" (p. 210). They also maintain that the gap in vocabulary development "seemed to foreshadow the findings from school research that in high school many children from families in poverty lack the vocabulary used in advanced textbooks" (p. 191).

Not only did this *quantity* of language enjoyed by different children link to their language accomplishments at the age of three, it very strongly predicted their vocabulary growth at the age of 9-10 on both the PPVT-R and the TOLD, and vocabulary use as measured by the Reading Comprehension score on the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (p. 160). It is interesting to note that the authors did *not* find this strong association between vocabulary growth rate at age three and children's 3rd grade scores in academic skill areas: reading, writing, spelling, math or on the OTIS Lennon verbal and non-verbal reasoning measures. But the authors found a strong link between the amount of cumulative language experience children had and their school performance (academic achievement) at age 9.

What are the implications of this research? From my perspective, we need to ensure rich language interactions with children of poverty at the very earliest opportunity. The more, the better. If, at very early ages, children are talked to *frequently* with rare use of discouraging words and a rich use of symbolic reference and gentle guidance, they will enjoy a much greater rate of vocabulary growth, and probably school success.

Hart & Risley believe their study shows that "the problem of skill differences among children at the time of school entry is bigger, more intractable, and more important than we had thought" (p. 193). To me this adds to the importance of an academic focus in preschool and rich language experiences for children of poverty starting at age one.

Linda Carnine, Ph.D.  
Eugene, Oregon

# Systems for Change: Increasing Schools' Capacities to Provide Effective Behavior Support

Mack D. Burke  
Shanna Hagan Burke  
University of Oregon

This is the second of two special issues of *Effective School Practices* to address discipline and school safety. In the first issue (Volume 17, 1998), two basic questions were posed: (a) What does research indicate about intervening with children and youth that display antisocial behaviors? and (b) What intervention approaches have been demonstrated to be effective and feasible for implementation in schools? Consideration of these questions leads to a more systemic concern: What systems and processes must be in place for schools to provide effective behavior support to all students, including those who present the most challenging behaviors? The challenge is to establish systems that enhance the adoption and sustained use of effective practices in schools.

This special issue begins with an overview of the critical features of an approach called Effective Behavior Support (EBS). In "Discipline and Behavioral Support: Practices, Pitfalls and Promises," Sugai and Horner present critical school, community, and family factors associated with children and youth who display anti-social behaviors. Although schools have been identified as promising sites for prevention and intervention; the authors suggest that many schools lack the necessary systems and structures to manage and sustain their intervention efforts. Such schools respond to severe and chronic behaviors reactively with punishment, exclusion, and ultimately expulsion. Sugai and Horner underscore the need for proactive measures and the adoption of a systems approach to discipline to provide a continuum of support for all students. The EBS approach focuses on four distinct systems that operate in a school: (a) school-wide, (b) non-classroom, (c) classrooms, and (d) individual students. Sugai and Horner describe each of the four systems in detail and provide authentic examples of how each system has been implemented in schools. To increase the likelihood of success, the authors suggest that schools

should agree that (a) a clearly defined problem exists (b) the EBS effort is one of their top school improvement priorities, and (c) time and resources must be allocated to support their efforts. Finally, the authors describe several process steps to implementation of the EBS approach.

The establishment of a behavior support team is a critical feature of the EBS approach. Todd, Horner, Sugai, and Sprague describe this team approach in "Effective Behavior Support: Strengthening School-Wide Systems Through a Team-Based Approach." They present four different problem behavior patterns that correspond with the systems of EBS approach (school-wide, non-classroom settings, classrooms and individual students). Todd et al. suggest that a large number of discipline referrals, for varied offenses, that involve a large numbers of students, is an indicator that an effective school-wide system of behavior support is not in place. The authors explain that if a school-wide system is functioning properly, (a) teachers and administrators embrace and consistently enforce a common set of school rules and (b) students are able to state the school rules and define acceptable and unacceptable forms of behavior associated with those rules. Todd et al. further describe the teaming approach used in the EBS model and the results of an elementary school's four year implementation. Described is the assessment information used to create a school-wide action plan. Furthermore, activities and outcomes are summarized for each of the four years of the school's EBS efforts. Time-lines and logistical considerations of implementing the approach are explained and office referral data are used to illustrate the approach's impact. The authors conclude with descriptions of the prerequisite features that should be in place for behavioral support to be successful in a school.

Lewis and Garrison-Harrell extend the school-wide system and focus on the non-classroom setting

system of behavioral support in "Effective Behavior Support: Designing Setting-Specific Interventions." They provide an elementary school case study to illustrate the effect of the EBS approach on reducing problem behaviors in cafeteria, playground, and hallway settings using a multiple-baseline design. The authors recommend starting with an assessment of current routines and characteristics of the physical environment. Next, desired behaviors that should be displayed in the setting and are congruent with the larger school rules are identified. The authors discuss how teaching and reinforcement strategies were developed and provide sample lesson plans used to teach expected behaviors for each of the targeted non-classroom settings.

Lewis-Palmer, Sugai, and Larson explore the utility of making data-based decisions in "Using Data to Guide Decisions about Program Implementation and Effectiveness: An Overview and Applied Example." The authors outline how data might be used to identify and define problems, evaluate effectiveness, and make modifications to increase program efficiency. They explore various types of assessments that could be conducted, different types of data that could be collected, and types of decisions that could be made from the assessments and data. The authors recommend that data be collected on a formative basis, and that feedback be given to staff members at regular times. An elementary school case study is presented to illustrate how varied types of data were collected and used to (a) identify those behaviors that needed to be taught and (b) determine the types of school-wide interventions that needed to be implemented. Guidelines for collecting and using school-wide information also are described. They stress that most schools possess a wealth of information that can inform decision making, but it needs to be organized and summarized in a way that is both consumable and useful.

Scott and Nelson further develop the rationale of implementing a school-wide plan of behavior support in "Universal School Discipline Strategies: Facilitating Positive Learning Environments." These authors review traditional school practices and argue that many of those practices have no evidence to support their use while more promising procedures have not been accepted by general educators or the public. They explain the differences between universal and targeted interventions and the students for whom these interventions are most appropriate. Scott and Nelson recommend setting up screening procedures to identify students that are at-risk of early school failure who could benefit from early intervention services. At the school-wide

level, the authors suggest that discipline plans include (a) an assessment of ecological variables, (b) instruction of expected behaviors, (c) active supervision and monitoring of students in areas of congestion, and (d) consistent disciplinary responses to minor problem behaviors across settings. Scott and Nelson state that classroom management procedures should parallel the school-wide plan while taking into consideration the organization of the classroom and the construction of classroom rules and routines. They also recommend that behavioral support take place within the context of sound instructional methods (modeling, guided practice, etc.). The authors conclude by advocating for a full continuum of services, which might include alternative programs for students with the greatest learning and behavioral challenges.

The success of the EBS approach is related to the active leadership of the school administrators. Colvin and Sprick discuss the administrator role in "Providing Administrative Leadership for Effective Behavior Support: Ten Strategies for Principals." Based on a review of the literature and their work in schools, these authors identify a set of ten guidelines that principals should display to encourage school improvement efforts. These guidelines are (a) maintain staff development standards, (b) make public statements of support for EBS efforts, (c) establish a leadership team that is representative of the school staff, (d) support team's efforts in allocating time and resources, (e) guide decision making processes, (f) actively participate in problem-solving sessions, (g) provide acknowledgments for the efforts of team members and staff, (h) serve as a liaison with other school committees and groups, and (i) provide informative feedback on the implementation. Colvin and Sprick indicate that administrative support is essential for successful reform efforts as characterized by these ten strategies.

Todd, Horner, Sugai, and Colvin describe features of the individual student system of EBS in "Individualizing School-wide Discipline for Students with Chronic Behaviors: A Team Approach." In the second article of this issue, Todd et. al describe a team based approach used in EBS. In this article, the approach is expanded to include students who display chronic problem behaviors. Such students are typically resistant to universal or school-wide procedures and require more intensive, individualized interventions. A two level team-based approach is described. The first level is comprised of a teacher support team that (a) discusses general issues and problems (b) gives suggestions to the teacher, and (c) establishes an action team. The second level of

support is characterized by the formation of an action team that will develop and implement individual behavior support plans. The authors describe a process for requesting assistance and problem-solving. Procedures, protocols, and examples are provided to illustrate the two level team approach.

In addition to *Effective School Practice's* regular editorial review board, we would like to acknowledge the following guest reviewers for their time and expertise in the preparation of this issue.

Dr. Kelli Beard, San Diego State University

Dr. Randy Depry, University of Colorado at Colorado Springs

Marion Fesmire, University of West Florida

Patsy Forrest, University of West Florida

Dr. Rollen Fowler, Oregon Research Institute

Jennifer Hull, University of West Florida

Dr. Tim Lewis, University of Missouri

Martha Lisner, University of West Florida

Dr. Teri Palmer, University of Oregon

Dr. Rex Schmidt, University of West Florida

Diane Wise, University of West Florida

## *Thank you to our Sustaining Members*

*The ADI Board of Directors acknowledges the financial contribution made by the following individuals. Their generosity helps our organization continue to promote the use of effective, research-based methods and materials in our schools.*

Lori Agar

Anita Archer

Jason Aronoff

Karen Beck

Roberta Bender

Deborah Bott Slaton

Jayne K Brace

William Brady

George Brent

Kathryn L Brown

Judith Carlson

Pam Carlson

Joan Chapman

Maria Collins

Jim Cowardin

Don Crawford

Aubrey Daniels

Shirley Dickson

Donna Dressman

Nancy/Del Eberhardt

Catherine Eiler

Julie Eisele

David Evans

Dale Feik

Janet Fender

Linda Gibson

David Giguere

Linda Gunkel

Ray Hall

Maggie Hanohano

Ardena Harris

Linda Heiderer

William Heward

Mark Hopper

Prentiss Jackson

Gary W Jennings

Dr Kent Johnson

Shirley Johnson

Debra Kamps

Stacey Kasendorf

Diane Kinder

Wendy Kozma

Ruth Lindstrom

John Lloyd

Mary Ann Manley

Elaine Maurer

Paul Mckinney

Providencia Medina

Sandi Morgan

Gary Myerson

Kip Orloff

Susan O'Donnell

Jean Osborn

Kris Persson

K Gale Phillips

Larry Prusz

Melva Pryor

Gary Raley

Linda D Randolph

Molly Riley Blakely

Kathleen L Schaefer

Carolyn Schneider

Frank Smith

Vicki Snider

Karen Sorrentino

Geoff St John

Candace E Steventon

Cathryn Trull

Edwina Treybig

Maria Vanoni

Scott Van Zuiden

Michael Walnay

Tricia Walsh-Coughlan

Ann Watanabe

James Weaver

Mary Anne Wheeler

Peter Wright

# Discipline and Behavioral Support: Practices, Pitfalls, and Promises

George Sugai, Ph.D.  
Robert Horner, Ph.D.  
College of Education  
University of Oregon

*Abstract: Supporting and educating students who exhibit severe problem behavior in our schools is a formidable task. Fortunately, the instructional and behavioral technologies for assisting these students in schools exists, and the capacity to construct specially designed programs is present. Unfortunately, the systems needed to support the efficient and effective selection, implementation, and sustained use of these technologies are missing in many schools. In this paper a proactive and systemic approach to discipline and positive behavior support for all students in a school building is proposed. The context for and the features of this response are described. In addition, a call for validating this approach is presented.*

Educating the diverse populations of students who are enrolled in today's schools is an ever increasing challenge. In fact, more students in tomorrow's general education settings will be culturally diverse, have English as a second language, be less prepared to enter school, have a greater range of learning, and behavioral challenges, and be more different from than similar to their peers (Knitzer, 1993; Knitzer, et al., 1990; Stevens & Price, 1992). Rising to the top of this challenge are children and youth who display behaviors that contribute to and foster antisocial lifestyles (Biglan, 1995; Sugai & Horner, 1994; Walker, Colvin, & Ramsey, 1995) and/or who are given the label *emotional and behavioral disordered* (EBD) (Kauffman, 1997). By presenting behaviors that are dangerous to other students, teachers, families, community members, and themselves, these children and youth disrupt teaching and learning in schools, create inhospitable neighborhoods, and upset family functioning (Walker et al., 1995). Child and youth with these antisocial characteristics are prime candidates for later negative outcomes (e.g., teacher and peer rejection, failure and dropping out of school, delinquency) (Walker, Kavanagh, Golly, Stiller, Severson & Feil, 1996) and for other poor adult outcomes (e.g., unemployment, poor mental health, criminal behavior lifestyles) (Patterson, Reid, &

Dishion, 1992; Walker, 1993; Zigler, Taussig, & Black, 1992). Fortunately, we have research that helps us understand the nature of this challenge and identify the features of a possible effective and efficient response.

The purpose of this paper is to propose that educators, families, and community agents adopt a systems approach to discipline in schools for all children and youth, but especially for those students with or at-risk of antisocial lifestyles. To address this purpose, the context or conditions which foster or contribute to antisocial behavior are discussed and the features and requirements of a proactive systems approach to school-wide discipline and positive behavior support are proposed.

*The purpose of this paper is to propose that educators, families, and community agents adopt a systems approach to discipline in schools for all children and youth, but especially for those students with or at-risk of antisocial lifestyles.*

## Context

The acquisition of antisocial behavior does not occur in a vacuum. In fact, a number of family/home, community, and school factors are associated with the likelihood that problematic behaviors are acquired by children and youth and contribute to the development of antisocial lifestyles (see Figure 1). For example, over two decades of research on

*The preparation of this paper was supported in part by a grant from the U. S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (Grant #HO29N30003). Opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect the policy of the U. S. Department of Education and no official endorsement should be inferred. Comments, questions, requests for reprints, or other correspondences should be addressed to the first author, Behavioral Research and Teaching, College of Education, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon 97403-5262.*

**Figure 1. Summary of factors associated with the development of antisocial lifestyles.**

<p>HOME (e.g., Patterson, Reid, &amp; Dishion, 1992)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ inconsistent management</li> <li>✓ punitive management</li> <li>✓ lack of monitoring</li> </ul>
<p>COMMUNITY (e.g., Biglan, 1995)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ antisocial network of peers</li> <li>✓ lack of prosocial engagements</li> </ul>
<p>SCHOOL (e.g., Mayer, 1995)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ punitive disciplinary approach</li> <li>✓ lack of clarity about rules, expectations, &amp; consequences</li> <li>✓ lack of staff support</li> <li>✓ failure to consider and accommodate individual differences</li> <li>✓ academic failure</li> </ul>

families of children with antisocial behavior indicates that antisocial behavior is more likely when parents utilize inconsistent disciplinary practices, use strong aversive consequences to manage problem behavior, fail to have regular prosocial engagements with their children, and do not monitor the whereabouts and activities of their children (e.g., Biglan, 1995; Dumas, 1986; Patterson, 1982; Patterson et al., 1992).

Within the community context, the development of antisocial lifestyles increases when these children and youth become involved in antisocial peer networks, substance abuse, deviant sexual behavior, and negative community engagements (e.g., Biglan, 1995; Walker et al., 1995). Clearly, when youth associate with students who exhibit problem behaviors and become involved in antisocial activities in the community, they are more likely themselves to develop similar antisocial lifestyles and to experience more trouble in the community.

A number of school factors also contribute to the development of problem behaviors in children and youth: (a) ineffective instruction that results in academic failure; (b) inconsistent and punitive management practices; (c) lack of opportunity to learn and practice prosocial interpersonal and self-management skills; (d) unclear rules and expectations regarding appropriate behavior; (e) failure to enforce rules; and (f) failure to individualize instruction to

accommodate individual differences (e.g., Colvin, Kameenui, & Sugai, 1993; Mayer, 1995).

*Unfortunately, many schools and school systems are not equipped to meet and respond to the needs of students who are at-risk of antisocial lifestyles or who already are immersed in such lifestyles.*

In combination, these school, family, and community factors pose a formidable challenge to agents whose objective is to mount a comprehensive, effective, and efficient response to preventing and responding to problem behavior. Schools, however, have been identified as an ideal place to organize an effort against the increasing problem of children and youth who display antisocial behavior (Mayer, 1995; Sugai & Horner, 1994; Walker et al., 1995; Walker et al., 1996). Schools, for example, provide predictable schedules of events and activities, socially appropriate adult and student role models, and personalized support around many health, social, and family needs. These predictable school structures may represent the only supporting social networks available in the lives of many at-risk and behaviorally challenged students. In particular, schools provide a disciplined and predictable environment where increased opportunities for academic and social success are possible.

Unfortunately, many schools and school systems are not equipped to meet and respond to the needs of students who are at-risk of antisocial lifestyles or who already are immersed in such lifestyles. These schools are characterized as having high rates of school leaving (e.g., dropping out, aging out), suspension and expulsion, punitive consequences, and segregated alternative placements (Borthwick-Duffy, Eyman, & White, 1987; Hill, Lakin, & Bruninks, 1984; Patterson et al., 1992; Sheerenberger, 1990; Walker et al., 1995). Teachers in these schools report that they are ill-equipped to support at-risk students and hindered from delivering quality instruction when these students are in their classrooms (Bannerman, 1987; Tausig, 1985). It is no surprise that the single most common technical assistance request from teachers is for help in "managing problem behaviors" (Horner, Diemer, & Brazeau, 1992; Reichle, 1990). The most common responses to at-risk students are punishment and exclusion (Lipsey, 1991; Tolan & Guerra, 1994). Unfortunately, punitive management systems have proven ineffective.

Detention, suspension, reprimands, fines, and extra tasks simply are not effective strategies for reducing problem behavior, and, in fact, increases in problem behaviors are more likely to be seen (Mayer, 1995).

Fortunately, we have a body of evidence that enables us to identify strategies that are effective in preventing and reducing problem behavior (e.g., Kerr & Nelson, 1998; Lipsey, 1991; Morgan & Jenson, 1988; Peacock Hill Working Group, 1991; Sugai, 1998; Sugai & Horner, 1994; Sugai & Lewis, 1996; Tolan & Guerra, 1994; Walker et al., 1995; Walker et al., 1996; Wolery, Bailey, & Sugai, 1988). These strategies include specific procedures for working with individual students:

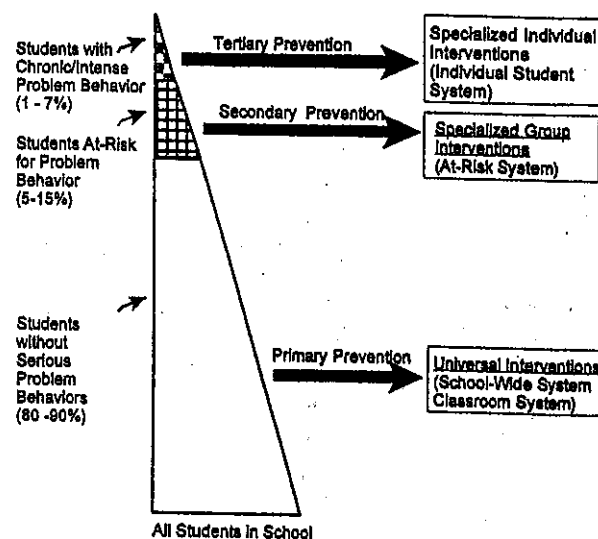
- ✓ Functional assessment technologies
- ✓ Social skills and self-management instruction
- ✓ Instructional and curricular modifications and restructuring
- ✓ Collaboration with parents, teachers, administrators, and community agents
- ✓ Placement in prosocial, integrated and inclusive settings.

They also include structural strategies for organizing school environments: (a) discipline policies, (b) staffing patterns, (c) team-based planning and problem solving structure, and (d) information management.

We propose that the real challenge is not identifying and developing new strategies, but delivering and maintaining these strategies in schools (Colvin, Kameenui, & Sugai, 1993; Sins & Ponti, 1990; Sugai & Horner, 1994; Walker et al., 1996). Although the motivation exists to adopt these preferred, best practices, a number of factors appear to inhibit their systematic and sustained adoption, and need to be validated. First, the frequency and intensity of the problem behaviors seen in today's schools are increasing. Second, educators are being asked to do more with less and to teach more students who are not prepared to learn and/or who display behaviors that are highly disruptive to the teaching/learning process. Third, educators are "coerced" into the overuse of punitive interventions and crisis management strategies because they need relief from behaviors that are dangerous and severely disruptive. Fourth, school staff lack the specialized behavioral competence needed to respond to the severe and intense problem behavior displayed by some students, and alternative placements or services for the students with the most intense EBD are more difficult to obtain and provide. Finally, a realistic mechanism for developing, presenting, and maintaining staff development has not been implemented.

If the goal is to reduce the incidence and prevalence of antisocial behavior through the sustained use of effective practices (Biglan, 1995; Walker et al., 1996), simple adoption of a collection of universal disciplinary practices will be insufficient and ineffective. Universal group interventions that emphasize a show-and-tell model of teaching school-wide expectations can be effective for a large number of children (e.g., 80-90% of school enrollment) (Colvin et al., 1993; Colvin, Sugai, Good, & Lee, 1997; Langland, Lewis-Palmer, & Sugai, 1998; Lewis, Colvin, & Sugai, 1998; Lewis, Sugai, & Colvin, in press; Taylor-Greene et al. 1997). For example, simply telling the rule and presenting a few examples is usually all that is needed to teach most students the rule for making transitions between classes or lessons, a strategy for obtaining adult attention, or an alternative for getting help on a difficult task. These children respond because they enter the school and classroom experience with learning histories that enable them to benefit from general teaching and management strategies. However, students who are at-risk of developing antisocial lifestyles or who already are immersed in patterns of antisocial behavior will not benefit with these universal group interventions alone because of the family, school, and community factors mentioned previously. In addition, these students will require specially designed and individualized interventions that are maintained by a comprehensive and positive school-wide system of behavior support. We propose a continuum of positive behavior supports that illustrates this relationship between problem type and intensity of behavior support (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. Continuum of Effective Behavior Support.





---

## A Proactive Systems Approach to Discipline in Schools

Traditionally, discipline is characterized by reactive strategies designed to reduce or eliminate the future occurrence of problem behavior. School conduct codes and discipline handbooks tend to be explicit about unacceptable student conduct, especially with respect to prohibited actions, for example, *no smoking, no weapons, no gum chewing, no illegal substances*. The expectations for specific settings (e.g., lunchroom, bathrooms, hallways) and activities (e.g., riding the bus, assemblies) tend to be similar, for example, *no running in the hallways, no standing on the bus*. To support and enforce these discipline policies and to inhibit displays of these unacceptable behaviors, graduated sanctions that increase in aversiveness and intensity (e.g., from verbal reprimands to corporal punishment, from trips to the office to in-school and out of school suspensions, from apologies to restitution) are developed and enacted.

---

*Unfortunately, students who are at-risk of developing antisocial lifestyles or who already have acquired a sophisticated history of antisocial behavior are the least likely to benefit from punitive approaches to school discipline, and, as a result, are the most likely to be excluded from classroom and school contexts.*

---

Fortunately, this traditional and universal approach to discipline is sufficient to inform and guide the conduct of most students in a school building or classroom (Colvin et al., 1993; Langland et al., 1998; Lewis et al., in press; Lewis et al., 1998; Taylor-Greene et al. 1997). As described previously, these students respond quickly and favorably to simple rule statements and to negatively stated rules and the "threat" of aversive sanctions because they have the benefit of learning histories that consist of firmly acquired socially acceptable behaviors and access to prosocial support systems. Unfortunately, students who are at-risk of developing antisocial lifestyles or who already have acquired a sophisticated history of antisocial behavior are the least likely to benefit from punitive approaches to school discipline, and, as a result, are the most likely to be excluded from classroom and school contexts (Mayer, 1995). In fact,

these students are more likely to respond negatively to rule- and sanctioned-based disciplinary systems. Evidence suggests that students with significant behavioral challenges are more likely to respond to punishment with *increases* in the very behaviors that were targeted to be decreased, and that "get tough" approaches exacerbate rather than improve the school environment (Noguera, 1995). Mayer and Sulzer-Azaroff (1991) observed that punishing problem behaviors without a school-wide system of support is associated with increased occurrences of aggression, vandalism, truancy, tardiness, and dropping out. To confound the problem further, introspective counseling and psychotherapeutic treatments are provided to these students. Interestingly, a compelling body of literature indicates that punishment, counseling, and psychotherapy are the *least* effective responses to reduce antisocial and violent behavior in school (Gottfredson, 1997; Kazdin, 1995; Lipsey, 1991, 1992; Lipsey & Wilson, 1993; Tolan & Guerra, 1994).

---

*Given these circumstances and challenges associated with educating students with severe behavioral challenges, effective behavioral support (i.e., discipline) must be developed that proactively (positive and preventive) applies a systems level approach to discipline for all students in today's schools, supports educators who must teach and work in today's classrooms and schools, and adopts and sustains effective and efficient practices.*

---

Given these circumstances and challenges associated with educating students with severe behavioral challenges, effective behavioral support (i.e., discipline) must be developed that proactively (positive and preventive) applies a systems level approach to discipline for all students in today's schools, supports educators who must teach and work in today's classrooms and schools, and adopts and sustains effective and efficient practices. Fortunately, the same body of literature that indicates ineffective strategies also acknowledges effective approaches to proactive school-wide discipline and management of at-risk and antisocial behavior of students: social skills instruction, academic/curricular restructuring, behaviorally based interven-



tions, early screening and identification of antisocial behavior patterns, and proactive school-wide discipline systems (Biglan, 1995; Gottfredson, 1997; Colvin et al., 1993; Lipsey, 1991, 1992; Mayer, 1995; Sugai & Horner, 1994; Tolan & Guerra, 1994; Walker et al., 1995; Walker et al., 1996).

---

*We suggest that an effective response to the rise in problem behavior in our schools requires a shift from conventional discipline approaches to an integrated set of behavioral systems*

---

Clearly, approaches to discipline must be comprehensive. Families must have opportunities to acquire and become fluent in effective parenting and behavior management skills and receive support, especially when their children are young (Biglan, 1995; Patterson et al., 1992). In addition, communities must learn to coordinate and make available a vast array of services (e.g., mental health, juvenile justice, health care), increase opportunities for children and youth to develop more prosocial peer networks, and improve the social and community engagements that these children experience. In this paper, we focus on the features of proactive school-wide discipline systems, and we provide illustrations of these features. For this purpose, school discipline is defined as a system of proactive behavioral supports designed to increase educators' capacity to minimize antisocial behavior and educate all children and youth. This type of definition is useful because systems, successful student learning, prevention, and proactive planning are emphasized.

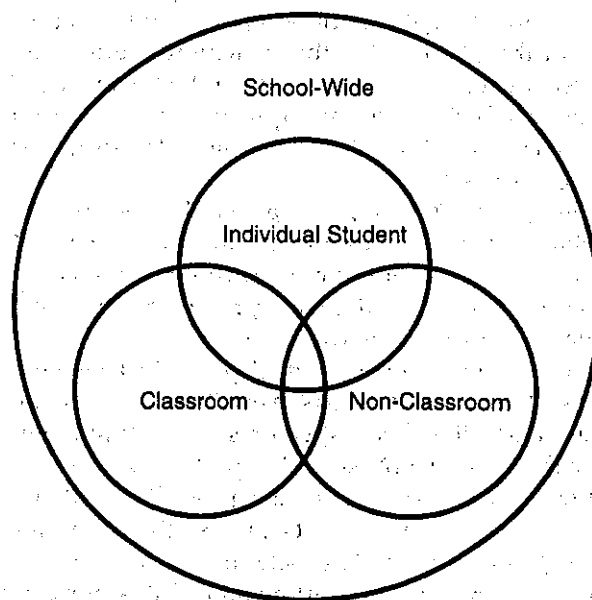
#### Systems Approach

We suggest that an effective response to the rise in problem behavior in our schools requires a shift from conventional discipline approaches to an integrated set of behavioral systems (Colvin et al., 1993; Gresham et al., in press; Sugai & Horner, 1994). Historically schools have organized efforts to manage antisocial behavior around discipline policies that defined transgressions and specified unpleasant consequences for those transgressions. More recently schools have been presented with a vast array of packaged interventions (e.g., Foundations, Assertive Discipline, Discipline with Dignity, Positive Discipline, Positive Discipline), but a major gap is that schools seldom implement an integrated set of behavioral systems that enable these universal

interventions to be sustained for more than two to three years and to meet the real challenges posed by problem behavior.

We propose a key message that traditional discipline policies or a patchwork of discipline programs is not likely to be effective or sustainable. The alternative is to suggest that most elementary and middle (junior-high) schools do not face a single school-wide discipline system. Instead, they should consider four distinct integrated discipline systems that stem from different sources, are maintained by different functions, and require different responses from schools. A school that operates successfully in the 21st Century will need an integrated approach that directly and systematically considers procedures that are associated with four systems (depicted in Figure 3): (a) *School-wide* procedures for all students, students, and settings; (b) *Specific-setting* procedures for all students and staff for specific school settings (e.g., cafeteria, hallways, playground, bus); (c) *Classroom* procedures for specific teachers and their students during in structured instructionally-focused contexts; and (d) *Individual-student* procedures for the 1-7% of students who typically are associated with 50% of the behavioral incidents (e.g., office referrals) experienced in a school building (e.g., Taylor-Greene et al., 1997). More detailed descriptions of these four interrelated systems, and the features needed to implement them are provided below.

Figure 3. Four Systems of Positive Behavior Support.



**School-wide support system.** School-wide support systems consist of those structures and procedures that involve and affect all students, all settings, and all staff. The most important element of the school-wide support system is a building-wide team that oversees all development, implementation, modification, and evaluation activities (see "team-based" approach described below) (Colvin et al., 1993; Curtis & Stollar, 1997; Knoff & Curtis, 1996; Sugai & Horner, 1994; Taylor-Greene et al., 1997). These activities include ensuring that expectations for student behavior are defined clearly, discipline procedures are implemented consistently by staff and administration, appropriate student behavior is taught to all students (and staff), information about student behavior is monitored and given back to staff members on a regular basis, clear consequences for problem behaviors are defined and provided, positive behaviors are acknowledged positively and publicly, rapid responses are in place to address dangerous situations, and teachers have clear options that allow instruction to continue in their classrooms. For example, a middle school was experiencing high rates of office referrals for problem behavior (>2600 office referrals for an enrollment of 530 students in 1994-1995) (Taylor-Green, et al., 1997). A behavior support team was established to design a school-wide set of expectations (e.g., *be there, be ready; be responsible; be respectful; be safe*), lesson plans and procedures for teaching these expectations to all students during the first week of school, and procedures for acknowledging students who demonstrated these expectations. The team also designed procedures for training and monitoring all building staff, and evaluated the effectiveness of the procedures. Implementation efforts involved all students and all staff, and were managed by the building behavior support team. The result was a 45% reduction in office referrals during the following year.

**Specific-setting support systems.** Procedures and structures for specific-setting support systems address unique non-instructional contexts which involve all students and all staff, for example, lunchrooms, assemblies, restrooms, buses, hallways. Like school-wide support systems, specific-setting support systems have team-based mechanisms for monitoring and identifying specific settings that are or have the potential of becoming problematic, ensuring that school-wide rules and procedures are applied, by training students and staff on specific setting procedures and expectations, monitoring the effectiveness of specific-setting procedures, and providing feedback to all staff (Colvin, Sugai, &

Kameenui, 1994; Smith & Sugai, 1998). For example, an elementary school determined that significant problem behaviors were occurring when students entered and exited the school building and during hallway transition periods (Colvin, Sugai, Good, & Lee, 1996). The building discipline team worked with all staff members on strategies to teach and remind all students of the expected behaviors for making successful transitions in the hallways of the school. Teachers also were reminded to monitor their students' behaviors actively and regularly. Finally, staff assigned to hallway duty were instructed to interact actively and positively with students and to acknowledge those students who moved appropriately through the hallways.

**Classroom support system.** Although the management of classrooms is the responsibility of individual classroom teachers, events in classrooms affect how students learn and teachers teach and how subsequent activities within and outside the classroom progress (Colvin & Lazar, 1997; Kameenui & Darch, 1997; Paine et al., 1983). Classroom support systems parallel the features and procedures of the school-wide system, for example, establishing and teaching classroom expectations, structures, and routines. However, attention also is directed toward providing teachers with regular opportunities for outside assistance (e.g., observation, instruction), adopting and adapting instruction and curriculum, and managing students who display challenging academic and social problem behavior. For example, two classroom teachers at a middle school developed a social skills lesson to improve general classroom behaviors (Langland et al., 1998). The teachers established procedures for teaching students and staff about classroom expectations and routines ("respect") and acknowledging displays of these behaviors. A decrease in the overall level of problem behavior was observed across both classrooms.

**Individual student support system.** Individual student support systems must provide teachers with immediate, relevant, effective, and efficient responses to those students who present the most significant behavioral challenges in their classrooms and schools. This system requires that discipline systems have (a) behavioral expertise that is located within the building; (b) a team-based approach in which all staff members who have regular contact with an individual student participate in the planning, development, implementation, and evaluation of individual behavior support plans; (c) access and use of effective behavioral interventions (e.g., functional assessment, social skills instructional strategies, instructional and curricular restructuring; positive

behavior support planning); (d) involvement of family and community resources; (e) progress monitoring and evaluation procedures; and (f) methods for sustaining high fidelity implementation. For example, a seventh grade student was identified as having significant problem behavior (e.g., physical and verbal aggression, destruction of property, academic deficiencies) (Todd et al., in press). The school-wide behavior support team initiated the development of an "action team" that included all teachers who had direct contact with the student (Todd, Horner, Sugai, & Colvin, 1998). This working team met within 48 hours of the teacher's request for assistance, developed a plan for the next day to decrease the likelihood that severe problem behavior would occur, and conducted a functional assessment and developed a comprehensive, individualized behavior support plan (e.g., crisis procedures, prevention procedures, teaching procedures, continuum of consequences for rule following and violation behaviors).

We suggest that the successful functioning of any one of these four support systems is dependent upon the effective and efficient functioning of all four systems. For example, a school's ability to respond systemically, effectively, and efficiently to individual student challenges is affected directly by the integrity of the school-wide support system and the operation of specific-setting support systems. Similarly, social and academic success in classrooms is influenced directly by individual student behavior and the foundation created by the school-wide support system.

### **Implementing Effective Behavior Support Systems**

The four behavior support systems described above incorporate well validated features of effective discipline (c.f., Charles, 1995; Colvin et al., 1994; Kameenui, Colvin, & Sugai, 1993; Sprick, Sprick, & Garrison, 1992; Wolery et al., 1988). What is different today is recognition that schools are complex environments that will not be easily influenced by subtle, isolated efforts. Efforts to implement individual elements will not be effective. Substantive change in antisocial behavior requires a level of effort that matches the level of the problem. The four integrated systems of effective behavioral support provide one possible structure for making that effort.

Admittedly, much more research is needed to support the effectiveness and efficiency of the overall effective behavior support approach and the components that make up the process and procedures.

However, as a promising practice, we suggest that schools consider the following features that characterize the effective behavior support systems approach.

---

*If the goal of developing, implementing, and monitoring a positive behavior support system is not one of the top three school improvement goals, material, time, and staff resources will be difficult to bring together and maneuver effectively and efficiently.*

---

**Priority.** Establishing or restructuring proactive discipline or behavior support systems in the context of school reform efforts, curricular adoptions, challenging child/family/community conditions, and budgetary reductions is extremely difficult. To be effective and efficient, school building staff must be prepared and have the capacity to engage in a sustained and focused effort. If the goal of developing, implementing, and monitoring a positive behavior support system is not one of the top three school improvement goals, material, time, and staff resources will be difficult to bring together and maneuver effectively and efficiently. For example, positive school-wide discipline and behavior support cannot be presented and maintained through a one-day staff development/in-service workshop or the distribution of a revised discipline handbook on the first day of school. In our efforts, successful schools have committed to and used 1-3 years in their efforts to create or restructure their school-wide discipline systems (Taylor et al., 1997).

**Collaboration.** An individual teacher typically does not have the capacity to provide the behavior support necessary to have a meaningful effect on the academic and social behavior success of individual students with significant problem behavior patterns. Similarly, the development, implementation, and/or maintenance of school-wide discipline systems is impossible for an individual administrator or teacher. A team-based approach is required (Horner & Sugai, 1994; Kameenui et al., 1993). A behavior support team (e.g., discipline, behavior, or school climate committee) should be established that is comprised of an administrator (or someone with administrative authority), grade level teacher representatives, and support staff (e.g., special educator, counselor, teaching assistants). The roles and functions of this

committee can vary but its primary purpose is to oversee the development, implementation, and monitoring of school-wide discipline efforts, including professional development and dissemination efforts.

---

*An individual teacher typically does not have the capacity to provide the behavior support necessary to have a meaningful effect on the academic and social behavior success of individual students with significant problem behavior patterns. Similarly, the development, implementation, and/or maintenance of school-wide discipline systems is impossible for an individual administrator or teacher.*

---

**Administrative leadership.** One of the most important elements in the development and implementation of a proactive systems approach to behavior support is administrative leadership. Although a team of teachers can accomplish many tasks, someone must have the capacity to make important decisions related to funding, schedules, personnel roles and functions, resource allocation, etc. These kinds of decisions usually rest with the building administrator (i.e., Principal or Assistant Principal). This administrator must be involved actively, have regular attendance, openly acknowledge staff member contributions, and make decisions that support the high priority of the behavior support effort (Colvin & Sprick, 1996).

**Agreement and need.** The development and sustained implementation of any systemic effort to address problem behavior in schools requires that all staff members identify that the need or problem exists and that a long-term comprehensive effort is required to mount an effective response to the problem. Making the need clear to staff may take time. Data about the nature of the problem (e.g., office referral rates and types, incidence of critical events) and information about individual responsibility to the problem may need to be presented. Although 100% staff agreement would be ideal, obtaining acknowledgment of the existence of the problem and a commitment to participate in a sustained effort from 80% or more of the staff is realistic and possible. Any less inhibits the problem solving and decision making process.

**Policy.** To reinforce the importance of the proactive systems approach to school discipline, decisions, procedures, and structures must be converted into policy to guide the actions of students, staff members, parents, and visitors. Usually policy is documented in discipline or conduct code handbooks; however, these books overemphasize what is prohibited (e.g., *no smoking*), what the consequences are for rule violations (e.g., *one day in-school suspension for first violation, two day out-school suspension for second and third violation*), and what the procedures are for specific contexts or routines (e.g., *buying lunch ticket, maintaining lockers, handling medication*). Little information is provided about prosocial behavioral expectations (e.g., *coming to class prepared and ready to learn, proactively problem solving or managing conflicts*), routines and techniques for teaching social skills, or consequences for engaging in prosocial behavior in classrooms and at school.

**Behavioral competence.** An individual or, preferably, a collective of persons within a school building must have the behavioral capacity to functionally assess situations, build proactive behavior support plans, develop social skill lesson plans, collect and interpret behavioral data, establish and implement crisis intervention strategies, train others, etc. This competence must be established and available in the building because the support must be trustworthy, readily accessible, and immediately usable (Carnine, 1995). Many school districts provide behavior consultants who provide one to six hours per week per building. This limited assistance is insufficient to meet the hourly/daily comprehensive behavior support needs of a school building. A special educator, counselor, general educator, or administrator who resides in a building and has been trained in behavioral technologies (Carr et al., 1993; Sugai & Tindal, 1993; Wolery et al., 1988) makes an ideal candidate for this role.

**Proactivity.** Successful school-wide behavior support systems create a balance between reactive and proactive (i.e., positive & preventive) structures and procedures. Unfortunately, the need to respond to the individual student who significantly disrupts the learning process or endangers peers is extremely coercive. Events that cannot be ignored require an immediate response, many individuals, extended amounts of time, and large amounts of resources that are focused on one student. When the problem is eventually removed or de-escalated, albeit temporarily, we return to the teaching job, exhausted and discouraged. Although preventative, proactive responses represent the best solution, the impact of prevention responses are delayed, small in the short

term, and seemingly unrelated to the student's problem behavior. However, school climate, classroom mood, staff attitudes, and student safety are enhanced when a proactive approach is emphasized during, for example, (a) social skills instruction, (b) academic success, (c) individualized programming, (d) prosocial peer and adult engagements, (e) positive student acknowledgments, (f) challenging curriculum, and (g) school, home, and community collaborations.

**Integration.** The development of effective behavior support systems must occur within the context of the academic and socialization mission of the school building and the classroom. That is, the implementation of a proactive approach to discipline should be integrated seamlessly with the design and presentation of effective academic instruction. If integration is not achieved, the impact will be lessened, resources will be used inefficiently, and interest in sustaining an effort will be diminished. In addition, many problem behaviors (e.g., escape/avoidance) can be traced directly to poor management of instruction (i.e., design of instruction and curriculum) (Kameeuni & Darch, 1995). Proactive school-wide discipline or behavior support must be integrated into the other routines and activities of the classroom and school building.

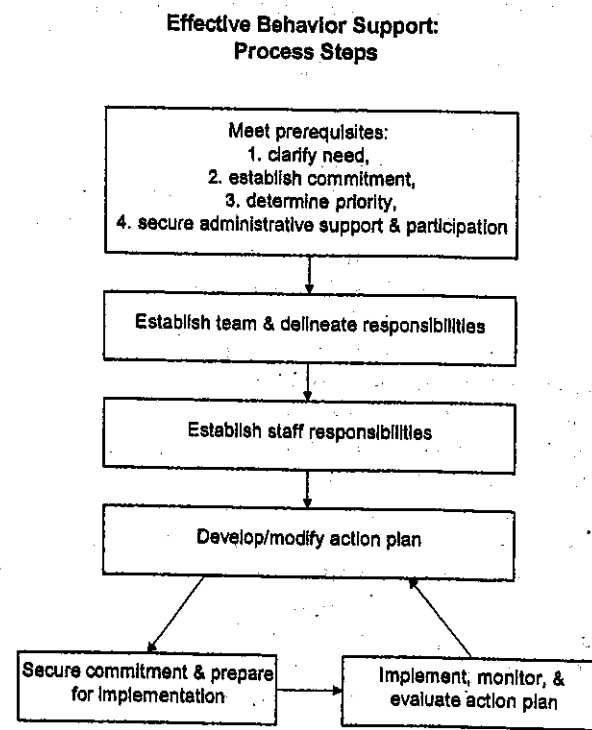
*The challenge to meeting the behavior support needs of all staff and students is not the identification of effective strategies. The real challenge is developing and maintaining "host environments" that can support the adoption and sustainment of these effective practices.*

**Resources.** When efforts to build or restructure behavior support systems are initiated, a familiar comment is that time, personnel, materials, equipment, etc. are insufficient. Building behavior support or discipline teams must consider the efficient and effective use of resources as a high priority concern. Interestingly, when building staff consider the amount of resources they expend in reacting to crisis situations and providing graduated sanctions, the resources needed to build structures and routines designed to prevent these situations becomes much more achievable and reasonable.

## An Approach to Implementation

The challenge to meeting the behavior support needs of all staff and students is not the identification of effective strategies. The real challenge is developing and maintaining "host environments" that can support the adoption and sustainment of these effective practices (Colvin et. al., 1993; Gottfredson & Gottfredson, 1996; Sugai & Horner, 1994; Zins & Ponti, 1990). To take fullest advantage of the research validated tools available to us, a systems approach that reflects the features described previously must be applied. In general, the implementation of a system of behavior support consists of three process steps: (a) establishing prerequisites, (b) establishing responsibilities, and (c) implementation (see Figure 4). The first two steps serve as the foundation for the effective and efficient implementation of the specific techniques and strategies associated with school-wide, specific setting, classroom, and individual student systems.

Figure 4. Behavior Support Process.



### Establishing Prerequisites

The first step in a systemic provision of behavior support is to establish a process to operate and sustain the policies and procedures of the building. In particular, four prerequisite needs must be met. First, the need for addressing behavior support must

be specified and clarified. A survey (e.g., Sugai, Horner, & Todd, 1996) or a review of behavior incidents (e.g., office or discipline referrals, attendance patterns) can be used to clarify this need. Second, the willingness and commitment of a majority (>80%) of the school staff must be developed, secured, and fostered. If this level of commitment is not present, initial efforts should involve activities that are low effort and high impact and that result in increased staff "buy-in" (e.g., establishment of a behavior support committee, conducting a needs assessment). Third, high priority should be given to addressing behavior support needs at the school-wide level. To increase the efficiency and effectiveness with which the goal is achieved, behavior support should be established as one of the top three school improvement goals for a period of 3-4 years. Finally, active administrative support should be secured. Administrators can show their backing of the behavior support process by (a) actively participating in activities, (b) increasing project visibility and priority (e.g., faculty meetings agenda, newsletters), (c) securing resources (e.g., time, fte, materials), (d) arranging professional development opportunities, (e) sustaining priority, and (f) providing positive reinforcement for accomplishments.

### Establish Roles and Responsibilities

After prerequisites have been established, a team should be formed and its roles and responsibilities should be determined. In general, this school-wide leadership team is charged with oversight for all four behavior support subsystems. Responsibilities include (a) assessing what is in place, (b) establishing behavior support as a priority and long term goal for the building's school improvement plan, (c) developing and implementing professional development activities for all staff, (d) developing and implementing plans that enable building staff to achieve behavior support goals, (e) developing and operating on-going record-keeping procedures to evaluate the implementation of behavior support, and (f) engaging in regular communications and problem solving with building staff.

After the needs, goals, and team for enhancing behavior support has been developed, the roles and responsibilities of all building staff should be delineated. Participation by support staff (e.g., special educators, school counselors and psychologists, nurses), educational assistants, classified staff (e.g., office secretaries, custodians), general education teachers, and administrators should be defined and secured. Establishing staff responsibilities can increase consistency and commitment.

### Implementation

Only after prerequisites, roles, and responsibilities have been established is the actual implementation of behavior support activities initiated. These preliminaries increase the probability that implementation will be sustained at high levels of accuracy, across multiple years, with changes in teaching and administrative staff, and with shifts in student populations.

Implementation involves three dynamic and on-going activities. First, an action plan should be developed. This plan should delineate the activities, people, resources, and schedules for achieving the building's behavior support needs. Second, the commitment and responsibilities of building staff should be delineated to prepare for the implementation of behavior support activities. Finally, implementation activities should be initiated and based on data from on-going evaluation procedures, modifications are made in activities.

### Concluding Comments

A number of family, community, and school factors are associated with the development of antisocial behavior. The greatest challenge is not the identification of effective strategies and techniques. The research literature is replete with effective strategies. The problem is implementing these strategies and techniques in a systematic, integrated manner.

---

*We challenge educators to avoid the temptation to embrace each new behavioral fad to address the intractable challenges presented by students with antisocial behavior patterns, but, instead, to focus on integrated systems that apply validated procedures in a comprehensive structure.*

---

The purpose of this paper is to describe the features of a proactive, systems approach to school discipline for all children and youth, but especially for those with or at-risk of antisocial lifestyles. These features reflect the need to develop structures and procedures at the systems level that increase educators' capacity to initiate and sustain the adoption and use of effective and preferred behavior and classroom management strategies. We acknowledge that the behavioral and academic challenges posed by students with antisocial behavior are formidable.

and that efforts to educate these students are arduous. We believe that successful school experiences and outcomes are possible for these students; however, a sustained, proactive, and systemic approach will be required. For some students, the schools will need to work directly and closely with the family and community members and agents in order to affect the steadfast antisocial behavior patterns displayed by these students. Although tempting, simple solutions and one-shot efforts will not be sufficient.

We challenge educators to avoid the temptation to embrace each new behavioral fad to address the intractable challenges presented by students with antisocial behavior patterns, but, instead, to focus on integrated systems that apply validated procedures in a comprehensive structure. We challenge educators to take advantage of the incredible opportunities they have during the school day to provide a successful learning and social experience for students who outside of the school context have few occasions for participation in prosocial peer networks or engagements. Finally, we challenge educators to pay close attention to the systemic variables that contribute to or hinder the effective and efficient implementation of a proactive learning environment. Educators, parents, students, administrators, etc. will need to build school building structures and procedures that support a best practices approach, that is, one in which discipline is more than punitive reacting to problem behavior, but rather an approach that is collaborative, high priority, proactive, integrated, systemic, supported, and policy-driven. ♦

## References

- Bannerman, S. F. (1987). *The politics of caring*. Philadelphia, PA: the Farmer Press.
- Biglan, A. (1995). Translating what we know about the context of antisocial behavior in to a lower prevalence of such behavior. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, 28, 479-492.
- Borthwick-Duffy, S. A., Eyman, R. K., & White, J. F. (1987). Client characteristics and residential placement pattern. *American Journal of Mental Deficiency*, 92, 24-30.
- Carnine, D. (1995). Trustworthiness, useability, and accessibility of educational research. *Journal of Behavioral Education*, 5, 251-258.
- Carr, E. G., Levin, L., McConnachie, G., Carlson, J. I., Kemp, D. C., & Smith, C. E. (1994). *Communication-based intervention for problem behavior: A user's guide for producing positive change*. Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes.
- Charles, C. M. (1995). *Building classroom discipline: From models to practice* (4th ed.). New York: Longman Inc.
- Colvin, G., Kameenui, E. J., & Sugai, G. (1993). Schoolwide and classroom management: Reconceptualizing the integration and management of students with behavior problems in general education. *Education and Treatment of Children*, 16, 361-381.
- Colvin, G., & Lazar, M. (1997). *The effective elementary classroom: Managing for success*. Longmont, CO: Sopris West.
- Colvin, G., & Sprick, R. (1996). Providing administrative support for school improvement plans: Ten strategies for principals. Unpublished manuscript. College of Education, University of Oregon.
- Colvin, G., Sugai, G., Good, R. H., III, & Lee, Y. (1997). Using active supervision and precorrection to improve transition behaviors in an elementary school. *School Psychology Quarterly*, 12, 344-363.
- Colvin, G., Sugai, G., & Kameenui, E. (1994). *Curriculum for establishing a proactive school-wide discipline plan: Project PREPARE*. Eugene, OR: Behavioral Research and Teaching, College of Education, University of Oregon.
- Curtis, H. M., & Stollar, S. A. (1996). Applying principles and practices of organizational change to school reform. *School Psychology Review*, 25, 409-417.
- Dumas, J. E. (1989). Treating antisocial behavior in children: child and family approaches. *Clinical Psychology Review*, 9, 197-222.
- Gottfredson, D.C. (1997). School-based crime prevention. In L. Sherman, D. Gottfredson, Mackenzie, D. J. Eck, P. Reuter, & S. Bushway (Eds.), *Preventing crime: What works, what doesn't, what's promising*. College Park, MD: Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice.
- Gottfredson, G. D., & Gottfredson, D. C. (1996). A national study of delinquency prevention in schools: Rationale for a study to describe the extensiveness and implementation of programs to prevent adolescent problem behavior in schools. Ellicott City, MD: Gottfredson Associates, Inc.
- Gresham, F. M., Sugai, G., Horner, R. H., Quinn, M. M., & McInerney, M. (in press). Schoolwide values, discipline, and social skills. Synthesis report for American Institutes of Research and Office of Special Education Programs. Washington, D.C.
- Hill, B. K., Lakin, C., & Bruninks, R. H. (1984). Trends in residential services for people who are mentally retarded: 1977-1982. *The Journal for the Association of Persons with Severe Handicaps*, 9, 243-250.



- Horner, R. H., Diemer, S. M., & Brazeau, K. C. (1992). Educational support for students with severe problem behaviors in Oregon: A descriptive analysis from the 1987-1988 school year. *The Journal of the Association of Persons with Severe Handicaps*, 17, 154-169.
- Kameenui, E. J., & Darch, C. B. (1995). *Instructional classroom management: A proactive approach to behavior management*. White Plains, NY: Longman.
- Kauffman, J. (1997). *Characteristics of emotional and behavior disorders of children and youth* (6th ed.). Columbus, OH: Merrill.
- Kazdin, A. E. (1985). *Treatment of antisocial behavior in children and adolescents*. Homewood, IL: Dorsey Press.
- Kerr, M. M., & Nelson, C. M. (1998). *Strategies for managing problem behaviors in the classroom* (2nd ed.). Columbus, OH: Merrill.
- Knitzer, J. (1993). Children's mental health policy: Challenging the future. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders*, 1(1), 8-16.
- Knitzer, J., Steinberg, Z., & Fleisch, B. (1990). *At the schoolhouse door: An examination of programs and policies for children with behavioral and emotional problems*. New York: Bank Street College of Education.
- Knoff, H. M., & Curtis, M. J. (1996). Applying principles and practices of organizational change to school reform. *School Psychology Review*, 25, 406-408.
- Langland, S., Lewis-Palmer, T., & Sugai, G. (1998). Teaching respect in the classroom: An instructional approach. *Journal of Behavioral Education*, 8, 245-261.
- Lewis, T. J., Colvin, G., & Sugai, G. (in press). The effects of pre-correction and active supervision on the recess behavior of elementary school students. *School Psychology Quarterly*.
- Lewis, T. J., Sugai, G., & Colvin, G. (1998). Reducing problem behavior through a school-wide system of effective behavioral support: Investigation of a school-wide social skills training program and contextual interventions. *School Psychology Review*, 27, 446-459.
- Lipsey, M. W. (1991). The effect of treatment on juvenile delinquents: Results from meta-analysis. In F. Losel, D. Bender, & T. Bliesener (Eds.), *Psychology and law*. New York: Walter de Gruyter.
- Lipsey, M. W. (1992). Juvenile delinquency treatment: A meta-analytic inquiry into the variability of effects. In T. D. Cook, H. Cooper, D. S. Cordray, H. Hartman, L. V. Hedges, R. V. Light, T. A. Louis, & F. Mostellar (Eds.), *Meta-analysis for explanation*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
- Lipsey, M. W., & Wilson, D. B. (1993). The efficacy of psychological, educational, and behavioral treatment: Confirmation from meta-analysis. *American Psychologist*, 48, 1181-1209.
- Mayer, G. (1995). Preventing antisocial behavior in the schools. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, 28, 467-478.
- Mayer, G. R., & Sulzer-Azaroff, B. (1990). Interventions for vandalism. In G. Stoner, M. R. Shinn, & H. M. Walker (Eds.), *Interventions for achievement and behavior problems* [monograph]. Washington, DC: National Association of School Psychologists.
- Morgan, D. P., & Jenson, W. R. (1988). *Teaching behaviorally disordered students: Preferred practices*. Columbus, OH: Merrill.
- Noguera, P. A. (1995). Preventing and producing violence: A critical analysis of responses to school violence. *Harvard Educational Review*, 65(2), 189-212.
- Paine, S. C., Radicchi, J., Rosellini, L. C., Deutchman, L., & Darch, C. B. (1983). *Structuring your classroom for academic success*. Champaign, IL: Research Press.
- Patterson, G. R. (1982). *Coercive family process: Vol. 3. A social learning approach*. Eugene, OR: Castalia Press.
- Patterson, G. R., Reid, J. B., & Dishion, T. J. (1992). *Antisocial boys*. Eugene, OR: Castalia Press.
- Peacock Hill Working Group (1991). Problems and promises in special education and related services for children and youth with emotional or behavioral disorders. *Behavioral Disorders*, 16, 299-313.
- Reichle, J. (1990). *National Working Conference on Positive Approaches to the Management of Excess Behavior: Final Report and Recommendations*. Minneapolis, MN: Institute on Community Integration, University of Minnesota.
- Sheerenberger, R. (1990). *Public residential services for the mentally retarded: FY 1988-89*. Fairfax, VA: National Association of Superintendents of Public Facilities for the Mentally Retarded.
- Smith, S., & Sugai, G. (1998). The effect of systematic supervision training on levels of active supervision and rates of problem behavior during recess. Unpublished manuscript. Behavioral Research and Teaching. University of Oregon.
- Sprick, R., Sprick, M., & Garrison, M. (1992). *Foundations: Developing positive school-wide discipline policies*. Longmont, CO: Sopris West.
- Stevens, L. J., & Price, M. (1992). Meeting the challenge of educating children at risk. *Kappan*, 74, 18-23.
- Sugai, G. (1998). Postmodernism and emotional and behavioral disorders: Distraction or advancement. *Behavior Disorders*, 23, 171-177.
- Sugai, G., & Horner, R. (1994). Including students with severe behavior problems in general education settings: Assumptions, challenges, and solutions. In J. Marr, G. Sugai, & G. Tindal (Eds.), *The Oregon conference monograph*, 6, 102-20. Eugene, OR: University of Oregon.



- Sugai, G., Horner, R., & Todd, A. (1996). *Effective behavior support self-assessment needs tool*. Eugene, Oregon: University of Oregon.
- Sugai, G., & Lewis, T. (1996). Preferred and promising practices for social skills instruction. *Focus on Exceptional Children*, 29(4), 1-16.
- Sugai, G., & Tindal, G. (1993). *Effective school consultation: An interactive approach*. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.
- Tausig, M. (1985). Factors in family decision making about placement for developmentally disabled individuals. *American Journal of Mental Deficiency*, 89, 353-361.
- Taylor-Green, S., Brown, D., Nelson, L., Longton, J., Gassman, Cohen, J., Swartz, J., Horner, R. H., Sugai, G., & Hall, S. (1997). School-wide behavioral support: Starting the year off right. *Journal of Behavioral Education*, 7, 99-112.
- Todd, A., Horner, R., Sugai, G., & Colvin, G. (1999). Individualizing school-wide discipline for students with chronic problem behaviors: A team approach. *Effective School Practices*, 17, 68-78.
- Todd, A. W., Horner, R. H., Vanater, S., & Schneider, C. (in press). Working together to make change: An example of positive behavioral support with a student with traumatic brain injury. *Education and Treatment in Children*.
- Tolan, P., & Guerra, N. (1994). What works in reducing adolescent violence: An empirical review of the field. Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence. University of Colorado, Boulder.
- Walker, H. M. (1993). Antisocial Behavior in school. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Problems*, 2(2), 20-24.
- Walker, H. M., Colvin, G., & Ramsey, E. (1995). *Antisocial behavior in schools: Strategies and best practice*. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.
- Walker, H. M., Horner, R. H., Sugai, G., Bullis, M., Sprague, J. R., Bricker, D., & Kaufman, M. J. (1996). Integrated approaches to preventing antisocial behavior patterns among school-age children and youth. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders*, 4, 193-256.
- Walker, H. M., Kavanagh, K., Golly, A., Stiller, B., Severson, H., & Feil, E. (1996). *Overview of first steps: An early intervention program for antisocial kindergartners: A training manual*. Longmont, CO: Sopris West.
- Wolery, M. R., Bailey, D. B., Jr., & Sugai, G. M. (1988). *Effective teaching: Principles and procedures of applied behavior analysis with exceptional children*. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- Zigler, E., Taussig, C., & Black, K. (1992). Early childhood intervention: A promising prevention for juvenile delinquency. *American Psychologist*, 47, 997-1006.
- Zins, J. E., & Ponti, C. R. (1990). Best practices in school-based consultation. In A. Thomas and J. Grimes (eds.), *Best practices in school psychology — II* (pp. 673-694). Washington, DC: National Association of School Psychologists.

# Effective Behavior Support: Strengthening School-Wide Systems Through a Team-based Approach

Anne W. Todd, Robert H. Horner, George Sugai, and Jeffrey R. Sprague  
University of Oregon

*Abstract: This paper presents a systems approach to building and strengthening effective behavior support in schools. Problem behaviors in school are discussed as patterns including (a) many students, many problems, (b) many incidents in a specific setting, (c) many incidents in a specific classroom, and (d) a small number of students accounting for a large proportion of problems. These patterns are then assessed and transposed into an action plan for building school-wide behavior support. The action plan is designed based on an assessment of the current systems of support in a school. Critical features for assessing and designing an action plan are presented through a case study approach of an elementary school of approximately 586 students across a four year period. The overall impact included (a) a change in the allocation of faculty resources by using teams in a systematic fashion, (b) a change in teaching and monitoring behavioral expectations across all settings in the school, (c) a change in the subjective "climate" of the school, (d) a change in teacher capacity to get help for student concerns, (e) a change in referrals to the office, and (f) a change in the ability of the school to adapt to on-going challenges.*

Problem behaviors are the single most common reason why students are removed from classroom and school settings (Walker, Horner, Sugai, Bullis, Sprague, Bricker & Kaufman, 1996). Some of these students have significant disabilities while others have no identified disabilities. Problem behaviors may include the screaming, self-injury and aggression of students with severe intellectual disabilities, the verbal threats, swearing and tardiness of a student labeled ADHD, or the theft, disrespect, vandalism, fights and weapons presented by a student with no disability labels. All key measures of problem behavior indicate that teachers are facing more students with problem behaviors. These students are more diverse: different cultures, different economic backgrounds, different family configurations, different types and levels of disability. The diversity of the challenge suggests that no one, simple solution will work for all students, all teachers, or all schools (Sugai & Horner, in press; Walker et al., 1996).

Schools face a complex challenge to educate all students and ensure their physical safety. Problem behaviors can interfere with the ability of teachers

to educate, and the ability of schools to be safe (Sprague & Colvin, 1996). In the past, we addressed this mix of goals by removing students with problem behaviors from typical school settings. This approach removed the student but did not necessarily result in the education and development of that student. For a variety of reasons (educational, fiscal, theoretical) we can expect that students who used to be removed from regular education will continue to be part of these classrooms. The net effect is that teachers will be asked to work with more students who engage in problem behaviors. Now is a time for careful reflection on current trends in violent, destructive and disruptive behaviors in our schools and communities. Now, also, is a time for assessing what approaches appear to be effective and which do not. If schools are to remain (become) safe environments, educate children with disruptive behavior, and meet the needs of those children without problem behaviors, change is needed.

## An Expanding Concern

The past decade has been a time when we have gained substantial understanding about problem behaviors. We know that problem behavior is a serious concern of teachers, and is affecting our communities. Consider the following facts:

- ✓ Three years after leaving school, 70% of antisocial youth have been arrested (Walker, Colvin & Ramsey, 1995).

---

Preparation of this manuscript was supported in part by the U.S. Department of Education Grant #H133B20004. However, the opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of either the U.S. Department of Education, and no official endorsement by the department should be inferred.

- ✓ Eighty-two percent of crimes in the United States are committed by people who dropped out of school (Walker, Colvin, & Ramsey, 1995).
- ✓ A Review of over 500 studies by Lipsey (1992) indicates that the *least* effective responses to violence in schools are: (a) counseling, (b) psychotherapy, (c) punishment.
- ✓ Punishing problem behaviors without a school-wide system of support is associated with *increased* (a) aggression, (b) vandalism, (c) truancy, (d) tardiness, and (e) dropouts (Mayer & Sulzer-Azeroff, 1991).
- ✓ Approaches that are more effective (Lipsey, 1992; Tolan & Guera, 1994; Gottfredson, 1997) include (a) social skills training, (b) academic/curricular restructuring, and (c) behavioral interventions.
- ✓ Early intervention in (a) school, (b) home, and (c) community (e.g. peers) is the single best hope we have of diverting children from a lifetime of antisocial behavior (Walker, 1993).

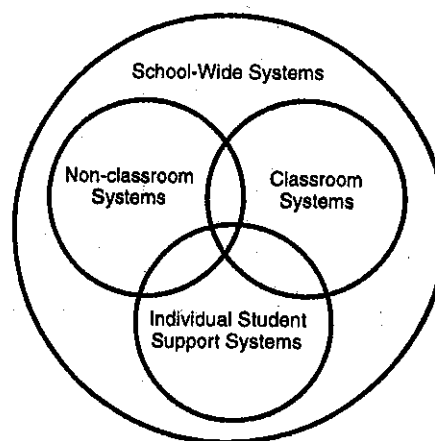
We have learned that problem behaviors are seldom the result of a single cause. Physiological factors can affect problem behaviors. Difficult home environments can affect problem behaviors. Developmental disabilities at different levels may affect problem behaviors. In most cases, however, persistent problem behaviors can be traced back to multiple, interacting origins. The vision of a simple solution that will quickly make a student "fit" back in the classroom is the exception rather than the rule. More often we are looking at solutions that involve (a) teaching the student new skills, (b) imposing limits that make problem behaviors unproductive for the student, (c) redesigning features of the school/classroom that will help the student be more successful, and (d) investing resources in supporting that student for a considerable time period. To accomplish this effectively requires time, efficient systems and access to technical expertise (Walker et al., 1996; Sugai & Horner, 1999, see page 10).

*Schools are not faced with a single type of behavioral challenge that can be solved with a single student-by-student approach. Effective behavioral support is a set of school-wide 'systems' that address different challenges, not just a patchwork of individual behavior management plans.*

Among the most important and encouraging trends in current research is recognition that individual student interventions are a necessary but insufficient response to violence and disruption in our schools. Schools are not faced with a single type of behavioral challenge that can be solved with a single student-by-student approach. Effective behavioral support is a set of school-wide 'systems' that address different challenges, not just a patchwork of individual behavior management plans. Sugai and Horner (1999, page 10) identify four specific patterns of problem behavior in schools, and the four different intervention systems needed to address each pattern: (a) school-wide, (b) non-classroom or specific settings, (c) classroom settings, and (d) individual students with chronic problem behavior.

An effective school will develop behavior support systems for addressing each of these patterns of problem behavior. Figure 1 illustrates how effective behavioral support systems in a school can be integrated.

**Figure 1: Effective Behavioral Support in Schools**



### Patterns of Problem Behavior

Over the past five years, we have worked directly with 37 elementary and middle schools. Initial efforts have focused on defining the kinds of behavioral challenges teachers and administrators face, the systems and procedures in use, and what works (Hall, Horner, Sugai, & Palmer, unpublished manuscript; Tobin, Sugai, & Colvin, 1996). More recently we have collaborated with schools in the redesign of behavior support systems with encouraging results (Taylor-Greene, Brown, Nelson, Longton, Gassman, Cohen, Horner, Sugai & Hall, 1997). We have found

four major patterns of problem behavior (discipline). We are finding that the different patterns require different solutions. Understanding the different patterns, and the different solutions is a key to understanding the logic behind this systematic approach to school-wide behavior support.

#### **Problem Behavior Pattern #1: Many Students, Many Problems**

One pattern of discipline (or problem behavior) involves large numbers of incidents and many different students. In one school we identified that 45-50% of the students had been involved in office referrals (or problem incidents) during a three month period, and that the incidents were of a widely varying nature (Hall et al., unpublished manuscript). If you have a large number of referrals involving many students, and the problems are of a wide range of issues then the basic school-wide discipline systems are not functioning effectively. If an effort is made to respond to the problem with individual student discipline strategies (punishment for rule violation) the result often is overload of the system. *When lots of students are getting into trouble the problem is with the systems, not the students* (Sugai & Horner, in press).

---

*If you have a large number of referrals involving many students, and the problems are of a wide range of issues then the basic school-wide discipline systems are not functioning effectively.*

---

The primary purpose of a school-wide discipline system is to provide guidance and support for the majority of the students. The school-wide system defines the basic rules of the school, provides training to define those rules, and provides feedback systems (both rewards and corrections) (Taylor-Greene et al., 1997). If the school-wide system is working, the students can describe acceptable and unacceptable behavior; the faculty are consistent in their definition and implementation of the school rules; the administration and faculty are in concert in implementing the rules; students are taught the rules and are rewarded for rule following more than they are punished for failing to follow the rules; and above all, the number of office referrals and the number of students involved in problems (office referrals) is low (typically less than 15% of the total population) (Taylor-Greene et al.; Hall et al., unpublished manuscript).

---

*Our experience with specific problem settings suggests that problems are more likely when there is a lack of adult supervision, or if the architectural features of the school create frustrating demands.*

---

An important message about school-wide systems is that they are not effective with students who engage in chronic patterns of problem behavior (Tobin, Sugai, & Colvin, 1996; Hall et al., unpublished manuscript). The power of school-wide systems is that they allow a "one-size-fits-all" approach. They are efficient, and if done well, they are effective with the vast majority of the students (Hall et al., unpublished manuscript).

#### **Problem Behavior Pattern #2: Many Incidents in a Specific Setting**

The second pattern of problem behavior we have observed is when a specific or non-classroom setting accounts for a large proportion of problem behaviors. In most cases the specific setting refers to the cafeteria, wash rooms, halls, or playground. The architectural features of a school often influence problems in specific settings.

If a non-classroom setting results in a disproportionate number of problem incidents, it is important to focus on the structural features of that setting. Too often an effort is made to address each incident as an independent event, and to focus on each student in the context of independent events. There simply will be too many students and too many events to deal with each one in an efficient, independent manner. Our experience with specific problem settings suggests that problems are more likely when there is a lack of adult supervision, or if the architectural features of the school create frustrating demands. For example if 200 students are on a playground with one adult who does not rotate around the area, there is high likelihood that problems will develop. If student bathrooms are never frequented by faculty they are more likely to become areas of problem behavior. If 300 students are released for lunch and must all go through a small door, there are very likely to be problems. If the layout of the school creates isolated pockets that are difficult to monitor, they are likely to be problem locations.

The key to addressing specific problem settings is to focus on the dysfunctional structural features of the area. The solution often lies in altering variables

---

*The key to addressing many incidents in classroom settings is to establish clearly defined classroom rules that are consistent with school-wide and specific setting rules, and to provide opportunities for teaching and monitoring the procedures and routines for teaching those rules and expectations.*

---

such as student schedules (eg. do not release all students at the same time), shifting faculty monitoring assignments and patterns, or making changes in the physical layout of the school (eg. providing fencing and lighting) (Colvin & Lazar, 1997).

#### **Problem Behavior Pattern #3: Many Incidents in Classroom Settings**

The third pattern of problem behavior we have observed is when many incidents occur in classroom settings. If many incidents are occurring in classrooms, it is important to focus on the structural and management features in those classrooms. As in non-classroom settings, too often efforts are made to address each incident as an independent event, and to focus on each student in the context of independent events. Lengthy lectures, lots of noise, movement during activities, or students not able to see the materials being presented all contribute to off-task and disruptive behavior. Rather than approaching each problem as an individual student problem, teachers need to establish and teach classroom expectations using a teaching style that fits the needs of most students (Colvin & Lazar, 1997). The key to addressing many incidents in classroom settings is to establish clearly defined classroom rules that are consistent with school-wide and non-classroom setting rules, and then provide opportunities for teaching and monitoring the procedures and routines for teaching those rules and expectations (Colvin & Lazar, 1997).

---

*Our experience is that in schools with 200-600 students there are 3-5% of the student body who will engage in chronic problem behaviors unless additional resources, and individualized programming, is provided*

---

#### **Problem Behavior Pattern #4: Small Number of Students Account for A Large Proportion of Problems**

When a small number of students account for a large number of problems, the focus needs to be on these students. Unlike the other three patterns, the response is not structural but individual. Our experience is that in schools with 200-600 students there are 3-5% of the student body who will engage in chronic problem behaviors unless additional resources, and individualized programming, is provided (Hall et al., unpublished manuscript).

In some cases these students have identified disabilities that allow access to additional resources. In some cases they have challenges outside the school that influence their behavior in school. In some cases the student brings a complex array of challenges that defy any simple labels or descriptions. We have not encountered "standardized" programs or techniques that are effective with all (or most) of these students. Radically different approaches all seem to help some students and not others. The challenge is to use our limited resources most efficiently and creatively both to provide the support that allows each student with chronic problem behaviors to be successful *and* to provide the safe, educational context that allows other students (and teachers) to be successful.

#### **Implementing School-wide Behavioral Support**

The remainder of this paper illustrates how Lee Elementary School developed school-wide behavioral support by assessing and strengthening their existing system through a team approach over a four year period. Initially, Lee Elementary focused their efforts on building a system for supporting the chronic students (problem behavior pattern #4). However, the following three years' efforts were devoted to maintaining the individual student support system and to develop and implement a school-wide system (problem behavior pattern #1). Results of their efforts and accomplishments are also documented.

In collaboration with the Effective Behavior Support Project at the University of Oregon, a team of Lee Elementary faculty began working toward building school wide systems for effective behavior support in 1994. Lee Elementary School is a Title I funded school with 586 students enrolled (grades K-5), in Springfield, Oregon. Over the past four years, they have maintained an Effective Behavior Support Team and have taken on the responsibility of working toward improved behavioral support as one of

their top school improvement goals. As with any systems change, the process has gone through an evolutionary process. With each stage of development, the team has integrated regularly scheduled meetings, effective meeting processes, and follow up on work-in-progress. Success toward their school wide effective behavior support includes (a) a school-wide system defined as a school-wide self-manager program, (b) a system for supporting individual students called the Behavioral Teacher Assistance Team, and (c) an operational and effective behavior support team called the EBS team.

The process of developing school wide behavioral support takes time, is dependent on a team of faculty, and is on-going. In fact, some teachers have asked, "When will we be done with this effort?" The response from other team members includes statements such as, "This is a life-long effort," or "For as long as we have students here at school." These responses articulate the essence of sustainable systems change. However, as the school improvement goal is met, the effort shifts to maintenance, which requires less and less time. As school faculty realize that these efforts toward systems change require a long term commitment, schools will experience the successes of their long term efforts in improving behavioral support in their school and in seeing positive changes in student behavior.

### Assessing Behavioral Support Systems in Your School

Behavior support for individual students begins with functional assessment. The same is true for the design of behavior support for the whole school. For assessing behavioral support in a school, we have designed a simple survey that is structured around the four systems and patterns of problem behavior. The assessment is formatted as a 'survey' that identifies the key features of each of the systems of behavioral support (Appendix A). The survey is completed by all faculty and staff in the school, and is used to identify (a) the strengths of current school systems, (b) areas perceived as most in need of attention, and (c) the most efficient changes that could be expected to have the greatest change in the behavioral life of the school. The basic elements of the survey are outlined in Table 1.

At the beginning of each school year, Lee Elementary conducted and summarized the survey for Assessing Behavioral Support in Schools. Activities for each school year were defined in an action plan based on survey results and consensus from the faculty. Using the summarized survey results to design an effective action plan for improving and

maintaining school wide behavior support proved useful. Table 2 defines each of the yearly activities and outcomes of Lee Elementary's efforts to create school-wide effective behavior support.

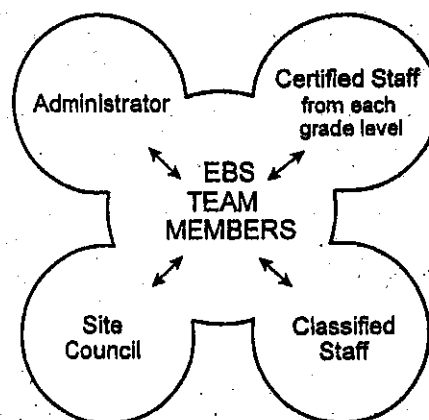
### The School Wide Self-manager Program

Four strategies worked in combination to make the school wide self-manager program successful. These strategies included a team approach, teaching school rules, individual student recognition and classroom wide recognition. Classroom teachers taught students to be self-managers by teaching the three school rules: **be safe, be respectful and follow directions of all school adults**. Faculty acknowledged students regularly for being self-managers. Classroom groups determined goals, graphed recognition stickers and earned classroom free time or extra recess.

#### School wide Effective Behavior Support Team[<sup>sub2</sup>]

Team membership was constructed to include representative faculty at the school. *Collective membership* included a) primary and intermediate grade representation, b) an administrator, c) non-certified staff, and d) faculty with behavioral expertise. Each team member had the responsibility for getting ideas from the team, going back to their group and gathering input on all of the EBS activities. The EBS team was then capable of making fairly accurate proposals back to the entire faculty for revisions and consensus. Figure 2 illustrates all of the groups that were represented by EBS team members. EBS team meetings occurred on a regular basis (monthly) and utilized a standardized agenda format. Meetings had a) clearly defined goals, objectives and outcomes, b) a format for acknowledging all participant contributions, and c) included follow-up on previous tasks.

Figure 2. EBS Team Membership and the Groups they Represent.



**Table 1. Features for Assessing Behavioral Support in Your School**

System	Features of the System
School Wide	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A small number (e.g. 3-5) of positively &amp; clearly stated student expectations or rules are defined.</li> <li>2. Expected student behaviors are taught directly.</li> <li>3. Expected student behaviors are rewarded regularly.</li> <li>4. Problem behaviors (failure to meet expected student behaviors) are defined clearly.</li> <li>5. Consequences for problem behaviors are defined clearly.</li> <li>6. Distinctions between office v. classroom managed problem behaviors are clear.</li> <li>7. Options exist to allow classroom instruction to continue when problem behavior occurs.</li> <li>8. Procedures are in place to address emergency/dangerous situations.</li> <li>9. A team exists for behavior support planning &amp; problem solving.</li> <li>10. School administrator is an active participant on the behavior support team.</li> <li>11. Staff receive regular (monthly/quarterly) feedback on behavior patterns.</li> <li>12. School includes formal strategies for informing families about expected student behaviors at school.</li> <li>13. Booster training activities for students are developed, modified, &amp; conducted based on school data.</li> <li>14. School-wide behavior support team has a budget for (a) teaching students, (b) on-going rewards, and (c) annual staff planning.</li> <li>15. All staff are involved directly and/or indirectly in school-wide interventions.</li> </ol>
Specific Settings	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. School-wide expected student behaviors apply to non-classroom settings.</li> <li>2. School-wide expected student behaviors are taught in non-classroom settings.</li> <li>3. Supervisors actively supervise (move, scan, &amp; interact) students in non-classroom settings.</li> <li>4. Rewards exist for meeting expected student behaviors in non-classroom settings.</li> <li>5. Physical/architectural features are modified to limit (a) unsupervised settings, (b) unclear traffic patterns, and (c) inappropriate access to &amp; exit from school grounds.</li> <li>6. Scheduling of student movement ensures appropriate numbers of students in non-classroom spaces.</li> <li>7. Staff receive regular opportunities for developing and improving active supervision skills.</li> <li>8. Status of student behavior and management practices are evaluated quarterly from data.</li> <li>9. All staff are involved directly or indirectly in management of non-classroom settings.</li> </ol>
Classrooms	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Expected student behavior &amp; routines in classrooms are stated positively &amp; defined clearly.</li> <li>2. Problem behaviors are defined clearly.</li> <li>3. Expected student behavior &amp; routines in classrooms are taught directly.</li> <li>4. Expected student behaviors are acknowledged regularly (positively reinforced) (&gt;4 positives to 1 negative).</li> <li>5. Problem behaviors receive consistent consequences.</li> <li>6. Procedures for expected &amp; problem behaviors are consistent with school-wide procedures.</li> <li>7. Options exist to allow classroom instruction to continue when problem behavior occurs.</li> <li>8. Instruction &amp; curriculum materials are matched to student ability (math, reading, language).</li> <li>9. Students experience high rates of academic success (&gt; 75% correct).</li> <li>10. Teachers have regular opportunities for access to assistance &amp; recommendations (observation, instruction, &amp; coaching).</li> <li>11. Transitions between instructional &amp; non-instructional activities are efficient &amp; orderly.</li> </ol>
Individual Students	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Assessments are conducted regularly to identify students with chronic problem behaviors.</li> <li>2. A simple process exists for teachers to request assistance.</li> <li>3. A behavior support team responds promptly (within 2 working days) to students who present chronic problem behaviors.</li> <li>4. Behavioral support team includes an individual skilled at conducting functional behavioral assessment.</li> <li>5. Local resources are used to conduct functional assessment-based behavior support planning (~10 hrs/week/student).</li> <li>6. Significant family &amp;/or community members are involved when appropriate &amp; possible.</li> <li>7. School includes formal opportunities for families to receive training on behavioral support positive parenting strategies.</li> <li>8. Behavior is monitored &amp; feedback provided regularly to the behavior support team &amp; relevant staff.</li> </ol>

**Table 2. Activities and Outcomes for Effective Behavior Support at Lee Elementary School**

Activity		Outcomes
Year One: 1994-95	Establish an Effective Behavior Support Team (EBS)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Established an Effective Behavior Support Team including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Administrative Assistant</li> <li>✓ Regular Education Teachers (2nd, 3rd, &amp; 5th)</li> <li>✓ Resource Room Teacher</li> <li>✓ School Counselor</li> <li>✓ Facilitator with Behavioral Expertise</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Conducted and summarized the School Wide Effective Behavior Support Survey.</li> <li>3. Agreed to develop an Individual Student Support System.</li> </ol>
	Improve the Individual Student System	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Established a Behavioral Teacher Assistance Team to support chronic students (same members as school wide team)</li> <li>2. Established a Behavioral Teacher Assistance Team process including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ A system for teachers to request assistance</li> <li>✓ A meeting process that constructs a summary statement(s) of the problem behavior,</li> <li>✓ discusses possible positive alternative behaviors that can be taught, establishes an</li> <li>✓ Action Plan for the requesting teacher, and targets a two to four week follow up.</li> </ul> </li> </ol>
Year Two: 1995-96	Maintain the EBS Team and Process of Operation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Expanded the School Wide Effective Behavior Support Team to include representation of classified faculty.</li> <li>2. Conducted School Wide Effective Behavioral Support Survey with a newly established team.</li> <li>3. Agreed to develop a School Wide System which targets school wide and setting specific procedures and expectations.</li> </ol>
	Develop a School Wide Self-Manager Program	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Developed a guide for teaching Lee Students to be Self-Managers.</li> <li>2. Defined rules, behavioral expectations, routines, ways to acknowledge students and to deal with infractions.</li> </ol>
	Maintain the Individual Student System	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Maintained the Behavioral Teacher Assistance Team and process for requesting assistance.</li> </ol>
Year Three: 1996-97	Maintain the EBS Team and Process of Operation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Maintain School Wide Effective Behavior Support Team to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Regular monthly meetings</li> <li>✓ Regular feedback and information exchange in school bulletins, site council meetings, and faculty meetings</li> <li>✓ Regular monthly meetings with supervisory faculty for updates and problem solving.</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Use referrals to make decisions</li> </ol>
	Implement the School Wide Self-Manager Program	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Conduct faculty review of self-manager program</li> <li>2. All teachers teach school rules</li> <li>3. Implement quarterly boosters for reviewing school rules</li> <li>4. Implement monthly self-manager recognition events</li> <li>5. Implement school wide procedure for referrals</li> <li>6. Conduct Quarterly Teacher Evaluation Survey to determine necessary revisions.</li> </ol>
	Maintain the Individual Student System	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Maintain the Behavioral Teacher Assistance Team and process for requesting assistance.</li> </ol>
	Maintain the EBS Team and Process of Operation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop a work plan of eight activities for the year</li> <li>2. Identify coordinators for each of the eight activities</li> </ol>
Year Four: 1997-98	Revise and implement the School Wide Self-Manager Program	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Survey faculty for necessary revisions</li> <li>2. Make revisions to the school wide self-manager program</li> <li>3. Conduct faculty review of self-manager program</li> <li>4. Implement program school wide</li> </ol>
	Maintain the Individual Student System	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Maintain the Behavioral Teacher Assistance Team and process for requesting assistance.</li> </ol>
	Define, Teach and Implement Recess Expectations and Guidelines	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop a recess guide.</li> <li>2. Teach boundaries, expectations and guidelines to faculty</li> <li>3. Teach boundaries, expectations and guidelines to students</li> <li>4. Monitor recess referral patterns and problem behaviors</li> </ol>



### Teaching School Rules

The three school rules were taught during the first four weeks of the school year, followed by events and 'booster' times for the remainder of the year. The self-manager recognition events were planned to acknowledge students for doing well, as well as to remind faculty to integrate feedback to students on their performance of being self-managers throughout the school day. The booster weeks were identified from our research on patterns of office referrals (Taylor-Greene et al., 1997; Hallet al., unpublished manuscript). The settings targeted for self-manager recognition were identified by faculty and by the location of infractions from summarized office referrals. Table 3 summarizes the implementation of the School Wide Self-manager Program for the 96-97 school year.

Teaching plans were driven by the three school rules and the behavioral expectations for following the rule in any given setting of the school. Three steps for teaching school rules and behavioral expectations were embedded into each of the lesson plans for teaching the school rules and included (a) the definition of the rule, (b) demonstration of the rule with positive and negative examples and, (c) suggestions for monitoring student behavior and providing feedback.

### Individual Student Recognition

The school wide program acknowledged individual student efforts in several different ways. As part of the year long program, students were verbally acknowledged for being self-managers throughout the school day. In addition, the EBS team orga-

Table 3: School Wide Self-Manager Program Activities for 1996-97

Week	Activity
Inservice/prep. Week	Review Self-manager program and implementation plan with all faculty
Week one	Teach three school rules and introduce the self-manager program
Week two	Teach daily lessons on <b>be safe</b> with daily recognition for being safe
Week three	Teach daily lessons on <b>be respectful</b> and review <b>be safe</b> with daily recognition for being respectful and being safe
Week four	Teach daily lessons on <b>following directions of all school adults</b> and provide cumulative review of other rules with daily recognition for being a self-manager by following the school rules
Week five	All school celebration and awards for posters, songs, & skits. Cumulative review of school rules
Week six	Cumulative review of school rules daily/weekly Two days a week self-manager recognition
Week before Thanksgiving	Reteach rules as a booster activity "Double day" recognition
Week after Winter break	Review and reteach rules as a booster activity "Double day" recognition
First week of March	Review and reteach rules as a booster activity "Double day" recognition
First week in May	Review and reteach rules as a booster activity "Double day" recognition
Last week of school	All school celebration and awards for posters, songs, & skits.
Report Cards	Any student who did not receive an office referral receives a self manager certificate with their report card, on a quarterly basis

nized two self-manager recognition events each week. Two days a week were declared as self-manager recognition days at which time students were acknowledged for being self-managers and were given a colorful sticker to take back to their classroom. In addition to the individual self-manager recognition stickers, a self-manager certificate was added to the students report card at grading time. Students received the self-manager certificate when he/she had not received any referrals during that grading period.

### Classroom Recognition

School wide, there were two classroom recognition activities that occurred through the self-manager recognition program. One activity is established as a classroom goal for collecting self-manager stickers and the other involves a visit from the front office. Each of these activities build on the notion of groups of students being self-managers when working and playing together.

Every classroom collects the self-manager stickers that individual students receive. Each class sets a goal of how many stickers they want to collect and what they want to spend them

on. This strategy has reinforced the self-manager concept to be a valuable skill for each individual and for groups of students. Peers have been recognized for coaching and reminding each other to be a self-manager.

Visits from the front office have also been a way to recognize groups of students for being self-managers. About once a month, the principal or school secretary paid a surprise visit to each classroom, looking for times when the *entire* class of students are being self-managers. During the surprise visit, if all students were being self-managers, the class received a Classroom Self-manager Certificate. Front office faculty enjoyed this activity while groups of students were recognized for doing well, and office faculty were seen outside of the office.

### Impact

The EBS team has been in operation for four years at Lee Elementary school. The sustainability of a functional and operational team has had a major impact on the systems within the school for handling problem behavior and for structuring a plan to prevent problems by teaching school-wide rules and expectations.

Office Discipline Referrals are low: about 1 referral every two days for a 586 student population. However, examining office referrals in a variety of ways provides guidance for comprehensive and effective decisions. For example, Lee Elementary faculty examined referral rates month by month across the year, and the frequency of referrals by location in school (Figure 3). When examining referral patterns by location (Figure 3), it became clear that a majority of problems occurred on the playground and in class-

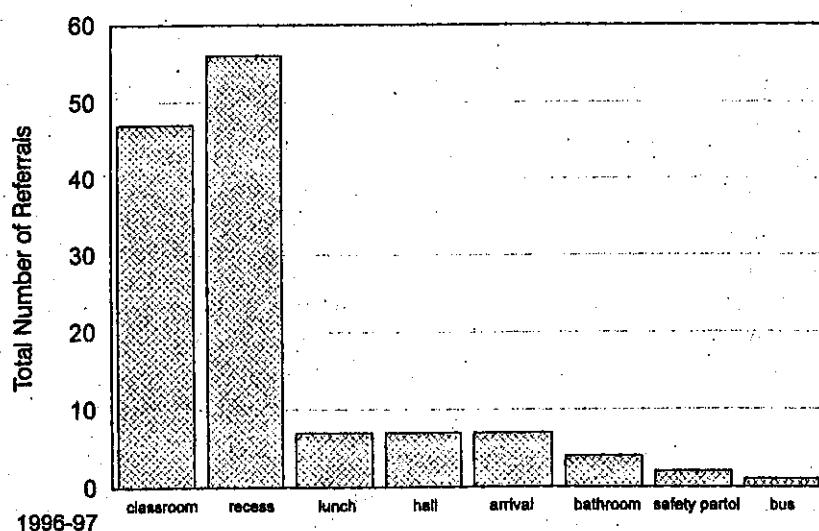
rooms. In fact, 43% of all referrals for the 1996-97 school year occurred on the playground (during recess), and 35% in classrooms, while all other locations in the school resulted in 4% or less of the total referrals (see Figure 3). As a result, the school is teaching recess expectations, boundaries, and guidelines for playing on the equipment and for popular games during the 1997-98 school year in hopes of decreasing the rate of recess referrals across the year.

The Behavioral Teacher Assistance Team (Individual Student Systems) has been in operation for 3 years. This is a two level team approach in which teachers can request assistance for students "at-risk" of repeated behavior problems. With the first year of implementation (1994-95) of the Behavioral TAT, there were nine requests (1.5% of the total enrollment) from teachers for assistance. Three of those requests resulted in suggestions that the teacher could implement the next day, two of those requests resulted in a referral to another team (medical or academic) and four of those requests required Action Teams (Todd, Horner, Vanater, & Schneider, 1998). The Action Teams conducted a functional assessment, designed a plan of support based on the functional assessment, implemented and monitored the plan. The second year (1995-96), there were 15 requests (2.5% of the total enrollment) for assistance. Nine of the 15 requests (60%) resulted in suggestions, 5 of the 15 requests (33%) were referred to a different team, and only one student required an Action Team. The third year (1996-97), eight requests for assistance were made (1.4% of the total enrollment). Six of the eight requests (75%) were satisfied through the 30-min Teacher Support Team

meeting that resulted in a set of suggestions and strategies for the teacher to implement. The Action Team from the 95-96 school year maintained itself to support the target student, while two additional Action Teams developed. Figure 4 compares this school's Teacher Assistance Team outcomes for the 1994-96 school years.

The Behavioral Teacher Assistance Team has been the mechanism for supporting individual "at-risk" and "chronic" students in the school. Prior to Teacher Assistance Team efforts, teachers referred the most problematic students for alternative placement. Now, teachers request help and receive a set of

Figure 3: Referrals by Location



functional suggestions or get additional resources (Action Team), both of which keep students in class. The process has supported teachers' early behavioral concerns and has been effective in individualizing the school-wide self-manager program for the 1-3% of students who present the biggest challenges. This system for supporting individual students gives teachers a sense that they can be successful.

*We can not prescribe effective behavioral support as a packaged model or curriculum. We can however, share the critical features that have been in operation as other schools have been successful. These critical features are small in number, but require commitment, time, and resources.*

Faculty satisfaction surveys favor the self-manager program. All but one faculty person of 27 were willing to continue a variation of the program school wide for a second year.

Individual Student Recognition was continual throughout the year in a variety of formats. All faculty were encouraged to provide specific feedback to students when they were displaying self-managed behavior as well as when students needed corrective feedback. Self-manager stickers were randomly distributed two days per week to students. Classroom teachers kept count of the collected self-manager stickers, so that individual efforts were pooled toward a classroom goal. In addition, individual student self-manager certificates were distributed in student report cards for those students who were self-managers by following school rules and did not receive a single referral during the grading period. These were totaled school wide for each grading period. Self-manager certificates were distributed to 92% of the students in the fall, 90% in

winter, and 97% of all students in the spring.

The overall impact of a systems approach to effective behavior support includes (1) a change in the allocation of faculty resources by using teams in a systematic fashion, (2) a change in teaching and monitoring behavioral expectations across all settings in the school, (3) a change in the subjective "climate" of the school, (4) a change in teacher capacity to get help for student concerns, (5) a change in referrals to the office, and (6) a change in the ability of the school to adapt to on-going challenges.

## Conclusion

Building and strengthening behavioral support school wide is not a simple task, nor does it happen quickly. With each school comes an individual list of strengths and challenges. Rather than using a model, schools should examine what they have that works and where they can most efficiently adjust to generate the key features of effective behavioral support. We can not prescribe effective behavioral support as a packaged model or curriculum. We can however, share the critical features that have been in operation as other schools have been successful. These critical features are small in number, but require commitment, time, and resources.

## Critical Features for School-wide Effective Behavior Support:

1. Effective Behavior Support should be one of the top three school priorities.
2. Effective Behavior Support requires a team with an active administrator, representative faculty, and behavioral expertise.
3. Effective Behavior Support requires a systems approach that supports the four patterns of problem behavior.
4. Effective Behavior Support requires time (3-5 years).
5. Effective Behavior Support requires teaching, monitoring and reviewing school-wide rules and expectations to all students.

These critical features should be used as a framework for developing school-wide systems for effective behavior support in elementary and middle schools. ♦

## Acknowledgments

The authors wish to acknowledge the long-term efforts of members of the School-Wide Effective Be-

Table 4. Teacher Assistance Team Outcomes

Year	Total number of requests	Number of requests resulting in suggestions	Number of requests resulting in an academic/speech or hearing referral	Number of requests resulting in Action Teams
94-95	9	3	2	4
95-96	15	9	5	1
96-97	8	6	0	3

havior Support Team. Over the four years of this project, team members have changed, however each team member contributed time and effort over and beyond their typical responsibilities. To date, EBS team members have included Kathryn Anderson, Jennifer Brink, Kate Burrus, Lynn Cox, Marilyn Green, Jill Harris, Patsy Hascall, Laurie Haugen, Jannine Jones, Joanne Jones, Barbara Kroeker, Barb Mattox, Betty Palanuk, Marilyn Spriggs, Wayne Strong, Joyce Stuart, Tina Sweeten, Sheri Winkelman and Dianne Yonker. School-wide behavior support could not have been possible without a team commitment. We commend the team efforts of this faculty.

### References

- Colvin, G & Lazar, M. (1997). *The Effective Elementary Classroom. Managing for Success*. Sopris Press. Longmont, Co.
- Gottfredson, D.C. (1997). School-based crime prevention. In L. Sherman, D. Gottfredson, D. Mackenzie, J. Eck., P. Reuter, & Shawn Bushway, (Eds.), *Preventing crime: what works, what doesn't, what's promising*. Department of criminology and Criminal Justice, University of Maryland.
- Hall, S., Horner, R., Sugai, G., & Palmer, T. (unpublished manuscript). *Use and descriptive analysis of school discipline referral*.
- Lipsey, M. W., (1992). Juvenile Delinquency Treatment: A Meta-Analytic Inquiry into the Variability of Effects. In T. Cook, et al. (Eds.), *Meta-Analysis for Explanation*, 83-126.
- Mayer, G.R., & Sulzer-Azeroff, B. (1990). Interventions for vandalism. In G. Stoner, M.K. Shinn, & H.M. Walker (Eds.), *Interventions for achievement and behavior problems*. National Association of School Psychologists Monograph: Washington, D.C.
- Sprague, J. & Colvin, G., (1996). Is your school safe? Do you have an adequate plan? In A. Deffenbaugh & G. Tindal (Eds.), *The Oregon Conference Monograph*, 17-23. University of Oregon, College of Education.
- Sugai, G., & Horner, R.H. (1999.) Discipline and Behavioral Support: Practices, Pitfalls and Promises. *Effective School Practices*, 17 (4), 10-22.
- Taylor-Greene, S. Brown D., Nelson, L., Longton, J., Gassman, T., Cohen, J. Horner, R.H., Sugai, G., & Hall, S. (1997). School-wide behavioral support: Starting the year off right. *Journal of Behavioral Education*, 7(1), 99-112.
- Tobin, T., Sugai, G., & Colvin, G. (1996). Patterns in middle school discipline records. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders*, 4(2), 82-94.
- Todd, A., Horner, R.H., Vanater, S.M., & Schneider, C.F. (1998). Working together to make a change: An example of positive behavioral support for a student with traumatic brain injury. *Education and Treatment of Children*, Vol. 20(4), 425-440.
- Tolan, P., & Guerra, N. (1994). *What works in reducing adolescent violence: An empirical review of the field*. Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence. University of Colorado, Boulder.
- Walker, H.M., Colvin, G., & Ramsey, E. (1995). *Antisocial Behavior in School: Strategies and Best Practices*. Pacific Grove, Ca: Brookes/Cole.
- Walker, H. M., Horner, R. H., Sugai, G., Bullis, M., Sprague, J. R., Bricker, D., & Kaufman, M. J. (1996). Integrated approaches to preventing antisocial behavior patterns among school-age children and youth. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders*, 4, 193-256.

## Appendix A. Assessing and Planning Behavior Support in Schools

### APPENDIX A

#### ASSESSING AND PLANNING BEHAVIOR SUPPORT IN SCHOOLS

Name of school \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Type: ☐ Elementary ☐ Middle/Junior ☐ High ☐ Alternative ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Location: ☐ Rural ☐ Small urban (<250,000) ☐ Large urban (>250,000)

Name (optional) of person completing this survey \_\_\_\_\_

Position: ☐ Administrator ☐ General educator ☐ Special educator ☐ Parent/family member  
☐ Educational/teacher assistant ☐ Counselor ☐ School psychologist ☐ Community member ☐ Student ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Total school enrollment \_\_\_\_\_

Estimate of number of students with chronic problem behaviors in school enrollment (i.e., those students who require extensive individualized support) \_\_\_\_\_

This survey was developed for use by school staff to assess and plan behavior support in their school. The information from this survey can be used to assess what is in place, what works, and what needs to be modified. Survey outcomes can be used to develop a school-wide behavior support action plan.

The survey examines the status and need to improve four behavior support "systems," (a) school-wide discipline systems, (b) non-classroom management systems (e.g., cafeteria, hallway, playground), (c) classroom management systems, and (d) systems for individual student with chronic problem behaviors.

To assess behavior support, first evaluate the status of each system feature (i.e. in place, partially in place, not in place) (left hand side of survey). Next, examine each feature that is rated as partially in place or not in place and rate the degree to which improvements are needed (i.e., high, medium, low) (right hand side of survey).

To develop an action plan, summarize the responses from all completed surveys, and complete the action plan sheet.

Assessing & Planning Behavior Support in Schools (ver. 1.4) - p. 1

#### SCHOOL-WIDE SYSTEMS

Current Status		Feature	Improvement Priority		
In Place	Partial in Place		High	Med	Low
		School-wide is defined as involving all students, all staff, & all settings.			
		1. A small number (e.g. 3-5) of positively & clearly stated student expectations or rules are defined.			
		2. Expected student behaviors are taught directly.			
		3. Expected student behaviors are rewarded regularly.			
		4. Problem behaviors (failure to meet expected student behaviors) are defined clearly.			
		5. Consequences for problem behaviors are defined clearly.			
		6. Distinctions between office v. classroom managed problem behaviors are clear.			
		7. Options exist to allow classroom instruction to continue when problem behavior occurs.			
		8. Procedures are in place to address emergency/dangerous situations.			
		9. A team exists for behavior support planning & problem solving.			
		10. School administrator is an active participant on the behavior support team.			
		11. Staff receive regular (monthly/quarterly) feedback on behavior patterns.			
		12. School includes formal strategies for informing families about expected student behaviors at school.			
		13. Booster training activities for students are developed, modified, & conducted based on school data.			
		14. School-wide behavior support team has a budget for (a) teaching students, (b) on-going rewards, and (c) annual staff planning.			
		15. All staff are involved directly and/or indirectly in school-wide interventions.			

## Appendix A. Assessing and Planning Behavior Support in Schools (Continued)

Assessing & Planning Behavior Support in Schools (ver. 1.4) - p. 2

### NONCLASSROOM SETTING SYSTEMS

Status		Feature	Improvement Priority		
In Place	Partial in Place	Not in Place	High	Med	Low
		Nonclassroom settings are defined as particular times or places where supervision is emphasized (e.g., hallways, cafeteria, playground, bus).			
		1. School-wide expected student behaviors apply to non-classroom settings.			
		2. School-wide expected student behaviors are taught in non-classroom settings.			
		3. Supervisors actively supervise (move, scan, & interact) students in non-classroom settings.			
		4. Rewards exist for meeting expected student behaviors in non-classroom settings.			
		5. Physical/architectural features are modified to limit (a) unsupervised settings, (b) unclear traffic patterns, and (c) inappropriate access to & exit from school grounds.			
		6. Scheduling of student movement ensures appropriate numbers of students in non-classroom spaces.			
		7. Staff receive regular opportunities for developing and improving active supervision skills.			
		8. Status of student behavior and management practices are evaluated quarterly from data.			
		9. All staff are involved directly or indirectly in management of non-classroom settings.			

Assessing & Planning Behavior Support in Schools (ver. 1.4) - p. 3

### CLASSROOM SYSTEMS

Status		Feature	Improvement Priority		
In Place	Partial in Place	Not in Place	High	Med	Low
		Classroom settings are defined as instructional settings in which teacher(s) supervise & teach groups of students.			
		1. Expected student behavior & routines in classrooms are stated positively & defined clearly.			
		2. Problem behaviors are defined clearly.			
		3. Expected student behavior & routines in classrooms are taught directly.			
		4. Expected student behaviors are acknowledged regularly (positively reinforced) (>4 positives to 1 negative).			
		5. Problem behaviors receive consistent consequences.			
		6. Procedures for expected & problem behaviors are consistent with school-wide procedures.			
		7. Options exist to allow classroom instruction to continue when problem behavior occurs.			
		8. Instruction & curriculum materials are matched to student ability (math, reading, language)			
		9. Students experience high rates of academic success ( $\geq 75\%$ correct)			
		10. Teachers have regular opportunities for access to assistance & recommendations (observation, instruction, & coaching).			
		11. Transitions between instructional & non-instructional activities are efficient & orderly.			

# Appendix A. Assessing and Planning Behavior Support in Schools (Continued)

Assessing & Planning Behavior Support in Schools (ver. 1.4) - p. 5

## BEHAVIOR SUPPORT SURVEY SUMMARY

	School-Wide	Nonclassroom	Classroom	Individual Student
1. Rate the overall implementation of positive behavior support.	high med low	high med low	high med low	high med low
2. List the three major strengths of each system.	a.  b.  c.	a.  b.  c.	a.  b.  c.	a.  b.  c.
3. List the three major areas in need of development in each system.	a.  b.  c.	a.  b.  c.	a.  b.  c.	a.  b.  c.
4. Circle the area in each system in most need of development.				

Assessing & Planning Behavior Support in Schools (ver. 1.4) - p. 4

## INDIVIDUAL STUDENT SYSTEMS

Status		Feature	Improvement Priority		
In Place	Not in Place		High	Med	Low
		Individual student systems are defined as specific supports for students who engage in chronic problem behaviors (1%-7% of enrollment).			
		1. Assessments are conducted regularly to identify students with chronic problem behaviors.			
		2. A simple process exists for teachers to request assistance.			
		3. A behavior support team responds promptly (within 2 working days) to students who present chronic problem behaviors.			
		4. Behavioral support team includes an individual skilled at conducting functional behavioral assessment.			
		5. Local resources are used to conduct functional assessment-based behavior support planning (~10 hrs/week/student).			
		6. Significant family &/or community members are involved when appropriate & possible.			
		7. School includes formal opportunities for families to receive training on behavioral support/positive parenting strategies.			
		8. Behavior is monitored & feedback provided regularly to the behavior support team & relevant staff.			

Appendix A. Assessing and Planning Behavior Support in Schools (Continued)

Assessing & Planning Behavior Support in Schools (ver. 1.4) - p. 6

<p>5. Pick one systems area to focus this years efforts.</p> <p>_____ (focus area)</p>	<b>Objective: Develop &amp; Implement EBS Activities</b>	
	Activity 1:	Who: _____ When: _____
	Activity 2:	Who: _____ When: _____
	Activity 3:	Who: _____ When: _____
	Activity 4:	Who: _____ When: _____
	Activity 5:	Who: _____ When: _____
<p>6. Develop an action plan for two objectives that include development, implementation &amp; management activities.</p>	Activity 6:	Who: _____ When: _____
	Activity 7:	Who: _____ When: _____

Assessing & Planning Behavior Support in Schools (ver. 1.4) - p. 7

<p><b>Objective: Manage All EBS Activities</b></p>	Activity 1:	Who: _____ When: _____
	Activity 2:	Who: _____ When: _____
	Activity 3:	Who: _____ When: _____
	Activity 4:	Who: _____ When: _____
	Activity 5:	Who: _____ When: _____
	Activity 6:	Who: _____ When: _____
<p>7. Identify next meeting of EBS team</p>	<p>Team Members: _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Date: _____ Time: _____ Where: _____</p>	



# Effective Behavior Support: Designing Setting-Specific Interventions

Timothy J. Lewis

University of Missouri-Columbia

Linda Garrison-Harrell

Southwest Missouri State University

Few issues in education raise emotions as much as the issue of school "discipline." Frequent newspaper accounts continually remind the public of the extreme behavioral issues that confront schools today. The situation becomes even more complex when children and youth with disabilities are brought into the picture. Faced with the pressing issue of challenging behavior in schools, educators are forced to create systems to deal with the problems. Unfortunately, educators often unknowingly engage in discipline practices that do not change behavior, and in fact, may exacerbate the problem.

---

*As a result of increasing behavioral challenges in school and pressure from educators and parents to act, schools increasingly are "getting tough" on discipline by increasing the use of punishment. However, evidence suggests that school discipline practices traditionally viewed as "punishment" in fact further exacerbate and contribute to the problem of challenging behavior.*

---

Increasingly, children and youth are coming to school with skill deficits, learned inappropriate social interaction strategies, and a lack of opportunities to practice pro-social skills at home and in their community that sets them up for further behavioral problems (Biglan, 1993, 1995; Dishion & Andrews, 1995; Dishion, Patterson, Stoolmiller, & Skinner, 1991; Patterson, Reid, & Dishion, 1992). Rates of extreme forms of problem behavior such as aggression continue to increase (Koop & Lundberg, 1992; Rutherford & Nelson, 1995). Less dramatic forms of challenging behavior, such as non-compliance and inappropriate peer interactions are also on the rise (Walker, Horner, Sugai, Bullis, Sprague, Bricker &

Kaufman, 1996). As a result school discipline continues to be one of the top concerns of teachers (American Educator, 1995-96) and the public (Elam, Rose, & Gallup, 1996).

As a result of increasing behavioral challenges in school and pressure from educators and parents to act, schools increasingly are "getting tough" on discipline by increasing the use of punishment (e.g., American Educator, 1995-96). However, evidence suggests that school discipline practices traditionally viewed as "punishment" (i.e., designed to decrease problem behavior) in fact further exacerbate and contribute to the problem of challenging behavior (i.e., reinforce or strengthen behavior). For example, Mayer and his colleagues have identified several traditional school discipline practices that increase as opposed to decrease problem behaviors such as use of in and out of school suspension, vague school rules and expectations, little or no positive consequences for appropriate behavior, lack of staff support, and failure to consider and accommodate individual differences (Mayer, 1995; Mayer & Butterworth, 1979, 1981; Mayer, Nafpaktitis, Butterworth, & Hollingsworth, 1987). In a review of 500 studies, Lipsey (1991) found the least effective responses to violence in schools were counseling, psychotherapy, and punishment. Colvin, Sugai, Good, and Lee (1999) noted that students are more likely to engage in problem behavior during periods where there is a high density of students, ambiguous rules and routines, and limited adult supervision. Furthermore, Mayer and Sulzer-Azeroff (1991) found that punishing problem behaviors, without a positive school-wide system of support, are associated with increases in aggression, vandalism, truancy, tardiness, and dropouts.

The literature on preventing and reducing problem behavior indicates that schools can be successful in reducing challenging behavior. Recommended educational strategies include social skill training (Lipsey, 1991; Lewis, Sugai, & Colvin, in press; Lewis, 1996; Lewis, Chard, & Scott, 1994; Mayer, 1995;

Peacock Hill Working Group, 1991; Sugai & Horner, 1994; Sugai & Lewis, 1996; Walker et al., 1996), academic and curricular restructuring (Colvin, Kameenui, & Sugai, 1993; Lipsey, 1991; Kameenui & Simmons, 1990; Tolan & Guerra, 1994; Walker et al., 1996), proactive and preventative management (Colvin et al., 1993; Cotton, 1995; Cotton & Wiklund, 1990; Lewis, 1995; Lewis et al., in press, 1994; Lipsey, 1991; Noguera, 1995; Sugai & Horner, 1994; Walker et al., 1996), early intervention (Walker et al., 1996; Zigler, Taussig, & Black, 1992), and individual behavioral interventions (Lewis, 1995; Lipsey, 1991; Walker et al., 1996).

---

*Most schools have clearly articulated routines for events such as a fire or bomb threat, but fail to plan adequately for high frequency routines such as hallway transitions, entering and exiting common areas, or use of the restrooms.*

---

Increasingly, educators are advocating for the development of pro-active school-wide systems to reduce and prevent challenging problem behavior (Colvin et al., 1993; Gottfredson & Gottfredson, 1996; Gottfredson, Gottfredson, & Hybl, 1993; Lewis, 1995; Lewis et al., in press; Mayer, 1995; Nelson & Colvin, 1995; Sugai & Horner, 1994; Walker et al., 1996). Features of school-wide systems include establishing building based teams to develop and monitor school-wide discipline; an emphasis on teaching social skills, reducing the use of punishment, and focusing on building student social and academic success (e.g., Colvin et al., 1993; Cotton, 1995; Smith & Rivera, 1995; Sugai & Horner, 1994). Recent work at the University of Oregon and the University of Missouri suggest the need for shaping school-wide practices to meet the unique needs of non-classroom settings (e.g., cafeteria, hallways, playgrounds, common areas), classrooms, and individual students who engage in chronic challenging behavior patterns.

The purpose of this article is to outline steps to implement school-wide Effective Behavioral Support (EBS) processes at the non-classroom level. Following a brief discussion of each of the recommended steps, an elementary school case study is provided to illustrate the effectiveness of EBS in reducing problem behavior across the cafeteria, playground, and hallway transition.

## **Pre-Requisites of Non-classroom Interventions**

Non-classroom (or specific setting) interventions should be viewed as an extension of the larger school-wide system. Prior to intervening within problematic settings, all of the key features of implementing EBS should be developed such as establishing a building based team, conducting a needs assessment; developing positively stated school rules, developing consequences for appropriate and inappropriate behavior (See Sugai and Horner in this issue, pp.10-22).

### **Planning**

The majority of the team's time and energy will be devoted to planning and developing non-classroom lesson plans, instructional strategies, and support structures. Planning activities should focus on five major activities: (a) assessment of current and needed setting routines, (b) assessment of physical factors within the setting, (c) identification of non-classroom behaviors, (d) development of instructional strategies, and (e) identification of needed support to implement the plan.

#### **Assess Setting Routines**

The first planning activity is an assessment of current setting routines. Nelson and Colvin (1995) outline a three-step process to evaluate and improve current and needed routines. First, identify existing and needed routines. Most schools have clearly articulated routines for events such as a fire or bomb threat, but fail to plan adequately for high frequency routines such as hallway transitions, entering and exiting common areas, or use of the restrooms. Second, once current and needed routines are identified, task analyze the routines to identify key student and staff behaviors to complete the routine successfully with minimal chance of problem behavior occurring. Finally, strategies to teach, practice, and maintain the new routines should be developed (see developing teaching strategies below).

#### **Assess Physical Characteristics**

The second planning activity should focus on the physical characteristics of the setting. Key factors to consider include identifying unsafe objects that can be removed or made off-limits, reducing physical space to insure adequate staff supervision, providing adequate space or staggering students during wait times such as in the cafeteria or bus lines, and reducing the density of students where possible in common areas (Nelson & Colvin, 1995). The outcome should focus on removing or modifying prob-

lematic features where possible or modifying routines and increasing supervision to lessen the likelihood of problem behavior from occurring.

### Identify Behavioral Examples

The third team activity during planning should focus on identifying setting-specific behavioral examples for each of the larger school rules and developing teaching strategies. For each school rule, the team should identify specific example behaviors unique and common to each targeted non-classroom setting. Behaviors should focus on what the students are expected to do, stated in positive observable terms. Avoid listing negative examples where possible. Instead, use inappropriate behavior examples during instruction to illustrate "what not to do." Students' input also should be included when appropriate.

---

*Social skills should be taught using clarifications of the critical rule (i.e., when to use the skill), demonstrations by the teacher, role plays with the students, and reviews of social skills. In addition, following direct instruction of setting-specific behaviors, teachers should continue to verbally review previously taught skills.*

---

### Develop Teaching Strategies

Once specific behaviors are identified for targeted nonclassroom settings, the next step is to develop strategies to teach setting-specific behaviors. Ideally, behavioral expectations should be taught through a common set of scripted social skill lessons (Lewis et al., in press; Sugai & Lewis, 1996). Social skills should be taught using clarifications of the critical rule (i.e., when to use the skill), demonstrations by the teacher, role plays with the students, and reviews of social skills (see Sugai & Lewis, 1996 for a complete description of social skill best practices). In addition, following direct instruction of setting-specific behaviors, teachers should continue to verbally review previously taught skills. Social skills and rules also should be integrated across the curricula where appropriate. For example, students can be asked to write stories using school rules during language arts or to create posters illustrating school rules for each setting during art class. Teachers can develop classroom plans that utilize peers

reinforcing peers. For example, students are reinforced for demonstrating social skills within the classroom by having their name placed by a classmate on the chalkboard that notes the demonstration of the particular skills. Having classmates note the demonstration of appropriate social skill not only reinforces the student who is demonstrating the skills, but may prompt other students to demonstrate the desired behavior. Plans also should be made to provide sufficient practice of skills and strategies to promote social skill use within each targeted setting.

### Implementation Support Structures

The final planning activity should focus on what support structures are needed to implement the plan effectively. For example, time allocation for teachers will be needed to identify key pivotal behaviors and develop the social skill lessons. Inservices are required to train building faculty and staff on new routines and teaching strategies. Physical rearrangement of the school environment will require accessing the appropriate personnel. Flexible teaching schedules may need to be provided to allow for adequate supervision. Finally, specific strategies should be developed to promote the use of new skills and routines directly within the setting (Colvin et al., in press; Lewis et al., in press). For example, pre-corrects (e.g., prompts or reviews of key behaviors) can be used prior to students' involvement in new settings, faculty and staff may need to increase active supervision (e.g., scanning, providing praise, providing error correction), and incentives will be needed to encourage students use of new routines and skills.

### Implementation

Once all planning activities are completed, a structured schedule for implementation should be developed and followed. All staff should focus on teaching routines and related skills within a single setting. In addition, multiple opportunities should be provided for student practice. For example, if the targeted setting is all school assemblies, staff would first review routines for leaving the classroom, arriving within the designated setting, and seating arrangements. Related social skills should also be taught such as listening to the speaker, ignoring off-task peers, and asking appropriate questions. Finally, staff should hold assemblies to practice new routines and skills. Award assemblies related to improved school behavior provide both an opportunity to practice new skills and recognize and reward appropriate assembly related behavior. Once new

routines and skills are taught and opportunities to practice are provided, staff can move to other targeted settings.

An essential component of implementation should be a system to monitor implementation effectiveness. Ideally, direct observation of the frequency of student problem and replacement behavior should be conducted. If time does not allow staff to collect direct observation data, other strategies should be used. Strategies such as anecdotal reports from supervisory staff, rate of office referrals related to target settings, or random counts on a small group of students within the target setting can provide an index of effectiveness. If the data indicate the plan is not working, re-evaluate. Additional instruction, supervision, incentives, or practice with feedback may be needed to improve performance. If data indicate the plan is working, it is important to continue the plan for a sufficient amount of time to insure maintenance.

### Example

The following case study is provided to illustrate how one school using EBS approached three problem settings—the cafeteria, playground and hallway transition (see Lewis et al., in press for complete description of the study).

### Overview

Prior to implementing setting-specific strategies, the team established a set of school rules (be kind, be safe, be cooperative, be respectful, be peaceful), provided rule instructions to the students, and established a token reinforcement system to provide an incentive to comply with school rules using targeted social skills. If staff observed students using social skills related to school rules, they gave students "chance tickets" and verbal praise. Students placed their signed chance tickets into classroom boxes. Each month at an award assembly classroom teachers pulled a ticket out of the box and that selected student could choose an award (e.g., certificate for ice cream, small toys). In addition, students who maintained a high rate of compliance with school rules, 80% or better, were designated as "self-managers" and were allowed building privileges (e.g., leave for lunch early, use the restroom unsupervised, run teacher errands).

The team followed the above recommended planning activities. Specifically, the team first analyzed current setting routines and physical structures. It was determined that entrance and exit doors needed to be clearly marked on the cafeteria, certain areas of the playground that prevented adult supervision

should be made off-limits, and adult supervision during transitions was needed. Next, the team delineated specific behaviors that reflected the school rules for each of the three settings (see Table 1). Third, social skill lessons incorporating each of the positive examples for each school rule were developed. Finally, direct intervention strategies for each setting were developed and implemented following social skill instruction.

### Participants and Setting

All students in grades one through five (approximately 110 students) participated. Kindergarten students were not included because they did not eat lunch with other students and had recess scheduled at different times. Students were enrolled in a small (one class per grade) suburban elementary school. Targeted settings for the study included the cafeteria, recess, and transition prior to lunch. The cafeteria consisted of long tables with open seating and a single line to pick up school lunches. All students, grades 1-5, ate lunch at the same time. Recess took place outside on a playground comprised of black-top play areas, jungle gyms, swings, and slides. All students, grades 1-5, attended recess at the same time. Transition into the cafeteria was defined as a large covered breezeway area. Students exited through two wings of the school building, ascended or descended a stairway, and entered the cafeteria through a designated entrance. Prior to the study, there was no constant adult presence during transitions.

### Social Skill Instruction

All social skill lessons were developed by members of the team with the assistance of the first author. Social skill lessons were developed for each school rule using the team generated list of positive example behaviors (see Figure 1 for a sample social skill lesson used to teach playground related social skills for the rule "Be Kind.") Each group of setting-specific social skills were taught daily during a 30-min home room period in each classroom for approximately one school week. In addition, following the week of direct instruction on the setting specific group of skills, teachers continued to review previously taught skills verbally for an additional three weeks.

### Direct Intervention Strategies

Following social skill instruction, setting-specific interventions and incentives were developed to promote practice and use of routines and social skills in non-classroom settings. Within the cafeteria, a whole

**Table 1. School-Wide Rules & Behavior Examples**

Setting	Be Kind	Be Safe	Be Cooperative	Be Respectful	Be Peaceful
Cafeteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wait in line in order</li> <li>• Use polite words</li> <li>• Allow everyone to sit</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walk</li> <li>• Keep hands and feet to self in line</li> <li>• Watch out for others</li> <li>• Open the doors slowly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep food on your tray</li> <li>• Follow adult directions</li> <li>• Sit at assigned table</li> <li>• Wait to be dismissed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Put ticket in basket</li> <li>• Follow adult directions</li> <li>• Only eat your own food</li> <li>• Clean up after yourself</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Calm voices</li> <li>• Eat slowly</li> </ul>
Playground	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invite others to join</li> <li>• Include all who want to play</li> <li>• Accept skill differences/teach rules to others</li> <li>• Include others in your activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use equipment appropriately</li> <li>• Stay in designated areas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agree on game rules before you start to play</li> <li>• Follow game rules</li> <li>• Take turns</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep game rules the same during the game</li> <li>• Use appropriate language (no put downs)</li> <li>• Line up when whistle blows</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Problem solve conflicts</li> <li>• Return from the playground quietly</li> </ul>
Transition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep hands and feet to self</li> <li>• Allow others to work when you enter the classroom</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walk</li> <li>• Watch where you are walking</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wait for directions before leaving</li> <li>• Follow rules without adult reminders</li> <li>• Get materials out and be prepared to work as soon as you enter the classroom</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walk quietly so other students can continue learning</li> <li>• Use polite language</li> <li>• Follow adult directions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walk quietly</li> <li>• Enter classrooms quietly</li> </ul>

group contingency strategy was developed. During lunch, cafeteria monitors placed a large posterboard on the wall. Approximately every two minutes, staff marked a point if the majority (80% or more) of the students in the cafeteria were complying with school rules. Once a designated number of points were earned (80% of possible), all students attended an ice cream party during afternoon recess.

On the playground, a class by class group contingency was used. During recess, monitors handed out elastic hoops for rule compliance. Playground monitors gave the hoop to the student and provided verbal praise and feedback (e.g., "nice job cooperating when you let other students join the game"); students then placed the hoops on their wrists. After recess, students reported to the classroom teacher why they earned the hoop(s) and placed them in the class jar. Once the jar was full, each class voted on a reinforcer.

During transition a pre-correction and active su-

pervision strategy was used (Colvin et al., in press). Prior to releasing students for lunch, staff reminded students of trained transition behaviors. The building principal positioned herself so she was able to observe all students during the transition (i.e., active supervision). The principal provided positive reinforcement to those who complied with school rules (e.g., verbal praise and chance tickets) and provided simple error corrections for non-compliant behavior (e.g., return to the top of the steps and walk).

### Design and Measurement

A multiple baseline across settings design was used to examine the effect of social skill instruction and direct intervention on the rate of student problem behavior (Kazdin, 1982). Daily frequency counts of problem behavior identified as most problematic by the team were collected during a 10 minute period on the playground, cafeteria, and in the transi-

---

Figure 1. Sample social skill lesson used to teach playground related social skills for the school rule "Be Kind."

---

School Wide Social Skill Program

Playground

RULE: Be Kind

*Skill and Critical Rule*

"Today, we are going to talk about ways to BE KIND to others on the playground."

- what are we going to talk about?

*Ask students to define what BEING KIND means. Shape their responses into observable behaviors (e.g., if they say to be 'nice,' ask for examples of being nice that equate to observable skills such as taking turns, asking someone to play...*

"There are several ways to BE KIND to others. For example, we can:

- invite others to join in our games
- include all who want to play
- accept skill differences/teach rules to others
- include others in your activities."

"What are some ways we can BE KIND on the playground?"

- Review above key behaviors and any other skills the students identify

*Demonstration & Role Play*

*Demonstration*

"I am going to show you some ways to BE KIND and some ways to BE UN-KIND. I want you to watch me and see if you can tell if I am BEING KIND.

- Following each demonstration, ask the students if you were BEING KIND. Ask what you might do instead during non-examples

*Examples*

1. Tell someone they can't play the game you are in.
2. Greet one of the students and ask if s/he would like to swing.
3. Make fun of someone who doesn't know how to play four square.
4. Review the rules of soccer with peers before start to play.
5. Ask a peer if they want to sit by you.

*Role Plays*

Set up a few practice sessions with your students (based on key behaviors of rule) or use older students to role play APPROPRIATE examples of the skill.

- Following each role play review with all students:

"Was he/she being KIND?"

"How do you know?"

*Review & Test*

"Today we talked about BEING KIND on the playground. There are lots of ways to BE KIND. Ask students to identify key behaviors to BEING KIND.

*Homework*

"Today, we will be watching you during recess to see if you are BEING KIND to others. After recess I will ask you to tell me what you did to BE KIND.

- What should you do during recess?
- What am I going to ask you?

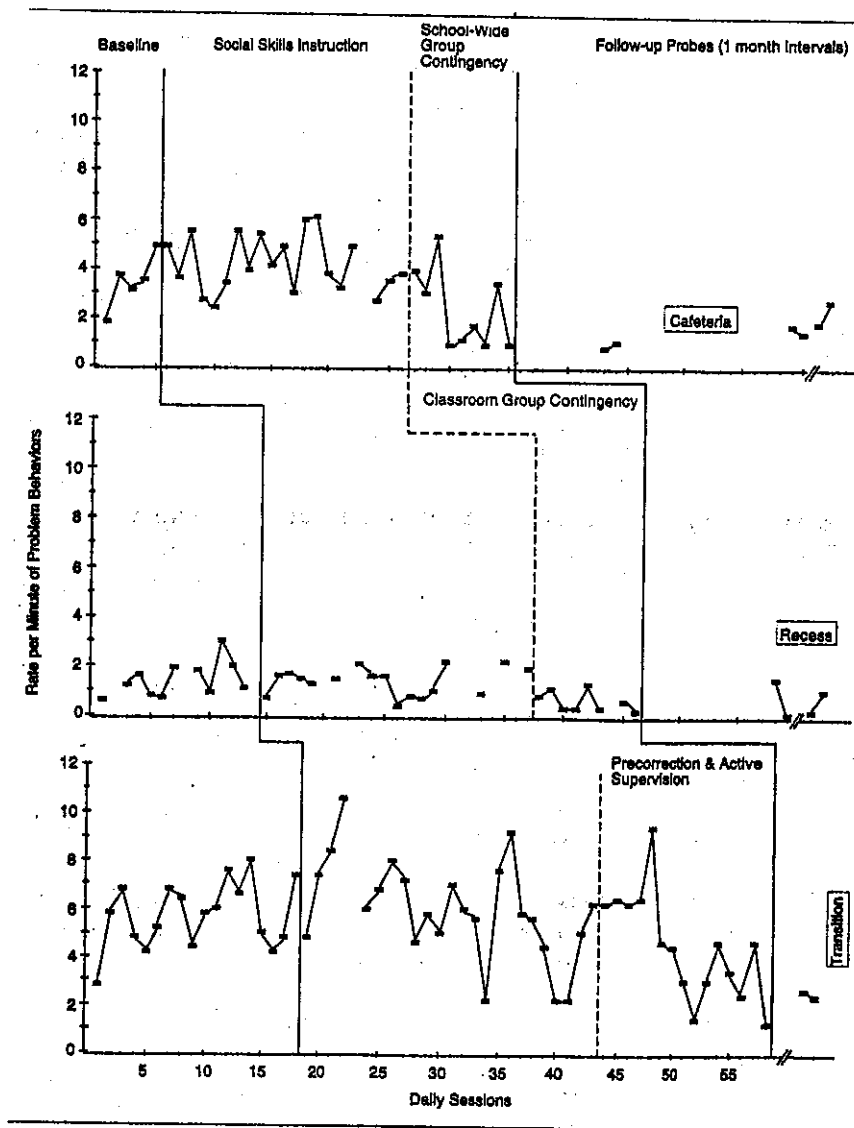
*It is important to remember that Effective Behavioral Support is a system of best practices of staff and student support and not a scripted set of procedures. Each school, using the outlined set of planning steps, develops a plan that meets the unique needs of their students, staff and building.*

tion period. Counts were collected throughout the transition period until the majority of students entered the cafeteria (average 5-10 min).

### Results

Daily counts of problem behavior were aggregated for each setting into a single rate data point. Daily problem behaviors rates were plotted and analyzed visually for significant within and between phase differences (see Figure 2). The School-Wide Group Contingencies (pre-corrects, active supervision, group contingencies) intervention resulted in reduction of problem behaviors in all three settings:

**Figure 2. Rate of problem behavior across settings, during social skill instruction, direct intervention, and one, two, and three month follow-up probes. Dashed phase line indicates change in group contingency format.**



cafeteria, recess and transition period. Data indicate no differences between baseline and social skill instruction phases across these three settings. In addition, at one month intervals following cessation of the interventions data indicate clear maintenance effects in the cafeteria and transition and moderate maintenance effects on the playground.

### Conclusion

It is important to remember that Effective Behavioral Support is a system of best practices of staff and student support and not a scripted set of procedures. Each school, using the above outlined set of planning steps, develops a plan that meets the unique needs of their students, staff and building. It is equally important that each school insure that any and all procedures developed are grounded in empirically validated practice (positive reinforcement theory, token economy, peer monitoring). Preliminary research investigating the use of best practice to reduce problem behavior in non-classroom settings, within the context of a larger pro-active school-wide system, indicates that educators can effectively reduce problem behavior with minimal external assistance (e.g., Colvin et al., in press; Lewis et al., in press; Lewis, Colvin, & Sugai, in review).

In addition to implementing empirically validated practices, the following factors have emerged among those schools who implement EBS effectively (Lewis et al., in press; Sugai, 1998). First, an administrator must be involved in the process. The administrator does not necessarily have to provide leadership within the EBS team, but must at minimum support the teams activities. Second, do not assume a) students will know what to do and b) simply explaining what is expected is sufficient to impact behavior. Schools must teach and provide opportunities to practice key expected behaviors and social skills. Finally, schools must keep EBS at the top of the school priority list. Impacting all students within a school setting should be viewed as a long term process necessitating that educators keep EBS at the forefront.

While evidence of the effectiveness of proactive school-wide discipline systems are emerging in the literature, continued research is needed to assess the long term impact on children's behavior. Research is also needed to identify the most parsimonious group of effective strategies and the collateral effects on academic performance. ♦

### References

- American Educator (1995-96). Elements of an effective discipline strategy. *American Educator*, 19(4), 24-27.
- Biglan, A. (1995). Translating what we know about the context of antisocial behavior into a lower prevalence of such behavior. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, 28, 479-492.
- Biglan, A. (1993). A functional contextualist framework for community interventions. In S. C. Hayes, L. J. Hayes, H. W. Reese, & T. R. Sarbin (Eds.), *Varieties of scientific contextualism* (pp. 251-276). Reno, NV: Context Press.
- Colvin, G., Kameenui, E., & Sugai, G. (1993). Reconceptualizing behavior management and school-wide discipline in general education. *Education and Treatment of Children*, 16, 361-381.
- Colvin, G., Sugai, G., Good, R., & Lee, Y-Y. (1997). Using precorrection and active supervision to improve transition behaviors in an elementary school. *School Psychology Quarterly*, 12(4), 344-363.
- Cotton, K. (1995). *Effective schooling practices: A Research synthesis*. Portland, OR: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory.
- Cotton, K., & Wiklund, K. R. (1990). Schoolwide and classroom Discipline. *School Improvement Series* (Close-Up #9). Portland OR: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory.
- Dishion, T., & Andrews, D. (1995). Preventing escalation in problem behaviors with high-risk, young adolescents: Immediate and one-year outcomes. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 63(4), 1-11.
- Dishion, T., Patterson, G. Stoolmiller, M., & Skinner, M. L. (1991). Family, school and behavioral antecedents to early adolescent involvement with antisocial peers. *Developmental Psychology*, 27, 172-180.
- Elam, S. J., Rose, L. C., & Gallup, A. M. (1996). 28th annual Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup poll of the public's attitudes toward the public schools. *Kappan*, 78(1), 41-59.
- Gottfredson, G. D., & Gottfredson, D. C. (1996). *A national study of delinquency prevention in schools*. Gottfredson Associates, Inc., Ellicott City, MD.
- Gottfredson, D. C., Gottfredson, G. D., & Hybl, L. D. (1993). Managing adolescent behavior: A multi-year, multi-school study. *American Educational Research Journal*, 30, 179-215.
- Kameenui, E. J., & Simmons, D. C. (1990). Designing classroom management strategies within the context of instruction. In *Designing instructional strategies: The prevention of academic learning problems*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Macmillan.
- Kazdin, A. E. (1982). *Single-case research design: Methods for clinical and applied settings*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Koop, C. E., & Lundberg, G. (1992). Violence in America: A public health emergency: Time to bite the bullet back. *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 267, 3075-3076.
- Lewis, T. J. (1996). *Decision making about effective behavioral support: A guide for educators*. Eugene, OR: National Center to Improve the Tools of Educators.
- Lewis, T. J. (1995, July). *What do we know about discipline with students with disabilities*. Working session at the Office of Special Education Programs, Project Director's Meeting, Washington, D. C.
- Lewis, T. J., Chard, D., & Scott, T. (1994). Full inclusion and the education of children and youth with emotional and behavioral disorders. *Behavioral Disorders*, 19, 277-293.
- Lewis, T. J., Sugai, G., & Colvin, G. (1998). Reducing problem behavior through a school-wide system of effective behavioral support: Investigation of a school wide social skills training program and contextual interventions. *School Psychology Review*, 27(3) 446-459.
- Lewis, T. J., Colvin, G., & Sugai, G. (in press). The effects of precorrection and active supervision on the recess behavior of elementary school students. *School Psychology Quarterly*.
- Lipsey, M. W. (1991). The effect of treatment on juvenile delinquents: Results from meta-analysis. In F. Losel, D. Bender, & T. Bliesener (Eds.), *Psychology and law* (pp. 131-143). New York: Walter de Gruyter.



- Mayer, G. R. (1995). Preventing antisocial behavior in the schools. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, 28, 467-478.
- Mayer, G. R., & Butterworth, T. (1979). A preventive approach to school violence and vandalism: An experimental study. *Personnel and Guidance Journal*, 57, 436-441.
- Mayer, G. R., & Butterworth, T. (1981). Evaluating a preventive approach to reducing school vandalism. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 62, 498-499.
- Mayer, G. R., Nafpaktitis, M., Butterworth, T., & Hollingsworth, P. (1987). A search for the elusive setting events of school vandalism: A correlational study. *Education and Treatment of Children*, 10, 259-270.
- Mayer, G. R., & Sulzer-Azeroff, B. (1991). Interventions for vandalism. In G. Stoner, M. K. Shinn, & H. M. Walker (Eds.), *Interventions for achievement and behavior problems* (pp. 559-580). Washington, DC: National Association of School Psychologists Monograph.
- Nelson, R., & Colvin, G. (1995). School-wide discipline: Procedures for managing common areas. In A. Deffenbaugh, G. Sugai, and G. Tindal (Eds.) *The Oregon Conference Monograph* (pp. 109-119). Eugene, OR: College of Education, University of Oregon.
- Noguera, P. A. (1995). Preventing and producing violence: A critical analysis of responses to school violence. *Harvard Educational Review*, 65, 189-211.
- Patterson, G. R., Reid, J. B., & Dishion, T. J. (1992). *Antisocial boys*. Eugene, OR: Castalia Press.
- Peacock Hill Working Group. (1991). Problems and promises in special education and related services for children and youth with emotional or behavioral disorders. *Behavioral Disorders*, 16, 299-313.
- Rutherford, R. B., & Nelson, C. M. (1995). Management of aggressive and violent behavior in the schools. *Focus on Exceptional Children*, 27(6), 1-15.
- Smith, D. D., & Rivera, D. P. (1995). Discipline in special education and general education settings. *Focus on Exceptional Children*, 27(5), 1-14.
- Sugai, G. (1998, February). *Schoolwide positive behavior support: Big ideas and examples*. Keynote Address at the Midwest Symposium for Leadership in Behavior Disorders, Kansas City, Missouri.
- Sugai, G., & Horner, R. (1994). Including students with severe behavior problems in general education settings: Assumptions, challenges, and solutions. In J. Marr, G. Sugai, & G. Tindal (Eds.), *The Oregon Conference Monograph* (pp. 109-120). Eugene, OR: College of Education, University of Oregon.
- Sugai, G., & Lewis, T. (1996). Preferred and promising practices for social skill instruction. *Focus on Exceptional Children*, 29(4), 1-16.
- Tolan, P., & Guerra, N. (1994). *What works in reducing adolescent violence: An empirical review of the field*. Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence, Boulder, Colorado.
- Walker, H. M., Horner, R. H., Sugai, G., Bullis, M., Sprague, J. R., Bricker, D., & Kaufman, M. J. (1996). Integrated approaches to preventing antisocial behavior patterns among school-age children and youth. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders*, 4, 193-256.
- Zigler, E., Taussig, C., & Black, K. (1992). Early childhood intervention: A promising preventative for juvenile delinquency. *American Psychologist*, 47, 997-1006.

#### Author Notes

Portions of this article, including the case study, appear in Lewis, T. J., Sugai, G., & Colvin, G. (in press). Reducing problem behavior through a school-side system of effective behavioral support in an elementary school. *School Psychology Review*.

---

# Using Data to Guide Decisions about Program Implementation and Effectiveness: An Overview and Applied Example

Teri Lewis-Palmer, George Sugai, and Stephen Larson  
University of Oregon

*Abstract: School systems are faced with the difficult task of effectively and efficiently addressing the increasing and intensifying discipline needs of their students. At the same time, school systems are experiencing a decrease in available resources and behavioral support. This paper describes a process designed to assist schools in their efforts to analyze and interpret data maintained in their current behavior tracking systems, and to use this information to guide decisions about their intervention practices. First, an overview of data-based decision making is reviewed. Second, a process for establishing data-based tracking systems is described. Third, an applied example of a school tracking system is presented and analysis and implications of discipline referral patterns are discussed.*

Violence among youth always has been a concern among educators. However, recent increases in the frequency and intensity in youth violence has left community, family, and school people seeking solutions. For example, homicides committed by children 10 to 14 years of age rose from 194 to 301 between 1988 and 1992 (Lacayo, 1994). Similarly, incidences of armed robbery, murder, rape, and aggravated assault have increased. With this increase in violence, the number of high school dropouts also has risen. In fact, only two-thirds of our nation's youth are expected to graduate from high-school (National Dropout Prevention Center, 1992). One explanation for this increase in dropouts is the educational system's difficulty to provide a full spectrum of resources and a structured learning environment (Mayer, 1995).

The National Educational Goals Report (1996) indicates that lack of discipline is one of the biggest problems facing public schools. Because of this challenge, schools are struggling to identify better ways to manage their school environments and to create and sustain positive structured learning environments. Wolery, Bailey, and Sugai (1988) define a structured learning environment as one that is conducive to teaching and learning, provides adequate space and materials, and provides a normal educational experience. They indicate that without this rich environment, students will have difficulty functioning to the highest of their potential. Unfortunately, creating and sustaining these proactive contexts is difficult as levels of inappropriate behaviors in schools increase and resources in schools decrease (Sugai & Horner, 1994). As a result, more time

is being spent on reactive classroom and behavior management and less on academic instruction (Baker & Zigmond, 1990).

Fortunately, a technology for developing and sustaining more proactive and structured learning environments exists (e.g., Colvin, Kameenui, & Sugai, 1993; Gottfredson, 1997; & Gresham et al., in press). This technology emphasizes the creation of school-wide structures and procedures to support the use of positive support for all students and staff across all school settings (see Sugai & Horner, 1996).

---

*Data-based decision procedures are used to identify and define problems, select interventions, evaluate the effectiveness of an intervention, and guide modifications of existing programs and activities.*

---

However, to sustain the use of a systematic approach to positive behavioral support, procedures must be in place to enable informed and accurate decisions about whether adequate gains are being achieved and what actions should occur next. Data-based decision procedures are used to identify and define problems, select interventions, evaluate the effectiveness of an intervention, and guide modifications of existing programs and activities. It is not enough for schools to be concerned about discipline and safety or to implement programs and interven-

tions to reduce discipline and safety concerns. Schools must use data to identify their specific needs and to determine if selected programs and interventions match their needs. Furthermore, schools need to continue data based decision making to determine if initial assessment decisions were accurate. In particular, they need to consider whether their efforts at increasing proactive school-wide discipline have been effective.

Previous research has demonstrated the usefulness of existing data systems in school-based decision making. Colvin et al., (1993) developed a program to train teachers to evaluate the effects of school-wide behavior supports on student behavior. Researchers evaluated a "teacher of teachers" intervention after analyzing the school's discipline referral data. By identifying patterns and trends across the school year, and comparing the results to a control school receiving no training, they were able to make informed conclusions regarding the effectiveness of their efforts. Their analysis focused on the number and types of referred behaviors, students with multiple discipline referrals, and location behavioral events.

Using similar data analysis techniques, Tobin, Sugai, and Colvin (1996) evaluated discipline records in three middle schools to test if discipline referral patterns during the first three months of school in sixth grade could serve as reliable predictors for chronic behaviors and poor social adjustment later in middle school. By analyzing discipline referral data, these researchers were able to identify individuals who had demonstrated difficulty behaving appropriately early in their school career, and predict the activity of the same individuals later in their educational experience. Other studies have used discipline referral data (Gottfredson, Gottfredson, & Hybl 1993; Hall, 1997) to look at discipline referral data and identify patterns and trends across each of the schools to make informed decisions.

The purpose of this paper is to describe a process designed to assist schools in their efforts to analyze and interpret data maintained in their current behavior tracking systems and to use this information to guide decisions about their intervention practices. First, an overview of data-based decision making is provided. Second, a process for establishing data-based tracking systems is described. Third, an applied example of a school tracking system is presented, and analysis and implications of discipline referral patterns are discussed.

## Overview of Data-Based Decision Making

In effective systems of behavior support, student behavior is monitored continuously, and data are

used by staff to make data-based decisions (Sugai & Horner, 1996). In this process, types of questions, data, and decisions must be considered.

### Types of Questions

The data-based decision making process involves two main types of questions: (a) initial assessment questions and (b) on-going evaluation questions.

**Initial assessment questions.** Initial assessment questions allow a school to assess their current strengths, weaknesses, and needs. By asking these questions, schools can determine where to focus their system change efforts and increase the likelihood that these efforts will be effective and efficient. Additionally, initial questions can assist schools in determining what type of intervention or program best meets their needs. Initial questions might include the following: (a) What is the nature of recent behavioral incidents (e.g., number of referrals per day per month, type of behavioral incidents, location of behavioral incidents)? and (b) What behavior supports are in place and to what degree must they be improved? Information collected to answer these questions is used to establish priorities and develop implementation action plans.

**On-going evaluation questions.** Once initial decisions have been made about where to focus efforts and what type of program is going to be implemented, data are used for on-going evaluations. Several types of evaluation questions can be addressed: (a) What is the impact of current behavior support efforts? (b) How do the outcomes of two program interventions compare? and (c) Are building staff satisfied with the impact of an intervention effort?

### Types of Data

After the specific question(s) are determined, the next step involves deciding on the type of data to be collected. Different types of data require differing levels of effort and expertise. A general rule of thumb is to choose the simplest type of data that will answer the question(s). Four general types of data should be considered.

**Archival review/permanent product.** The collection of archival review/permanent product data involves a review of items produced by the student (e.g., assignments, graffiti) or written by others about the student (e.g., assessments, discipline referrals). Because these data are permanent, educators have more flexibility in where and when data are analyzed. The major drawback is that this data source represents an indirect measure of behavior and can be unreliable.

**Rating/survey.** The use of rating scales and surveys represents an easy method for collecting data because students, parents, and/or school personnel write responses to specific behavior support related questions. Respondents mark numerical rankings or scores, or write answers to open-ended questions. This data source is convenient and can require minimal analysis to summarize results. Additionally, ratings and surveys can be distributed one time or at several times, and results can be compared to determine if change has occurred. One drawback is that obtained data are indirect measures of actual behavioral events because respondent opinion or perceptions are used.

**Interview.** Similar to ratings and surveys, interviews provide an easy to administer and analyze data source. Interviews can be conducted with staff, faculty, students, parents, and community members. Although interviews allow for clarification and further questioning, they still do not provide a direct measure of behavior. However, data from interviews are informational and can be collected at several times and from several groups to answer evaluation questions.

**Observation.** To obtain a direct measure of student or staff behavior, direct observation data collection strategies should be employed. In general, direct observation involves targeting specific behaviors, identifying contexts or settings in which these behaviors are of concern, and recording behavior as they occur.

### Types of Decisions

Once questions have been developed, data source(s) have been identified, and data collected and summarized, answers to evaluation questions can be developed. Several types of data-based decisions are possible.

**Begin.** Data can be used to determine whether a new program needs to be initiated and which one might be the most appropriate program to initiate. These data also can guide decisions about where and when to begin new programs.

**Continue.** Once programs or interventions are in place, data can be used to evaluate effectiveness and progress. If programs are associated with satisfactory levels of desired change, then a decision to continue the program or intervention might be made.

**Modify.** Sometimes data will reveal that programs are not producing the level or rate of change desired. Data can be used to determine what aspects of a program should be modified and often can provide information about how to modify the program.

**Terminate.** An analysis of program evaluation data can lead to a decision to terminate or end a program. A terminate decision can result if a program is associated with ineffective progress or if a program has been successful and is no longer needed.

### Creating a Data-Base System

Before a data-based decision making system is created, four guidelines should be considered: (a) data must be readily available, (b) procedures for collecting data must be easy to use and not be staff/resource/time expensive, (c) purposes for using data must be relevant to on-going activities, and (d) small number of questions should be addressed.

Given these considerations, the questions must be identified and clearly defined. Questions should be (a) based on information from initial assessments or on-going evaluations, (b) related to school improvement targets or objectives, and (c) written in measurable and observable terms.

After relevant and measurable questions have been identified, the next step involves identifying what data are to be collected and from where. These data must be readily available and easily collectable to minimize the amount of staff resource and time involved in data collection, manipulation, and analysis. In addition, it is important to specify (a) who will collect the data, (b) how they will collect the data, (c) how often data will be collected and summarized, (d) how the data will be displayed (i.e., table or graph), (e) who will be responsible for creating data displays and, (f) how the displays will be produced.

The final step in developing a monitoring system is to determine how the data displays will be used, by whom, how often, and where. Natural data cycles (e.g., monthly team meetings, bi-monthly staff meetings, six-week grading periods) should be considered because they are regular and consistent, and allow for timely decision making. Waiting until the end of the school year for a summative review of programs does not allow for timely evaluation and modification. Figure 1 summarizes the steps outlined by Colvin and Sugai (1996) in a matrix that can be used to develop a monitoring system.

### Case Study

The following case study illustrates how available data (i.e., discipline referrals) were used to characterize and evaluate the status of behavior support in an elementary school. Although discipline referral data represent an indirect measure of student behavior and are a reflection of an interaction between a teacher, a student, and office staff, they are useful indicators of the status of disciplin-

**Figure 1. Procedures for developing and monitoring school-management implementation.**

Implementation question to be answered	Data to be collected and source	Steps and frequency for collecting data and by whom	Format for displaying data	Steps and frequency for using data and by whom
		1. 2. 3. 4. 5.		
		1. 2. 3. 4. 5.		
		1. 2. 3. 4. 5.		
		1. 2. 3. 4. 5.		
		1. 2. 3. 4. 5.		

ary action and allow for within-school comparison and evaluation.

#### Participating School

The elementary school (K-5) was located in a suburban area of the Pacific Northwest and was a participant in an on-going school-wide behavior support project. A seven-member team was established to lead the efforts to improve school-wide behavior support. Discipline referral data reported in the case study were from the school's first year in the behavior support project. The team requested assistance with summarizing its discipline data for use in decision making. Throughout the school year the behavior support team participated in on-going training activities including how to analyze data to make decisions. The enrollment was about 570 students. Staff consisted of 34 certified, 13 classified, and 1 administrative personnel.

#### Type of Questions

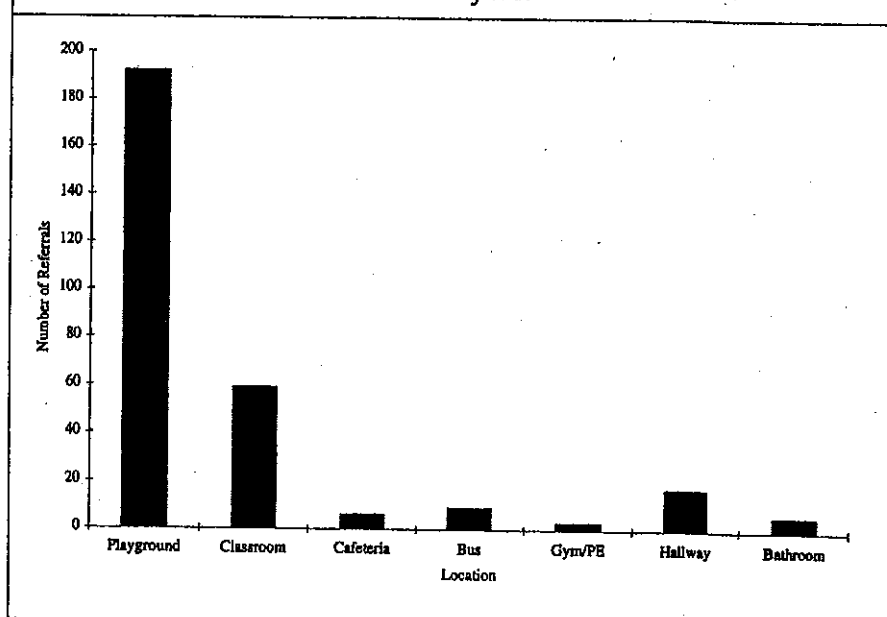
The school behavior support team initially completed an assessment of discipline referral records from the previous year to identify strengths and weaknesses and to determine the focus of its activities in the 1997-1998 school year. Throughout

the 1997-1998 school year the support team monitored discipline referral information on a monthly basis and compared this information to data from the same month in the previous year. Thus, effectiveness of intervention and program activities could be evaluated on a monthly basis. As a result of the discipline referrals the team developed lesson plans for the playground around appropriate behavior and taught lessons on the playground to all students.

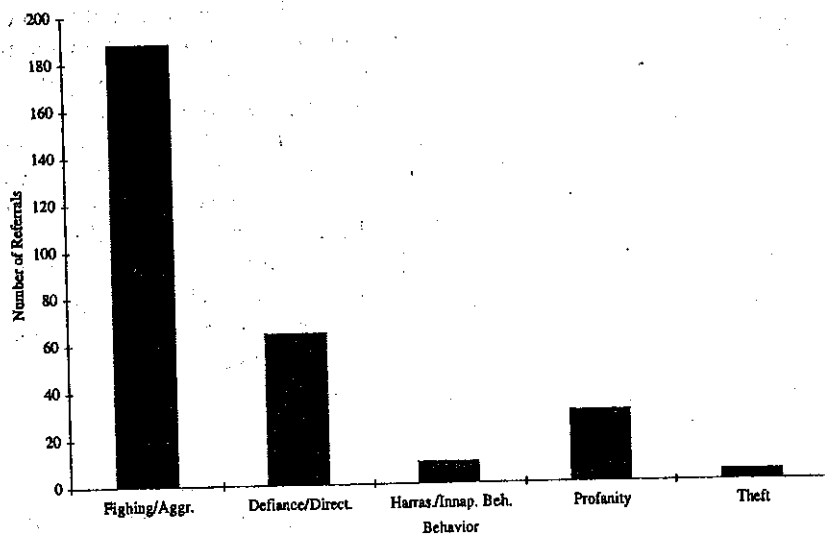
#### Type of Data

A total of 292 discipline referrals were recorded for the 1996-1997 school year. Of the 292 referrals, 192 (65%) occurred on the playground, followed by 59 (20%) within the classroom (Figure 2). The majority of discipline referrals involved fighting/aggression (63%) and defiance/failure to follow directions (21%) (Figure 3). The highest rate of discipline referrals occurred in November with 3.2 discipline referrals per day per month. In May, 2.6 discipline referrals per day per month were processed (Figure 4). The majority of students who received discipline referrals during the school year received either one (91) or two (30) (Figure 5). Two students received 12 and

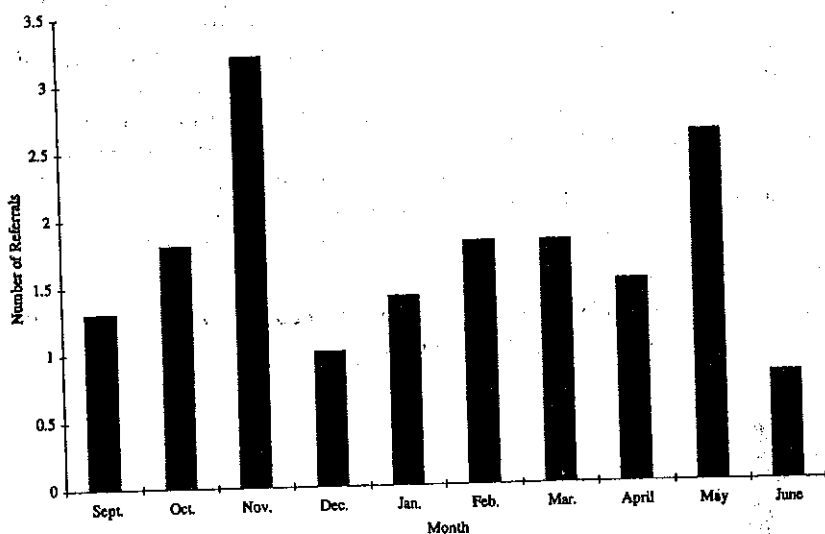
**Figure 2. Discipline referrals by location of occurrence for 1996-1997 school year.**



**Figure 3. Discipline referrals by type of behavior for 1996-1997 school year.**



**Figure 4. Discipline referrals per day per month for 1996-1997 school year.**



13 discipline referrals each over the year, and one student received 33 discipline referrals in one year.

#### Type of Decisions

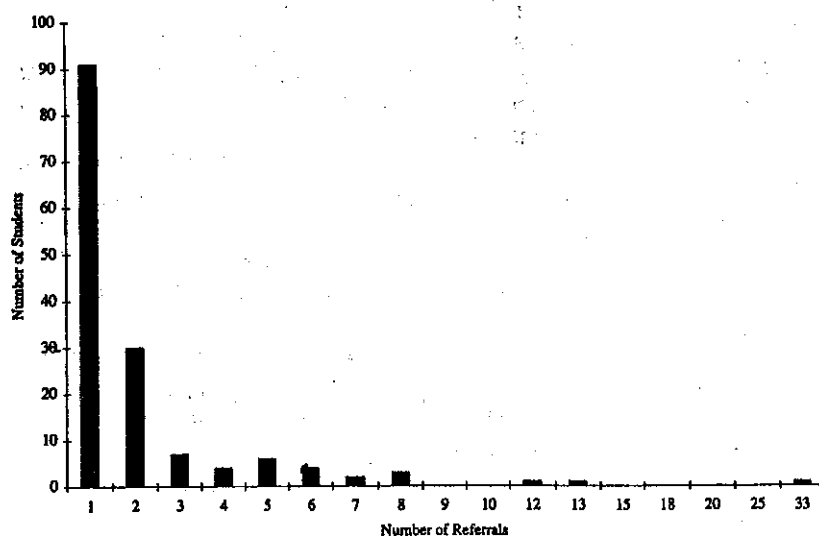
The behavior support team within the school used the discipline referral information and the results from a staff needs assessment survey to plan activities and focus implementation efforts for the 1997-1998 school year. Based on their analysis of these data, the team developed an action plan that focused on procedures to identify, teach, and encourage appropriate behavior on the playground.

Initially the team focused on re-defining the school-wide expectations and simplified them to "Be Kind," "Be Safe," and "Be Responsible." First year activities included (a) presenting the new expectations to staff and incorporating staff feedback, (b) defining the expectations for all school settings (i.e., classroom, hallway, playground, cafeteria, bus, restroom, office), (c) teaching the students the new expectation through daily classroom lessons, and (d) establishing a school-wide recognition system to encourage and acknowledge students exhibiting appropriate behavior. Based on information from the staff survey the team also (a) established a "buddy system" for students having difficulty during class, (b) established a teacher support team for teachers to receive assistance for individual students, and (c) created "helpful hints" cards for staff to refer to when responding to minor behavior problems outside of their classrooms with students unfamiliar to them. In addition, the team continued to monitor discipline referrals for physical aggression to determine where and when this type of problem behavior was most and least likely to occur and what behavior support response was required, if any. Because November and May had the highest discipline referral rates during the previous year, the team has considered implementation of additional incentive or booster/

reminder programs in October and April. Students who received more than 10 discipline referrals in the previous year were targeted for specially designed interventions.

In the second year, the teacher support teams, buddy system, and school-wide incentive/acknowledgment programs were continued. Furthermore, the team began to address the needs of the students with chronic behavior problems as identified through teacher requests and high rates of discipline referrals and to learn how to conduct functional assessments to determine the features of behavior support plans.

**Figure 5. Discipline referrals by repeat offenders for 1996-1997 school year.**



### Discussion

Schools are searching for strategies to address the increasing and intensifying social behavioral needs of their students. Although several program options are available to address these concerns, schools must determine which program will work best for their unique setting. Data-based decision making is critical to effectively addressing school-wide discipline and safety issues. First, schools need to rely on data to determine (a) what specific need must be addressed, (b) where to emphasize instruction and intervention, (c) what type of intervention to implement, and (d) what type of learning should be targeted (i.e., acquisition, fluency, maintenance, and/or generalization). Second, schools also must rely on data to determine if the interventions and strategies implemented have been effective, for example, (a) Was there sufficient change in the behavior(s) of the students? (b) Did appropriate behaviors increase while inappropriate behaviors decreased? and (c) If the intervention was not effective, why, and what

changes can be made to increase effectiveness? To benefit from existing empirically validated practices, schools must be able to make data-based decisions that include both initial assessment and ongoing evaluation decisions. Additionally, the data system must be effective and efficient for the school to implement. Therefore, decisions about data systems must reflect a balance between the degree of information required and the resources necessary to collect the data. Figure 6 represents a summary of the types of data available (e.g., interview) and specific examples of measurement strategies, accessibility of data sources and resource requirements. For example, if a school decides to assess the impact of a school-wide strat-

egy, a data collection system that would measure several students with minimal effort (e.g., discipline referrals, surveys) would be developed. However, if a school needs information about an individual student requiring individualized support, it may need to develop a data system that requires more time and more intensive direct observation procedures. The goal is for schools to improve their capacity to match the level of information required with the type of data available and select options that are effective and efficient. Data collection decisions re-

**Figure 6. Summary of Matching Types of Data to Level of School-wide System**

		Accessibility			
		Easy			Hard
Implementation	Easy	Archival/Permanent	Rating/Surveys	Interviews	Direct Observation
	Universal Group (80%)	Referrals (Big Six) Attendance Vandalism Socio-economic status Grades Essays "Chance" Tickets	EBS Assessment Social Skills Rating System for Teachers Oregon School Safety Survey	Pre-referral form Question & answer	Transitions Playgrounds Cafeteria Classrooms
	Targeted Group (15%)	Referrals Suspension Expulsion Arrest/crime Records Individualized Education Plans Work Samples	Problem Behavior Questionnaire Motivation Assessment Scale Vineland	Teacher Assistance Teams Functional assessment Interviews	
	Individual Student (5%)	Referrals Suspension Expulsion Arrest/crime Records Individualized Education Plans Work Samples Previous Assessments Previous Interventions	Problem Behavior Questionnaire Motivation Assessment Scale Vineland	Teacher Interview Student Interview Parent Interview	Scatterplot Antecedent-Behavior- Consequence form Functional Assessment Observation Form
Hard					

*To benefit from existing empirically validated practices, schools must be able to make data-based decisions that include both initial assessment and ongoing evaluation decisions. Additionally, the data system must be effective and efficient for the school to implement. Therefore, decisions about data systems must reflect a balance between the degree of information required and the resources necessary to collect the data.*

quire a balance between the reliability of the data and the level of detail needed to make an informed decision.

The main message in this paper is that data are important to make sound behavior support decisions. Many forms of data are available or can be collected in schools. The objective is to use data that are easily available and collectable. However, as the seriousness or importance of the question increases, the ease of implementation of the data collection procedures and the accessibility of the data source may need to be modified to include data that are more difficult to obtain. ♦

### References

- Baker, J., & Zigmond, N. (1990). Are general classrooms equipped to accommodate students with learning disabilities? *Exceptional Children*, 56(6), 515-526.
- Colvin, G., Kameenui, J., & Sugai, G. (1993). Reconceptualizing behavior management and school-wide discipline in general education. *Education and Treatment of Children*, 16(4), 361-381.
- Colvin, G., & Sugai, G. (1996). *Overview of procedures for monitoring school-wide discipline systems*. Unpublished document. University of Oregon, Eugene, OR.
- Gottfredson, D. C. (1997). School-based crime prevention. In L. Sherman, D. Gottfredson, Mackenzie, D. J. Eck, P. Reuter, & S. Bushway (Eds.), *Preventing crime: What works, what doesn't, what's promising*. College Park, MD: Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice.
- Gottfredson, D. C., Gottfredson, G. D., & Hybl, L. G. (1993). Managing adolescent behavior a multiyear, multischool study. *American Educational Research Journal*, 30, (1), 179-215.
- Gresham, F. M., & Elliott, S. N. (1990). *Social skills rating scale*. Circle Pines, MN: American Guidance Service.
- Gresham, F., Sugai, G., Horner, R., Quinn, M., & McInerney, M. (in press). Schoolwide values, discipline, and social skills. Synthesis report for American Institutes of Research and Offices of Special Education Programs. Washington, D.C.
- Hall, S. (1997). *A Descriptive analysis of discipline referrals in six elementary and middle schools (1994-1995)*. Unpublished Masters Project. University of Oregon, Eugene OR.
- Mayer, G. R. (1995) Preventing antisocial behavior in the schools. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, 28, (4), 467-478.
- Lacayo, R. (1994, September). When kids go bad. *Time*, 144, 60-63.
- National Dropout Prevention Center. (1992). *Statistics from the secretary's wall chart*. Clemson, SC: Author.
- National Educational Goals Panel (1996). *1995 National Educational Goals Report*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.
- Sugai, G., & Horner, R. (1994). Including students with severe behavior problems in general education settings: Assumptions, challenges, and solutions. *The Oregon Conference Monograph*, 6, 109-120.
- Sugai, G., & Horner, R. (1996). Antisocial behavior, discipline, and behavioral support: A look from the schoolhouse door. Unpublished Manuscript. University of Oregon.
- Tobin, T., Sugai, G., & Colvin, G. (1996). Patterns in middle school discipline records. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders*, 4(2), 82-94.
- Wolery, M., Bailey, D. B., & Sugai, G. M. (1988). *Effective teaching: Principles and procedures of applied behavior analysis with exceptional students*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc.



# Universal School Discipline Strategies: Facilitating Positive Learning Environments

Terrance M. Scott, Ph.D.

C. Michael Nelson, Ed.D.

University of Kentucky

*Abstract: This paper addresses school responses to problems of student discipline. Disciplinary policies and practices that have been ineffective are presented, followed by a review of research documenting successful practices that address school-wide disciplinary issues. Although a voluminous literature concerning best practices exists, much of the information pertaining to the management of challenging student behavior has been published in special education journals. As the movement to fully include students with disabilities in general education programs expands, it is important that regular and special educators who collaborate in such programs have the same knowledge base regarding strategies that are effective.*

It's 12:00 PM and the lunch bell rings at an average middle school in America. While students busily scurry out of classrooms and toward the exits, teachers arrange the stacks of ungraded papers on their desks and prepare to transition to their own lunch. Out behind the gym, a crowd gathers. There's no legitimate reason for students to occupy this area, still, there are no specific rules against it and, thus, the teachers going to lunch do not notice the stream of students moving to this area. The faculty's response is not apathetic, it's just that no teacher has specifically been assigned the task of monitoring student movements between classes. At 12:04, behind the gym, two students begin fighting before a large audience of their peers. At 12:05 one student is struck in the side of the head and knocked to the ground, unconscious. The group audibly gasps before quickly scattering away from the area. This catches the attention of a passing teacher who rushes to the aid of the student.

At the school board meeting that week, concerned parents demand to know what will be done to ensure the safety of their children. In quick response, the board assures the parents that such violence will not be tolerated. The student perpetrator in question is expelled from school.

This paper is an abridgment of a more comprehensive treatment of this topic entitled "Best Practices in School Discipline I: School and Classroom-Wide Strategies" and submitted to *Elementary School Journal* for publication.

Author addresses: Department of Special Education and Rehabilitation Counseling, 229 Taylor Education Building, University of Kentucky, Lexington, KY 40506-0001.

The violence and outcomes in this scenario are typical of everyday occurrences in many American schools. Also typical is the manner with which this problem was addressed. That is, school-wide discipline policy typically is designed to react to rather than to prevent dangerous and disruptive behaviors. The number of aggressive and violent acts in public schools has reached crisis proportion (Bullock, Reilly, & Donahue, 1983; Horne & Sayger, 1990; Hranitz & Eddowes, 1990; Rutherford & Nelson, 1995). Beyond the most obvious consequences, students with disruptive behaviors affect not only their own level of academic engaged time but also that of their peers (Pomplun, 1997). Approximately 8% of junior and senior high school students report missing school out of fear of the conflict and aggression occurring in the classroom (Hranitz & Eddowes, 1990). Clearly, the incidence of challenging behaviors in our school system is beginning to demonstrate an effect on the overall quality of education.

Although dangerous and disruptive behaviors are cited by teachers as being the most difficult issue with which they deal on a daily basis (Bannerman,

---

*Each year, the U.S. spends over 1 billion dollars on juvenile corrections facilities alone. Yet, the concrete costs of incarceration and rehabilitation pale in comparison to the cost of a wasted life - divorce, inability to hold a job, failure to provide for children, and the continuing victimization of responsible citizens.*

---

---

*If all students are to be served in a manner that precludes their exclusion from public schools while still maintaining a positive learning environment, educators must develop school-wide systems of proactive behavioral support that are implemented and owned by the entire school staff.*

---

1987; Safran & Safran, 1987, 1988; Tausig, 1985), the costs of dealing with these students in the school system must be balanced against the cost of excluding them. Each year, the U.S. spends over 1 billion dollars on juvenile corrections facilities alone. Yet, the concrete costs of incarceration and rehabilitation pale in comparison to the cost of a wasted life - divorce, inability to hold a job, failure to provide for children, and the continuing victimization of responsible citizens. Providing children with social and academic skills of prevention is cheaper than providing them with social and correctional services for the remainder of their lives. If all students are to be served in a manner that precludes their exclusion from public schools while still maintaining a positive learning environment, educators must develop school-wide systems of proactive behavioral support that are implemented and owned by the entire school staff.

The purpose of this paper is to present a review of the essential features of a proactive school-wide discipline program. We begin with a brief review of school practices that are inequitable and have been ineffective. Next, we describe a range of best practices, including early intervention, effective practices regarding school-wide discipline, classroom management, effective instruction, and alternative placement. The research base concerning these strategies will be documented. Finally, we present a set of recommendations designed to guide educators toward a systematic approach to developing systematic school-wide policies and procedures.

### **Challenging Behaviors: A School-Wide Problem**

Several factors provide evidence of the need for school-wide prevention and support strategies. These include, on the one hand, disciplinary practices that are ineffective, and educational groupings that are poorly conceptualized and supported. On the other hand, advances in early detection and early inter-

vention have increased schools' potential to meet the need for more effective approaches.

### **Historically Inequitable Practices Applied to Specific School Populations**

Students identified under the federal definition for serious emotional disturbance (more commonly referred to as emotional and behavioral disorders, Council for Children with Behavioral Disorders, 1990) traditionally have been suspended, expelled, or otherwise excluded at a higher frequency than other students (Borthwick-Duffy, Eyman, & White, 1987; Patterson, Reid, & Dishion, 1992). Further, students with EBD have the lowest rate of high school completion of any disability group (42%) and are more likely to be incarcerated while in school than any other group of pupils (Chesapeake Institute, 1994). Yet, this population of children, while easily visible due to their special education label, is not responsible for most disruptive and violent school behaviors (Wentzel, 1993).

In addition to students with EBD, members of minority groups, males, and students from low socioeconomic status backgrounds also are more likely to be subjected to exclusionary practices (Cooley, 1995; Costenbader & Markson, 1994; McFadden, Marsh, Price, & Hwang, 1990; Panko-Stilmock, 1996; Shaw & Braden, 1990; Skiba, Petersen, & Williams, 1997). However, special treatment screening that is focused solely on students with these characteristics ignores the numbers of pupils with challenging behaviors who do not fit these demographics. Rather, screening attempts should effectively screen all students to identify those at risk of school failure.

---

*Although historically, disruptive, acting-out, and noncompliant behaviors have been thought of as symptomatic of EBD, the perpetrators of disruptive and violent behavior in schools actually are a heterogeneous group of students who cannot be solely characterized by identified disability.*

---

Many of the students included in the above groups may be characterized or identified as conduct disorder, antisocial, delinquent, or as exhibiting attentional deficits and/or impulsive behaviors (ADHD). The large group of pupils, comprised of unidentified students with EBD, those with other conditions not considered educational disabilities,

and those at-risk for such labels, no doubt accounts for a significant portion of those students who display disruptive and dangerous behaviors. Although historically, disruptive, acting-out, and noncompliant behaviors have been thought of as symptomatic of EBD, the perpetrators of disruptive and violent behavior in schools actually are a heterogeneous group of students who cannot be solely characterized by identified disability (Wentzel, 1993).

---

*Behavior management and intervention with children exhibiting behavioral disabilities generally has been the domain of the special education teacher. However, as inclusive school reforms prescribe that all students be included in the regular education environment to a degree not experienced previously, the challenge of handling these children no longer can be looked upon purely as a special education issue.*

---

The single most common denominator among students at-risk for behavioral deviation is poverty. Education always has been viewed as a mechanism for counteracting the negative influences of poverty (Carlson, 1996), and early intervention programs (e.g., Headstart) aimed at students with low SES have been found to be generally effective in facilitating academic skill development (e.g., Gersten, Becker, & Heiry, 1984; Gersten, Darch, & Gleason, 1988). However, to date, educators and the public have not accepted a set of procedures that are effective in identifying students at-risk for school disruption and violence or for early intervention.

#### **Historically Ineffective Policies and Interventions**

Traditional interventions for students with challenging behaviors largely have been reactive and negative, employing punishment and hierarchical exclusions (e.g., in-school suspension, suspension, and expulsion, Center & McKittrick, 1987; Uchitelle, Bartz, & Hillman, 1989; Walker et al., 1996). However, substantial evidence exists that a reliance on negative intervention is ineffective in fostering positive behavioral changes (Shores, Gunter, & Jack, 1993; Sulzer-Azaroff & Mayer, 1991). Yet teachers consistently dispense significantly more reprimands and disapprovals than praise, and student compli-

ance largely goes unrewarded (Cantrell, Stenner, & Katzenmeyer, 1977; Gunter, Denny, Jack, Shores, & Nelson, 1993; Shores, Gunter, & Jack, 1993; Shores, Jack, Gunter, Ellis, DeBriere, & Wehby, 1994). The need for positive interventions is even greater when dealing with behaviorally volatile children, yet praise seldom is used with students who have histories of challenging behavior, even when they are engaged in appropriate behaviors (Denny, Epstein, & Rose, 1992; Gable, Hendrickson, Young, Shores, & Stowitschek, 1983; Strain, Lambert, Kerr, Stagg, & Lenkner, 1983).

#### **The Move Toward Inclusion**

Behavior management and intervention with children exhibiting behavioral disabilities generally has been the domain of the special education teacher. However, as inclusive school reforms prescribe that all students be included in the regular education environment to a degree not experienced previously, the challenge of handling these children no longer can be looked upon purely as a special education issue.

While inclusionary practices may increase the number of students in general education classrooms who need specific behavior management plans, inclusion is not the cause of the escalating rate of disciplinary challenges in regular classrooms. However, attempts to include students with these needs without first developing a clear plan to support their challenging behaviors leads to a sense of frustration and failure on the part of general education teachers. It is true that the regular school environment exposes children to appropriate peer models, but the simple act of placing these students into these inclusionary environments, without benefit of effective individual and school-wide discipline plans, is not sufficient to change their behavior (Cartwright, Cartwright, & Ward, 1988; Jenkins, Speltz, & Odom, 1986; Schloss, 1984).

#### **Best Practices in School-Wide Intervention**

Disruptive and dangerous behaviors are exhibited across a range of students and affect virtually all staff and students in a school. Therefore, effective interventions must be designed, implemented, and evaluated by a school-wide team of regular and special education teachers, administrators, and staff. Several authorities on behavioral interventions (Nelson, 1996; Walker, Colvin, & Ramsey, 1995) have identified multiple levels of intervention that are appropriate for different types of student behavior. *Universal interventions* are applicable to entire

---

*By establishing multi-level interventions and basing decisions regarding which level to apply on the basis of student response to less intensive interventions, schools can use available resources more efficiently and effectively, while also reducing the wholesale use of strategies whose effectiveness diminishes with overuse (e.g., in-school suspension).*

---

groups of students (e.g., the population of a school or a classroom). These interventions are proactive and are based on commonly understood rules and routines. Examples of universal intervention practices are school-wide rules, routines for common student areas (lunchroom, bus waiting area, hallways), and ecological arrangements to deal with student movement and crowding (Nelson & Colvin, 1996). While all students benefit from universal interventions, those pupils whose compliance with normal school expectations and routines is marginal are the group most affected. *Targeted interventions* are individualized strategies designed specifically for students whose responses to universal interventions is less than desired. A third level of intervention, *wraparound planning*, is a team-based approach in which student characteristics and needs are addressed through comprehensive planning and intervention across multiple life domains (Eber, Nelson, & Miles, 1997).

Each successive level of this hierarchy represents a more intensive degree of specific intervention planning. By establishing multi-level interventions and basing decisions regarding which level to apply on the basis of student response to less intensive interventions, schools can use available resources more efficiently and effectively, while also reducing the wholesale use of strategies whose effectiveness diminishes with overuse (e.g., in-school suspension).

The remainder of this paper describes a variety of interventions that have been effective in universal (i.e., school-wide) applications.

### **Screening and Early Intervention**

Though a significant proportion of students are involved in behaviors warranting office referral at some time during their schooling, the majority of behaviors leading to suspension generally are exhibited by a relatively small number of students

(Costenbader & Markson, 1994). Research indicates that significant adjustment problems can be predicted at a very early age simply by the presence of specific antisocial behaviors (Hinshaw, Han, Erhardt, & Huber, 1992). These findings suggest that systematic screening procedures can be used to identify students whose current behaviors are predictive of engagement in disruptive and violent behaviors long before such behaviors become serious challenges.

Identification of children at an early age is most efficiently completed by screening all children during their first school placement, allowing school personnel to identify students with challenging behaviors at the earliest possible opportunity. Because the first school years are likely the first situation in which a child will be observed by teachers and other professionals, this setting is the most efficient to institute systematic screening procedures (Hersh & Walker, 1983). Efficient screening procedures must be capable of assessing all students at the initial screening level, identifying possible at-risk students and providing them with early intervention services or referring them on to more intense levels of assessment. Two such "multiple-gating" systems, *Systematic Screening for Behavior Disorders* (Walker & Severson, 1990) and the *Early Screening Project* (Walker, Severson, & Feil, 1994), have been validated widely for use in screening for children with challenging behaviors.

### **School-Wide Rules, Routines, and Procedures**

Walker et al. (1995) describe discipline as an instrument that allows instruction and learning to take place. School-wide discipline refers to the extension of traditional discipline to the entire school building, implemented by agreement across all school staff. This systematic approach has been widely advocated as a best practice in preventing and minimizing disruptive and dangerous behaviors (American Psychological Association, 1993; Colvin, Kameenui, & Sugai, 1993; Nelson & Colvin, 1995; Nelson, 1996; Walker et al., 1995; Walker et al., 1996). Furthermore, applied research on school-wide discipline procedures has found such practices to be effective in decreasing the number of challenging behaviors and increasing academic scores (Colvin et al., 1993; Nelson, 1996; Walker et al., 1995).

Nelson (1996) has identified four areas on which school-wide discipline plans must focus. First, ecological factors throughout the school must be assessed and arranged to minimize the potential for disruptive or dangerous behaviors. Examples of such arrangements include setting boundaries that keep all students in areas where they can be monitored,

arranging student schedules to minimize the number of students in a given area at one time or to avoid problems with large groups or potentially volatile combinations of students in a given area. For instance, if the cook notices that students push and argue in the lunch line when more than one class at a time is released for lunch, a staggered lunch schedule might be constructed, or the cook might be involved in signaling the release of classes to lunch as the line decreases in length.

The second organizational practice identified by Nelson involves establishing and instructing students and staff in clear behavioral guidelines. This is accomplished by analyzing routines according to their intended outcomes, in terms of desired student behaviors, specifying these behaviors as school-wide rules, and then teaching those behaviors to students. Once rules have been established, they should be available in a written form and posted for public viewing within the school. Different sets of rules, or variations in school-wide rules, can be developed for specific occasions. For example, on the playground, staff can create a list of rules for each game, write the rules on a poster, and then post those rules on or near the playground.

---

*In addition to implementing school-wide rules and routines, effective school-wide discipline involves the creation of clear and consistent procedures for reacting to and documenting episodes of disruptive and dangerous behavior.*

---

The third practice is active supervision of students in the school environment. Supervision should be available for every area of the school in which students may congregate. Although school rules should designate those areas that are particularly difficult to supervise as out of bounds, such areas will continue to require some degree of monitoring to be certain that students do not congregate. Some areas may be monitored from a stationary point; others will require roaming from one area to the next in order to adequately supervise student behavior.

The fourth practice is to provide disciplinary responses to inappropriate behavior in a timely and consistent manner across situations. These responses require clear decision rules that are set by the school staff, with agreement to enforce consistently across students and incidents. When misbehaviors do occur, it is imperative that teachers react immediately

and consistently. Behaviors often perceived as petty and annoying (and therefore often overlooked by staff) approach the limit of school or classroom rules and are predictive of more chronic and disruptive behaviors (Patterson, 1982). Therefore, it is important to intervene early, when these initial behaviors occur, rather than waiting for escalation which may result in more seriously disruptive behaviors.

Other authorities have proposed similar models (e.g., Colvin et al., 1993; Walker et al., 1995). Each model includes empirically derived best practice strategies for preventing and controlling disruptive and dangerous behaviors. Other common characteristics of these models are clear statements of rules, teacher-led modeling of examples, student practice with guidance and feedback from the teacher, and then independent student practice with a corrective teaching sequence for errors and praise for success. These procedures characterize an instructional, as opposed to a control and containment model. That is, little difference exists between the assessment, teaching, and monitoring of systematic disciplinary procedures and that of an effective instructional sequence used to teach a common academic skill (Colvin & Sugai, 1988). The teacher's ability to use instructional practices that facilitate a high degree of student success relative to error is key to maintaining a positive environment. These strategies do not require major investments in new technology or staff training. Rather, they are straightforward practices that many good teachers use anyway. The key is their school-wide adoption and consistent use by all staff, including those who are not involved in instruction.

In addition to implementing school-wide rules and routines, effective school-wide discipline involves the creation of clear and consistent procedures for reacting to and documenting episodes of disruptive and dangerous behavior. For example, playground monitors might carry a whistle or air horn to signal other staff when assistance is necessary or may carry laminated 3 X 5 signal cards which can be used via a student runner to gain attention and assistance from other staff members. Such signal cards may contain messages such as "fight, need help," "student injured, need medical assistance," etc. In addition, teachers should develop an efficient system for accessing assistance. In the absence of a room phones or intercom systems, teachers again may use a student runner or other signal to gain necessary attention and assistance. Key to the success of any communication protocol is the degree to which it is pre-planned and understood by all members of a school staff.

Further, when disciplinary actions are necessary, it is crucial that the names and actions of the students involved be included in a school data base so that repeat offenders or those engaging in particularly dangerous behaviors may be tracked and handled according to established disciplinary procedures.

One method for tracking students and their problem behaviors is to provide each staff member with a number of behavioral tracking forms. For each occurrence of problem behavior, a staff member fills out a form and sends it to a designated person in the school (e.g., counselor, dean of discipline, assistant principal, etc.). This information then can be organized in a notebook by student name or can be entered into a data base. The important outcome is information regarding the types of behaviors, individual students, times, and/or locations that are most frequently associated with problems. This information can be used to create rules, routines, and procedures that effectively preclude those problems.

### Classroom Management

Procedures for the management of classroom environments are small scale versions of school-wide discipline plans. The classroom teacher and support staff must arrange the classroom to avoid areas where the potential for disruptive behavior is great. Such arrangements may involve increasing space between student desks, providing sufficient areas for moving from one setting to another, avoiding certain settings (e.g., open windows, unobservable areas), and removing problematic or otherwise distracting stimuli (e.g., extracurricular items). Much of the actual arrangement of the classroom will be dictated by the rules and routines of the class in conjunction with targeted academic outcomes.

---

*The creation and management of clear classroom routines is a relatively simple method of preventing potentially disruptive behaviors.*

---

In general, rules will be more effective when behaviors are defined specifically and worded in a positive manner. That is, rules should suggest what students should do as opposed to what they should not do. For example, a rule instituted to prevent students from shoving in line might read "keep hands and feet to self." This rule effectively covers

shoving, because keeping one's hands and feet to one's self is incompatible with shoving. The number of rules that are posted should be few (5 or less is ideal) and the wording of each rule should be brief so that students will be able to find and read rules easily when prompted. The purpose of posted rules is to (a) provide proactive prompts which increase the probability of a student meeting classroom behavioral expectations and (b) provide a foundation of consistency from which disciplinary action can be referred. When a teacher must respond with a disciplinary action, the student's attention can be directed to the rules, facilitating a corrective sequence that includes reteaching.

The creation and management of clear classroom routines is a relatively simple method of preventing potentially disruptive behaviors (Colvin & Nelson, 1995; Kerr & Nelson, 1998; Nelson, 1996; Walker et al., 1995). Routines may include such simple procedures as lining up by row, raising one's hand before leaving a desk, and/or having a single student pass out books. In general, classroom routines should be directed at minimizing student traffic congestion in a single area, increasing the ability to monitor the movement of students, and maintaining a consistent and predictable classroom organization with which students become familiar, thereby preventing unexpected and potentially disruptive events.

---

*The precorrective statement is a proactive method of preventing misbehavior, increasing the likelihood of appropriate behavior and lessening the need for negative contingencies.*

---

Even with consistent routines, some students will require prompts and cues to facilitate their success. Such prompts may be made via a precorrective statement (Colvin & Sugai, 1988; Sugai, Colvin, & Scott, 1993). *Precorrection* is accomplished with a statement of the key rules and the positive/negative consequences associated with those rules. For example, "While I'm talking over here remember that you need to stay in your seats and complete your assignment so that we can all earn free time." The precorrective statement is a proactive method of preventing misbehavior, increasing the likelihood of appropriate behavior and lessening the need for negative contingencies.

Clear routines for transitions also can act as effective pre-corrects for students. For example, one

---

*When instruction is designed to maximize the likelihood of success (and minimize errors) in acquiring targeted skills, students are more likely to enjoy the activity. The student who is successful in and enjoys an activity has little incentive to disrupt the class or to act in ways which effectively would precipitate his or her escape or exclusion from that activity.*

---

simple routine is to excuse students by row, dependent upon the display of some appropriate behavior. In effect, students come to see transition time as an occasion to behave appropriately. Another routine is to select a student to pass out materials for the day, precluding a melee of students moving about the room, which both wastes instructional time and sets the occasion for misbehavior.

#### **Effective Instruction**

The connection between effective instruction and behavior is well established (Becker & Carnine, 1980; Engelmann, Becker, Carnine, & Gersten, 1988; Nelson, 1996; Kameenui & Darch, 1995). As mentioned earlier, negative and aversive stimuli in the classroom have been found to lead to inappropriate and disruptive student behaviors (Gunter et al., 1993; Shores et al., 1993; Sulzer-Azaroff & Mayer, 1991). Instruction that is either too difficult or too easy for students also has been found to be associated with disruptive behaviors (Cooper, Wacker, Thursby, Plagmann, Harding, Millard, & Derby, 1992; Mayer & Sulzer-Azaroff, 1991; Weeks & Gaylord-Ross, 1981).

When instruction is designed to maximize the likelihood of success (and minimize errors) in acquiring targeted skills, students are more likely to enjoy the activity. The student who is successful in and enjoys an activity has little incentive to disrupt the class or to act in ways which effectively would precipitate his or her escape or exclusion from that activity.

Research demonstrates that instructional methodologies that maximize the probability of success are those that teach skills directly via the presentation of clear rules, teacher modeling, and guided practice. Direct Instruction methodologies have been developed with the specific purpose of minimizing errors during skill acquisition and have been found

to minimize disruptive and aggressive behaviors (e.g., Nelson, Johnson, and Marchand-Martella, 1996; Weeks & Gaylord-Ross, 1981). These methods are based on the principle that students learn most efficiently and effectively when they are successful. Student success also increases their opportunity for reinforcement.

#### **Continuum of Alternative Placements**

The goal of any school discipline program should be for all students to interact together in a common setting with mutual respect for school property and one another. However, no one setting is sufficient to serve the needs of every child. Schools must continue to provide alternative placements for children, based upon their individual needs. For those students who cannot achieve success in the regular education environment, federal law mandates a range of available alternatives so that the student may achieve success in the least restrictive setting. These placements must include general education classes, special classes, special schools, home instruction, and instruction in hospitals and institutions (Lewis, Chard, & Scott, 1994). Alternative placements are the only means of insuring an opportunity for some students to be successful in school (Center & McKittrick, 1987; Lewis et al., 1994; Walker et al., 1996). However, placement in more restrictive settings should not be viewed as permanent. A focus of instruction in these settings should be on learning to succeed in more inclusive settings (Kerr & Nelson, 1998).

#### **Conclusions and Recommendations**

Heightened concerns regarding school safety and students who display violent and aggressive behavior has led many school districts to adopt policies of "zero tolerance" for pupil misbehavior. Suspending and expelling children from school because of their failure to exhibit socially desired behavior has two additional undesirable outcomes: they fail to develop the skills to become literate citizens, and they spend their days in the community, where they have greater access to drugs and weapons, receive less supervision by caring adults, and have increased opportunity to practice antisocial behavior (Bostic, 1994; Walker et al., 1995). The wholesale assignment of disruptive students to ill-conceived alternative placements is another exclusionary practice that may result in undesirable outcomes. In addition to removing students from environments where they can learn useful skills, model the behavior of prosocial peers, and be exposed to caring adults, they are *defacto* placed in settings in which they may be



exposed to deviant peer and adult models (Nelson, in press). Finally, failure to create effective and proactive school-wide disciplinary procedures simply will defer the problem of children who exhibit chronic disruptive and aggressive behavior to other systems (e.g., criminal justice), where the cost of treatment is far greater and the outcomes are much less positive.

Educators are quick to take responsibility for student academic learning, but the prevailing attitude is that misbehavior reflects a moral deficit: the student *could* behave appropriately, but chooses not to. Over the years, our work with students identified as having emotional and behavioral disorders has shown us that many students with behavior problems lack the skills to behave as teachers desire.

---

*Best practices regarding proactive, universal, targeted, and wraparound intervention plans should be widely disseminated and taught throughout the professional education community. Students who exhibit challenging behaviors are not the sole responsibility of specialists. All school staff must take ownership of all students.*

---

In this paper, we have presented an overview of best practices, derived primarily from the special education research literature, whose effectiveness in reducing threats to school discipline and safety has been proven. As we move into the 21st Century, it is important to build the capacity of schools to deal effectively with the full range of student behavior.

In summary, the following procedures are recommended as steps toward building the capacity of schools to deal effectively with students with challenging behaviors:

1. Although professional educators and lay persons will continue to engage in philosophical debates, there is a wealth of scientific evidence supporting the effects of academic and behavioral programming. This research evidence should drive practice, and educators should receive systematic, ongoing training in validated practices. We have an obligation to present our children with their greatest chances for success.
2. A critical element (often missing from school-wide discipline plans) is systematic support for desired student behavior. This may be as simple

as teachers standing outside their classrooms between classes, greeting (and monitoring) students as they pass. Simply having a staff member present in a problematic area of the school has been shown to reduce the rate of behavior problems in such areas (Nelson & Colvin, 1996).

3. The escalation of challenging student behavior notwithstanding, a relatively small number of students are responsible for the majority of discipline problems. Furthermore, not all school discipline infractions require the same response (e.g., office referral, in-school suspension). Therefore, school staff should learn and apply decision models that involve a continuum of responses to student misbehavior. Decisions to apply more punitive or restrictive discipline strategies should be made on the basis of a school-wide data base. Systematic data collection should occur regarding specific common indicator behaviors, and a tracking system for monitoring at-risk (and beyond-risk) students should be in place.
4. Effective planning and implementation of school-wide discipline is a team process. School-wide teams should be formed to develop, implement, and review student discipline. When teams exist to help teachers with students who exhibit challenging behavior, having difficulty managing a student or a group is less likely to be seen as a threat, and teachers are more likely to follow expected practices and to feel secure in their roles (Phillips & McCullough, 1992; Thomas, Correa, & Morsink, 1995). School-based teams should be linked with community providers to conduct wraparound planning for students whose needs extend beyond the school domain (Eber et al., 1997).
5. Best practices regarding proactive, universal, targeted, and wraparound intervention plans should be widely disseminated and taught throughout the professional education community. Students who exhibit challenging behaviors are not the sole responsibility of specialists. All school staff must take ownership of all students. ♦

### References

- American Psychological Association (1993). *Violence and Youth, Report of the Commission on Violence and Youth*, p. 7. Washington, DC: Author.
- Bannerman, S. F. (1987). *The politics of caring*. Philadelphia: The Farmer Press.
- Becker, W. C., & Carnine, D. W. (1980). Direct instruction as an effective approach to educational intervention with disadvantaged and low performers.



- In B. Lahey & A. Kazdin (Eds.), *Advances in clinical child psychology* (vol. 3, pp. 429-473). New York: Plenum.
- Borthwick-Duffy, S. A., Eyman, R. K., & White, J. F. (1987). Client characteristics and residential placement pattern. *American Journal of Mental Deficiency, 92*, 24-30.
- Bostic, M. (1994). *Juvenile crime prevention strategies: A low enforcement perspective*. Paper presented at the Council of State Governments Conference on School Violence, Westlake Village, CA.
- Bullock, L. M., Reilly, T. F., & Donahue, C. A. (1983). School violence and what teachers can do about it. *Contemporary Education, 55*, 40-44.
- Cantrell, R. P., Stenner, A. J., & Katzenmeyer, W. G. (1977). Teacher knowledge, attitudes, and classroom teaching correlates of students' achievement. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 69*, 190-197.
- Carlson, C. (1996). Changing the school culture toward integrated services. In R. J. Illback & C. M. Nelson (Eds.), *Emerging school-based approaches for children with emotional and behavioral problems: Research and practice in service integration* (pp. 225-249). New York: Haworth Press.
- Cartwright, G. P., Cartwright, C. A., & Ward, M. E. (1988). *Educating special learners* (2nd ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- Center, D. B., & McKittrick, S. (1987). Disciplinary removal of special education students. *Focus on Exceptional Children, 20*(2), 1-9.
- Chesapeake Institute (1994, September). National agenda for achieving better results for children and youth with serious emotional disturbance. Washington, DC: Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services, Office of Special Education Programs.
- Colvin, R., & Sugai, G. (1988). Proactive strategies for managing social behavior problems: An instructional approach. *Education and Treatment of Children, 11*, 341-348.
- Colvin, G., Kameenui, E. J., & Sugai, G. (1993). Reconceptualizing school-wide discipline. *Education and Treatment of Children, 16*, 361-381.
- Cooley, S. (1995). *Suspension/expulsion of regular and special education students in Kansas: A report to the Kansas State Board of Education*. Topeka, KS: Kansas State Board of Education.
- Cooper, L. J., Wacker, D. P., Thursby, D., Plagmann, L. A., Harding, J., Millard, T., & Derby, M. (1992). Analysis of the effects of task preferences, task demands, and adult attention on child behavior in outpatient and classroom settings. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis, 25*, 823-840.
- Contenbader, V. K., & Markson, S. (1994). School suspension: A survey of current policies and practices. *NASSP Bulletin, 78*, 103-107.
- Council for Children with Behavioral Disorders (1990). Position paper on the provision of service to children with conduct disorders. *Behavioral Disorders, 15*(3), 180-189.
- Denny, R. K., Epstein, M., & Rose, E. (1992). Direct observation of adolescents with serious emotional disturbance and their nonhandicapped peers in mainstream vocational education classrooms. *Behavioral Disorders, 18*, 33-41.
- Eber, L., Nelson, C. M., & Miles, P. School-based wraparound planning for students with emotional and behavioral challenges. *Exceptional Children, 63*, 539-555.
- Engelmann, S., Becker, W. C., Carnine, D., & Gersten, R. (1988). The direct instruction follow through model: Design and outcomes. *Education and Treatment of Children, 11*, 303-317.
- Gable, R. A., Hendrickson, J. M., Young, C. C., Shores, R. E., & Stowitschek, J. J. (1983). A comparison of teacher approval and disapproval statements across categories of exceptionality. *Journal of Special Education Technology, VI*(1), 15-22.
- Gersten, R. M., Becker, W. C., & Heiry, T. J. (1984). Entry IQ and yearly academic growth of children in Direct Instruction programs: A longitudinal study of low SES children. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, 6*, 109-121.
- Gersten, R. M., Darch, C., & Gleason, M. (1988). Effectiveness of a Direct Instruction academic kindergarten for low-income students. *Elementary School Journal, 89*, 227-240.
- Gunter, P. L., Denny, R. K., Jack, S. L., Shores, R. E., & Nelson, C. M. (1993). Aversive stimuli in academic interactions between students with serious emotional disturbance and their teachers. *Behavioral Disorders, 18*, 265-274.
- Hersh, R. H., & Walker, H. M. (1983). Great expectations: Making schools effective for all students. *Policy Studies Review, 2*(Special No. 1), 147-188.
- Hinshaw, S., Han, S., Erhardt, D., & Huber, A. (1992). Internalizing and externalizing behavior problems in preschool children: Correspondence among parent and teacher ratings and behavior observations. *Journal of Clinical Child Psychology, 21*(2), 143-150.
- Horne, A., & Sayger, T. (1990). *Treating conduct and oppositional disorders in children*. Elmsford, NY: Pergamon Press.
- Hranitz, J. R., & Eddowes, E. A. (1990). Violence: A crisis in homes and schools. *Childhood Education, 67*, 4-7.
- Jenkins, J., Speltz, M., & Odom, S. (1986). Integrating normal and handicapped pre-schoolers: Effects on

- child development and social interaction. *Exceptional Children*, 52, 7-17.
- Kameenui, E. J., & Darch, C. (1995). *Instructional classroom management: A proactive approach to behavior management*. White Plains, NY: Longman.
- Kerr, M. M., & Nelson, C. M. (1998). *Strategies for managing behavior problems in the classroom* (3rd ed.). Saddle Hills, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Lewis, T. J., Chard, D., & Scott, T. M. (1994). Full inclusion and the education of children and youth with emotional and behavioral disorders. *Behavioral Disorders*, 19(4), 277-293.
- McFadden, A. C., Marsh, G. E., Price, B. J., & Hwang, Y. (1992). A study of race and gender bias in the punishment of school children. *Education and Treatment of Children*, 15, 140-146.
- Nelson, C. M. (1997). Aggressive and violent behavior: A personal perspective. *Education and Treatment of Children*, 20(3), 250-262.
- Nelson, J. R. (1996). Designing schools to meet the needs of students who exhibit disruptive behavior. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders*, 4(3), 147-161.
- Nelson, J. R., & Colvin, G. (1996). Designing supportive school environments. In R. J. Illback & C. M. Nelson (Eds.), *Emerging school-based approaches for children with emotional and behavioral problems: Research and practice in service integration* (pp. 225-249). New York: Haworth Press.
- Nelson, J. R., & Colvin, G. (1995). School-wide discipline: Procedures for managing common areas. In A. Deffenbaugh, G. Sugai, & G. Tindal (Eds.), *The Oregon Conference Monograph*, Vol. 7, pp. 109-119. University of Oregon: Eugene, OR.
- Nelson, J. R., Johnson, A., & Marchand-Martella, N. (1996). A comparative analysis of the effects of direct instruction, cooperative learning, and independent learning practices on the disruptive behaviors of students with behavior disorders. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders*, 4(1), 53-63.
- Nelson, C. M., & Pearson, C. A. (1994). Juvenile delinquency in the context of culture and community. In R. L. Peterson & S. Ishii-Jordan (Eds.), *Cultural and community contexts for emotional or behavioral disorders* (pp. 78-90). Boston: Brookline Press.
- Panko-Stilmock, J. (1996). *Teacher Gender and Discipline Referral Rates for middle Level Boys and Girls*. Lincoln, NE: Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Nebraska-Lincoln.
- Patterson, G. R. (1982). *Coercive Family Process*. Eugene, OR: Castalia.
- Patterson, G. R., Reid, J. B., & Dishion, T. J. (1992). *A social interaction approach: Antisocial boys*. Eugene, OR: Castalia Publishing Company.
- Phillips, V., & McCullough, L. L. (1992). *Student/staff support teams*. Longmont, CO: Sopris West.
- Pomplun, M. (1997). When Students with disabilities participate in cooperative groups. *Exceptional Children*, 64(1), 49-58.
- Rutherford, R. B., & Nelson, C. M. (1995). Management of aggressive and violent behavior in schools. *Focus on Exceptional Children*, 27(6), 1-16.
- Safran, S. P., & Safran, J. S. (1988). Perceptions of problem behaviors: A review and analysis of research. In R. B. Rutherford, C. M. Nelson, & S. R. Forness (Eds.), *Bases of severe behavioral disorders in children and youth* (pp. 39-50). Boston: College-Hill.
- Safran, S. P., & Safran, J. S. (1987). Behavioral contagion and manageability: Learning disability and regular education teachers' perceptions. *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 20, 439-440.
- Schloss, P. J. (1984). *Social development of handicapped children and adolescents*. Rockville, MD: Aspen Systems.
- Shaw, S. R., & Braden, J. P. (1990). Race and gender bias in the administration of corporal punishment. *School Psychology Review*, 19, 378-383.
- Shores, R. E., Gunter, P. L., & Jack, S. L. (1993). Classroom management strategies: Are they setting events for coercion? *Behavioral Disorders*, 18(2), 92-102.
- Shores, R. E., Jack, S. L., Gunter, P. L., Ellis, D. N., DeBriere, T. J., & Wehby, J. H. (1994). Classroom interactions of children with behavior disorders. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders*, 1(1), 27-39.
- Skiba, R. J., Petersen, R. L., & Williams, T. (1997). Office referrals and suspension: Disciplinary intervention in middle schools. *Education and Treatment of Children*, 20(3), 295-315.
- Strain, P. S., Lambert, D. L., Kerr, M. M., Stagg, V., & Lenkner, D. A. (1983). Naturalistic assessment of children's compliance to teacher's requests and consequences for compliance. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, 16, 243-249.
- Sugai, G., Colvin, G., & Scott, T. (1993). *Enhancing expected behavior* [technical paper] Eugene: University of Oregon, Project PREPARE, College of Education.
- Sulzer-Azaroff, B., & Mayer, G. R. (1991). *Behavior analysis for lasting change*. Fort Worth: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
- Tausig, M. (1985). Factors in family decision making about placement for developmentally disabled individuals. *American Journal of Mental Deficiency*, 89, 353-361.
- Thomas, C. C., Correa, V. I., & Morsink, C. V. (1995). *Interactive teaming: Consultation and collaboration in*

- special settings* (2nd ed). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill/Prentice Hall.
- Uchitelle, S., Bartz, D., & Hillman, L. (1989). Strategies for reducing suspensions. *Urban Education*, 24, 163-176.
- Walker, H. M., Colvin, G., & Ramsey, E. (1995). *Antisocial behavior in school: Strategies and best practices*. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.
- Walker, H. M., Horner, R. H., Sugai, G., Bullis, M., Sprague, J. R., Bricker, D., & Kauffman, M. J. (1996). Integrated Approaches to preventing antisocial behavior patterns among school-age children and youth. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders*, 4(4), 194-209.
- Walker, H. M., & Severson, H. H. (1990). *Systematic screening for behavior disorders (SSBD): User's guide and technical manual*. Longmont, CO: Sopris West.
- Walker, H. M., Severson, H. H., & Feil, E. G. (1994). *The Early Screening Project: A proven child-find process*. Longmont, CO: Sopris West.
- Weeks, M., & Gaylord-Ross, R. (1981). Task difficulty and aberrant behavior in severely handicapped students. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, 14, 449-463.
- Wentzel, K. R. (1993). Does being good make the grade: Social behavior and academic competence in middle school. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 85(2), 357-364.

---

# Providing Administrative Leadership for Effective Behavior Support: Ten Strategies for Principals

Geoffrey Colvin  
University of Oregon

Randall Sprick  
Teaching Strategies  
Eugene, Oregon

While many topics related to education lead to discussion and debate, one seems indisputable. Public schools are under incredible pressure. Dwindling resources, stressed out staff, multiple demands and greater numbers of high needs children make the task of providing education more complex and more difficult. Educators must respond to increasing cultural and economic diversity among students. Hodgkinson (1993), in an analysis of census data, reported that the number of minority students was increasing annually and that the trend would likely continue through 2010. Similar trends can be seen in terms of economic status. For example, in 1993 more than 23% of school-age children in the U.S. were living below the poverty level. In addition to facing the challenges associated with cultural, linguistic and economic diversity, public schools are dealing also with diminishing fiscal resources and extraordinary pressure to increase student achievement (Colvin, Kameenui, & Sugai, 1993).

---

*In addition to facing the challenges associated with cultural, linguistic and economic diversity, public schools are dealing also with diminishing fiscal resources and extraordinary pressure to increase student achievement.*

---

Another pressing issue for public schools today is that of violence and safety. The National Centers for Disease Control has concluded that violence represents one of our society's chief public health concerns. Many observers have noted that violence seems endemic to our society (Duhon-Sells, 1995;

Johns & Carr, 1995; Walker, Colvin and Ramsey, 1995), and that the spillover to schools is becoming alarmingly evident as per the most recent unspeakable shooting tragedies inflicted by students upon staff and students at Jonesboro, Arkansas, Springfield, Oregon and Littleton, Colorado. Schools are no longer the safe havens they once were.

There are many levels that need to be addressed in order to face these painful and almost overwhelming pressures including legislation, national, state and community supports, law enforcement, service agencies and parents. However, there remains the overriding assumption that public schools should be able to address the problems and develop effective and workable solutions. One dimension, for which the school is clearly responsible, is its capacity to establish a safe, nurturing and positive environment that is designed to promote desirable behavior and to reduce and control problem behavior. Generally speaking, public schools have limited capacity to address the full range of problem behavior that occurs on school campuses today. Consequently there is a need to develop systems of support capable of serving all students. To accomplish this goal, three factors have been identified as critical for bringing about substantial and durable changes in a school: (a) collegiality, or teachers working together, supporting each other and communicating constructively, (b) time, or the recognition that teacher change is a slow gradual process, and (c) administrative support (Guskey, 1986, 1986; Smylie, 1988). This article takes a detailed look at one of those components, **administrative support**, by examining the role of the principal in the development and implementation of a comprehensive, and proactive school-wide discipline plan.

As a concept, *administrative support* is somewhat

elusive to define. The most effective way to get at it may be to ask, "What does a principal actually do to provide administrative support?" or "What does administrative support really look like?" That is, one principal may provide administrative support intuitively, and have teachers who are well aware and appreciative of that support. Another principal may attempt to provide administrative support, yet teachers view the support as inconsistent or even manipulative. Still a third principal may say, "Tell me what administrative support is and I will do it. I do not know exactly what it is."

---

*While leadership styles may vary, the following 10 strategies are identified as critical activities that a principal needs to engage in to provide administrative support to effect change in a school.*

---

A basic assumption in this article is that the building principal is the key to any major school-wide staff development activity, (Colvin, Kameenui & Sugai, 1993; Sprick, Sprick, & Garrison, 1991; Sugai, 1996). When a principal is not solidly behind the efforts, the process is likely to stumble and dissipate. Some staff may expend considerable energy initially, but lose heart when the principal does not support the process at critical steps, (e.g., during implementation). These staff, who are often building leaders, then become reluctant to undertake leadership roles in the future.

While leadership styles may vary, the following 10 strategies are identified as critical activities that a principal needs to engage in to provide administrative support to effect change in a school. These strategies, operationally define how a principal can provide administrative support for school reform efforts, and are derived from two sources: (a) several years of consulting work in public schools, during the authors have had the opportunity to work with many principals, and (b) published research and best practices in administrative leadership. We describe, and then illustrate, each support behavior in terms of the principals role in working with staff to develop and implement a proactive school-wide discipline plan. Although these illustrations relate to improving school-wide discipline, we review the principal's role in providing administrative support as essential to any school improvement effort (such as shared decision making in site-based councils or curriculum reform for reading instruction).

## 1. Maintain Standards

Perhaps the most important role an administrator has in supporting staff development and change in a school is to maintain standards, that is to serve as a "gatekeeper." Many ideas and activities are presented to schools under the umbrella of staff development and reform. However, all innovations are not equal. In fact some can be quite destructive. A school administrator needs to carefully lead staff toward innovations that have a high probability of creating a positive effect (based on research or best practices) for the students, and away from innovations that will be ineffective or destructive. In this way, the principal serves as a gatekeeper for establishing, administering and maintaining standards. However, these standards should not be arbitrary. They should be policy. The role then becomes one of implementing and maintaining this policy. As an example, the National Center to Improve the Tools of Educators developed practical guidelines for these purposes for use by School Site Councils:

### JUDGING THE POTENTIAL VALUE OF AN APPROACH

1. Are the approach and its outcomes clearly defined?
2. What evidence exists that the approach is effective?
3. Is an accountability process built into the approach?
4. Is the approach sustainable?
5. Is the approach equitable?
6. Are the costs of the approach and its implementation reasonable?

*How School Site Councils Can Help Improve Teaching and Learning: A handbook for Site Councils and Educational Leaders on School Improvement (pp. 6-9). National Center to Improve the Tools of Educators.*

## 2. Make a Public Statement of Support

Once a faculty has made a decision to implement a given innovation, the principal should follow with a public statement of support for the project—essentially, to inform the staff that whatever is possible and reasonable will be done to work with them in accomplishing the goals of the project. However, if the principal does not follow through, credibility with staff will be eroded. Conversely, when follow through occurs, credibility is enhanced and it becomes easier to undertake subsequent projects.

*Example:* The staff and parent representatives at Jackson Middle School determine that developing a more comprehensive school-wide

discipline policy would move the school in the direction of their school vision. Therefore, the principal, Dr. Lee, publicly announces the goal of the school improvement effort during a faculty meeting, a parent meeting, and in the staff bulletin and school newsletter. In each of these announcements she stresses that she will actively support this effort to develop a more comprehensive discipline policy. She clearly articulates that the intent of the project is to develop and potentially revise procedures for managing behavior and motivating students and that the goals include reducing misbehavior, increasing student motivation, insuring adequate and safe supervision, and improving school climate.

*Once a faculty has made a decision to implement a given innovation, the principal should follow with a public statement of support for the project—essentially, to inform the staff that whatever is possible and reasonable will be done to work with them in accomplishing the goals of the project.*

### 3. Establish a Leadership Team

A critical task for a principal is to establish a building team to lead the process. Since staff will be the people who must carry out most of the work, a successful innovation must have the support of staff. Successful development and implementation are more likely if staff plays an active role in the process from the beginning. Therefore, the team needs to be representative of all the people who will be directly affected by the innovation. Using a team will save time because the entire faculty is relieved of the burden of participating in all aspects of planning. In addition, procedures need to be identified for determining the size of the team, usually 5-7 members, and a process for selecting team members.

*Example:* Dr. Lee proposes to staff that a team, consisting of the following seven positions, be formed:

- Teacher representative for the 6th grade
- Teacher representative for the 7th grade
- Teacher representative for the 8th grade
- Representative for counselors and specialists
- Representative for paraprofessionals and secretaries

*Successful development and implementation are more likely if staff plays an active role in the process from the beginning. Therefore, the team needs to be representative of all the people who will be directly affected by the innovation.*

Representative for the parent advisory committees

Representative for administrative staff

She suggests that the time commitment for committee members will be a one-hour meeting after school every other Wednesday and suggests that each of the identified groups assume responsibility for selecting their own representative. After discussing this proposal, staff agree with the team composition proposed by Dr. Lee and agree to select their representatives by the first committee meeting, which has been set for two weeks hence.

### 4. Support the Team Members

Team members, who participate in school-wide projects and activities, make a substantial commitment to the school. The principal can acknowledge their commitment by making a special visit to each team member, thanking them for agreeing to serve on the team, and assuring them that they will be provided help whenever possible. Another way to support team members is to be sensitive to their work load. For example, the principal might ensure that members of the team are not expected to serve on other committees. In other words these team members should not be over taxed. When the team needs significant amounts of time for certain tasks, the principal can offer assistance such as secretarial time, or utilize substitute teachers to free team members. The principal can take steps to ensure that the team and faculty have consistent opportunities to develop and implement the school-wide plan. For example, it is important not to schedule other meetings involving team members at the times the team regularly meets. Also, it is important to allocate, and maintain, time for the project or activity at faculty meetings and to avoid taking this time away on the basis that "we have a full agenda." In addition, the principal can preserve the meeting space for the team and not "bump" the team to some other place because of a "more important" meeting.

*Example:* As each group selects its representative for the team, Dr. Lee pays a short visit to the selected representatives. She thanks each person for their commitment and briefly reviews the long-term goals of the project. She also lets them know that she is confident that they will not only represent their particular groups in the process, but that as individuals, each will bring a unique and valuable perspective to the committee meetings.

During the first meeting, Dr. Lee and Mr. Tomason (assistant principal) inform the group that four times during the year substitutes will be hired to cover their responsibilities so that they can have four full planning days—in addition to the every other Wednesday meetings. Also, Mr. Tomason will coordinate secretarial staff to assist the team with any clerical tasks (e.g., typing and printing) that need to be accomplished.

---

*Effective administrators are very clear about the school's process for decision making in relation to school improvement issues. They inform staff in advance regarding the nature of any decisions that must be made about particular issues, and they have in place a clear and agreed upon processes for staff to reach a decision.*

---

### **5. Guide Decision Making Processes**

Effective administrators are very clear about the school's process for decision making in relation to school improvement issues. They inform staff in advance regarding the nature of any decisions that must be made about particular issues, and they have in place a clear and agreed upon processes for staff to reach a decision. One such process is a simple vote, either majority rules, or something like 70% established to represent a greater level of commitment on the part of faculty. The disadvantage of a simple vote is that it is possible for some percentage of the faculty, those people who must carry out any decisions that are made, may actively object to the outcome of the decision.

An alternative to the simple vote, one that may facilitate greater commitment on the part of all staff, is a procedure called "fist of five." In this method each faculty member votes by holding up one to five

fingers. Holding up five fingers means, "I actively support this decision and will even take a leadership role in carrying out the decision." Four fingers means, "I actively support this decision, but choose not to take a leadership role." Three fingers means, "I support this decision." Two fingers means, "I have reservations about this decision, but I will not roadblock implementation." One finger means, "I have strong objections and cannot support, and will even roadblock this decision." Under the fist of five procedure, if anyone votes a "one," the decision will not be made at that moment. However, the person (people) voting one are responsible for voicing their concerns. This gives staff in favor of the decision an opportunity to modify the plan in a way that those opposing can accept. This method of decision making reduces the passive resistance to a decision that a simple majority vote can sometimes create.

*Example:* The committee responsible for carrying out the decision to design and implement a new school-wide discipline plan proposes to the total staff that use of administrative involvement in discipline (i.e., sending students to the office) be limited to illegal acts, physically dangerous acts, and the overt and immediate refusal to comply. After discussing the issue, a fist of five vote was taken. Three staff members vote "one," and the rest of the votes are "three" or higher. Dr. Lee declares that there was no additional time in the meeting that day, but the committee needed to contact the three people who voted one to learn about these individuals' objections to the proposed policy.

During the next week the committee members discuss the issue privately with the three teachers. Their concern was that although the three criteria proposed made sense, they know that sometimes there is a student who might exhibit less severe behavior, but does so chronically and frequently so that administrative involvement might be warranted. The committee's concern is that some teachers might overuse referral for every minor behavior. In fact, that is the current situation the policy is supposed to reduce. After some discussion and negotiation, the committee and the three teachers add a fourth criteria to the list. In addition to the three mentioned above, teachers could send a student to the office for less severe infractions (e.g., frequent disruptive behavior) if the matter is discussed in advance with either the principal or the assistant principal, and they agree that the next time the be-

---

*If problems arise within the team and resolution does not occur, the principal needs to be ready to address the problems and find solutions in a timely manner.*

---

havior occurs the student can be sent to the office.

At the next faculty meeting, the four criteria were proposed. Every faculty member voted four or higher. Dr. Lee publicly thanks the committee and thanks the people who had previously voted one. She informs the entire staff that the initial objections and the skill of the committee and the people who voted one have resulted in a policy that was much better than the original plan.

## **6. Take a Leadership Role in Problem Solving**

If problems arise within the team and resolution does not occur, the principal needs to be ready to address the problems and find solutions in a timely manner. Similarly, if problems occur between the team and faculty or within faculty over some aspect of the plan, the principal has a clear role in assisting with the problem solving. This does not mean "taking over." Rather it involves stepping in and leading the group to a workable solution. For example, some team members may find it difficult to work effectively with certain staff members due to personality issues or a past history of conflict. In these cases, the administrator might visit with involved staff, try to problem solve, remind people of the long-term vision of the school, and encourage staff to cooperate for the "good of the order."

Principals should avoid rhetoric, especially in the context of problem solving. Typically, teachers are not impressed with administrative jargon. They need "plain" talk that is sincere and clear.

*Example:* As part of their plan for improving hallway behavior, the staff of Jackson Middle School agree that students who must go from one place to another during class time will be required to have a hall pass. In addition, staff agree that during passing periods, staff members should be out in the halls monitoring student behavior, correcting misbehavior and interacting in a friendly manner with students engaged in appropriate behavior. During the initial discussion of these issues, three teachers

express the belief that they should not have to "police the halls." These staff members state that since they manage student behavior in the classroom, they should not have to be responsible for the students' hallway behavior. However, these staff members agree to go along with the decision.

Once the new procedures have been implemented, it becomes apparent that these staff members were not following through on supervising hallway behavior. The other teachers in their wing begin feeling overburdened and resentful about having to do all of the hallway monitoring. As tensions increase, Dr. Lee intervenes by meeting individually with each of these three staff members. Her approach is to communicate to staff that there is a problem and that a solution needs to be found. She discusses the need for the monitoring and explores other options. She also explores the difficulties with remembering to monitor the hallways and examines some strategies for providing reminders. Each teacher, while not exactly pleased with the monitoring plan, agrees to implement the plan. Dr. Lee assures each teacher that the plan will be reviewed toward the end of the term and that other options will be considered at that time if problems persist.

## **7. Support the Team Meetings**

If the principal is a member of the team, then it is important to attend meetings. Missing a meeting should be the exception. If the principal is frequently absent (as a team member), a wrong message is sent to the team, that is, "It is important for you to be there but not me." In cases where the vice-principal is the administrative representative, the principal should still attend meetings on an intermittent basis to demonstrate support. Note, the principal should use the time to thank staff for their time and effort on a regular basis.

*Example:* As the administration's representative, Mr. Tomason attends every meeting. Since Dr. Lee wants to demonstrate an issue on which they want her to participate in the discussion they can always invite her to attend any of their meetings.

## **8. Provide Recognition to Faculty and Team for their Work**

The administrator has a major role in appreciation to the team and faculty for their efforts. Whenever major projects or activities are undertaken, the



principal should take steps to acknowledge involved staff (such as visit with the staff individually, use staff notices, bulletins and staff meetings to acknowledge the work and effort by team members).

*Example:* Dr. Lee checks to see when each of the team members has their prep period for the day. She then visits them during this time to personally thank them for their willingness to serve on the team. She acknowledges their role and effort and assures them that she, and the staff, are grateful to them. Dr. Lee also lists the team on the front page of the staff newsletter and expresses her thanks to the team. At a faculty meeting she reads a list of the team members and asks faculty to show their appreciation by giving them a round of applause.

---

*Another important role for the principal is to provide ongoing information about the project's goals and activities to key school groups such as the site based council, the student council, district organizations, and parent organizations.*

---

### **9. Serve as the Point Person for School-Related Groups**

Another important role for the principal is to provide ongoing information about the project's goals and activities to key school groups such as the site based council, the student council, district organizations, and parent organizations. Team members could be involved in these presentations where appropriate as a way of giving them some recognition. It is important to acknowledge the work of the team and staff and address problems in a timely manner if they arise.

*Example:* At one point, the parent representative, gives a report on the team's goals and progress to the Parent/Teacher Association meeting. She mentions that one of the goals of the group is to get the faculty to spend more time at the beginning of the next school year teaching students social skills, specifically how to behave responsibly in common areas such as cafeteria and halls. No one at the meeting expresses any concerns or problems.

Three days later a scathing letter appears on the editorial page of the local paper. A parent has written that the school is planning to stop teaching academics and spend all the time "teaching social skills and having students con-

templating their navels."

Dr. Lee arranges to meet directly with this particular parent and any others who share her concern. At this meeting Dr. Lee assures the parents that any social skills instruction will be done for the purpose of enhancing learning of academics. Although some parents are still concerned, no more letters appear. Dr. Lee stays in direct contact with the person that wrote the letter to keep her informed and to alleviate her concerns.

### **10. Monitor Implementation Activities and Provide Feedback**

The principal has a vital role in observing and monitoring the actual implementation of the school project particularly activities that the faculty has decided to undertake. Staff need to see tangible evidence of the principal's interest in, and concern for, the particular activity being implemented. In other words the principal needs to be visible "when the rubber hits the road." The principal should provide specific praise and recognition to staff members implementing the new procedures. In this way, support and example is provided to staff regarding the activity under implementation. Moreover, the principal is in a good position to assess progress. Observations can be discussed with the team or total faculty.

Another common problem during the implementation of any innovation is that some staff will not follow through on the new procedures. Possible actions by the principal include visiting with these staff members, providing reminders during a faculty meeting regarding the agreed upon procedures or turning the problem back to the team to develop proposed solutions. Regardless of how the problem is addressed, the principal must follow through to see that all staff are now implementing the agreed upon procedures. Staff need to know that their cooperation is expected and that the implementation will be monitored and, if there is a problem, efforts will be made to find a solution.

*Example:* Dr. Lee makes a concerted effort to be out in the halls during passing periods and before and after school. In this way she models for staff how to interact in a friendly way with students and how to correct misbehavior when necessary. It also lets staff who are in the hall know that Dr. Lee is aware they are meeting the agreed upon commitment. Finally, her visibility in the hallway serves as a reminder to staff who may not be following through with the plan.

Once the hallway behavior improved significantly, the team decides to address developing school-wide policies and procedures to increase the rate of homework completion. Dr. Lee responds that this is an excellent next step and publicly expresses her support.

### Summary

There appears to be general consensus among educators that schools are under tremendous pressure to address a range of social problems. These demands often translate to school improvement efforts. Research has identified administrative support as a critical component needed for school improvement and successful staff development activities. Although administrative support is a widely-held value in schools, it is elusive to define. In this article we identified ten practical strategies that principals can implement to effectively demonstrate administrative support. If principals utilize these strategies, staff development will be more successful, and the faculty and students will be more likely to achieve their goals. ♦

### References

- Colvin, G., Kameenui, E., & Sugai, G. (1993). Reconceptualizing behavior management and school-wide discipline in general education. *Education and Treatment of Children*, 16(4), 361-381.
- Cotton, K. (1995). *Effective schools research summary: 1995 update*. Portland, OR: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory.
- Duhon-Sells, R. (1995). *Dealing with youth violence: What schools and communities need to know*. Bloomington, IN: National Education Service.
- Guskey, T. (1986). Staff development and the process of teacher change. *Educational Researcher*, 15(5), 5-12.
- Hodgkinson, M. (1991). Reform versus reality. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 73, 9-16.
- Johns, B., & Carr, V. (1995). *Techniques for managing verbally and physically aggressive students*. Denver, CO: Love Publishing Company.
- Smylie, M.A. (1988). The enhancement function of staff development: Organizational and psychological antecedents to individual teacher change. *American Educational Research Journal*, 25, 1-30.
- Sprick, R., Sprick, M., & Garrison, M. (1992). *Foundations: Developing school-wide discipline policies*. Longmont, CO: Sopris West.
- Sprick, R., Wise, B., Marcum, K., Haykin, M., & Howard, L. (In press). *Creating a safe and productive school: A principal's guide to behavior management and discipline*. Longmont, CO: Sopris West.
- Sugai, G. (1996). Providing effective behavior support to all students: Procedures and processes. *Technical Assistance Journal: Oregon Special Education*, 11, 1-4.
- Walker, H., Colvin, G., & Ramsey, E. (1995). *Antisocial behavior in school: Strategies and best practices*. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.

---

# Individualizing School-wide Discipline for Students with Chronic Problem Behaviors: A Team Approach

Anne W. Todd, Robert H. Horner, George Sugai, & Geoff Colvin  
University of Oregon

Students with long histories of problem behavior typically require individualized, intensive interventions. In some cases these interventions are needed to contain significant problem behavior patterns; in other cases, the interventions can produce durable change. No single technique or procedure can be expected to be effective with all these students. For these students additional resources and individualized systems of support are required (Sugai, 1996; Todd, Horner, Vanater, & Schneider, in press; Walker, Horner, Sugai, Bullis, Sprague, Bricker & Kaufman, 1996).

---

*In our work with elementary and middle schools, we have found that 3-7% of the student body of 200-600 students engage in chronic problem behaviors and require additional resources and individualized programming*

---

In our work with elementary and middle schools, we have found that 3-7% of the student body of 200-600 students engage in chronic problem behaviors and require additional resources and individualized programming (Taylor-Greene, Brown, Nelson, Longton, Gassman, Cohen, Horner, Sugai & Hall, 1997; Sugai, 1996; Sugai & Horner, 1994). In some cases these students have identified disabilities that allow access to additional resources. In some cases, they have outside challenges that influence their behavior in school. Generally, these students present a complex array of challenges that defy any simple labels or descriptions and do NOT respond to existing school-wide systems.

---

Authors' Note: Preparation of this manuscript was supported in part by the U.S. Department of Education Grant #H133B20004. However, the opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of either the U.S. Department of Education, and no official endorsement by the department should be inferred.

More troubling is the observation that "standardized" programs or universal techniques are ineffective in addressing the severe problem behavior displayed by these students. Specially designed, individualized interventions are required. Fortunately, many features of this specialized approach have been identified (e.g., functional assessment, precorrections, self-management). Unfortunately, the greater challenge is to determine how to use our meager resources most efficiently and creatively to provide the support that (a) allows each student with chronic problem behaviors access to effective interventions, (b) does not interfere with the education of other students, and (c) enables teachers to maintain a positive, safe, and predictable learning environment.

---

*Generally, these students present a complex array of challenges that defy any simple labels or descriptions and do NOT respond to existing school-wide systems.*

---

The purpose of this paper is to describe the defining features of the procedures and processes for designing, implementing, and sustaining school systems in their efforts to address chronic problem behaviors. We focus on designing support systems specifically for those students who display the most chronic problem behavior. Our approach is based on the belief that (a) different discipline problems require different behavior support systems (Sugai & Horner, in press), (b) students with chronic problem behaviors are at major risk for academic and social failure, and (c) schools that are ineffective in addressing the needs of these students are unsafe (Sprague & Colvin, 1996). Specifically, we describe the features of (a) a systems based approach, (b) a team based structure, and (c) the operating procedures and structures.

---

## Features of a Systems Based Approach

Establishing behavior support systems for the 3-7% of students who present the most chronic problem behavior in schools is not a simple task. The challenge is even greater if the larger school-wide behavior support system is not clearly structured and functioning efficiently. Schools that provide effective and efficient behavior support for all students and staff members across all school settings have a number of important systems features (Taylor-Greene et al., 1997; Sugai, 1996; Sugai & Horner, 1994).

A systems approach must be taken. The individual student system is only one of four subsystems that comprise a complete school-wide system of behavior support. 1) The school-wide subsystem is what we traditionally refer to as the school-wide discipline plan, and includes (a) a statement of purpose, (b) expected behavior, (c) continuum of procedures for teaching and encouraging expected behavior, (d) continuum of procedures for discouraging or correcting problem behavior, and (e) procedures for record-keeping and monitoring (Colvin, Kameenui, & Sugai, 1993). We expect effective school-wide subsystems to accommodate most (e.g., 85%) of the students in a school building (Taylor-Greene et al., 1997). 2) The specific setting subsystem focuses on non-classroom contexts (e.g., bus, cafeteria, playground, hallways) which are typically non-academic, unstructured, and supervision-oriented. 3) The classroom subsystem is comprised of the classroom management and disciplinary methods used by teachers within their individual classrooms. This subsystem accommodates individual teaching styles, but is grounded in the larger school-wide system. 4) The final subsystem focuses on the individual students who present the most chronic problem behavior, and is the most different from the other three subsystems because of the specialized, intensive, and individualized features of the procedures that are used (Todd, Horner, Sugai, & Sprague, 1999).

A collaborative team-based approach must be in operation. To create a sustainable and efficient process, a high-profile building-level team must be in place to initiate and sustain school-wide behavior support activities. Unlike a system that is led by a single individual, a team based approach can be sustained when staff members join and leave a staff, difficult decisions must be made, and major effort must be directed toward implementation of a project.

Behavior support efforts must be positioned among the top three long term school improvement goals. All school buildings are dynamic places with new innovations continually being considered and implemented. If an effort to develop or revamp a

school-wide behavior support effort is to be successful, the effort must be among the top three targets for at least two years. If behavior support is not among the top three school improvement goals, energy, resources, and attention are likely to waver and fade.

---

*Individualized student support is organized around a two-level team approach that includes administrative, teacher, and student features. Since we expect to create and maintain school communities that support all students and staff, our knowledge, skills, and tolerance for using teams needs to increase.*

---

The building principal (or designee with administrative authority) must be an active leader and regular participant of the behavior support team. Building teams are limited in what can be accomplished unless the building principal is involved actively in behavior support activities. Administrators have the ability to make decisions that involve money, FTE, scheduling, staff development, etc. that others do not have.

Behavioral capacity must be identified and fostered within the school building. If behavioral expertise does not reside with an individual or collectively with a group of staff members, schools will become dependent upon outside resources which can be expensive, inaccessible, and inefficient. More importantly outside experts do not have the working relationships needed to manage the difficult and daily challenges associated with educating students with severe problem behavior.

To create, implement, and sustain an individualized system of behavior support for students with chronic problem behavior, a systems level approach must be taken. However, this system must be clearly defined and operating efficiently.

## Features of a Team-Based Approach

Individualized student support is organized around a two-level team approach that includes administrative, teacher, and student features. Since we expect to create and maintain school communities that support all students and staff, our knowledge, skills, and tolerance for using teams needs to increase. Comprehensive and dynamic support plans are dependent on a team-based approach.

---

*Most behavioral issues can be solved if they are addressed early, and if time and support are provided to assess the situation and build systems of practical and effective behavioral support.*

---

Although teams vary in structure, composition, skills, clientele, and perspective, teams that address students with chronic problem behavior share certain defining features. A team-based approach allows a group of people to understand the values, limits, and tolerance levels of all of the people involved. Teams that support students with chronic problem behaviors need to (a) possess specialized behavioral skills within its membership, (b) allow and encourage contributions from all its members, (b) have predictable and efficient procedures for doing business and solving problems, and (c) have regular opportunities to access building staff, families and community agencies to communicate and solicit information.

#### **A Team Approach**

The provision of individualized support for students with chronic problem behaviors is possible through the use of clear team-based problem solving and teacher support structures. Most behavioral issues can be solved if they are addressed early, and if time and support are provided to assess the situation and build systems of practical and effective behavioral support. Most schools have established teams for supporting students with academic issues, such as, the Multi-Disciplinary Team, Interdisciplinary Team, Teacher Assistance Team, or Student Support Team. However, behavioral or discipline issues are traditionally not addressed by a standing team or committee, but durable long-term behavior support requires a team approach. New teams should not be established before assessing the priority and strength of existing teams. In some cases creating a new team is unnecessary if an already existing team (e.g., Teacher Support Team) could be expanded to include responsibilities of another team (e.g., Interdisciplinary Team) and support students with academic difficulties as well as students with behavioral concerns. A team approach provides a structure for teachers to ask for assistance about students.

Building a system of individualized support for students with chronic problem behavior requires a two-level team approach. At the first and more

general level (i.e., Teacher Support Team), a team discusses general student issues and problems, oversees behavior support planning, and makes policy and procedural recommendations for providing individual student support. The specific and individual student level (re: Action Team), is a mechanism for obtaining detailed assessment information, engaging in focused problem solving, and developing and implementing specially designed behavior support plans (Todd et al, in press).

**Teacher Support Teams.** The Teacher Support Team (TST) is a building-based team that has the charge to structure support for school-wide, specific setting, and classroom issues, both academic and social behavior. Within the context of behavior support, TSTs have an expanded role which includes the management of behavioral support for individual students with chronic problem behavior. However, to be efficient, TSTs must organize how they meet, when they meet, and what they discuss, for example, the TST might meet alternative weeks to discuss academic and social behavior issues. When focused on behavior support issues, the primary purposes of this team are to (a) manage teacher requests for assistance, (b) ensure that teachers and students receive support in a timely and meaningful manner, (c) provide a general forum for discussions and possible solutions for individual student behavioral concerns, and (d) organize a collaborative effort to support the teacher (i.e., Action Team).

The TST is comprised of administrators, teachers, and related service staff who collectively have the responsibility of coordinating support for teachers who are working with students who have chronic problem behaviors. The TST meets on a regular (e.g., weekly or bi-weekly) basis to address students who have been identified as having serious problem behaviors because they (a) have excessive office referrals or (b) have been referred by a teacher(s) or administrator.

**Action Teams.** An Action Team (AT) is a subgroup of the TST that consists of at least one member from the TST, the staff member who has made the request for assistance, parent or guardian, and other building staff who have direct contact with or are concerned about the student. The primary purpose of this team is to develop, implement, and monitor a program of effective behavioral support for a student who displays significant problem behaviors.

Collectively, the AT must have the behavioral capacity to (a) provide immediate (within 48 hours) assistance to the teacher who has made the request; (b) conduct functional assessments to understand

the factors that trigger and maintain the chronic problem behavior; (c) develop and implement specially designed, individualized behavior support plans that are based on functional assessment information; (d) provide initial, intensive and sustained support which can be faded as the student's behavior improves; and (e) maintain a data collection system that is sensitive to the impact of the behavior support plan on the student's behavior.

#### Team Operating Features

To increase the effectiveness of TSTs and Action

Teams, the efforts and activities of administrators, teachers, and students must be integrated into a comprehensive, positive, behavioral support system for *all* students. Although variations will exist across schools, certain common features are identifiable and are summarized in Table 1.

#### TST Membership and Responsibilities

Each TST should be established and designed around three critical themes including responsibilities, membership, and levels of support. Table 2 outlines these critical themes.

The TST membership will vary in number from school to school (i.e., four to eight team members). However, each TST should be able to respond to teachers requests for (a) ideas, (b) administrative help, (c) an Action Team that generates help, and/or (d) community agency resources. All TST decisions should be based on team-based assessments of individual requests for assistance.

#### Requesting Assistance from the Teacher Support Team

The TST represents a school-wide structure and process by which teachers and staff can solicit assistance for individual students who present repeated problematic behavior. Requesting assistance from the TST leads to a constructive understanding of the problem, a systematic evaluation of general strategies that have been used previously, and direction on current options for responding to the problem. Typically, teachers will request assistance from the TST after they have attempted to solve a problem either on their own or with assistance from colleagues, but are

**Table 1. Essential Administrative, Teacher and Student Features**

Administrative Features
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The administration has identified student discipline systems as one of the top three policy goals of the school.</li> <li>✓ Specific faculty time is dedicated to the coordination and implementation of behavioral support (e.g. 10-20 hours of staff time per week for a 400 student school).</li> <li>✓ Teams meet regularly to coordinate support for teachers.</li> <li>✓ Administrators are active members of behavior support teams.</li> <li>✓ Outcomes of School-wide, Specific-Setting, Classroom Settings, and Individual-Student behavior support subsystems are reviewed at least quarterly at faculty meetings.</li> </ul>
Teacher Features
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ A teacher support team meets at least every two weeks to review difficult instructional and behavioral challenges.</li> <li>✓ The process for referring an issue to the teacher support team is structured and simple (e.g. referral form requires less than 10 minutes to complete).</li> <li>✓ When a teacher raises a problem, it is addressed by the teacher support team within 10 working days.</li> <li>✓ The teacher support team has the option of establishing "Action Teams" to provide in-depth support.</li> <li>✓ Action Teams report to the teacher support team at least every two weeks on the status of support and outcomes for specific students.</li> <li>✓ The teacher who brings a problem can request that the teacher support team (a) provide suggestions, (b) provide monitoring of the situation, or (c) establish an action team, and deliver more extensive assistance.</li> <li>✓ To the extent possible (and appropriate) school-based support is integrated with other community supports for the student (and/or family).</li> </ul>
Student Features
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Students with chronic problem behaviors receive a functional assessment that includes analysis of academic, social, and behavioral features of their education.</li> <li>✓ Curriculum revision is examined to determine the extent to which (a) student educational responding is occurring and (b) student educational success is occurring.</li> <li>✓ Focus of support is on assessment and remediation of the current situation, not "diagnosis and placement."</li> </ul>

**Table 2. Teacher Support Team Responsibilities and Composition**

**Teacher Support Team Responsibilities**

- ✓ Develop and maintain systems (a) by which teacher/staff request assistance and support, (b) for monitoring individual action teams, (c) that provide input and feedback on school-wide discipline efforts, and (d) for coordinating staff and family training opportunities.
- ✓ Meet at least bi-weekly to review teachers' requests for assistance.
- ✓ Be accessible to provide immediate and on-going technical assistance to individual teachers on assessment, intervention, and monitoring strategies.
- ✓ Establish Action Teams for students with significant or challenging behaviors.
- ✓ Address academic as well as social/behavioral concerns.

**Teacher Support Team Membership**

The collective membership of the TST should include school staff who

- ✓ Have administrative authority to make and affect decisions to support teachers and students,
- ✓ Have knowledge in the formal and informal structure and coordination of school services,
- ✓ Have general education teaching positions, and
- ✓ Are skilled in designing and implementing positive behavior support plans based on functional assessments.

**Teacher Support Team Levels of Support**

The TST will be able to provide one or more of the following levels of support:

- ✓ *Development of an immediate action plan.* The TST provides immediate support to any teacher or student who is in crisis and in need of an emergency intervention. This support can be as simple as immediate suggestions, but can also include observations.
- ✓ *Establishment of an AT for the target student and teacher(s).* The primary functions of the AT is to gather functional assessment information, develop, implement, and monitor a behavior support plan.
- ✓ *Referral to a different team or community agency.* If the needs of the student and/or teacher can be satisfied more efficiently and effectively by someone else, the request for assistance can be referred to a different team.

dissatisfied with the outcome of those efforts. As such, every request for assistance must be treated in a respectful manner.

**Making a Request for Assistance**

Requesting assistance from the TST is simple, but requires some planning prior to the meeting. First, the teacher wanting assistance requests a TST meeting time from the Teacher Support Team coordinator who provides the teacher with a Request for Assistance Form (RFA) (see Figure 1). The requesting teacher completes and returns the RFA form preferably before the actual meeting so that the TST members can review the request and collect additional information/materials before the meeting. If multiple teachers are involved with a request for assistance for an individual student, it is recommended that (a) each teacher fill out an RFA or (b) teachers pool their concerns and ideas by filling out the RFA together.

**Teacher Support Team Meetings**

During the TST meeting, the requesting teacher(s) describe the problem behaviors displayed by the individual student by summarizing the information on page 1 of the RFA. TST members will gather more information during the meeting by asking the questions outlined on page 2 of the RFA. This discussion is the primary focus of the TST meeting, and should last about 30 minutes. The discussion is structured in three parts which are illustrated in the sample meeting agenda in Figure 2. At the end of the discussion, the team will make a decision about an appropriate action for each request for assistance.

**Explanation of the problem and strategies tried** is the first part for reviewing a request for assistance. The content of this portion of the discussion centers around the front page of the RFA in Figure 1. This is the requesting teachers chance to tell about specific problems and explain the expectations. This includes (a) what has been tried so far to teach expected

Figure 1. Teacher Assistance Team Request for Assistance.

TEACHER ASSISTANCE TEAM  
Request For Assistance

Date 1/6/97 Student Name Kyle Teacher/Team Lip.S. Grade 4  
 (IP-Yes) No (Circle)

Situations	Problem Behaviors	Most Common Result
written assignments group activities whole class instructions	won't do independent work very unorganized, no materials tenses & distracts others	attempts work ask for help cooperates with others in group
1. What have you tried/used? How has it worked? give more individual attention quick payoffs (prizes) more parental involvement		

What have you tried to date to change the situations in which the problem behavior(s) occur?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Modified assignments to match the students skills	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Changed seating assignments	Changed schedule of activities	Other?
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Arranged tutoring to improve the student's academic skills	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Changed curriculum	Provided extra assistance	

What have you tried to date to teach expected behaviors?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reminders about expected behavior when problem behavior is likely	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Clarified rules and expected behavior for the whole class	Practiced the expected behaviors in class	Other?
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reward program for expected behavior	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Oral agreement with the student	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Self-management program	→ Classroom self- evaluation program at end of school day
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Systematic feedback about behavior	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Individual written contract with the student	Contract with student with parents	

What consequences have you tried to date for the problem behavior?

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Loss of privileges reducer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Note or phone call to the student's parents	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Office referral	Other?
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Time-out	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Detention	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reprimand	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Referral to school counselor	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Meeting with the student's parents	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Individual meeting with the student	

TEACHER ASSISTANCE TEAM  
Request For Assistance  
Page 2

WHEN ADDRESSING THIS PROBLEM, PLEASE CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

- When is the problem behavior(s) most and least likely to occur?
  - On particular days of the week (e.g., Monday) or times of day (e.g., right after recess)?
  - During or after interactions with certain people (e.g., during small, cooperative group projects)?
  - During certain types of activity or tasks, e.g., during apparently difficult or boring work?
  - In connection with particular features of the physical environment (e.g., noise, crowded)?
  - Features of routine (e.g., when there are unexpected changes or when a preferred activity is canceled)?
  - Medical or physical factors (e.g., apparent hunger or lack of sleep)?
  - Other influences?
- What do you think the student(s) may gain from the problem behavior(s)?
  - Attention? What kind of attention? From whom?
  - Avoid an apparently difficult or boring activity?
  - Avoid teacher interaction?
  - Get control of a situation?
  - Avoid embarrassment in front of peers?

Summary of Behavior		
Setting Events & Predictors	Behaviors of Concern	Maintaining Consequences

3. Are there appropriate behavior that the student could use that would make the problem behavior unnecessary?

4. Teacher Support Team Decision

- ☐ Some suggestions regarding interventions to try.
- ☐ Referral to a different team for assessment (speech hearing, academic).
- ☐ Formation of an Action Team to conduct a Functional Assessment and develop a plan of support.
- Date for Follow Up \_\_\_\_\_



behaviors and (b) what has been tried so far to change the situation. Allotting 10 minutes for this part of the meeting gives enough time to talk about the problem and strategies and encourages brevity.

**Developing summary statements and possible alternatives** is the second part of reviewing a request for assistance and can take about 15 minutes. The content of this portion of the discussion is structured around the second page of the "RFA". This is when the team, along with the requesting teacher, tries to figure out (a) when, where, and why the problem behaviors are occurring, and (b) identify the possible alternative positive behaviors that could serve the same function for the student.

The first two parts of the discussion should really help all meeting participants to understand the problem, the problem context, and begin to pose some possible solutions and things to try. Part three of the discussion is the time to plan for these ideas and solutions.

**Determining a plan of action** is the third and final part of reviewing a request for assistance. This is the time that the team and the teacher need to agree on the best action to be taken. Any of three decisions (or a combination of the three) can be made and are centered around the TST levels of support including:

✓ **Suggestions:** the TST coordinator will follow up with the teacher(s) 2 weeks following the meeting using the TST follow up form (Figure 3).

✓ **Establishment of an action team:** one of the TST members will serve as a Action Team coordinator, using the Action Team Plan (Figure 4). The Action Team coordinator will coordinate all functional assessment, support plan design and implementation activities.

✓ **Referral to a different team:** the TAT will decide which team to refer the student to and follow the process for scheduling a review.

**Figure 2. Teacher Support Team Meeting Agenda**

Teacher Support Team Meeting Agenda		
Meeting date: <u>1/6/97</u> Next meeting date: <u>1/13/97</u>		
Participants: <u>Tina, Betty, Joe, Lacey, Anne, Nick, Lg.S.</u>		
Follow up		
Josh - recess buddy has worked. Josh looks forward to recess. Continue buddy system.		
Time	Students	Action / Decision
3:00	Kyle	Need to form an Action Team Anne to be Action Team coordinator Action Team to meet tomorrow to complete Action Team Plan (3:00-3:30 in Lg's room) Lg to invite Patty (resource teacher), & Kyle's dad
3:30	Amanda J.	Suggestions include 1. Nick remind Amanda's mom about homework completion 2. Amanda to get self manager. Stickers for completing & bringing 3. Nick to decrease homework assignments to 1/2 amount for a week 4. Report to TST next week

### After the Teacher Support Team Meeting

Within two to three weeks after the meeting, the coordinator gives the requesting teacher a Teacher Support Team Follow Up form (Figure 3), a half page form that asks some follow up questions to see how the student is doing and if additional assistance is needed.

### Dealing with Crisis Situations[sub2]

If the problem is a crisis situation, the TST will not only hold an emergency TST meeting, but will also arrange immediate support for the teacher(s) and student. Immediate support should result in (a) an immediate response plan, (b) a limitation of access to dangerous situations, (c) an increase in supervision, and (d) an increase in feedback loops.

### Action Team Composition and Responsibilities

Action Team formation is one of the three outcomes of a TST meeting. Therefore, Action Teams form only when prescribed by the TST. Typically, the 3-7% of students who need individualized support are the students for whom Action Teams are formed. To be effective in addressing a student's challenging behaviors, the Action Team must be teacher-driven by being directly and actively involved in the development and implementation of a plan of support. Table 3 highlights the Action Teams responsibilities, membership and levels of support.

Action Team membership should be flexible so that interested individuals can contribute and participate in *any* of the functional assessment or support plan implementation activities. Action Team membership lasts until the student learns and maintains positive alternative behaviors as determined

by the team. Active participation is necessary for each team member while the support plan is being developed. As the plan is implemented and new behaviors are learned, team members will spend less time meeting and more time coaching the student and each other. Each Action Team should be composed of those people who interact regularly with the student.

**Figure 3. TST Student Follow Up**

**TST Student Follow Up**

Date: 1/3/97 Student name: Tosh Completed by: Joan F.

The Teacher Support Team is interested in Tosh's progress. Please take a few minutes to answer the following questions. Return this form to Tina by 1/6/97. The TST thanks you in advance!

1. Were the TST's suggestions helpful? ☒ Yes ☐ No
2. Are the suggestions manageable during the course of your lesson(s)? ☒ Yes ☐ No
3. Have you seen an improvement in Tosh's behavior since the TST meeting? ☒ Yes ☐ No
4. Do you need more help from the TST? Yes ☒ No ☐
5. Please list any other comments, concerns or questions.

*I will continue recess buddy program for the next month and would like to review with the TST again at that time. Thanks.*

**Figure 4. Action Team Plan**

**Action Team Plan**

Date: Jan 7, 1997 Student: Kyle

Team Members: Liz, Alan, Anne

Action Team Coordinator: Anne

At the initial Action Team Meeting, use this plan to organize activities and dates.

Activity	People Responsible	Date	Team Meeting
<b>Functional Assessment</b>			
1. interview	<u>Anne</u>	<u>1/9-1/14</u>	
2. observations	<u>Anne</u>	<u>1/9-1/23</u>	
3. summarize	<u>Action Team</u>	<u>1/28</u>	
<b>Support Plan Development</b>			
1. develop considerations for support plan	<u>Action Team</u>	<u>1/28</u>	<u>1/28 3:00-4:00</u>
2. firm up support plan	<u>Action Team</u>	<u>2/3</u>	<u>2/3 3:00-4:00</u>
<b>Support Plan Implementation</b>			
1. teaching	<u>Anne &amp; Liz</u>	<u>2/10-2/12</u>	
2. coaching and feedback	<u>Anne &amp; Liz</u>	<u>2/12</u>	
<b>Monitoring and Evaluation</b>			
1. managing student information	<u>Anne</u>	<u>daily/weekly</u>	
2. meeting times	<u>Anne</u>	<u>3/4, 4/1, 5/6, 6/3</u>	<u>3:00-4:00 Liz's classroom</u>

### Action Team Coordinator Responsibilities

With every effective team comes a coordinator! A designated member of the Action Team should assume responsibility for coordinating the activities and meetings of the Action Team. The Action Team coordinator is the person that will make this team the most efficient and the person who will spend the most time designing the support plan. This person can make a difference not only for the student, but for the family and school as well. The TST representative is a natural choice for the coordinating role of the Action Team because of familiarity with the TST and Action Team process. The Action Team Coordinator is by far the key person to making this team work. The Coordinator doesn't necessarily need to do all of the work, but this is the person who coordinates all of the team members, activities for designing and implementing the support plan, and team meetings.

Whenever an Action Team is developed, members need to be aware of the initial time commitment for designing a support plan. The Action Team Plan (Figure 4) serves as a "map" for all of the critical steps for conducting a functional assessment, designing a support plan and monitoring progress. More than likely, during the first three weeks, each Action Team will spend two to three hours meeting, and the coordinator will spend about three hours a week directly with the student, family members and school staff. The result should be a clear understanding of the problem, what is happening, why it is happening, and when it is happening (the outcome of a functional assessment). In addition, a support plan for teaching the student positive alternative behaviors and/or classroom and curricular adaptations that the teacher can use will be designed.

---

---

**Table 3. Action Team Composition**

---

**Essential Responsibilities and Membership Features**

---

**Action Team Responsibilities**

- ✓ Meet regularly until the student's new learning objectives have been met.
  - ✓ Provide student reports regularly to the TST.
  - ✓ Use an Action Team Plan (Figure 4) to guide the activities of implementing a functional assessment and for designing, implementing and monitoring a support plan.
- 

**Action Team Membership**

The collective membership of the Action Team should include the following individuals:

- ✓ At least one member who is competent in designing and providing positive behavioral support based on functional assessments. This person will more than likely be the TST representative,
  - ✓ The teacher(s) requesting assistance,
  - ✓ Family members (or guardian),
  - ✓ A member from the TST,
  - ✓ Concerned school staff who interact with the student, and
  - ✓ The student, when appropriate.
- 

**Action Team Levels of Support**

Through direct observations and Action Team meetings the features of a comprehensive plan of support can be melded together to design a systematic plan for teaching a student to be more socially appropriate. This process involves:

- ✓ Doing a functional assessment ( understanding the problem and why it is happening).
  - ✓ Designing a support plan based on the functional assessment.
  - ✓ Determining support plan implementation strategies and logistics.
  - ✓ Offering to help implement the support plan by (a) teaching individual or small groups or (b) substituting for the teacher so that he/she can teach individual or small groups.
- 

**Action Team Meetings**

A designated member of the Action Team should assume responsibility for chairing each meeting. It is not mandatory that this person be the coordinator, however a chairperson does need to be selected. The role responsibilities for the chairperson include chairing each Action Team meeting and keeping and meeting minutes for each meeting.

The length and effectiveness of Action Team meetings is related to the degree to which the behavioral support strategies fit the context in which the problem is occurring. In general, the Action Team meetings last longer than TST meetings because of the detail work required to develop, evaluate, and modify behavior support plans; however, these meetings should not last more than 90 minutes. In many cases, the Action Team requires about three 45 minute meetings to complete its assessment and design an individual support plan.

The frequency of Action Team meetings depends upon the status of the support plan and progress of the student. Initially, the Action Team meets weekly to collect information, develop a support plan and

oversee the initial implementation of the plan. Once implementation of the support plan is established, the Action Team meets every other week or monthly. Based on the student's progress and on-going monitoring of the effects of the support plan, the Action Team will meet as needed to monitor student, teacher and family support strategies. With time, an effective Action Team will require less frequent meetings.

The content of each meeting will depend upon the current step of behavior support plan development. However, each meeting needs to have the three parts, including (a) follow up from the last meeting, (b) necessary support plan revisions and (c) confirmation of next meeting.

The Action Team must meet and make decisions around key features of the support plan for four critical purposes including, (a) summarizing and sharing functional assessment information, (b) sharing considerations for supporting the student, (c) firming up the support plan and determining implementation strategies and (d) reviewing progress, strategies, and making revisions. Finally, the Action

Team Plan indicates the time lines and people responsible for gathering and designing information needed by the Action Team.

### After the Action Team Meeting

The Action Team Plan will serve as the vehicle for getting the job done. However, the Teacher Support Team needs to stay involved with the Action Teams activities and the students progress. Therefore, four weeks after the meeting, the coordinator gives the requesting teacher an Action Team Follow Up form (Figure 5) that is a half-page form that asks some follow up questions to see how the student is doing and if the requesting teacher needs more assistance from the Teacher Support Team. If before then, the requesting teacher needs more help, the Action Team coordinator can contact one of the TST members to problem-solve or request another TST meeting.

### An Elementary School in Action

Through our work with a local elementary school, we have seen this two-level team process develop over the past three years. As with any systems change, the process has gone through an evolutionary process. With each stage of development, the team has integrated regularly scheduled meetings, effective meeting processes, and follow up on work-in-progress. This school, Guy Lee Elementary, is a Title I funded school with 586 students enrolled and has an established school-wide effective behavior support system (Todd et al., in press).

As stated earlier, the Teacher Support Team established a process by which teachers could ask for help for individual students by requesting assistance

from the team. Each request for assistance could result in any one of three decisions including 1) suggestions to try, 2) referral to a different team for academic, hearing or speech assessment, or 3) establishment of an Action Team to conduct a functional assessment and design a plan of support. With the first year of implementation (1994-95) of the Teacher Support Team and Action Team approach, there were nine requests for assistance. Three of those nine requests resulted in the Teacher Support Team providing suggestions. Of the remaining six requests, two student requests were referred to another team (i.e. speech or academic assessment) while the remaining four students required Action Teams. The second year (1995-96), there were 15 requests for assistance. Nine of those 15 requests resulted in suggestions to the requesting teacher, five of the 15 requests were referred to a different team (i.e. speech or academic assessment), while only one student request required an Action Team. The third year (1996-97), eight requests for assistance were made to the team. The Action Team from the previous year maintained itself to support the target student, while two additional Action Teams developed. Six of the eight requests for assistance were satisfied though one 30 minute Teacher Support Team meeting that resulted in a set of suggestions and strategies for the teacher to try out. Table 4 provides an illustration of this school's Teacher Support Team outcomes for the 1994-96 school years (Todd, Horner, Sugai, & Sprague, in press).

The outcomes for this school illustrate a proactive, school wide approach to supporting all students and their teachers. The Teacher Support Team process

has become a system of support for teachers who expect small problems to accelerate unless given attention early on. The Teacher Support Team is one of the subsystems of the school-wide discipline for Guy Lee Elementary. The individual student system has been in place, operational and functional for three years. The individual student systems success has not only enhanced individual students school success, but has also contributed to effective classroom instruction and management and to the success of all students school-wide.

### Conclusion

We have seen Teacher Support Teams and Action Teams work at a variety of different elementary and middle schools. The essential administrative, teacher and

Figure 5: TST Action Team Follow Up

TST Action Team Follow Up	
Date: <u>2/19/97</u> Student name: <u>Kyle</u> Completed by: <u>L.S.</u>	
The Teacher Support Team is interested in <u>Kyle's</u> progress. Please take a few minutes to answer the following questions. Return this form to <u>Tina</u> by <u>2/18/97</u> . The TST thanks you in advance!	
1. Are you following the specified procedures on the plan?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
2. Are the procedures manageable during the course of your lesson(s)?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
3. Have you seen an improvement in <u>Kyle's</u> behavior since the support plan was implemented?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
4. Do you think that the procedures and/or objectives in the support plan need modification?	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No
5. Do you need more help from the TST or Action Team?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
6. Please list any other comments, concerns or questions.	
<i>The Action Team is very helpful. We need to meet again in two weeks. I will coordinate this with Anne.</i>	

Table 4. Teacher Assistance Team Outcomes

Year	Total number of requests	Number of requests resulting in suggestions	Number of requests resulting in an academic/speech or hearing referral	Number of requests resulting in Action Teams
94-95	9	3	2	4
95-96	15	9	5	1
96-97	8	6	0	3

student features identified in Table 1, combined with follow up and meeting structures with predictable outcomes provide an effective and comprehensive framework for supporting students who need individualized support plans. Schools that have had behavioral support as one of their top three school improvement goals have had the most success in developing teams to support students who engage in chronic problem behaviors. The successful schools have taken a hard look at the existing structures that are already established for supporting students. Many have been very creative in melding behavioral support into existing teams. In most cases, all teachers feel supported, students make progress, and instructional time is enhanced. In some cases, schools have been able to shift and supplement responsibilities of an already existing team and a new team has not been necessary.

As a result of having an effective and proactive approach to supporting students who need more support than the school-wide system can provide, schools can be successful in supporting all of their enrolled students. Developing a team approach and a simple, safe and effective process for teachers to get help when faced with individual student problems is the place to begin. ♦

### References

- Colvin, G., Kameenui, E., & Sugai, G. (1993). Reconceptualizing behavior management and school-wide discipline in general education. *Education and Treatment of Children*, 16, 361-381.
- Sprague, J. & Colvin, G., (1996). Is your school safe? Do you have an adequate plan? In A. Deffenbaugh & G. Tindal (Eds.), *The Oregon Conference Monograph*, 17-23. University of Oregon, College of Education.
- Sugai, G. (1996). The development of individualized behavior support plans. Case study in M.M. Kerr & C. M. Nelson. *Strategies for managing problem behaviors in the classroom* (2nd ed.). Columbus, OH: Merrill.
- Sugai, G., & Horner, R. H. (1994). Including students with severe behavior problems in general education settings: Assumptions, challenges, and solutions. In J. Marr, G. Sugai, & G. Tindal (Eds.). *The Oregon conference Monograph*, 6. 102-120.
- Taylor-Greene, S., Brown, D., Nelson, L., Longton, J., Gassman, T., Cohen, J. Horner, R.H., Sugai, G., & Hall, S. (1997). School-wide behavioral support: Starting the year off right. *Journal of Behavioral Education*, 7(1), 99-112.
- Todd, A.W., Horner, R. H., Sugai, G., & Sprague, J.R. (1999). *Effective Behavior Support: Strengthening School-wide Systems Through a Team Approach. Effective School Practices*, 17(4) 23-33.
- Todd, A., Horner, R.H., Vanater, S.M., Schneider, C. F. (1998). Working together to make a change: An example of positive behavioral support for a student with traumatic brain injury. *Education and Treatment of Children*. Vol. 20(4), 425-440.
- Walker, H. M., Horner, R. H., Sugai, G., Bullis, M., Sprague, J. R., Bricker, D., & Kaufman, M. J. (1996). Integrated approaches to preventing antisocial behavior patterns among school-age children and youth. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders*, 4, 193-256.

# 1998 ADI Recognitions Presented

Jocelyn Warren,  
Effective School Practices Staff

## Wayne Carnine Student Improvement Awards

The 1998 Wayne Carnine Student Improvement Awards were presented to Jamal Skrine of Beach Channel High School in Rockaway Park, New York and Kelly Robert Miller of Valley View Elementary in Roy, Utah. Though Jamal is classified as learning disabled and has a speech impairment, he is a determined young man full of the love of learning. He continually expresses a desire and displays the willingness necessary to learn. And Jamal is not shy of hard work. The DI programs used in his classes have helped him make outstanding progress in reading achievement. Jamal says he considers learning to read a gift, one that he'd like to share and, to that end, he works as a counselor at the Edgemere Community Center during his summer vacations, when many kids his age leave their books for the beach. Jamal takes great pride in his work at the Center where he acts as coach, homework helper and group leader during the afterschool program with 6- to 12-year-olds. As his teacher says, "The students love him!" Jamal is a very motivated student, involved in both school activities and community organizations, and he is very deserving of the Student Improvement Award.

Kelly Miller was still having difficulty identifying letters and sounds when he entered Valley View Elementary at the beginning of third grade. His mother, Marilyn Miller, says her son was feeling defeated and that he had changed from an energetic, confident boy into a shy, withdrawn one. When he was tested for resource at Valley View, his scores showed a severe discrepancy between ability and achievement. Other tests highlighted problems with self-esteem and aggressive behavior.

Janet Meyer, Kelly's resource teacher, set high goals for Kelly, focusing on reading and language. Using *Reading Mastery* and *Reasoning and Writing*, Kelly worked very hard to achieve those goals and by fifth grade was put back into the regular classroom full-time. He read at or above grade level and his math scores also improved. "All of this is a miracle to me," Marilyn Miller says, "and I've seen even greater improvements in his self-esteem, con-

fidence and temperament." She credits the school's Media Specialist, Lynnette Miller, for encouraging Kelly and sending him to the Storytellers Festival to represent the school. Kelly also qualified that year to go to the district's Math Olympiad. Now Kelly enjoys community theater, reading and rock collecting, and hopes to be a children's book writer when he grows up. Kelly has learned that with hard work he can be successful at whatever he does.

## Executive Director's Award

At the 1998 National Direct Instruction Conference in Eugene, Bob Dixon presented the Executive Director's Award to Carolyn Schneider, a 1996 recipient of an Excellence in Education award. As Bob explained, the Executive Director's Award is meant to recognize those who go far beyond the call

of duty and make a special contribution to their field and to the DI family. Carolyn Schneider is one of those exceptional people. Gary Johnson told the story about the first SRA trainers session for *Corrective Reading* that he and Carolyn led—long days and late nights with no breaks. It was a grueling schedule for anyone, but most es-

pecially for a woman in her last days of pregnancy. Hours after finishing the training and leaving the hotel, Carolyn had her baby. Bob also recognized Carolyn for her financial contributions and her willingness to help in any situation. In accepting the award—a surprise—Carolyn was typically modest, saying she'd been given much more than she'd received.



Carolyn Schneider

## Excellence in Education Awards

Johnnie Hicks is a first-grade teacher at Herzl School in the Lawndale section of Chicago, one of

Chicago's most distressed communities. It is clear in observing her classroom that Johnnie has invested considerable energy, talent and especially heart into the education of her students. Her classroom is colorful and cheery, with bulletin boards that correspond to the reading, math and language lessons being taught. Her stu-



Johnnie Hicks

dents are always on-task and excited about what they've learned that day. As consultant Laura Rice Doherty says, "It is clear Mrs. Hicks cares deeply about her students; it is equally clear that she takes the mission of TEACHING these students extremely seriously. And guess what—it is clear that her students adore her and it is equally clear that they take their job of LEARNING extremely seriously."

Jerry Silbert, in presenting Johnnie with the Excellence in Teaching award, said she was already a great teacher before he came to help with the implementation at Herzl, but that she welcomed him into her classroom and sought his advice whenever she had questions. In 1997, every one of Johnnie's first graders scored in the upper quartile on their achievement tests. In accepting the award, Johnnie said she is addicted to DI and that her students' high self-esteem, love of reading and high test scores all attest to the fact that DI works.

Tina Meadows currently serves as the Mason County Special Education Coordinator in West Virginia. In 1993, she brought the first DI program to Mason County special education teachers. While over 200 teachers packed an auditorium to learn about whole language activities, about 20 teachers gathered in a cramped classroom across the hall with Tina to learn to use *Corrective Spelling*



Tina Meadows

*Through Morphographs*. These teachers had such success with *Corrective Spelling* they asked Tina to get more DI programs, which she did. Over the next several years, Tina worked hard to secure funding for additional DI materials and to bring the most qualified trainers to Mason County. Through Tina's persuasion more and more teachers and administrators adopted DI and soon the special education department had changed its curriculum entirely to DI. As a result, test scores for special needs students have improved tremendously in Mason County and the students are excited about learning. Special education teachers say they feel blessed to have Tina as their coordinator.

Given the success special education teachers have had with DI, its not surprising that general education teachers also enlist Tina's support and guidance in their classrooms. At Beale Elementary School, a rural school of about 300 students, teachers use DI in reading, writing, spelling and mathematics and are pleased with the success their students enjoy. Tina has also faced criticism from some administrators and regular teachers for her championing of DI, however, she remains committed to ensuring all students reach mastery. Far from the days of holding DI training sessions in cramped, out-of-the-way classrooms, DI can now be found in almost every school in Mason County, thanks to Tina's leadership and enthusiasm. In accepting the Excellence in Administration award, Tina said, "The true celebration of this award are the students who have been given the skills and successes to last a lifetime."

Sandra S. Murray, former principal of Larkdale Elementary School in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, was awarded an Excellence in Administration award for the dedication, talent and energy she invested in improving students' academic performance and behavior in the nine years she led the school. In 1995, Larkdale Elementary was placed on the Critically Low Performing Schools list. Only 15% of fourth graders scored at or above the 50th percentile in reading and just 25% scored at or above the 50th percentile in mathematics. Additionally, Larkdale has a 49% mobility rate, with 91% of the students eligible for



Sandra Murray



free or reduced lunch. Despite these complications, Sandy was determined to improve student achievement. She had implemented various programs but did not see the gains she expected until, in cooperation with consultant Stu Greenburg, she combined curriculum and behavior goals and implemented Direct Instruction as the core of the Larkdale curriculum. The two also wrote a very successful program for the entire Broward County called the Alliance of Quality Schools which has helped other principals increase student performance in their schools.

With the quiet support of her superintendent, Sandy was able to persist in the DI implementation in Larkdale despite the resistance of some staff and teachers. Sandy also involves parents in their children's education. Besides parent training activities, an open house policy encourages parents to observe their children's classes, and parents are also required to monitor their children's homework and attend at least two teacher conferences a year. Sandy's unceasing emphasis on developmentally appropriate academic programs, maintaining high expectations for students, staff, parents and herself, her employment of a variety of strategies to help students succeed and the engagement of parents to improve student learning have combined to pull Larkdale off "The List." In accepting the award, Sandy acknowledged the hard work of everyone involved with Larkdale, saying all 115 staff members deserved the award, too, and that she accepted on their behalf.

Melanie Mayo was nominated for the award in **Excellence in Supervision and Training** by her colleagues for her work as Direct Instruction Coordinator on the Special Education Team for Queens High Schools in Flushing, New York. As coordinator, Melanie was responsible for supporting the DI program, which has



Melanie Mayo

been in place for 10 years, by coaching and providing technical assistance to teachers and supervisors in 22 high schools. Melanie's enthusiasm and fresh perspective inspired teachers and students to do their best. The students have made significant gains

as a result of her work and look forward to her classroom visits so they can demonstrate their achievements.

Melanie always has time for the teachers she coaches. Bette Moraitis says, "Whenever a question arises she will always try to help find a solution...Melanie is very supportive and a good listener." Before coming to Queens High Schools, Melanie taught learning disabled junior high school students and moderately retarded elementary students using Direct Instruction. She also worked as an SRA consultant and teacher trainer. Because of the relationships she's established with the teachers in the Queens High Schools, Melanie is known as "a teacher's teacher." Penny Santiago has been teaching various Direct Instruction reading programs since 1991 and says Melanie has been an inspiration. "This year Melanie's guidance has reignited the spark that was present during my beginning years as a direct instruction teacher." Teacher Jacqueline Gomes says Melanie has played an important role in the professional lives of many teachers. "Her enthusiasm and love of teaching are contagious and all who have had the opportunity to meet her and work with her are truly touched by her kindness, dedication and patience." Though Melanie was not able to attend the conference, she did send a letter accepting the award and saying, "I invite anyone who wishes to come see our program to contact me because it would be my pleasure to share our success with you."

Dr. Nancy Marchand-Martella, winner of the Excellence in University Education award, is currently an Associate Professor in the department of Applied Psychology in the College of Education and Human Development at Eastern Washington University. Though her colleagues do not always share her enthusiasm, Nancy is a dedicated and energetic

champion of research-based instruction, especially DI. She has introduced many students in the teacher training program to effective techniques, strategies, curriculums and qualitative verification of instructional practices. As first grade teacher and DI consultant Linda McGlocklin says,



Nancy Marchand-Martella



"Nancy's students are actively seeking more knowledge and experience by adding course work which focuses on Direct Instruction and research-based practices. She has been instrumental in providing her students with skills that will make them effective in the classroom, at graduate school and beyond."

Nancy's influence on teaching practices extends well beyond her own university classroom. She herself can often be found in the Spokane community schools, coaching and training teachers in effective teaching practices. Nancy also assists schools in finding funding for new programs and materials. The grants she's written have funded teacher training, parent training, innovative student tutoring, and material acquisition at Evergreen Elementary, Rogers High School, Deer Park High School and other community schools. Clark Ness, a special education teacher at Horizon Junior High School, says that, with Nancy's assistance, his teaching skills have greatly improved which, ultimately, will be reflected in the lives of his students.

Beyond her own community, Nancy's research—she has published over 40 articles, co-edited research methods instruction textbooks and has been a guest editor for this journal—has enriched the field and motivated students and colleagues to follow her lead.

### Excellent School Award

Valley View Elementary is an ambitious school and holds high expectations for all its students. Over the course of four years, the staff and teachers of Valley View worked hard to implement Direct Instruction school-wide as part of the Utah Accelerated Student Achievement Project (ASAP). At the end of each year, kindergartners and first graders were performing substantially above the national means in reading performance. Low, moderate and higher performing students all made gains that were sustained over the course of the implementation. Larry Yates, Assistant Superintendent of the Weber School District, is very impressed with Valley View's program. "The program has required some of the staff to be trained as coaches," he says. "The coaches have turned the entire program into a very consistent, high quality approach to student education." Yates says teachers are excited with the progress they make in their classrooms and parental support is at an all-time high. Cheryl Hostetter, an Educa-

tion Specialist for the district, says she has been very impressed with principal Maurine Newton. "I am always amazed at the positive climate of the school, the morale of the teachers who feel they are valued for their profession and the knowledge base they have accrued to be specialists in the curricula," Hostetter says. "This positive climate and morale in addition to a consistent and research-based curricula has made Valley View a school that provides for high expectations and opportunities for every child in the school to succeed." Marilyn Miller accepted the Excellence in Schools award on behalf of Valley View and especially Maureen Newton, an "outstanding principal."

Mabel B. Wesley Elementary in Houston is familiar to many in the DI family and beyond, thanks in part to a feature story on the ABC News program *PrimeTime Live*. Wesley cannot help but be noticed. In the blighted neighborhood of Acres Home, with its barbed-wire fencing and boarded up homes, Wesley's manicured lawn, immaculate brick facade and polished floors are a promise that things are done better here. And Wesley's students fulfill that promise—they have gained national attention for their consistent achievement scores in reading and math that put them on a par with, or in many cases surpass, their suburban peers. Since becoming principal in 1975, Thaddeus Lott has never let poverty, parentage or minority status be an excuse for poor achievement. He has always focused on the basics—research-based instruction, rigorous teacher training, high expectations of teachers and students in behavior and academics, and a passionate conviction that every child can learn—though this often made him very unpopular with the district administration that had mandated a whole language curriculum. Lott got tremendous results with very little support and on a very tight budget. Today, Lott continues his work in managing a district of charter schools that includes Wesley. Principal Suzie Rimes continues the tradition of high expectations and high achievement at Wesley and now has the benefit of increased funding after being awarded magnet school status by the Houston school district in 1994. As Bob Dixon noted at the Eugene conference in presenting the Excellence in Schools award to Wesley, it was Carolyn Schneider, our first award winner, who was the trainer sent to Wesley in the beginning, and so now we've come full circle. ♦

## ***Effective School Practices* Editorial Board**

Scott Baker  
University of Oregon, Eugene, OR

Doug Carnine  
NCITE, Eugene, OR

Jim Cowardin  
Ohio State University, Columbus, OH

Craig Darch  
Auburn University, Auburn, AL

Ann Glang  
Oregon Research Institute, Eugene, OR

Phyllis Haddox  
University of Oregon, Eugene, OR

Shanna Hagan Burke  
University of Oregon, Eugene, OR

Tracy Hall  
Pennsylvania State at College Station, University Park, PA

Jan Hasbrouck  
Texas A&M, Bryan, TX

Kerry Hempenstall  
RMIT, Bundoora, Australia

Dan Hursh  
University of West Virginia, Morgantown, WV

Gretchen Jefferson  
University of Oregon, Eugene, OR

Jane Jung  
University of Wisconsin-Madison, Madison, WI

Marie Keel  
Georgia State University, Atlanta, GA

Tim Lewis, Ph.D.  
University of Missouri, Columbia, MO

Nancy Marchand-Martella  
Eastern Washington University, Cheney, WA

Patricia Mathes  
Florida State University, Tallahassee, FL

Tom Proctor  
Baylor University, Waco, TX

Jerry Silbert  
NCITE, Eugene, OR

Marcy Stein  
University of Washington-Tacoma, Tacoma, WA

Sara Tarver  
University of Wisconsin-Madison, Madison, WI

Cathy Watkins  
California State University, Stanislaus, CA

## CONTRIBUTOR'S GUIDELINES

*Effective School Practices* provides practitioners and decision-makers with the latest research and development news on effective teaching tools and practices. The journal emphasizes practical knowledge and products that have proven superior through scientific testing. Readers are invited to contribute to several different columns and departments that will appear regularly:

**FROM THE FIELD:** Submit letters describing your thrills and frustrations, problems and successes, and so on. A number of experts are available who may be able to offer helpful solutions and recommendations to persons seeking advice.

**NEWS:** Report news of interest to ADI's membership.

**SUCCESS STORIES:** Send your stories about successful instruction. These can be short, anecdotal pieces.

**PERSPECTIVE:** Submit critiques and perspective essays about a theme of current interest, such as: school restructuring, the ungraded classroom, cooperative learning, site-based management, learning styles, heterogeneous grouping, Regular Ed Initiative and the law, and so on.

**RESEARCH STUDIES:** Present data from your classroom or the results of scientific research. The data should guide other practitioners and decision-

makers in evaluating alternative options for school reform.

**TRANSLATING RESEARCH INTO PRACTICE** Integrate a larger body of empirical research into a defined practice that can be implemented in schools.

**BOOK NOTES:** Review a book of interest to members.

**NEW PRODUCTS:** Descriptions of new products that are available will be featured. Send the description with a sample of the product or a research report validating its effectiveness. Space will be given only to products that have been field-tested and empirically validated.

**LIST OF DEMONSTRATION SITES:** We wish to maintain an on-going list of school sites with exemplary implementations and impressive student outcomes. Submit the name of the exemplary school or classrooms, the names of the programs being implemented, and contact information so that visitations may be arranged.

**TIPS FOR TEACHERS:** Practical, short products that a teacher can copy and use immediately. This might be advice for solving a specific but pervasive problem, a data-keeping form, a single format that would successfully teach something meaningful and impress teachers with the effectiveness and cleverness of Direct Instruction.

---

### MANUSCRIPT PREPARATION

Authors should prepare manuscripts according to the third revised edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, published in 1983. Copies may be ordered from: Order Department

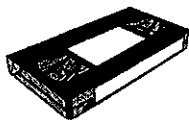
American Psychological Association  
1200 Seventeenth St., N.W.  
Washington, DC 20036

Send an electronic copy with a hardcopy of the manuscript. Indicate the name of the word-processing program you use. Save drawings and figures in separate files. Electronic copy should replace text that is underlined according to the APA format, with italic text.

**Illustrations and Figures:** Please send drawings or figures electronic form, though you may also include them in camera-ready form.

Completed manuscripts should be sent to:  
Bonnie Grossen, Ph.D.  
Editor, *Effective School Practices*  
PO Box 10252  
Eugene, OR 97440

Acknowledgement of receipt of the manuscript will be sent by mail. Articles are initially screened by the editor for content appropriateness. Then sent out for review by peers in the field. These reviewers may recommend acceptance as is, revision without further review, revision with a subsequent review, or rejection. The author is usually notified about the status of the article within a 6- to 8-week period. If the article is published, the author will receive five complimentary copies of the issue in which his or her article appears.



## Videotapes on the Direct Instruction Model

**Aren't You Special**—25 minutes. Motivational talk by Linda Gibson, Principal at a school in Columbus, Ohio. Successful with DI, in spite of minimal support. Keynote from 1997 National DI Conference. Price: \$15.00

**Effective Teaching: It's in the Nature of the Task**—25 minutes. Bob Stevens, expert in cooperative learning from Penn State University, describes how the type of task to be taught impacts the instructional delivery method. Keynote from 1997 National DI Conference. Price: \$15.00

**One More Time**—20 minutes. Closing from 1997 National DI Conference. One of Engelmann's best motivational talks. Good for those already using DI, this is sure to make them know what they are doing is the right choice, for teachers, students and our future. Price: \$15.00

**Direct Instruction in Action**—45 minutes. This tape is a series of student, parent, teacher and administrator testimonials about the use of DI, and many examples of Direct Instruction being used across the country with a wide range of learners. A good tape for anyone who needs to know what DI looks like and why it works. Price: \$45.00

**Keynotes from 22nd National DI Conference**—2 hours. Ed Schaefer speaks on "DI—What it is and Why It Works," an excellent introductory talk on the efficiency of DI and the sensibility of research based programs. Doug Carnine's talk "Get it Straight, Do it Right, and Keep it Straight" is a call for people to do what they already know works, and not to abandon sensible approaches in favor of "innovations" that are recycled fads. Siegfried Engelmann delivers the closing "Words vs. Deeds" in his usual inspirational manner, with a plea to teachers not to get worn down by the weight of a system that at times does not reward excellence as it should. Price: \$25.00

**Keynotes from the 1995 Conference**—2 hours. Titles and speakers include: Anita Archer, Professor Emeritus, San Diego State University, speaking on "The Time Is Now" (An overview of key features of DI); Rob Horner, Professor, University of Oregon, speaking on "Effective Instruction for All Learners;" Zig Engelmann, Professor, University of Oregon, speaking on "Truth or Consequences." Price: \$25.00

**Keynote Presentations from the 1994 20th Anniversary Conference**—2 hours. Titles and speakers include: Jean Osborn, Associate Director for the Center for the Study of Reading, University of Illinois, speaking on "Direct Instruction: Past, Present & Future;" Sara Tarver, professor, University of Wisconsin-Madison, speaking on "I have a Dream That Someday We Will Teach All Children;" Zig Engelmann, Professor, University of Oregon, speaking on "So Who Needs Standards?" Price: \$25.00

**An Evening of Tribute to Siegfried Engelmann**—2.5 hours. On July 26, 1995, 400 of Zig Engelmann's friends, admirers, colleagues, and protégés assembled to pay tribute to the "Father of Direct Instruction." The Tribute tape features Carl Bereiter, Wes Becker, Barbara Bateman, Cookie Bruner, Doug Carnine, and Jean Osborn—the pioneers of Direct Instruction—and many other program authors, paying tribute to Zig. Price: \$25.00

**Challenge of the 90's: Higher-Order thinking**—45 minutes, 1990. Overview and rationale for Direct Instruction strategies. Includes home-video footage and Follow Through. Price: \$10.00 (includes copying costs only).

**Follow Through: A Bridge to the Future**—22 minutes, video, 1992. Direct Instruction Dissemination Center, Wesley Elementary School in Houston, Texas, demonstrates approach. Principal, Thaddeus Lott, and teachers are interviewed and classroom footage is shown. Created by Houston Independent School District in collaborative partnership with Project Follow Through. Price: \$10.00 (includes copying costs only).

**Where It All Started**—45 minutes. Zig teaching kindergarten children for the Engelmann-Bereiter pre-school in the 60's. These minority children demonstrate mathematical understanding far beyond normal developmental expectations. This acceleration came through expert teaching from the man who is now regarded as the "Father of Direct Instruction," Zig Engelmann. Price: \$10.00 (includes copying costs only).

**Direct Instruction**—black and white, 1 hour, 1978. Overview and rationale for Direct Instruction compiled by Haddox for University of Oregon College of Education from footage of Project Follow Through and Eugene Classrooms. Price: \$10.00 (includes copying costs only).

**Corrective Reading: Decoding B1, B2, C**—4 hours, 38 minutes + practice time. Pilot video training tape that includes an overview of the Corrective Series, placement procedures, training and practice on each part of a decoding lesson, information on classroom management / reinforcement and demonstrations of lessons (off-camera responses). Price: \$25.00 per tape (includes copying costs only).

VISA of Mastercard accepted  
Call 1-800-995-2464  
ADI, PO Box 10252, Eugene, OR 97440  
For shipping charges please see page 99

## **New Videos Available!**

Keynotes from the 1998 National Direct Instruction Conference in Eugene are now available from ADI. These videos are professional quality, 2 camera productions suitable for use in meetings and trainings.

☐ **Successful Schools... How We Do It**—35 minutes. Eric Mahmoud, Co-founder and CEO of Seed Academy/Harvest Preparatory School in Minneapolis, Minnesota presented the lead keynote for the 1998 National Direct Instruction Conference. His talk was rated as one of the best features of the conference. Eric focused on the challenges of educating our inner-city youth and the high expectations we must communicate to our children and teachers if we are to succeed in raising student performance in our schools. Also included on this video is a welcome by Siegfried Engelmann, Senior Author and Developer of Direct Instruction Programs. Price: \$19.95

☐ **Fads, Fashions & Follies—Linking Research to Practice**—25 Minutes. Dr. Kevin Feldman, Director of Reading and Early Intervention for the Sonoma County Office of Education in Santa Rosa California presents on the need to apply research findings to educational practices. He supplies a definition of what research is and is not, with examples of each. His style is very entertaining and holds interest quite well. Price: \$19.95

☐ **Moving from Better to the Best**—20 minutes. Closing keynote from the National DI Conference. Classic Zig Engelmann doing one of the many things he does well... motivating teaching professionals to go out into the field and work with kids in a sensible and sensitive manner, paying attention to the details of instruction, making sure that excellence instead of "pretty good" is the standard we strive for and other topics that have been the constant theme of his work over the years. Price \$19.95

☐ **Special Pricing.** Each video is \$19.95. Purchase all three keynotes from the 1998 National Direct Instruction Conference for \$45.00 (includes shipping)

To order, please indicate number of tapes or sets of tapes and return this form to ADI. Make checks or purchase orders to Association for Direct Instruction.

Please charge my ☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard in the amount of \$\_\_\_\_\_

Card Number & Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Send to ADI, PO Box 10252, Eugene, OR 97440

You may also phone in your order with VISA or Mastercard. Phone 1.800.995.2464

# Order Back Issues/Monographs on Important Themes

Past issues of *Effective School Practices* are available for purchase. Start building your collection today. Pricing is as follows:

Number of copies	Price each	Use this chart to figure your shipping and handling charges.	
1	\$5.00	If your order is:	Postage & Handling is:
2-5	\$4.00	\$0.00 to \$5.00 .....	\$3.00
6-10	\$3.50	\$5.01 to \$10.00 .....	\$3.50
11-20	\$3.00	\$10.01 to \$15.00 .....	\$4.00
21+	\$2.00	\$15.01 to \$20.99 .....	\$4.50
Write the issue number(s) and quantity you want and send your order with payment to: ADI • PO Box 10252 • Eugene, OR 97440 You may order by phone using VISA or Mastercard. Phone 1.800.995.2464		\$21.00 to \$40.99 .....	\$6.00
		\$41.00 to \$60.99 .....	\$7.50
		\$61.00 to \$80.99 .....	\$9.00
		\$81.00 or more .....	10% of Subtotal

## Preschool

*Effective School Practices*, Winter, 1999, Volume 17, No.3

ABSTRACT: For this issue we have selected contributions that provide research data and guidance toward answering four important questions regarding preschool:

1. Should preschool really be "school" or should it only be a time for socialization and play?
2. What can we do at the preschool age to ensure that our children grow up to be well-adjusted adults?
3. When should a child ideally start an academic preschool?
4. If preschool is really a "school," with some academic goals as well as social goals, what should the curriculum look like, especially in the area of reading?

## Discipline and School Safety—Guest Editors: Shanna Hagan and Mack D. Burke

*Effective School Practices*, Fall, 1998, Volume 17, No.2

ABSTRACT: Violence in schools is increasing nationwide, both in intensity and prevalence. Educators must often balance the maintenance of a safe and orderly school with the needs of students entering with well-established patterns of antisocial behavior. Many organizations have put forth positions calling for "zero tolerance"; advocating that disruptive students either be expelled or removed to alternative settings. Lacking from these emotionally charged discussions are two critical questions: (1) What does research have to say about intervening with children and youth that display antisocial behaviors?; and (2) What are the most effective approaches of intervention that are feasible for schools to implement? This is the first of two special issues intended to address these important questions, produced by guest editors Shanna Hagan and Mack D. Burke of the University of Oregon.

## Roadmaps for Success

*Effective School Practices*, Winter, 1998, Volume 17, No.1

ABSTRACT: Roadmaps for Success was the theme of the 1997 Eugene DI Conference and this issue contains implementation information on programs in Illinois, Utah and Texas. Research includes the American Federation of Teachers' "Promising Programs for Raising Student Achievement: A Resource Guide for Redesigning Low-Performing Schools" and an abstract from *What Works in Education*, published by the Cambridge Center for Behavioral Studies. Also, winners of the Excellence in Education awards, presented at the conference, are profiled.

## Coaching and Supervision—Guest Editor: Nancy Marchand-Martella

*Effective School Practices*, Fall, 1997, Volume 16, No.4

ABSTRACT: The research presented in this issue deals with the problems involved in getting teachers to implement DI with fidelity. The studies come from a variety of perspectives representing the needs of consultants working directly in schools and of college instructors working with or without the luxury of a DI practicum. In spite of the different contexts from which the ideas for solutions come, the findings have relevance for all these service providers. This issue on classroom supervision was put together by our guest editor, Nancy Marchand-Martella at Eastern Washington University. Nancy has published perhaps more research studies on the topic of supervision than anyone else in the country who trains in Direct Instruction.

## **Back Issues—Continued**

### **Serving Non-English Speaking Children**

*Effective School Practices*, Summer, 1997, Volume 16, No.3

**ABSTRACT:** In California, more than one-fifth of public school children participate in bilingual education. Each year only 5% of the students not previously proficient in English are found to have gained English proficiency. Critics of bilingual education say it produces students illiterate in two languages. This issue presents two seminal research studies on the effects of Direct Instruction on English language learners, both Asian and Hispanic. Direct Instruction for English language learners, characterized as "structured immersion," offer an alternative to the more common forms of bilingual education, where the school programs are bilingual to enable the children to remain monolingual for a longer period of time.

### **Tools for Middle School Success**

*Effective School Practices*, Winter-Spring, 1997, Volume 16, Nos. 1 and 2.

**ABSTRACT:** Over the past decade, much of the research conducted under Doug Carnine's leadership at the University of Oregon has been investigating effective instructional interventions for middle school students. Zig Engelmann and associates have also been applying Direct Instruction theory to higher level cognitive tasks of more sophisticated learners. The combined results of these efforts have been rewarding in terms of higher achievement levels for at-risk populations. The instructional tools that resulted from this work and some of the research studies that evaluate these interventions for higher level thinking are featured in this double issue.

### **Developing Professionalism**

*Effective School Practices*, Fall, 1996, Volume 15, No.4

**ABSTRACT:** This issue contains Doug Carnine's keynote address to the 1996 Eugene DI Conference: "How Business Can Help Education Learn About Accountability." Also, implementation news from Maryland, Alabama, California and Delaware are included. In a case study, initial language instruction using a cumulative programming strategy is evaluated. Research articles measure the effects of videodisc instruction and question whether method of teaching beginning reading should be matched to a student's learning style.

### **Reading Recovery/Preventing Reading Failure**

*Effective School Practices*, Summer, 1996, Volume 15, No.3

**ABSTRACT:** Reading Recovery advocates claim that the program brings the lowest performing children up to the average level of their local class by the end of first grade within 60 lessons, or 12 weeks. However, independent evaluations have found that Reading Recovery is far less effective and more costly than has been claimed, and that learning gains are not maintained. Those independent evaluations are reprinted in this issue. In contrast to the unscientific methods of Reading Recovery, the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) for thirty years has conducted research into reading difficulties following the most rigorous scientific procedures. In this issue, the Center for the Future of Teaching and Learning identifies best practices based on NICHD research.

### **Regular Education Issues**

*Effective School Practices*, Spring, 1996, Volume 15, No. 2

**ABSTRACT:** To achieve equity in education, the performance of traditionally low-performing groups of children must be improved. This issue includes a synthesis of the research in ability grouping and mixed-age grouping and also describes school models where low achievers reach remarkably high performance levels. Also featured is an article that compares traditional math textbooks with *Connecting Math Concepts* and reports the results of a field study that was conducted by a school district prior to its adoption of a new mathematics basal. It's an excellent example of the kind of small research project that districts should undertake before spending thousands of dollars on new textbooks. A student teacher also reports on the success she had in her inner city classroom using DI to teach basic mathematical skills.

### **What Was That Project Follow Through?**

*Effective School Practices*, Winter, 1996, Volume 15, No. 1

**ABSTRACT:** Find out about the largest, most expensive educational experiment in history. What were the results? Why weren't they publicized? In the history of education, no educational model has ever been documented to achieve such positive results with such consistency across so many variable sites as Direct Instruction.

### **Planning for a Direct Instruction Implementation**

*Effective School Practices*, Summer, 1995, Volume 14, No. 3

**ABSTRACT:** A workbook and guidelines provide a framework for planning a Direct Instruction implementation.

## **Back Issues—Continued**

The planning stages include: 1. Feasibility planning (Does the school have the support and resources to begin a DI implementation?), 2. Setting specific school policies (What policy changes regarding grouping and scheduling, report cards and discipline, inclusion and evaluation, substitutes and so on, need to be made?), 3. Deciding on the scope of the first year's implementation (Given the support and limitations, what level of implementation should the school schedule for the first year?), 4. Budget planning (What will the DI implementation cost?). A full set of placement tests for *Reading Mastery*, *Reasoning and Writing*, *Spelling Mastery*, and *Connecting Math Concepts* are included. The planning guide is particularly appropriate for the school administrator or leader.

### **Handbook for Grassroots Reform**

*Effective School Practices*, Winter 1995, Volume 14, No. 1

**ABSTRACT:** An article by Russell Worrall and Doug Carnine describes the problem to solve: the irrationality of top-down educational decision-making. Individual school communities that wish to use a more rational process are provided with reference materials and guides for establishing bottom-up reform, particularly in the selection of the teaching practices and tools (textbooks, technology, media, software, and so on). A Handbook for Site Councils to use to improve schools guides local site councils in obtaining reliable information about what works, that is, site councils should select validated practices and tools or cautiously monitor the implementation of unvalidated practices. Reliable information is usually available in the form of research studies. Because research is often misused and abused, a guide for using research to identify superior teaching practices and tools is also provided.

### **Twenty Years of Effective Teaching**

*Effective School Practices*, Fall 1994, Volume 13, No. 4

**ABSTRACT:** Two keynote addresses by Sara Tarver and Jean Osborn at the summer conference provide an overview of the history of Direct Instruction. Headline news articles featuring Direct Instruction and/or disappointing results from trendy approaches are reprinted. An exchange of letters between a Montana parent and the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics highlights issues regarding school adoption of unproven, faddish methods, textbooks, and philosophies. The NCTM is unable to provide evidence that the teaching methods they promote improve learning. NCTM claims there are no measures that assess the kinds of outcomes they wish to achieve. They expect to have a guide for assessment published in 1995, 4 years after the guide for teaching practice was published. The Montana parent argues that the assessment should be used to evaluate the practices before they are promoted nationwide.

### **OBE and World Class Standards**

*Effective School Practices*, Summer 1994, Volume 13, No. 3

**ABSTRACT:** This issue is a critique of outcome-based education. Criticisms from educational researchers and from the American Federation of Teachers are featured. Positive suggestions for education reform legislation are offered, as well as some guidelines for evaluating standards. The standards of most states are criticized for their lack of rigor, for their non-academic focus, and for their evaluation systems that do not provide information regarding the effectiveness of the school programs, but rather only evaluate individual students.

### **Achieving Higher Standards in Mathematics**

*Effective School Practices*, Spring 1994, Volume 13, No. 2

**ABSTRACT:** The standards from the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics prescribe teaching practice more than they set standards for student performance. Several research articles provide evidence that the NCTM teaching practices are probably not the best practices for achieving the student performance standards implied in the standards.

### **Beginning Reading Instruction**

*Effective School Practices*, Winter 1994, Volume 13, No. 1

**ABSTRACT:** Research still shows that systematic phonics instruction with a code-based reader are important components of effective initial reading instruction and are not incompatible with most whole language activities. Read Keith Stanovich's analysis of reading instruction issues in *Romance and reality* and Patrick Groff's review of *Reading Recovery* research. Read how a highly successful school teaches reading to Spanish-speaking children. Edward Fry also provides a set of tools for solving common reading problems.

### **Discriminatory Educational Practices**

*Effective School Practices*, Spring, 1993, Volume 12, No. 2

**ABSTRACT:** Research has documented discriminatory effects for two popular school reforms: whole language and "developmentally appropriate practice" as it has been defined by the National Association for the Education







Effective School Practices  
Association for Direct Instruction  
P.O. Box 10252  
Eugene, OR 97440

Non-Profit Organization  
U.S. Postage PAID  
Permit No. 122  
Eugene, OR

## How soon will your subscription expire?

The number in the upper right hand corner of your address label indicates the number of the last issue you have paid to receive. Compare that number with the number of this issue: Vol. 17, No. 4. Each volume has 4 numbers. If your subscription ends soon, please renew. Don't miss an issue. Renew early.

If you are moving, please send us your new address. The post office will not forward *Effective School Practices*.