

## Evidence Based Practices in School Mental Health: Behavior

**B**ehavior impacts every area of a student's life. A student's own behaviors and that of others can influence the student's school climate in either a positive or negative way.

### Background Information

Behavior comes in a variety of intensities from calling out in class to violent outbursts such as throwing desks. In fact, violent behaviors are a growing trend among young children (Smallwood, 2002). Interventions for behaviors fall on a spectrum of intensity from verbal corrections to elaborate behavior plans. Another way to categorize behaviors and interventions is through the Positive Behavior Supports (PBS) triangle. PBS identifies behaviors and interventions as fitting into three different categories: school wide, targeted, and individualized. By using behavior interventions at the school wide and targeted levels it is often possible to prevent behaviors from increasing in intensity.

Behaviors can be assessed using Functional Behavior Assessments (FBAs) and the identified behavior addressed by creating a Behavior Improvement Plan (BIP). A FBA gathers information about the identified behaviors. The behaviors may be academic or social/emotional, but always display a reoccurring behavior or pattern of behaviors. FBAs are required by IDEA 97 when a student with a disability has been removed from his/her educational setting for more than 10 days; however, best practice is to assess behaviors well before a student reaches the point of suspension. An FBA can be conducted much earlier in the process.

BIPs are written to address behavior concerns that interfere with a student's ability to gain reasonable benefit from his/her learning environment. Effective and accurate assessment of behaviors allows for the

best possible intervention to be implemented. A BIP includes the following components (Colorado Department of Education, 2001):

- ☞ Detailed description of the behaviors being addressed
- ☞ Interventions used and their results
- ☞ Behavioral goals
- ☞ Plan for teaching and supporting the new behavior
- ☞ Description of the success
- ☞ Follow-up activities

Even if a formal FBA has not been conducted the components of a BIP should be accounted for when designing a behavioral intervention.

### Disclaimer


The information gathered for this evidence-based practice sheet is a summary of common practices and definitions found in recent literature. This summary is by no means a comprehensive representation of all information, definitions, programs, and standards to be found. The listing of a specific program within this sheet does not constitute as an endorsement from CDE for the program.

### Resources

- Intervention Central: [www.interventioncentral.org](http://www.interventioncentral.org)  
 U.S. Department of Education. (2003). *Identifying and implementing educational practices supported by rigorous evidence: A user friendly guide*. [Brochure]. Washington, D.C.: Author.  
 Promising Practices Network:  
<http://www.promisingpractices.net/>  
 What Works Clearinghouse: <http://www.w-w-c.org/>  
 CDE - PBS website: [www.cde.state.co.us/pbs](http://www.cde.state.co.us/pbs)

### References

- Colorado Department of Education (2005). Functional Behavior Assessment FAQ.  
 Colorado Department of Education (2001). Fast Facts: Functional Behavioral Assessment – What, Why, and How?  
 Smallwood, D. (20002). Behavior Problems Defusing Violent Behavior in Young Children: An Ounce of Prevention.

Program	Publisher	Level of Intervention 	Target Population	Type of research conducted (Stringent research-research design, random assignment; Research – mixed method, random sampling; Applied with Fidelity – outcome measures)*	Research Sample
<b>ACT-REACT</b> <i>Summary:</i> This program combines self-monitoring of attention and self-monitoring of performance to help disengaged students to take control of their learning.	Rock, M.L. (2005). Use of strategic self-monitoring to enhance academic engagement, productivity, and accuracy of students with and without exceptionalities. <i>Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions, 7(1), 3-17</i> .	Intensive	Elementary School Students	Applied with Fidelity	5 - 2 <sup>nd</sup> -5 <sup>th</sup> graders in a regular education classroom in the southern United States
<b>Contingency/Behavior Contracts</b> <i>Summary:</i> A contract lays out the expectations of the student and teacher and in some situations the parents. Target behaviors are clearly defined as are the rewards and consequences for the student's behavior.	Directions: <a href="http://www.interventioncentral.org/htmldocs/interventions/bchcontr.shtml">http://www.interventioncentral.org/htmldocs/interventions/bchcontr.shtml</a>	Intensive	School Age Students	Stringent Research	Multiple studies with all age groups and grades focusing mostly on students with problem behaviors
<b>Good Behavior Game</b> <i>Summary:</i> The classroom teacher divides the class up into teams. Points are assigned to the team when inappropriate behavior is observed. The team with the fewest points wins a reward. The Good Behavior Game reduces classroom disruptions, aggression, and social withdrawal.	Directions: <a href="http://www.interventioncentral.org/htmldocs/interventions/gbg.shtml">http://www.interventioncentral.org/htmldocs/interventions/gbg.shtml</a> Manual: <a href="http://www.bpp.jhu.edu">www.bpp.jhu.edu</a>	Targeted Universal	Elementary School Students	Applied with Fidelity	5 <sup>th</sup> grade reading class 4 <sup>th</sup> grade class during reading and math
<b>School – Wide Positive Behavior Support (SW-PBS)</b> <i>Summary:</i> SW-PBS utilizes systemic and individualized strategies to achieve social and learning outcomes while also preventing problem behaviors.	PBS Implementation Manual; <a href="http://www.pbis.org/files/Blueprint%20draft%20v3%209-13-04.doc">http://www.pbis.org/files/Blue print%20draft%20v3%209-13-04.doc</a>	Intensive Targeted Universal	School Age Students	Applied with Fidelity	Multiple studies with all age groups and grades
<b>Token Economy</b> <i>Summary:</i> Token economies can be set up to reinforce certain student behaviors. The system may be for an individual child or class wide. When a student is caught exhibiting a target behavior s/he receives a token (i.e. marble, play money, etc). The tokens can then be exchanged for prizes.	An overview of how to set up a token economy: <a href="http://www.uams.edu/add/token.htm">http://www.uams.edu/add/token.htm</a>	Targeted Intensive	School Age Students	Research	Multiple studies with all age groups and grades focusing mostly on students with problem behaviors

---

## References

- Barrish, H. H., Saunders, M., & Wolf, M. M. (1969). Good behavior game: Effects of individual contingencies for group consequences on disruptive behavior in a classroom. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, 2, 119-124.
- Bear, G.G., Cavalier, A.R., & Manning, M.A. (2002). Best practices in school discipline. In A. Thomas and J. Grimes (Eds.) *BEST Practices in School Psychology IV*. Bethesda, MD: National Association of School Psychologists.
- Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence (2004). *Blueprints Model Programs: Bullying Prevention Program (BPP)*. [Brochure]. Author.
- Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports, University of Oregon (2004). *School-wide Positive Behavior Support: Implementers' Blueprint and Self-Assessment*.
- DeRosier, M.E. & Marcus, S.R. (2005). Building friendships and combating bullying: Effectiveness of S.S. GRIN at one-year follow-up. *Journal of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology*, 34(1), 140-150.
- Din, F.S. & Isack, L.R. (2003). *Effects of Contingency Contracting on Decreasing Student Tardiness*. Paper presented at the 26<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the Eastern Educational Research Association, Hilton Head Island, S.C. Feb. 26-Mar. 1, 2003.
- Flannery, D.J., Vazsonyi, A.T., Liau, A.K., Guo, S., Atha, H, Vesterdal, W. & Embry, D. (2003). Initial behavior outcomes for the *PeaceBuilders* universal school-based violence prevention program. *Developmental Psychology*, 39(2), 292-308.
- Hupp, S.D.A., Reitman, D., Northup, J., O'Callaghan, P., & Leblanc, M. (2002). The effects of delayed rewards, tokens, and stimulant medication on sportsmanlike behavior with ADHD-diagnosed children. *Behavior Modification*, 26 (2), 148-162.
- Intervention Central: [www.interventioncentral.org](http://www.interventioncentral.org)
- Kariuki, P. & Martin, K. (1999). *Effects of an Intervention Model on Second Grade Students Who Exhibit Inappropriate Behavior toward Authority Figures*. A paper presented at the annual conference of the Mid-South Educational Research Association Point Clear, Alabama, November 17-19.
- Medland, M. B., & Stachnik, T. J. (1972). Good-behavior game: A replication and systematic analysis. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, 5, 45-51.
- Robinson, P.W., Newlay, T.J., & Ganzell, S.L. (1981). A token system for a class of underachieving hyperactive children. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, 14(3), 307-315.
- Rock, M.L. (2005). *Use of strategic self-monitoring to enhance academic engagement, productivity, and accuracy of students with and without exceptionalities*. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions*, 7(1), 3-17.
- Osher, D., Dwyer, K., & Jackson, S. (2004). *Safe, Supportive and Successful Schools Step by Step*. Longmont, CO: Sopris West.
- Stover, K. (1994). The effects of a token economy system on the inappropriate verbalizations of emotional support students. *Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC)*.
- University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (2005). *Classroom Interventions for Children with Attention Deficit Disorder*. Retrieved from University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences website: <http://www.uams.edu/add/token.htm>
-