

TOOLS FOR PROMOTING EDUCATIONAL SUCCESS AND REDUCING DELINQUENCY

STEP 2.

Universal Interventions

- **Introduction**
- **Active Supervision** *(a best practice)*
- **Developing a Link Between School and Community** *(a promising practice)*
- **Developing a Link Between School and Home** *(a promising practice)*
- **Direct Instruction of Academic Skills** *(a best practice)*
- **Error Correction** *(a best practice)*
- **Explicit Social Skills Instruction** *(a best practice)*
- **Peer Tutoring** *(a best practice)*
- **Praise for Desired Behavior** *(a best practice)*

TOOLS FOR PROMOTING EDUCATIONAL SUCCESS AND REDUCING DELINQUENCY

~~~~~

## **Step 2. Universal Interventions**

### **INTRODUCTION\***

Steps 2, 3, and 4 are based on the framework of prevention and early intervention mentioned in the Preface to *Tools for Success*. This framework consists of three levels, or tiers: primary (universal), secondary (targeted), and tertiary (intensive) prevention. Step 2 consists of primary prevention strategies designed to prevent initial occurrences of antisocial or problem behavior through practices that are **universal**, meaning that they are applied to all students. In schools, universal interventions consist of practices that are used by teachers and other school staff to support desired behavior for all students.

With regard to preventing the involvement of students with the juvenile justice system, strategies are employed to prevent initial instances of academic or social failure in school, much like vaccinations are given to prevent initial occurrences of diseases. Much of the work that educators do routinely is primary prevention. Good academic instruction prevents academic failure; establishing, teaching, monitoring, and reinforcing social expectations prevents the development of problem behavior; and interventions that link home and community with school facilitate the use of acquired skills in other environments. In other words, universal interventions are employed to prevent students from becoming at risk of failing to meet academic or behavioral expectations and requiring more targeted and intensive interventions.

The principle underlying the tools for Step 2: Universal Interventions is proactively **teaching and supporting desired academic and social behavior for all students**. The tools are written for teachers and other front-line staff and can also be used by school and district administrators to frame school-wide initiatives. Witt, VanDerHayden, and Gilbertson (2004) identified three prerequisites to effective classroom behavior management:

1. The teacher must be competent to teach the academic subjects to which she is assigned; the curriculum must be appropriate for the students; and instruction must include opportunities for students to learn, practice, and receive feedback.
2. Students must know what is expected of them behaviorally.
3. *If* the academic program is solid and *if* positive behavioral expectations have been taught, *then* strategies for responding to problem behavior can be successful.

At the level of school-wide prevention, these prerequisites ensure that:

1. All students know the school-wide behavioral expectations.

---

\* A *Reference List* for each of the nine Steps, including this Step, can be found in Appendix E.

2. All school staff know the behavioral expectations for students.
3. All staff respond consistently and appropriately to instances of expected and undesired student behavior.

A number of the practices described in this step are incorporated into classroom- and school-wide programs, such as Project Achieve (Knoff & Batsche, 1995), Unified Discipline (Marr, Audette, White, Ellis, & Algozzine, 2002), and School-Wide Positive Behavior Support (Horner, Sugai Todd, & Lewis-Palmer, 2005). This document describes the specific practices in these programs instead of the entire programs because: (a) research has not yet demonstrated that the complete program packages are effective across a wide range of classrooms, schools, and students, whereas the effectiveness of specific practices has been documented in numerous research studies; and (b) these practices can be implemented in schools and classrooms without additional resources or expenditures.

The practices included in this step were identified through a review of the research on primary prevention (especially in educational settings). Specifically, empirical literature was reviewed to identify practices that have demonstrated effectiveness across any and all groups of students with respect to improving social behavior, academic behavior, or both. Practices were selected that also have demonstrated positive results with students identified as socially maladjusted, behaviorally disordered, emotionally disturbed, or involved with the juvenile justice system. Further, the tools selected can be implemented in general education settings with existing resources. These include practices that have been successfully used in classroom and non-classroom settings, as well as those that build linkages between schools and homes and schools and the community.

# ***TOOLS FOR PROMOTING EDUCATIONAL SUCCESS AND REDUCING DELINQUENCY***

~~~~~

Step 2. Universal Interventions

Active Supervision (a best practice)

BRIEF OVERVIEW

Active supervision is a practice used by teachers to achieve orderly, productive, and positive classroom environments. It is a fundamental component of programs (e.g., , Project ACHIEVE, School-Wide Positive Behavior Support, and Unified Discipline) designed to improve classroom or school disciplinary climate and to enhance school performance. Active supervision consists of three adult behaviors: moving around; looking around; and interacting frequently with students. Active supervision is a best practice that is effective in both classroom and non-classroom (e.g., playground, cafeteria) settings.

- **Moving around**

Circulate frequently so students are aware of the physical presence of an adult. Adults visit identified problem areas often and avoid remaining in one place. Movements should be obvious and unpredictable.

- **Looking around**

Scan the environment regularly, especially those areas that are farther away. When looking around, check for both appropriate and inappropriate behavior. Make eye contact. Have an overt body position.

- **Interacting frequently with students**

- **Types of interactions**

- greeting students;
- instructional engagement (in the classroom);
- having conversations with students about topics of interest;
- providing pre-corrections: pre-teaching of rules and routines, especially for problem situations (e.g., passing in hallways); and prompts to encourage appropriate behavior;
- providing positive reinforcement for displays of appropriate behavior;
- providing positive corrections for behavior errors; and
- teaching appropriate behaviors.

- **Guidelines for interactions**

- Interact with as many students as possible.
- If in a large setting (e.g., cafeteria), interact with a wide variety of students.
- Avoid lengthy conversations with other adults.
- The majority of interactions should be positive or neutral, rather than corrective (a 4:1 ratio is suggested).
- Any corrections should be handled quickly and privately.
- Interactions should be age and publicly appropriate.

IMPLEMENTATION ESSENTIALS

The essential ingredients for effective supervision are teacher movement and surveillance. Increasing the amount of time that a teacher spends away from her desk during independent activities will increase student academic engagement and greater proximity to students will increase the power of both the teacher's praise and behavioral corrections. Likewise, visually monitoring student behavior keeps the teacher in touch with what is going on. One often hears students ask of teachers who are good observers, "Does she have eyes in the back of her head?"

When among students, teachers should remember to catch them being good—commenting on and praising the good behavior they see (e.g., being on task, showing good effort, following a rule). Active supervision works in other settings as well, such as hallways and the cafeteria. It also provides a good opportunity to "check in" with students or to extend a personal greeting.

PROGRAM EVALUATION AND AVAILABLE EVIDENCE

This practice has an established evidence base in the areas of classroom management and has been incorporated with other classroom management practices such as: precorrection; use of feedback and praise; and classroom-wide positive behavior support. Scholarly reviews of research on classroom behavior management support active supervision as a best practice (Kerr & Nelson, 2006; Simonsen, Fairbanks, Briesch, Sugai, & Myers, in review; Walker, Ramsey, & Gresham, 2004). (A complete list of research citations are in Appendix E). Specific findings include the following.

Active supervision is associated with increases in *appropriate* behavior, including (1) higher levels of on-task behavior; (2) higher levels of participation in physical education classes; and (3) an increase in pro-social interactions during lunch and recess. It is also associated with decreases in inappropriate behavior, including (1) "minor behavioral instances" in the classroom; (2) problem behaviors on the playground, including hands on others, threats, and name-calling; (3) problem behaviors during transitions, especially hitting, yelling, and running; and (4) aggression during lunch and recess.

Pairing active supervision with precorrections has a pronounced effect on decreasing inappropriate social behaviors.

Adult presence alone is associated with a reduction in aggression at a day care center and increased communicatory behaviors in children with autism.

It is the activeness of supervision, rather than the number of supervisors, that produces a decrease in problem behavior.

RESOURCES

- Behavior Home Page. <http://www.state.ky.us/agencies/behave/bi/universal.html>
- Bus Discipline: A Positive Approach. <http://www.safeandcivilschools.com/books.php>
- Cafeteria Discipline: Positive Techniques for Lunchroom Supervision. <http://www.safeandcivilschools.com/books.php>
- Foundations: Establishing Positive Discipline Policies-Module II: Behaviors in the Common Areas. <http://www.safeandcivilschools.com/books.php>
- Intervention Central: Creating Safe Playgrounds: A Whole-School Approach. <http://www.interventioncentral.org/htmdocs/interventions/behavior/playground.shtml>
- Least Restrictive Behavior Interventions (LRBI): Utah State Office of Education. <http://www.usu.edu/teachall/text/behavior/LRBI.htm>
- National Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports. <http://www.pbis.org>
- Project ACHIEVE website. <http://www.projectachieve.info/>
- On the Playground. <http://www.safeandcivilschools.com/books.php>
- SAFE Playground Supervision. <http://www.playgroundsafety.org/supervision/video.htm>
- START on Time! Safe Transitions and Reduced Tardies. <http://www.safeandcivilschools.com/books.php>
- Unified Discipline. <http://ericec.org/osep/newsbriefs/news29.html>

BACKGROUND READING

- Alberto, P. A., & Troutman, A. C. (2003). *Applied behavior analysis for teachers* (6th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill Prentice Hall.
- Sugai, G. (2004). *Active supervision*. Retrieved June 25, 2006, from http://interact.uoregon.edu/pdf/adml/jal/active_supervision.ppt

TOOLS FOR PROMOTING EDUCATIONAL SUCCESS AND REDUCING DELINQUENCY

~~~~~

## **Step 2. Universal Interventions**

### **Developing a Link between School and Community (a promising practice)**

#### **BRIEF OVERVIEW**

Many programs that link schools and the surrounding community connect schools with businesses and other community employers, such as the familiar “adopt-a-school” program in which companies donate staff time and other resources to specific schools. Other public-private partnerships have been established between schools and non-governmental agencies that provide after-school access to recreation, childcare, homework help, and tutoring. Public agencies have partnered with schools to provide programs on preventive health care, teaching parenting skills, and school-wide crisis prevention. Community resource mapping has been shown to improve family access to appropriate services, and memoranda of understanding have improved efficiency and coordination of children’s services, reducing service duplication and better identification of service gaps. Many of these programs have not been subject to scientific research but are associated with improved attendance, health measures, and school staff satisfaction.

As the forgoing examples suggest, links between schools and community resources may be achieved in a variety of ways, and each has demonstrated initial effectiveness in impacting student outcomes. Those that have been subject to research usually are designed to serve the needs of children identified as “at-risk.” These include links to proven mentoring programs, such as Big Brother Big Sister, and promising after-school and service learning activities, such as those promoted by the National Commission on Service Learning (see Resources section below). These initiatives are included here as universal tools because in some schools, particularly those in large urban areas, the majority of the student population could be considered at risk. Additional research is needed before these “linking” activities are considered a best practice at either the universal or targeted level.

#### **Service learning programs**

Involvement in community service activities might serve as a protective factor for antisocial behavior. Community service activities include general activities that promote community engagement (e.g., volunteering in nursing home, serving homeless, etc.) or targeted activities that promote specific learning outcomes (e.g., shadowing doctors to promote safe sexual behavior).

According to the National Commission on Service Learning, service learning is “a teaching and learning approach that integrates community service with academic study to enrich learning, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities” (p. 3).

## **Mentoring programs**

Mentoring programs **link students with adults from the community**. Mentoring can take place in a variety of settings (e.g., school, community, or recreation centers) and include either structured or less structured activities (e.g., planned academic support, social interaction, or recreation). Mentoring can be implemented as a universal intervention by inviting community members to partner with school classes or other school groups; however, this application of mentoring does not have an established evidence base.

Mentoring can also be considered a more targeted intervention for individual students who are at risk. One example of a more intensive mentoring program, which has demonstrated initial effectiveness, is **Big Brother Big Sister**. Big Brother Big Sister pairs students with community members who share similar characteristics and interests. Mentoring consists of two types of activities: "site-based mentoring," which includes weekly visits at the child's school, and "community-based mentoring," which involves the "Big" and "Little" engaging in preferred activities together in the community (e.g., sports, recreation).

## **After-school and community-based programs**

After-school and community-based programs provide students with opportunities for positive contact with adults and peers and other supports targeted by the program (e.g., academic support, school attendance, recreation, etc.). These programs can be made available to all students, as a universal intervention. However, data suggest that students who might be most at-risk are the most likely to drop out of after-school programs.

## **IMPLEMENTATION ESSENTIALS**

Community linkages are particularly important for students who are in middle and high school, and for students who are at-risk due to their academic or behavioral performance. School district support is instrumental in developing school linkages with community agencies, programs, and employers. Even without district involvement, a school can establish contact with community resources. With administrative approval, teachers can invite local public servants (law enforcement officers, firefighters, etc.) agency workers, and employers to visit a classroom to meet with students, talk about what they do, explain the services they offer, and answer questions. Some states have active Youth Development Programs sponsored by such organizations as 4-H. Check for Youth Development Programs on the Internet or with other agencies. Once linkages have been established, contact information can be kept on hand as a resource for teachers, students, and their families.

## **PROGRAM EVALUATION AND AVAILABLE EVIDENCE**

Research programs and practices that link schools to the community have focused on at-risk student populations, and the research base is insufficient to declare these a best practice. However, specific programs such as Big Brother Big Sister have been established as effective with at-risk youth (Grossman & Tierney, 1998; Westhues, Clarke, Watton, & St. Claire-Smith, 2001). Other programs that link schools and communities, including service learning and after-school programs, have demonstrated success in evaluation studies (Walker, Horner, Sugai, Bullis, Sprague, Bricker, & Kaufman, 1996). A complete list of research citations can be found in Appendix E.

**Service learning programs** have been associated with:

- **increases in *appropriate behavior***, including concern for others and "social

- responsibility;" and
- **decreases in *inappropriate* behavior** including reported sexual activity.

**Mentoring programs** (e.g., Big Brothers, Big Sisters) that link students with adults from the community have been associated with:

- **increases in *appropriate* behavior** including:
  - self-esteem;
  - self-reported self-confidence, self-control, cooperation, and attachment;
  - self-reported sense of school membership;
  - self-reported family interactions and school confidence; and
  - general appropriate behavior.
- **decreases in *inappropriate* behavior** including:
  - self-reported problem behavior and substance abuse and
  - infractions on school property and suspensions (in an at-risk population).

**After-school and community-based programs** have been associated with:

- **increases in *appropriate* behavior** including social competence.
- **decreases in *inappropriate* behavior** including:
  - substance abuse;
  - tobacco use and attitudes;
  - truancy (for youth with a history of truancy; and
  - general behavior problems.

## RESOURCES

- Big Brother Big Sister Organization. <http://www.bbbs.org>
- Effective Substance Abuse and Mental Health Programs. <http://modelprograms.samhsa.gov>
- The Forum for Youth Investment. <http://forumfyi.org/>
- Intervention Central: Locations: Transforming Schools from Bully-Havens to Safe Havens. <http://www.interventioncentral.org/htmldocs/interventions/bully/location.shtml>

## BACKGROUND READING

- Meshack, A. F., Hu, S., Pallonen, U. E., McAllister, A. L., Gotleib, N., & Huang, P. (2004). Texas tobacco prevention pilot initiative: Processes and effects. *Health Education Research, 19*, 657-668.
- National Commission on Service Learning. (n.d.). *Learning in deed: The power of service learning for American schools*. <http://nslp.convio.net/site/DocServer/learningindeed.pdf?docID=1201>
- VanderWaal, C. J., Powell, L. M., Terry-McElrath, Y. M., Bao, Y., & Flay, B. R. (2005). Community and school drug prevention strategy prevalence: Differential effects by setting and substance. *Journal of Primary Prevention, 26*, 299-320.

# ***TOOLS FOR PROMOTING EDUCATIONAL SUCCESS AND REDUCING DELINQUENCY***

~~~~~

Step 2. Universal Interventions

Developing a Link Between School and Home (a promising practice)

BRIEF OVERVIEW

A variety of strategies can be employed to create linkages between the school and students' homes. Because parental involvement has long been associated with student success, schools should take a proactive approach to developing relationships with families, including providing families with opportunities to be involved and relevant skills and strategies to enhance their child's chances for success in school. However, additional research is needed before these "linking" activities are considered a best practice. Several programs for creating home-school linkages are available (e.g., Linking the Interests of Families and Teachers, which is described in Step 6; Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters; the Parent-Child Home Program), as well as national coalitions and web sites (see Resources section below).

Every school should have systems in place to foster relationships with families.

- **Provide families with more opportunities to be involved.**
 - Ensure families are aware of ways they can become involved in their child's education. These opportunities can include volunteering, tutoring, chaperoning field trips, or visiting the classroom.
 - Teachers can take the initiative by arranging convenient times to meet parents face-to-face, sending learning materials home, and keeping in touch about students' accomplishments and areas of concern.
 - Collect data, such as:
 - the percentage of families attending school functions (e. g. Open House, Parent-Teacher night, sports events, plays, etc.);
 - the percentage of families volunteering or serving the school in other capacities;
 - how often families visit the school, as well as the nature of the visit (e.g., are families visiting mostly when there's a problem); and
 - the ratio of positive contacts to negative contacts that teachers and administrators make to families.
- When changes are made, collect data again to judge effectiveness and adjust accordingly.
- Communicate regularly with families via newsletters, handouts, email, and other media; and ensure that all materials are accessible to all families (e.g., language, reading level).
- Offer lending libraries for useful materials, such as parenting guides, videos, and information on post-secondary education for older students and their families.
- Institute discussion groups for parents and families, both general and focused on specific issues (e.g., special education, bilingual).
- Use the home-school coordinator (if available) to visit families that cannot come to the school, and establish regular contact with families, providing information and support.

- **Provide families with specific training.**
 - Hold workshops that focus on how to help students with homework.
 - Teach families how to access school and community resources, including homework help, after-school programming, and health services. Provide handouts and visual reminders, and review frequently.
 - Give parents and families guidelines for supporting school achievement, including using a home-based reward program to reward appropriate school behavior.
 - Teach parents about the school rules and recognition system.
 - Use the home-school coordinator (if available) to deliver materials and support to families, and assist with training in the home.
 - Use clinical staff to develop parent training programs or disseminate information from commercial programs (e.g., “The Incredible Years”, see Step 1).
- **Provide early intervention when a problem is identified.**
 - Ensure families have access to community resources, including preschool programs.
 - Review school and district policy on providing intervention in the home and ensure all faculty are aware of the guidelines.
 - Provide follow-up services to any interventions offered by the school.
 - Identify supports within the school that are available to families, such as a crisis team, home-school coordinator, or school resource officer, and define the roles these staff will take when providing interventions in the home.

IMPLEMENTATION ESSENTIALS

Policy and resources linking school and home.

Establishing positive and effective relationships with families obviously is easier if a school has a policy and resources that support such a linkage. Many school districts include active family involvement in their vision statement and policies. Some districts employ home-school coordinators or school social workers, while others have family resource centers. However, even if a school does not have these available, it is possible to build linkages to families.

The key is to open and maintain lines of communication. One way to do this is to send regular reports of student progress and class and school news home with students. These do not have to be elaborate or lengthy and can consist of the results of curriculum-based assessments or checklists that students can even complete themselves (the teacher will need to teach them to do this honestly and monitor their evaluations regularly). The National Association of Elementary School Principals website (www.naesp.org) has examples of parent communication tools (Use “parent involvement” to search the website.)

Since parents of students who struggle academically and socially have learned to expect that all communications from school are negative, a good strategy to break this pattern is for teachers to send home “good behavior notes.” Even if it might take a bit of searching, teachers who find something to praise about each student are likely to see greater parental interest in their children’s educational experiences. The same practice works during phone calls and parent conferences. Even if the focus of the communication is on something negative, the teacher should try to begin each contact with something positive. Good communication also involves listening, of course. So teachers should make it a point to invite parental questions or comments, and give them full attention when they have something to say.

PROGRAM EVALUATION AND AVAILABLE EVIDENCE

Involving parents in their children's performance in school has been found to improve academic skills in a number of research studies (e.g., Clark, 1993; Marcon, 1999; Shaver & Walls, 1998). In addition, specific programs such as First Steps to Success have been validated as effective across schools and over time (Walker, Golly, McLane, & Kimmich, 2005). A complete list of research citations can be found in Appendix E.

Specifically, research has demonstrated a number of positive outcomes.

- **Parental involvement** in their child's school has been associated with **increases in appropriate behavior**, including:
 - earning higher grades;
 - improved school attendance;
 - improved social skills;
 - increased rates of graduation and post-secondary education; and
 - a more positive attitude toward school.
- Schools that have **programs designed to engage families** have been associated with **increases in appropriate behavior**.
- Programs designed to **teach skills to parents** also have been associated with **increases in appropriate behavior**.
 - School-sponsored workshops for parents that focus on ways to help students at home have been linked to higher reading and math scores, regardless of the student's socioeconomic status and gender.
- **Home-based intervention provided by schools** has been associated with:
 - **increases in appropriate behavior**
 - Parent-child therapy has been shown to improve school compliance without direct intervention in schools with effects maintained one year after intervention.
 - **decreases in inappropriate behavior**
 - Early intervention combining home-based parent training and school-based social skills training has been linked to long-term positive results for disruptive kindergarten boys, including fewer special education referrals and fewer delinquent behaviors.

RESOURCES

- Early Head Start National Resource Center. <http://ehsnrc.org/>
- Family Friendly Schools. <http://www.familyfriendlyschools.com/>
- The Family Involvement Network of Educators (FINE), part of the Harvard Family Research project. <http://www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/projects/fine.html>
- Healthy Families America. <http://www.healthyfamiliesamerica.org/home/index.shtml>
- Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY). <http://www.hippyusa.org/>
- National Coalition for Parent Involvement in Education. <http://www.ncpie.org/>
- The National Network of Partnership Schools. <http://www.csos.jhu.edu/p2000/>
- The Parent-Child Home Program. <http://www.parent-child.org/>
- Parents as Teachers. <http://www.parentsasteachers.org/site/pp.asp?c=ekIRLcMZJxE&b=272091>
- Parent and teacher training resources. <http://incredibleyears.com/>

- Parent Training and Information Centers and Community Parent Resource Centers.
<http://www.taalliance.org/centers/index.htm>

BACKGROUND READING

- Dunst, C., Trivette, C., & Deal, A. (1988). *Enabling & empowering families: Principles & guidelines for practice*. Cambridge, MA: Brookline Books.
- Jones, V., & Jones, L. (2007). *Comprehensive classroom management: Creating communities of support and solving problems* (8th ed). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- Walker, J. E., Shea, T. M., & Bauer, A. M. (2007). *Behavior management: A practical approach for educators* (9th ed). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill/Prentice Hall.

TOOLS FOR PROMOTING EDUCATIONAL SUCCESS AND REDUCING DELINQUENCY

~~~~~

## **Step 2. Universal Interventions**

### **Direct Instruction of Academic Skills (a best practice)**

#### **BRIEF OVERVIEW**

**Direct instruction** is a teaching method typified by explicit presentation of subject matter (e.g., use of signals); carefully sequenced (i.e., components and sub-components of skills are seamlessly and progressively presented); supported instruction (e.g., prompts are added and systematically faded out); numerous opportunities for students to respond; frequent and specific feedback to student responses (e.g., error correction or praise); and frequent review of concepts and skills already taught. It is commercially available as packaged programs for teaching reading, math, science, handwriting and social science. However, it is not necessary to use commercially available curricula to implement direct instruction.

In a direct instruction approach, students experience a high degree of success because they learn concepts and skills to mastery as teachers **model** what they want students to do, **lead** students in a trial of the new skill or concept, and **test** students' understanding of the new material. Determining placement, teaching material, and progress monitoring are key components of direct instruction programs.

**Determining Placement.** It is important to first determine what skills students already possess and what skills need to be taught before developing lesson plans. As appropriate, general and program-specific screenings of students should be conducted. The intent of a general screening is to assess whether students have mastered typical grade-level skills (e.g., letter-sound correspondence). The intent of program-specific screening is to determine where instruction should begin within a specific program for a group of students.

When possible, students should be grouped according to their skill level; with the students needing the greatest amount of support in the smallest groups. If grouping according to skill level is not possible, additional opportunities for struggling students to receive more practice and instruction should be arranged (e.g., peer-tutoring, computer assisted instruction, or extended periods of teacher-led instruction).

Assessment to determine placement not only provides a gauge of where to begin instruction, it also provides a baseline level of performance to which future performance can be compared.

**Teaching Material. Scripted lesson plans** are used to explicitly teach students concepts and skills. Lesson plans may be teacher-developed or already embedded in a direct instruction curriculum. Lesson plans should include the following.

- An explanation of the objective of the lesson (**frame** the lesson).
- A definition of the concept or skill to be taught including, as appropriate, both positive and

negative teaching examples.

- A demonstration of the correct application of the skill or concept (**model**).
- A teacher-led demonstration of the correct application of the skill or concept with students (**lead**).
- Opportunities for students to independently demonstrate the correct application of the skill or concept (**test**).
- If students respond to the test accurately, provide **specific praise**.
- If students respond inaccurately to the test, immediately provide an **error correction** and repeat the **model, lead, and test** process.

### **Example of Direct Instruction: Teaching the sound for the letter "m."**

- Tell the class that they will be learning a new sound today (**frame the lesson**).
- Write "m" on the board.
- Say (while pointing to the letter), "This makes the sound 'mmmm'." (**model**).
- Show the class a variety of pictures of the letter "m" (e.g., vary font and color). Point to each picture and say, "This makes the sound 'mmmm'."
- Show them a variety of pictures of other letters, numbers, and objects and say, "This does **not** make the sound 'mmmm'."
- Vary the order in which examples and non-examples are presented.
- Show a picture of the letter /m/ and say, "Let's say it together, "this makes the sound 'mmmm'." (**lead**). Lead students through other examples as needed.
- Ask, "What sound does this make?" (**test**). Test students on other examples as needed.
- If students produce the sound correctly, say, "Great job making the sound for the letter 'm'." (**specific praise**).
- If a student says, "nnnn" instead of "mmmm," repeat the **model, lead, and test** process and say (while pointing to the letter), "This says 'mmmm'. Say it with me, 'mmmm'. On your own, what is this sound? That's right, that sound is 'mmmm'." (**error correction**).
- Provide students with ample opportunities to practice the new skill.

**Progress Monitoring.** Following instruction, the effect of instruction is evaluated by monitoring student progress frequently. Progress is typically monitored using **mastery measurement** or assessing whether students are fluent with skills and concepts that have specifically been taught (e.g., "m" makes the "mmm" sound). It is also important to measure growth on **general outcome** assessments, which determine whether students are making progress on grade-level skills that students are expected to learn (e.g., multiple letter-sound correspondences).

Progress monitoring data should be collected either informally or formally, to also determine the types of student errors being made and the number of students making errors. These data will indicate what skills should be re-taught and what skills or concepts need to be taught next.

## IMPLEMENTATION ESSENTIALS

Like the other practices described in this set of tools, direct instruction is most effective if it is faithfully implemented. A number of curricula have been commercially developed in a direct instruction format. If a school or school district uses any of these, teachers will have access to instruments for determining student placement, teaching materials, and monitoring student progress. If teachers do not have access to these resources, they can consult the websites listed below in the Resources section. After teachers have mastered the model-lead-test format, they will find that they and their students will enjoy the quick pace of instruction as well as the gains in student achievement.

## PROGRAM EVALUATION AND AVAILABLE EVIDENCE

There is a wealth of research evidence that direct instruction is effective when compared to other strategies for improving reading fluency (e.g., Gersten, Keating, & Becker, 1988; Nelson, Johnson, & Marchand-Martella, 1996; White, 1988). This practice also has an established evidence base in the areas of classroom management (Simonsen, Fairbanks, Briesch, Sugai, & Myers, in review), and teaching social skills (Rutherford, Mathur, & Quinn, 1998; a complete list of research citations can be found in Appendix E). Specific findings include the following.

**Direct instruction** is associated with changes in behavior.

- **Increases in *appropriate* behavior** include:
  - on-task behavior (e.g., hand-raising and attending to the teacher);
  - academic achievement;
  - college acceptance rates;
  - long-term success in reading, math, and spelling performance;
  - phonemic awareness and basic early reading skills of students with or at-risk for emotional disturbance;
  - identifying anaphoric relationships;
  - social communication;
  - reading and math performance for students with intractable epilepsy);
  - rates of legible hand writing and word reading;
  - comprehension skills (e.g., identifying the main idea in texts); and
  - social interaction skills in students with serious emotional disturbance.
  
- **Decreases in *inappropriate* behavior** such as:
  - disruptive behavior (e.g., hitting, yelling, and being out of the seat); and
  - grade retention.

When combined with **cooperative learning**, direct instruction has been shown to promote social communication skills in adjudicated female adolescents.

## RESOURCES

- The Association for Direct Instruction. <http://www.adihome.org/phpshop/members.php>
- Big Ideas in Beginning Reading. <http://reading.uoregon.edu/>
- The Florida Center for Reading Research. <http://www.f=ctr.org/>

- Intervention Central: Direction Instruction.  
<http://www.interventioncentral.org/htmdocs/interventions/rdngcompr/dirinstr.shtml>
- National Reading Panel: Teaching Children to Read.  
<http://www.nichd.nih.gov/publications/nrp/smallbook.htm>
- National Institute for Direction Instruction. <http://www.nifdi.org/>
- Special Connections: An Introduction to Direct Instruction.  
<http://www.specialconnections.ku.edu/cgi-bin/cgiwrap/speconn/main.php?cat=instruction&section=di/main>
- Teaching LD: Current Practice Alerts: Alert 2- Direction Instruction.  
[http://www.teachingld.org/ld\\_resources/alerts/2.htm](http://www.teachingld.org/ld_resources/alerts/2.htm)

## **BACKGROUND READING**

- Becker, W.C., & Gersten, R. (1982). A follow-up of Follow Through: The later effects of the Direct Instruction Model on children in fifth and sixth grades. *American Educational Research Journal*, 19(1), 75-92.
- Carnine, D. W., Silbert, J., Kame'enui, E. J., & Tarver, S.G. (2004). *Direct instruction reading* (4<sup>th</sup> Ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill.
- Engelmann, S. & Bruner, E.C. (1974). *DISTAR I, II*. Chicago: Chicago Science Research Associates.

# ***TOOLS FOR PROMOTING EDUCATIONAL SUCCESS AND REDUCING DELINQUENCY***

~~~~~

Step 2. Universal Interventions

Error Correction (a best practice)

BRIEF OVERVIEW

Reducing repetitive errors and ensuring the student knows and can demonstrate the correct response increases the chance that the correct response will occur. **Error correction** is a statement provided by a teacher or other adult following the occurrence of an undesired behavior (i.e., contingent), which indicates that the behavior is incorrect or inappropriate. It is a practice used to correct errors in academic or social behavior, although it is specifically incorporated into such behavior programs as School-Wide Positive Behavior Support, Unified Discipline, and Project ACHIEVE.

In most situations, error corrections should:

- state the undesired behavior that occurred;
- state the specific desired behavior for that particular situation;
- require the student to engage in the desired behavior; and
- be as brief and specific as possible.

From a social behavior perspective, error corrections are also called **explicit reprimands**. Error corrections may be delivered for **academic** or **social behavior errors** and can be enhanced by providing performance feedback for accurate and appropriate responses. These explicit instructional strategies include:

- **Academic Behavior Error Correction.** This can be used when students make academic mistakes, as explained in the Direct Instruction section. When a student makes an academic error, specific and immediate corrections are most effective. For example, if a student says "sss" when presented with the letter "f", a teacher should immediately interject, "fff," that sound is "fff". Say it with me, "fff". Now, on your own, what sound?" In addition to having the student immediately state the correct sound, a teacher should check throughout the lesson (and in later lessons), to determine whether the student continues to state the correct sound. A teacher should follow-up the error with varied opportunities to practice making the correct response and opportunities to discriminate between the correct response and other similar, but incorrect, responses.
- **Social Behavior Error Correction.** Just as academic errors are corrected, errors in social behavior should also be corrected. A teacher should state the behavior that is inappropriate, state the appropriate behavior, and require the student to engage in the appropriate behavior. For example, if a student gets out of seat without asking for permission, a teacher says, "You did not ask for permission before getting out of your seat. Raise your hand and

ask permission before you leave your seat. Come back to your seat and let's try that again." The teacher then requires the student to ask for permission and praises the student for doing so. The teacher should test student knowledge at later times to ensure they know and can demonstrate the appropriate behavior. Teachers should be sure to praise corrected academic and social behavior responses.

- **Performance Feedback.** Another way to provide feedback to students regarding their engagement in target behaviors is performance feedback. Performance feedback typically involves the visual display (e.g., graphs or charts) and/or verbal explanation of rates of specific target behaviors in which students are engaging. Students might earn rewards or acknowledgements for engaging in a targeted level of a specific behavior. For example, a class might earn a free choice period if they are tardy fewer than three times in a month. Performance feedback can be provided not only for inappropriate behavior (e.g., number of office referrals for one group of students for the week) but also for appropriate behavior (e.g., students who have passed mastery tests or positive school social acknowledgements).

IMPLEMENTATION ESSENTIALS

It might seem odd to refer to instances of inappropriate social behavior as "errors." However, if teachers think of such behaviors as a mistake, rather than intentional misbehavior, teachers are less likely to overreact with harsh punishment or lecturing. Just as when correcting academic errors, following behavioral errors with specific feedback and teaching the correct behavior is more likely to result in the student's use of the appropriate behavior in the future.

Error correction is more effective if it occurs in a climate where positive reinforcement of desired behavior predominates. Teachers should strive to deliver at least four praise statements to students for every one error correction. Not only will this focus students' attention on desired behavior, but the contrast in rates of use also will increase the impact of error corrections.

PROGRAM EVALUATION AND AVAILABLE EVIDENCE

Research consistently has shown that systematic correction of student academic and social behavioral errors and performance feedback have a positive effect on behavior (Kerr & Nelson, 2006; Simonsen, Fairbanks, Briesch, Sugai, & Myers, in review; Walker, Ramsey, & Gresham, 2004) A complete list of research citations can be found in Appendix E. Specific research findings include the following:

Error correction of Academic Behavior

- Immediate direct academic error corrections that required students to emit the correct response resulted in higher rates of correct future responses.
- Error correction on all oral reading errors was significantly more effective than correction of meaning-changing errors only or no error correction.
- Error correction following:
 - oral reading errors, improved word recognition and reading comprehension; and
 - spelling errors, improved spelling accuracy.

Error correction (i.e., explicit reprimands) **of Social Behavior**

- Direct and explicit reprimands following undesired behavior and praise for desired behavior, decreased undesired behavior.
- Quiet or “soft” corrections were most effective in reducing inappropriate behavior.
- Discreet corrections in combination with praise were effective in increasing on-task behavior.

Performance feedback systems have:

- increased on-task behavior and accurate reading and spelling performance and
- improved student writing performance, task completion, and on-task behavior.

Performance feedback systems in combination with **group contingencies** and/or **intermittent reinforcement** have:

- increased appropriate social behavior for a classroom of students versus a control classroom;
- increased rates of homework completion;
- reduced student problem behavior; and
- reduced classroom transition times.

RESOURCES

- Behavior Home Page: Classroom Management Tips.
<http://www.state.ky.us/agencies/behave/bj/cmtips.html>
- CHAMPs: A Proactive and Positive Approach to Classroom Management- Correction Procedures, Module 7. <http://www.safeandcivilschools.com/books.php>
- Discipline in the Secondary Classroom, 2nd Edition.
<http://www.safeandcivilschools.com/books.php>
- Intervention Central: Reducing Problem Behaviors Through Good Academic Management: 10 Strategies.
<http://www.interventioncentral.org/htmldocs/interventions/behavior/edtchng.shtml>
- Intervention Central: Teacher Behavioral Strategies: A Menu.
<http://www.interventioncentral.org/htmldocs/interventions/behaviormenu.shtml>
- National Technical Assistance Center for Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports.
<http://www.pbis.org>
- Project ACHIEVE.
<http://www.projectachieve.info/>
- Unified Discipline.
<http://ericec.org/osep/newsbriefs/news29.html>

BACKGROUND READING

- Alberto, P. A., & Troutman, A. C. (2003). *Applied behavior analysis for teachers* (6th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill/Prentice Hall.
- Barbetta, P.M., Heward, W. L., Bradley, D. M., & Miller, A. D. (1994). Effects of immediate and delayed error correction on the acquisition and maintenance of sight words by students with developmental disabilities. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, 27, 177-178.

TOOLS FOR PROMOTING EDUCATIONAL SUCCESS AND REDUCING DELINQUENCY

~~~~~

## **Step 2. Universal Interventions**

### **Explicit Social Skills Instruction (a best practice)**

#### **BRIEF OVERVIEW**

**Explicit Social Skills Instruction** refers to systematically teaching expected and appropriate social behavior to students. Curricula for social skills instruction are available commercially. Many of these have been established as evidence based through multiple research studies (e.g., Second Step, I Can Problem Solve), and focus on generic social skills (e.g., showing respect) or on specific problems (e.g., bullying prevention). A number of school-wide approaches for addressing student discipline (e.g., CHAMPS, School-Wide Positive Behavior Support, Unified Discipline) include social skills instruction.

Explicit social skills instruction includes three key components:

- establishing and posting expectations;
- teaching and reviewing expectations; and
- monitoring and providing feedback.

**Establishing and Posting Expectations or Rules.** This involves identifying a set of expectations that meet the following criteria:

- **positively stated**; tell students what *to* do rather than what *not* to do;
- **small in number** (i.e., 3-5) to increase the likelihood that students (and staff) will recall them;
- **broad** enough to encompass a variety of specific appropriate behaviors. For example, the expectation "Be Respectful" may include the specific behaviors: raise hand before talking, use polite language, and wait turn;
- **mutually exclusive**, that is, there should not be overlap among the behaviors that would be covered by each expectation. For example, an expectation to "Keep Hands and Feet to Self" would overlap significantly with an expectation to "Be Safe"; and
- **consistent** throughout all settings in a school.

The expectations are **operationally defined** in the context of routines; that is, what it "looks like" to follow the expectation within each routine. One way to do this is in a matrix format (see examples on the Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports website, [www.pbis.org](http://www.pbis.org)). As illustrated below, expectations are row headings, routines are column headings, and bullet points within each cross-section are used to operationally define expectations following behavior within each routine. For example, bullet points written in the box labeled "A" could include: "keep hands, feet, and materials to self"; "walk to your desk"; and "put items where they belong."

|                      | Entering Classroom | Seat Work   | Small Group Activity | Leaving Classroom |
|----------------------|--------------------|-------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Be Safe</b>       | ▪<br>▪ A<br>▪      | ▪<br>▪<br>▪ | ▪<br>▪<br>▪          | ▪<br>▪<br>▪       |
| <b>Be Respectful</b> | ▪<br>▪<br>▪        | ▪<br>▪<br>▪ | ▪<br>▪<br>▪          | ▪<br>▪<br>▪       |
| <b>Be Ready</b>      | ▪<br>▪<br>▪        | ▪<br>▪<br>▪ | ▪<br>▪<br>▪          | ▪<br>▪<br>▪       |

After completing the matrix, the identified expectations are posted in all areas of a school, using a variety of methods (e.g., posters, murals). The display should state the expectations and provide the operational definition of the expectations within relevant routines. In addition to public displays, some schools choose to include the expectations in student planners, on the school website, and in other locations accessed by students and staff.

**Teaching and Reviewing Expectations.** Scripted lesson plans are developed to explicitly teach students how to follow each expectation within the context of each routine. Lesson plans should include:

- a brief explanation of the expectation and routine;
- a statement (i.e., operational definition) of what it looks like to follow the expectation within the routine, including both positive and negative teaching examples;
- a demonstration of expectation-following behavior (*model*);
- activities that provide students with guided practice (*lead*); and
- opportunities for students to independently demonstrate expected behavior in the natural context (*test*).

A separate lesson plan should be developed for teaching each expectation in the context of each routine. For example, if the matrix format is used to develop and define expectations, a separate lesson would be created for each box.

Once lesson plans have been developed, **deliver instruction in the natural context.** For example, to teach students how to be respectful in the hallway, teach and provide practice in the hallway.

**Review** previously taught expectations on a daily basis, and **prompt** students to engage in expected behavior before transitioning to each new routine or setting. Similarly, provide **pre-corrections** before student(s) transition into a routine or setting where frequent errors have been made.

**Monitoring and Providing Feedback Related to Expectations.** Following instruction, actively supervise or monitor students' behavior across routines. Active supervision, which is described in detail in another tool for this step, includes scanning the environment, moving around, and interacting with students. In the context of rule instruction, active supervision provides the opportunity to (a) evaluate the effect of instruction and (b) provide students with feedback on the extent to which they are exhibiting expected behavior.

Evaluate the effect of instruction by **collecting data**, either informally or formally, on the types

of errors being made, the number of students making errors, and the environmental features associated with the errors. These data will indicate which expectations (what) should be re-taught to which students (who) in which routines (where).

Provide **feedback** to students in the form of both corrective and praise statements. Corrective statements tell the student what s/he did incorrectly and what s/he should do differently in the future (i.e., the expected behavior). Praise statements tell students what they did well (the expected behavior) and that they should continue to engage in that behavior in the future.

## **IMPLEMENTATION ESSENTIALS**

The essential ingredients in teaching social skills are identifying the skills to teach, developing and scheduling lessons, delivering instruction, and monitoring to assess students' proficiency. Thus, it is essential that teachers identify the expectations (desired skills) that they want to teach. This task also is essential to using praise effectively—teachers must first identify specific positive behaviors to praise. It is important to monitor students to see if they are using the social skills being taught, so active supervision also is a key component of social skills instruction. Effective teaching of desired social behaviors also includes elements of direct instruction, in that a model-lead-test format is an efficient way to deliver instruction. There are a number of published social skills curricula that include lesson plans and teaching materials, but instructors can design their own social skills lesson plans. Remember to schedule some time regularly for social skills instruction. Other students who have demonstrated mastery of particular social skills can be used as peer mentors.

## **PROGRAM EVALUATION AND AVAILABLE EVIDENCE**

Research on social skills instruction has shown this strategy to be consistently effective with a variety of student populations and using a variety of curricula (e.g., Gresham, Sugai, & Horner, 2001; Hansen, Nagle, & Meyer, 1998; Rutherford, Mathur, & Quinn, 1998). It is supported as a best practice in scholarly reviews (e.g., Kerr & Nelson, 2006; Walker, Ramsey, & Gresham, 2004). A complete list of research citations can be found in Appendix E. Specific findings include the following.

Explicit social skills **instruction and review** is associated with:

- **increases in appropriate behavior**; including:
  - teacher-independent conflict resolution and leadership behaviors in both non-classroom and classroom settings;
  - time on task in classroom settings;
  - opportunities to respond in classroom settings (teacher behavior);
  - game-related social skills in gym; and
  - generic appropriate behavior.
- **decreases in inappropriate behavior**, including:
  - off-task behavior in both non-classroom and classroom settings;
  - talk outs in classroom settings;
  - disruptive behavior in both classroom and non-classroom settings;
  - aggressive behavior;
  - inappropriate verbalizations in non-classroom settings; and
  - generic inappropriate behavior.

Combining rule instruction and review with other interventions (e.g., seating changes, contingent feedback, reinforcement, precision requests) is associated with:

- **increases in appropriate behavior**; including:

- on-task behavior and
- positive and corrective comments (teacher behavior).
- **decreases in inappropriate behavior**, including disruptive behavior.

Pairing rule instruction with both feedback and reinforcement is more effective than rule instruction alone or the combination of rule instruction with feedback.

Combining rule review with other interventions (e.g., token economy, precision requests or group contingencies) is also effective with students identified with social and emotional disorders and oppositional defiant disorder.

Although research supports the use of individualized social skills instruction (e.g., locally developed lessons to address needs of a particular school, classroom, or group of students), there also is empirical support for various packaged social skills curricula (e.g., Second Step). Interested readers also may access the CASEL publication, listed under Background Reading below, for a review of additional curricula.

## RESOURCES

- The Behavior Home Page: Social Skill Resources.  
<http://www.state.ky.us/agencies/behave/bi/ss.html>
- CHAMPs: A Proactive and Positive Approach to Classroom Management- Expectations, Module 3. <http://www.safeandcivilschools.com/books.php>
- Collaborative for Academic, Social & Emotional Learning (CASEL).  
<http://www.casel.org>
- Effective Substance Abuse and Mental Health Programs for Every Community.  
<http://modelprograms.samhsa.gov>
- I Can Problem Solve. <http://www.psychologymatters.org/shure.html>
- Intervention Central: Power of Generalization.  
<http://www.interventioncentral.org/htmdocs/interventions/specialneeds/generalization.shtml>
- Intervention Central: Victims: Preventing Students From Becoming 'Bully-Targets'.  
<http://www.interventioncentral.org/htmdocs/interventions/bully/victim.shtml>
- The National Center for Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports.  
<http://www.pbis.org>
- Second Step. <http://www.cfchildren.org/cfc/ssf/ssf/ssindex/>
- Unified Discipline. <http://ericec.org/osep/newsbriefs/news29.html>

## BACKGROUND READING

- The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL). (March 2003). *Safe and sound; An educational leader's guide to evidence-based social and emotional learning (SEL) programs*. Chicago, IL: Author.  
[http://www.casel.org/projects\\_products/safeandsound.php](http://www.casel.org/projects_products/safeandsound.php)
- Darch, C. B., & Kame'enui, E. J. (2004). *Instructional classroom management: A positive approach to behavior management* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill/Prentice Hall.
- Simonsen, B. M., Fairbanks, S. A., Briesch, A., Sugai, G., & Myers, D. M. (unpublished manuscript). *Evidence based practices in classroom management*.

# ***TOOLS FOR PROMOTING EDUCATIONAL SUCCESS AND REDUCING DELINQUENCY***

~~~~~

Step 2. Universal Interventions

Peer Tutoring (a best practice)

BRIEF OVERVIEW

Peer tutoring is an instructional strategy in which students help each other and learn by teaching. Students provide instruction to one another and provide immediate error correction. Teachers function as managers in that they choose materials, assign "tutor" and "tutee" roles, and monitor students' progress. Teachers might also opt to use the principle of reinforcement in conjunction with peer tutoring and providing praise or other reinforcement to successful teams or groups of teams. There are many variations on the peer tutoring model. Two well-researched examples are the Class Wide Peer Tutoring (CWPT) model (Greewood et. al., 1988) and the Peer-Assisted Learning Strategies Model (PALS).

General implementation guidelines.

1. Explain to students why they will be using a peer-tutoring technique, stressing the idea of increased chances to practice and increased on-task behavior.
2. Ensure that students understand that the focus is on cooperation and collaboration, rather than competition.
3. Carefully select the content and instructional materials. The material should be at an appropriate difficulty level.
4. Provide training for students in both tutor and tutee roles. Be *specific* about the routines for feedback for correct responses, error corrections, and score-keeping (see below).
5. Demonstrate (**model**) the appropriate ways to give feedback, both positive and corrective.
6. Allow students to practice with sample scripts.
7. Circulate while students are practicing and provide feedback and reinforcement.
8. Discuss both constructive and non-constructive behavior observed in the pairs and invite students to discuss what did and did not work. Answer questions and find solutions.
9. Have the pairs switch roles and practice again. Continue to circulate, providing feedback and reinforcement.

One effective **score-keeping** model entails dividing the pairs into two groups that will compete for points. Tutors are instructed to provide tutees with immediate error correction, and points are awarded based on tutee performance. Both individual and team scores are publicly posted, and a reward is provided for the team with the highest point total.

Suggestions for **pairing** students:

- *Random* pairing if all students are at similar levels.
- *Split-list* pairing. Listing students by achievement (from highest to lowest), dividing the list

- in two, and pairing the first student from List 1 with the first student from List 2, and so on.
- When pairing students, pay attention to social cues that might make a particular pairing less likely to be successful.
- Change pairs and teams frequently to ensure that students work with a variety of peers, and have increased opportunities to win if using classroom competition in conjunction with peer tutoring.

IMPLEMENTATION ESSENTIALS

Peer tutoring is more successful when lessons are carefully planned and tutoring sessions are supervised. Regardless of the strategy used to pair students, it is important to instruct both tutor and tutee in how to perform their roles. When tutoring sessions are taking place, it is important to circulate among all pairs, pausing often to observe, provide feedback, and most importantly, praise.

PROGRAM EVALUATION AND AVAILABLE EVIDENCE

The evidence base supporting peer tutoring is extensive, and there is broad consensus among researchers and scholars that this is a best practice for academic instruction (Darch & Kame'enui, 2004; Simonsen, Fairbanks, Briesch, Sugai, & Meyers, in review; Ryan, Reid, & Epstein, 2004.) A complete list of research citations can be found in Appendix E. Specific findings include the following:

Classwide Peer Tutoring (CWPT) is associated with:

- **increases in *appropriate* behavior**; including:
 - academic benefits for all peers in an inclusive classroom;
 - an increase in academic engagement;
 - an increase in reading achievement;
 - an increase in reading fluency and comprehension among students with disabilities;
 - an increase in the duration of social interaction for students with autism;
 - an increase in reading performance in students with emotional and behavioral disorders.
- **decreases in *inappropriate* behavior**; including:
 - reduced rates of competing behaviors, including aggression toward others and disrupting the academic task, in students with moderate and severe disabilities;
 - a decrease in off-task behavior and fidgeting in students with ADHD.

When paired with **peer coaching**, CWPT has been shown to affect an increase in positive social behaviors for students with ADHD. When combined with **explicit instruction**, CWPT has shown to enhance content area mastery in students with behavior disorders. When combined with **social skills activities** and **high classroom structure**, peer tutoring has been shown to decrease aggression in students with or at risk for emotional disturbance.

RESOURCES

- Behavior Home Page: Academic.
<http://www.state.ky.us/agencies/behave/academic/academic.html>
- CAST: Peer Mediated Instruction and Intervention.
http://www.cast.org/publications/ncac/ncac_peerpii.html>http://www.cast.org/publications/ncac/ncac_peerpii.html

- Classwide Peer Tutoring at Work (Fulk & King, 2001).
http://journals.sped.org/EC/Archive_Articles/VOL.34NO.2NOVDEC2001_TEC_Article7.pdf
- Fuchs, D., Mathes, P. G., & Fuchs, L. S. (1995). *Peabody peer assisted learning strategies (PALS): Reading methods*. Nashville, TN: Peabody College, Vanderbilt University.
- Intervention Central: Kids as Reading Helpers: A Peer Tutor Training Manual.
<http://www.interventioncentral.org/htmdocs/interventions/rdngfluency/prtutor.shtml>
- Intervention Central: Peer Helper.
<http://www.interventioncentral.org/htmdocs/interventions/motivation.shtml>
- An Introduction to Classwide Peer Tutoring. <http://www.specialconnections.ku.edu/cgi-bin/cgiwrap/speconn/main.php?cat=instruction§ion=cwpt/main>
- Peer Assisted Learning Strategies. <http://kc.vanderbilt.edu/pals/>

BACKGROUND READING

- Fulk, B. M., & King, K. (2001). Classwide peer tutoring at work. *Teaching Exceptional Children*, 34(2), 49-53.
- Goodlad, S., & Hirst, B. (1989). *Peer tutoring: A guide to learning by teaching*. New York: Nichols Publishing.

TOOLS FOR PROMOTING EDUCATIONAL SUCCESS AND REDUCING DELINQUENCY

~~~~~

## **Step 2. Universal Interventions**

### **Praise for Desired Behavior (a best practice)**

#### **BRIEF OVERVIEW**

The use of behavior-specific *praise* is an essential component of many programs and approaches that are focused on encouraging desired student behavior such as CHAMPS, School-Wide Positive Behavior Support, and Unified Discipline. The effectiveness of praise has been documented in research studies spanning more than 40 years. Praise is a statement indicating the positive value of or approval of some behavior(s). Praise is most effective when it:

- includes words indicating **genuine approval** of a behavior (e.g., "Great work!");
- is **contingent** on a behavior (i.e., follows the occurrence of a specific behavior); and
- is **specific** (i.e., describes the behavior for which the individual(s) is being praised).

For example, after a student raises his hand to ask a question, a teacher might say, "Jorge, thank you for raising your hand and waiting for me to call on you."

Praise for desired student behavior is primarily given by teachers and other adults in schools. In situations when students might benefit from increased levels of praise or acknowledgement, students can be effectively taught to recruit praise from teachers, peers, or both (e.g., sharing completed class-work with teachers). Praise is a very effective way to encourage students to display academic and social appropriate behaviors. However, it has been demonstrated that teachers tend to use praise only sparingly. The ratio of praise to reprimands is more critical than the rate of using praise per se. Authorities recommend that teachers should deliver three to four praise statements to students for every one reprimand.

Praise is an excellent strategy to use in combination with a continuum of other strategies to acknowledge appropriate academic and social behavior (e.g., token economies). Praise statements can be interspersed between periods when more complicated acknowledgements (e.g., token or activity reward) are not delivered and also paired with such acknowledgements.

#### **IMPLEMENTATION ESSENTIALS**

Practically everybody has the basic resources necessary to deliver praise. The essentials required to use praise effectively include: identifying expected student behavior; being watchful for when it occurs; delivering praise promptly when expected or desired behavior is observed; and praising often. Other techniques include: clearly defining and reviewing behavioral expectations with students (e.g., being in one's seat, raising one's hand for permission to speak or to obtain teacher attention, keeping hands and feet to self), continuously watching for demonstrations of expected behavior, acknowledging it when it occurs, and acknowledging it often. The motto that best describes this practice is "catch them being good."

Some teachers have picked up the habit of being “bad behavior cops,” looking for instances of undesired behavior and upon spying it, delivering a reprimand or some other punishment. Although this might sound like good disciplinary practice, it is not. Children acclimate to consistent levels of mild punishment, so that it becomes progressively *less effective*. Also, some students, particularly those who have long histories of experience with punishment, find the attention associated with reprimands and other forms of interaction with teachers rewarding, even though it’s negative. So, the teacher’s challenge is to be alert for student behavior that exemplifies the expectations in his or her classroom and praise it immediately and often.

## **PROGRAM EVALUATION AND AVAILABLE EVIDENCE**

The systematic and contingent use of praise has been extensively researched, and there is broad consensus that it is a best practice for promoting and supporting desired student behavior (Kerr & Nelson, 2006; Lewis, Hudson, Richter, & Johnson, 2004; Simonsen, Fairbanks, Briesch, Sugai, & Meyers, in review; Walker, Ramsey, & Gresham, 2004). A complete list of research citations can be found in Appendix E.

Specific findings include the following:

- Delivering **contingent praise** for **academic behaviors** can increase:
  - correct responses;
  - work productivity and accuracy;
  - academic performance; and
  - oral reading performance.
  
- Delivering **contingent praise** for specific **social behaviors** can increase:
  - on-task behavior;
  - student attending;
  - student compliance;
  - positive self-referent statements; and
  - cooperative play.
  
- Increasing the number of **behavior specific praise statements** was associated with an **increase in on-task behavior**.
  
- Providing reprimands three times as often as praise or approving behavior, resulted in increases in disruptive behavior; specifically noise-making behaviors.
  
- Increases in appropriate classroom behavior also occur when **contingent praise** was combined with:
  - use of effective commands;
  - direct instruction;
  - decreasing use of reprimands;
  - ignoring inappropriate behavior;
  - establishing rules;
  - establishing rules and ignoring inappropriate behavior; and
  - establishing rules and expressing disapproval for inappropriate behavior.

- Student recruitment of adult praise resulted in increases in adult praise, work productivity and accuracy, and language and math class work.

## RESOURCES

- Behavior Home Page: Classroom Management Tips.  
<http://www.state.ky.us/agencies/behave/bi/cmtips.html>
- CHAMPs: A Proactive and Positive Approach to Classroom Management- Motivation, Module 5. <http://www.safeandcivilschools.com/books.php>
- Discipline in the Secondary Classroom, 2nd Edition.  
<http://www.safeandcivilschools.com/books.php>
- Effective Schooling Practices: A Research Synthesis.  
<http://www.nwrel.org/scpd/esp/esp95.html#1.4.3>
- Intervention Central: Breaking the Attention-Seeking Habit: The Power of Random Positive Teacher Attention.  
<http://www.interventioncentral.org/htmdocs/interventions/behavior/ncrft.shtml>
- Least Restrictive Behavior Interventions (LRBI): Utah State Office of Education.  
<http://www.usu.edu/teachall/text/behavior/LRBI.htm>
- National Technical Assistance Center for Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports.  
<http://www.pbis.org>
- Unified Discipline. <http://ericec.org/osep/newsbriefs/news29.html>

## BACKGROUND READING

- Alberto, P. A., & Troutman, A. C. (2003). *Applied behavior analysis for teachers* (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill/Prentice Hall.
- Jones, V., & Jones, L. (2007). *Comprehensive classroom management: Creating communities of support and solving problems* (8<sup>th</sup> ed.). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- Walker, J. E., Shea, T. M., & Bauer, A. M. (2007). *Behavior management: A practical approach for educators* (9<sup>th</sup> ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill/Prentice Hall.