



*RTI Toolkit: A Practical Guide for Schools*

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# Building an RTI/MTSS System for Mental-Health: Guidance for School Teams

## **SESSION 2: Write Classroom Support Plans**

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# How To: Write Behavior Statements to Pinpoint Causes of Student Misbehavior

When a teacher is confronted with a misbehaving or non-compliant student, the challenging behavior presents a puzzle to be solved. Instructors skilled in resolving behavior problems know that effective behavior management is built upon 3 assumptions (Packenham, Shute, & Reid, 2004). First, students engage in specific behaviors for a purpose (e.g., to seek peer attention; to avoid academic work). Second, events in the school environment play a central role in shaping student conduct, whether as behavioral triggers or reinforcers. Third, the teacher who can accurately identify both the purpose (function) of a student's problem behavior and events in the environment that sustain that behavior will be able to select appropriate intervention strategies to replace or eliminate it.

A classroom teacher has access to a great deal of information that could potentially be helpful in analyzing a student's behavior: direct observation, interviews with the student, interviews with past teachers and parents; work products, school records, and more. In fact, as Hosp (2008) notes, a problem that teachers frequently face is not that they *lack* sufficient data to understand a student, but rather that they are saturated with *too much* global information to easily analyze.

**Behavioral statement: Template for analysis.** What is needed is a simple template that helps teachers to narrow their problem-solving focus, productively tap into their reservoir of knowledge about a student, and --hopefully-- solve the behavioral puzzle. Such a template exists in the form of the 'behavioral statement' (Moreno & Bullock, 2011). The behavioral statement--also known as the 'ABC' (Antecedent-Behavior-Consequence) statement-- describes (a) *antecedents*: events that precede and trigger the problem behavior; (b) *behavior*: the problem behavior itself; and (c) *consequences*: events occurring as a result of the behavior that reinforce it in the future.

Sample Behavioral (ABC) Statements		
Antecedent	Behavior	Consequence
During large-group lectures in social studies	Brian talks with peers about non-instructional topics	and receives positive peer attention.
During independent seatwork assignments involving writing tasks	Angela verbally refuses to comply with teacher requests to start work	and is sent to the office with a disciplinary referral.

The behavioral statement neatly encapsulates the behavior and its context and places the student's behavior on a timeline (trigger, behavior, outcome). The statement's format allows the teacher to examine what antecedent events or conditions may precipitate a problem behavior and think about how to reengineer aspects of the learning activity to prevent the problem behavior. In the same manner, the statement prompts the instructor to look at the current consequences that accompany the problem behavior, consider whether they are actually supporting misbehavior, and perhaps seek to replace them with alternative consequences to extinguish undesired behaviors.

**Classroom Behavioral Statement Organizer.** While teachers can certainly draw upon their knowledge of students to write their own behavior statements, the process does require time and reflection. Yet time is a scarce commodity in busy classrooms. Teachers need access to streamlined tools to speed their understanding of mild problem behaviors and make behavior analysis feasible in general-education classrooms (Packenham, Shute, & Reid, 2004).

The *Classroom Behavioral Statement Organizer*, which appears later in this document, is just such a tool, created to help instructors in a classroom setting to quickly draft behavior statements in ABC format and use those statements



to link student behaviors to their underlying purpose or function. The chart is a table divided into four columns: (1) *Antecedent/Activity*; (2) *Student Behavior*; (3) *Consequence/ Outcome*; and (4) *Behavior Function*. The teacher browses the elements in the first 3 columns to assemble a behavior/ABC statement that describes a student's problem behavior and its context. Based on this statement and the teacher's comprehensive knowledge of the student, the instructor then selects the underlying behavioral 'function' or purpose, a hypothesis that best explains why the problem behavioral is occurring.

A brief explanation of the sections of the *Classroom Behavioral Statement Organizer* follows:

- *Antecedent/Activity*. The chart lists a range of classroom activities (e.g., student work-pairs; reading activities; independent seat work) typically taking place when the student problem behavior occurs. If a teacher finds that a student behavior is displayed across *multiple* classroom settings/activities, it is recommended that the instructor make the analysis more manageable by choosing only the one or two most important settings/activities where the student's behavior is most problematic. Also, while this antecedent/activity list covers the majority of common classroom activities, the teacher is encouraged to write out his or her own description of any antecedents or activities not listed here.
- *Student Behavior*. A listing of the more common types of student misbehavior (e.g., talks to other students about non-instructional topics; fails to comply with routine teacher requests) appear in this section of the chart. The instructor identifies those problem behaviors that the student most often displays during the 'antecedent/activity' previously selected. It is recommended that teachers select no more than 2-3 behaviors to keep the behavior statement (and classroom intervention) manageable. If the teacher does not see a particular behavior listed, the instructor can use the examples from the chart as models to craft his or her own behavior definition.
- *Consequence/Outcome*. The teacher chooses outcomes/consequences that typically follow the problem behavior (e.g., student fails to complete work; student is sent from the classroom to the office or to in-school suspension). The instructor should try to limit the number of consequences/outcomes selected to 3. If, in the teacher's opinion, several consequences (e.g., positive peer attention; student fails to finish work) occur with the same frequency, each selected consequence can simply be indicated with a check mark. However, if several consequences are linked to the behavior but one consequence (e.g., student fails to complete work) clearly occurs more often than another (e.g., student is sent to the office with a disciplinary referral), the teacher should number the relevant consequences in descending (i.e., 1, 2, 3) order of frequency. The value of rank-ordering when consequences happen with differing frequencies is that such ranking can provide insight into what 'pay-off' is actually sustaining the problem student behavior. For example, the instructor may note that the number-one consequence for a misbehaving student is that she reliably gets positive attention from her classmates but that a more sporadic disciplinary consequence such as teacher reprimand or office referral ranks a distant third. From this differential rate of consequences, the teacher may conclude that the more frequent peer attention is driving the behavior and that the sparser disciplinary consequence is not sufficient to change that pattern.
- *Behavior Function*. Having reviewed the behavior statement, the teacher chooses a behavior function that appears to be the most likely driver or cause of the student problem behavior(s). Seven possible functions are listed in this column. The most commonly observed behavioral functions in classrooms are escape/avoidance and peer or adult attention (Packenham, Shute, & Reid, 2004), but other functions can appear as well. If the teacher is unsure of the function sustaining the behavior but has 2-3 candidates (e.g., peer attention; escape or avoidance of a situation or activity), that instructor should continue to observe the target student's behaviors and



note accompanying antecedents and consequences in an effort to rule out all but one of the competing hypotheses.

## References

- Hosp, J. L. (2008). Best practices in aligning academic assessment with instruction. In A. Thomas & J. Grimes (Eds.), *Best practices in school psychology V* (pp.363-376). Bethesda, MD: National Association of School Psychologists.
- Moreno, G., & Bullock, L. M. (2011). Principles of positive behaviour supports: Using the FBA as a problem-solving approach to address challenging behaviours beyond special populations. *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties*, *16*(2), 117-127.
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### Classroom Behavioral Statement Organizer

Antecedent/Activity	Student Behavior	Consequence/Outcome	Behavior Function
<input type="checkbox"/> Start of class/bell-ringer activities  <input type="checkbox"/> Large-group lecture <input type="checkbox"/> Large group teacher-led discussion <input type="checkbox"/> Large-group: when called on by the teacher  <input type="checkbox"/> Student work-pairs <input type="checkbox"/> Student groups: cooperative learning  <input type="checkbox"/> Reading activities <input type="checkbox"/> Writing activities <input type="checkbox"/> Math activities  <input type="checkbox"/> Independent seat work <input type="checkbox"/> Independent computer work  <input type="checkbox"/> Transitions between academic activities <input type="checkbox"/> Unstructured in-class time  <input type="checkbox"/> Homework collection <input type="checkbox"/> In-class homework review  <input type="checkbox"/> Tests and/or quizzes  <input type="checkbox"/> Class dismissal	<input type="checkbox"/> Sits inactive <input type="checkbox"/> Puts head on desk <input type="checkbox"/> Is inattentive (e.g., staring into space, looking out the window) <input type="checkbox"/> Leaves seat without permission <input type="checkbox"/> Requests bathroom or water breaks <input type="checkbox"/> Uses cell phone, music player, or other digital device against class rules  <input type="checkbox"/> Whispers/talks/mutters to self <input type="checkbox"/> Makes loud or distracting noises <input type="checkbox"/> Calls out with non-instructional comments <input type="checkbox"/> Calls out with instructionally relevant comments  <input type="checkbox"/> Plays with/taps objects <input type="checkbox"/> Throws objects <input type="checkbox"/> Destroys work materials or instructional materials (e.g., ripping up a worksheet, breaking a pencil)  <input type="checkbox"/> Whispers/talks to other students about non-instructional topics <input type="checkbox"/> Whispers/talks to other students about instructional/academic topics: e.g., seeking answers or help with directions <input type="checkbox"/> Makes verbal threats toward peers <input type="checkbox"/> Uses inappropriate language (e.g., obscenities) with peers <input type="checkbox"/> Taunts/teases/makes fun of peers <input type="checkbox"/> Makes comments to encourage or 'egg on' other students to misbehave  <input type="checkbox"/> Fails to begin in-class assignments (verbal refusal)	— Student fails to complete work.  — Teacher ignores the behavior ('planned ignoring'). — Teacher redirects the student. — Teacher reprimands the student. — Teacher conferences w/ the student.  — Student receives positive peer attention — Student receives negative peer attention.  — Student is briefly timed-out within the classroom. — Student is briefly timed-out outside of the classroom. — Student is sent from the classroom to the office or to in-school suspension (disciplinary referral). — Student receives a disciplinary consequence outside of class time (e.g., afterschool detention).  — Student receives a 'respite' break away from peers to calm down before rejoining class. — Student is sent from the classroom to talk with a counselor/ psychologist/social	<input type="checkbox"/> Peer attention <input type="checkbox"/> Acceptance/ affiliation with individuals or peer group(s) <input type="checkbox"/> Power/control in interactions with peer(s)  <input type="checkbox"/> Adult attention <input type="checkbox"/> Power/control in interactions with adult(s)  <input type="checkbox"/> Escape or avoidance of a situation or activity (e.g., because the student lacks the skills to do the academic work)  <input type="checkbox"/> Fulfillment of physical needs: e.g., sleep  <input type="checkbox"/> Access to preferred edibles/objects/ experiences  <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____



<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____  	<input type="checkbox"/> Fails to begin in-class assignments (silent refusal) <input type="checkbox"/> Fails to comply with routine teacher requests (verbal refusal) <input type="checkbox"/> Fails to comply with routine teacher requests (silent refusal)  <input type="checkbox"/> Makes verbal threats toward adult <input type="checkbox"/> Uses inappropriate language (e.g., obscenities) with adult <input type="checkbox"/> Taunts/teases/makes fun of adult <input type="checkbox"/> Seeks academic help from adult when not needed  <input type="checkbox"/> Perseverates with previous academic activity after the class/group has transitioned to a new activity  <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	worker. — Student receives a snack, nap, or other support.  — Other: _____	
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Sample Behavioral (ABC) Statements		
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Behavioral (ABC) Statement: Use the organizer below to write a behavioral statement, based on your selections from the Classroom Behavior Chart.		
Antecedent	Behavior	Consequence



# A Toolkit: 38 Classroom Ideas to Help Students to Make Better Behavioral Choices

Behavior intervention plans are highly individualized--because every student displays a unique profile of behaviors. However, teachers will find that their chances of helping a student to engage in positive behaviors increase when they include *each* of these 3 elements in their classroom behavior intervention plans:

1. Antecedents: Strategies to promote positive behaviors and prevent misbehavior
2. Positive consequences: Responses that increase positive/goal behaviors
3. Extinction procedures: Responses that extinguish problem behaviors

Every one of these elements plays a crucial role in promoting the success of a behavior plan. Antecedent strategies prevent the student from engaging in problem behaviors in the first place. Positive consequences motivate the student to show desired behaviors, such as academic engagement. Extinction procedures remove the 'pay-off' to the student for engaging in problem behaviors. While any one of the elements might be inadequate to change the student's behavior, the combination of antecedents, positive consequences, and extinction procedures can result in a strong, flexible plan and successful intervention outcome.

Teachers can use this guide to build their own behavior plans using its research-based ideas for antecedents, positive consequences, and extinction procedures.

## ***1. Antecedents: Strategies to Prevent Misbehavior***

Teachers have the greatest array of options to influence a student to engage in positive behaviors when they focus on *antecedents*: actions they take *before* the student behavior occurs. Proactive antecedent actions to encourage desired behaviors are often quick-acting, can prevent misbehavior and attendant interruption of instruction, and usually require less teacher effort than providing corrective consequences after problem behaviors have occurred. Teacher strategies to elicit positive student behaviors include making instructional adjustments, providing student prompts and reminders, and teaching students to monitor and evaluate their work performance. Here are specific antecedent ideas that teachers can use to 'nudge' students to engage in desired behaviors:

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### *Antecedents That Prevent Problem Behaviors*

- Behaviors: Teach Expectations** (Fairbanks, Sugai, Guardino, & Lathrop, 2007). Students must be explicitly taught behavioral expectations before they can be held accountable for those behaviors. The teacher should model positive behaviors, give students examples and non-examples of appropriate behaviors to clarify understanding, have students practice those behaviors with instructor feedback; and consistently acknowledge and praise students for successfully displaying positive behaviors.
- Instructional Match: Ensure the Student Can Do the Work** (Burns, VanDerHeyden, & Boice, 2008). Student misbehavior frequently arises from an inability to do the academic task. When the student lacks skills necessary for the academic task, the instructor teaches the necessary skill(s). Additional strategies include adjusting the immediate task to the student's current skill(s) and pairing the student with a helping peer.



- ❑ **No: Substitute a Preferred Alternative** (Mace, Pratt, Prager, & Pritchard, 2011). If the student has a pattern of misbehaving when told that he or she cannot access a desired item or engage in a preferred activity, the teacher can use the 'no with preferred alternative' strategy. The teacher prepares by making a list of activities or items preferred by the student that are allowed during the academic situation or setting where problems arise. Then, whenever the student requests an item or activity that is not allowed, the teacher (1) tells the student that he or she cannot access the desired activity or item; (2) provides a brief explanation of why the requested item or activity is off-limits; and (3) immediately offers the student one or more items or activities from the prepared list that *are* allowable in the current situation or setting.
- ❑ **Pre-Session Attention: Provide Antecedent Attention.** If a student appears to misbehave to seek adult attention during an activity such as whole-group instruction, the teacher consistently gives the student a dose (e.g., 3 minutes) of positive individual attention *just before* the session begins (Wood et al., 2018). This pre-session attention can thus reduce that student's immediate attention-seeking behaviors.
- ❑ **Relocate the Student: Remove From Temptation** (US Department of Education, 2004). When the student's problem behaviors are triggered or supported by factors in the environment--such as a talkative peer or difficulty hearing or seeing the instructor--the teacher may choose to move the student to another, less-distracting location in the classroom. A good option is to seat the student within the teacher's 'action zone', close to the instructor and in the region of the room toward which that educator directs most instruction.
- ❑ **Schedule: Increase Predictability** (Kern & Clemens, 2007). When students know the "content, duration, and/or consequences of future events" (Kern & Clemens, 2007; p. 67), their level of engagement rises and problem behaviors decline—a good definition of motivation. A strategy to increase the predictability of events for individual students or an entire classroom is to post or otherwise provide a schedule outlining the day's classroom activities. In simplest form, such a schedule lists a title and brief description for each scheduled activity, along with the start and end times for that activity. Teachers may wish to add information to the schedule, such as helpful reminders of what work materials a student might need for each event. Students who have difficulty interpreting a written schedule may benefit from having their schedules read aloud and/or from having pictorial equivalents included in their schedules.
- ❑ **Work Break: Make It Available on Request** (Majeika et al., 2011). Sometimes misbehavior is an attempt by the student to engineer a break from an academic task. The teacher can choose an alternative method for the student to use to communicate that he or she would like a brief break, such as requesting that break verbally or pulling out a color-coded break card. Of course, the student will also require clear guidelines on how long the requested break will last and what activities are acceptable for the student to engage in during that break.

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### *Antecedents That Encourage Goal Behaviors*

- ❑ **Checklist for Academic Skills: Make the Complicated Simple** (Alter, Wyrick, Brown, & Lingo, 2008). When the student must apply several steps to complete a complex academic task, the teacher can give the student a checklist detailing each step and instructions for completing it. Before the activity, the student is prompted to preview the checklist; after the activity, the student uses the checklist to review the work.
- ❑ **Checklist for Challenging Situations: Script Transition Times** (McCoy, Mathur, & Czoka, 2010). Students often struggle with the complexity of managing multi-step routines such as transitioning between classroom activities or moving to different locations within the school. Teachers can assist by making up step-by-step



checklists that 'walk' the student incrementally through the routine. Instructors can use these checklists as guides to teach and measure student success in navigating transitions. Just as important, the student can use the checklist as a prompt and guide to follow the expected steps.

- ❑ **Check Out: Exit Slips** (Hirn & Park, 2012). As the student transitions from small-group or independent work to another activity, give the student an 'exit slip'. This slip can contain short-answer questions to prompt the student to reflect on the learning just completed. It can also include reminders for putting away materials, turning in completed work, or preparing for the next activity.
- ❑ **Choice-Making: Allow for Student Preference** (Green, Mays, & Jolivet, 2011). Students find it motivating to have opportunities to choose how they structure or carry out their academic tasks. Teachers can allow choice on any of a variety of dimensions of a classroom activity, such as where the activity takes place; who the child works with; what materials to work with (e.g., choosing a book from several options); when to begin or end the activity; or how long to engage in the activity.
- ❑ **Clock It: Time-Based Check-In** (Hirn & Park, 2012). While the student is working independently, the instructor checks in periodically (e.g., at 3- or 5-minute intervals) to ensure that the student remains actively engaged and to offer instructional support, praise, or encouragement.
- ❑ **Fix-Up Skills: Foster Work Independence** (Rosenshine, 2008). During independent work, the student should know procedures to follow if stuck (e.g., cannot complete an item; does not understand a word in a reading passage). The teacher creates a routine for the student in how to apply 'fix-up' skills for independent assignments: e.g., "If I don't understand what I have read, I should (1) reread the paragraph; (2) slow my reading; (3) focus my *full* attention on what I am reading; (4) underline any words that I do not know and try to figure them out from the reading" (McCallum et al., 2010).
- ❑ **Greet Students at the Start of Class** (Allday & Pakurar, 2007). As students arrive at the start of class, the teacher stands at the door and briefly greets each student by name. This modest effort has been shown to substantially increase student attention and focus. Teachers who commit to using student greetings rearrange their start-of-class routine to allow them consistently to be standing just outside or inside the classroom door as the students arrive.
- ❑ **Goal-Setting: Get a Commitment** (Martin et al., 2003). One tool to increase student motivation to perform an academic task is to have that student choose a specific, measurable outcome goal before starting that task. At the end of the work session, the student compares the actual outcome to the previously selected goal to judge success. For example, a student about to begin a writing task may choose the goal of locating 3 primary sources for a term paper. Or a student starting an in-class reading assignment might come up with two questions that he would like to have answered from the reading.
- ❑ **High-Preference Requests: Build Behavioral Momentum** (Kern & Clemens, 2007). Use 'behavioral momentum' to increase compliance by first directing the student or class to complete several short, simple, high-preference directives that they readily complete (e.g., "Take out a sheet of paper", "write your name on the paper", "copy the assignment from the board") before presenting the student or class with a low-preference directive that they typically balk at (e.g., "Open your books and begin the assignment").
- ❑ **Maintain a High Ratio of Positive Interactions** (Sprick, Borgmeier & Nolet, 2002). To keep relationships on a positive footing throughout the classroom, the teacher self-monitors encounters with particular students and sets



the goal of having at least 3 positive interactions for each disciplinary interaction. Positive teacher-student interactions can vary in format: for example, greeting, praise, conversation, smile, thumbs-up sign. By maintaining at least a 3:1 ratio between relationship-enhancing vs. disciplinary interactions, the teacher bends the odds in his or her favor that every student in the class will view the instructor as fair and caring.

- **Opportunities to Respond: Let Feedback Be Its Own Reward** (Partin et al., 2010). When students are academically engaged, they are usually also behaving appropriately. The teacher's goal, then, is to capture positive student behaviors by structuring lessons and work assignments to require a high rate of opportunities to respond (OTRs). In a complete OTR cycle, the student has an opportunity to respond (e.g., the teacher asks a question, or the student encounters an item on independent work), produces a response (e.g., the student responds to the teacher question or answers the work item); and receives timely performance feedback (e.g., the teacher says, "Right answer!", or the student uses an answer key to check a response).

An efficient way to boost OTRs classwide is through group responding (Haydon, Borders, Embury, & Clarke, 2009). Strategies for group response include choral responding; show of hands; pre-formatted response cards (e.g., with YES and NO written on opposite faces of the card); and individual white boards.

- **Paraphrasing: Have the Student Repeat Directions or Other Key Information** (Mancil & Maynard, 2007). To ensure that the student understands challenging directions, the instructor has the student repeat those directions in his or her own words before starting the task. This paraphrasing strategy can also be used with any other key information (e.g., fix-up strategies) that the student needs for success on the task.
- **Positive Teacher Requests: It's How You Say It** (Braithwaite, 2000). Non-compliant students have a pattern of ignoring or defying teacher requests. However, instructors can increase the likelihood of student compliance by stating their requests in positive terms (e.g., "John, I can help you just as soon as you are back in your seat") rather than in negative terms (e.g., "John, I can't help you unless you are sitting in your seat").
- **Pre-Correction: Plant a Positive Thought** (De Pry & Sugai, 2002). Some students need a timely reminder of expected behaviors just before they transition into situations or settings in which problem behaviors tend to occur. At this 'point of performance', the teacher gives the student a timely reminder of goal behaviors, using such prompting strategies as stating goal behaviors, having the student preview a checklist of goal behaviors, asking the student to describe goal behaviors; or praising another student for demonstrating goal behaviors.
- **Response Effort: Reduce Task Difficulty** (Friman & Poling, 1995; Skinner, Pappas & Davis, 2005). The teacher increases student engagement through any method that reduces the apparent difficulty ('response effort') of an academic task - so long as that method does not hold the student to a lesser academic standard than classmates. Examples of strategies that lower response effort include having students pair off to start homework in class and breaking larger academic tasks into smaller, more manageable 'chunks'.
- **Rewards: Choose Them in Advance** (De Pry & Sugai, 2002). Just as the student is about to enter a challenging situation or setting in which he or she will need to show appropriate behaviors, the instructor reminds the student of the behavioral expectations and has the student select a possible reward from a menu. The student is later given that reward if behaviors were appropriate.
- **Setting the Tone: Transition Signal** (Hirn & Park, 2012). When moving from a high-structure learning task (e.g., independent seatwork) to a less-structured situation (e.g., lining up for lunch; preparing for dismissal), the



teacher uses an audible tone or other signal to clearly mark that transition. Such a signal helps all students more quickly and appropriately to match behaviors to the current classroom activity.

- **'Two by Ten': Engage in Brief Positive Chats** (Mendler, 2000). If a teacher has a strained (or nonexistent) relationship with a particular student, that instructor may want to jump-start a more positive pattern of interaction using the 'two-by-ten' intervention. With this time efficient strategy, the teacher commits to having a positive 2-minute conversation with the student at least once per day across 10 consecutive school days. The active ingredient in the intervention is regular and positive teacher attention delivered at times when the student is engaged in appropriate behavior.
- **Verbal Commands: Keep Them Brief and Powerful** (Matheson & Shriver, 2005; Walker & Walker, 1991). Teacher commands are most likely to elicit student compliance when they (1) are delivered calmly, (2) are brief, (3) are stated when possible as DO statements rather than as DON'T statements, (4) use clear, simple language, and (5) are delivered one command at a time and appropriately paced to avoid confusing or overloading students. Effective teacher commands avoid both sarcasm or hostility and over-lengthy explanations that can distract or confuse students.

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## 2. *Positive Consequences*: Responses That Increase Positive/Goal Behaviors

Consequences are those events following a student behavior that make it more or less likely that the behavior will occur in the future. This section looks at positive consequences, ideas that teachers can use to reinforce the student for being on-task and showing appropriate behaviors. Among strategies that promote behaviors are providing timely feedback, praise, and teacher attention; as well as allowing students to take temporary work breaks. To foster specific behaviors, the teacher can use any of the following strategies:

- **Performance Feedback: Information is Rewarding** (Conroy et al., 2009). When students receive timely feedback about their academic performance, this information can reinforce academic behavior and reduce misbehavior. Instructional feedback comes in many forms: e.g., teacher oral or written feedback; class discussion and review of an assignment; oral feedback from class peers; student self-directed completion of a rubric or problem-solving checklist during an independent assignment.
- **Praise: Catch Them Being Good** (Kern & Clemens, 2007). Research suggests that teacher praise is one of the most powerful--yet underused-- of classroom management tools. When a student, group, or class displays an appropriate pro-social or pro-academic behavior, the teacher reinforces that behavior with a targeted praise statement containing two elements: (1) a specific description of the praiseworthy behavior, and (2) an expression of teacher approval (e.g., "You worked for the full independent-work period. Nice job!"; "I really appreciate the way that our student groups stayed on-task and completed their entire assignment.").
- **Scheduled Attention: Rechannel Adult Interactions** (Austin & Soeda, 2008). As every educator knows, teacher attention can be a potent motivator for student behavior. One strategy to increase positive behaviors is to 'catch the student being good' with regular doses of 'scheduled attention': (1) The teacher decides on a fixed-interval schedule to provide attention (e.g., every 8 minutes); (2) At each interval, the teacher observes the student; (3) If the student is engaged in appropriate behaviors at that moment, the teacher provides a dose of positive attention (e.g., verbal praise; non-verbal praise such as thumbs-up; brief positive conversation; encouragement). If the student is off-task or not behaving appropriately, the teacher briefly redirects the student to task and returns immediately to instruction until the next scheduled-attention interval.



### 3. *Extinction Procedures*: Responses That Reduce or Eliminate Problem Behaviors

Extinction means discontinuing the reinforcing consequences of behaviors to erase an individual's motivation to engage in those behaviors. In effect, extinction procedures 'cut off the oxygen' to problem behaviors. That is, explicit directions should be written into a behavior intervention plan to guide those working with the student to alter their responses to problem behaviors in a manner designed to remove reinforcement for the misbehavior.

An explicit plan to extinguish problem behaviors is an *essential* part of most student behavior plans (Hester et al., 2009). Without extinction procedures, educators are far too likely accidentally to continue reinforcing the very behaviors they are trying to eliminate. The teacher wishing to extinguish specific behaviors can try one or more of the following strategies:

- **Escape Breaks: Put Escape on a Schedule** (Waller & Higbee, 2010). The teacher can manage a student who uses disruptive behavior to escape or avoid academic work by scheduling 'non-contingent escape breaks'. First the teacher selects a reasonable work interval for the student-- this should be an interval slightly shorter than the average amount of time that student *currently* will work before misbehaving (e.g. 5 minutes). Next, the teacher decides how long the brief 'escape break' will last (e.g., two minutes). Finally, the teacher identifies motivating activities that the student can engage in during escape breaks (e.g., coloring; playing a math application on a computer tablet). When the intervention is in effect, the teacher directs the student to begin work and starts a timer. When the student's work interval is done, the teacher directs that student to take a break and again starts the timer. When the break is up, the student is directed to resume work. This process repeats until the work period is over. As the student's behaviors improve, the teacher can gradually lengthen the work periods until the student is able to remain academically engaged for as long as typical peers; at this point, the intervention is discontinued.
- **Choice Statements in 2 Parts: Frame the Alternative Consequences** (Walker, 1997). The teacher frames a request to an uncooperative student as a two-part 'choice' statement: (1) The teacher presents the negative, or non-compliant, choice and its consequence (e.g., "John, you can choose to stay after school today to finish this in-class assignment."); (2) The teacher next states the positive behavioral choice that the student is encouraged to select (e.g., "Or you can finish your work now and not stay after school. It's your choice."). If the student fails to comply within a reasonable time (e.g. 1 minute), the teacher imposes the disciplinary consequence.
- **Contingent Instructions: Move from 'Stop' to 'Start'** (Curran, 2006; Gable. Hester, Rock, & Hughes, 2009). When the instructor observes that a student is engaging in problem behavior requiring a response, the teacher delivers contingent instructions in a 3-part format.
  1. *STOP statement*. The teacher directs the student to STOP a specific problem behavior, e.g., "Joshua, put away the magazine."; "Annabelle, return to your seat."
  2. *START statement*. After a brief (1-2 second) pause, the instruction describes the appropriate replacement behavior that the student should START, e.g., "Open your book to page 28 and begin the end-of-chapter questions."; "Work with your partner to solve the math problem on the board."



3. *PRAISE for compliance.* As the student begins to engage in the desired behavior, the teacher concludes by PRAISING the student for compliance. e.g., "Thank you for starting your book assignment, Joshua.", "I see that you and your partner are solving the math problem, Annabelle. Good!"
- **If/Then Statements: Set the Conditions** (Majeika et al., 2011). When the student is engaging in a problem behavior, the teacher can use an 'if/then' statement to prompt that student to engage in the appropriate replacement behavior. For example, if a student is out of seat without permission, the teacher says, "Shelly, if you return to your seat, then I will come over and answer your question." Of course, when the student responds by displaying the positive behavior, the teacher follows through with the promised action and praises that student for compliance.
  - **Planned Ignoring: Turn Off the Attention** (Colvin, 2009). When the student engages in minor misbehavior to attract teacher attention, planned ignoring is a useful strategy. In planned ignoring, the instructor withholds attention when the student engages in the problem behavior. Ignoring problem behavior can remove the source of its reinforcement and thus help to extinguish it. Teachers should remember, though, that planned ignoring alone is seldom successful. Instead, planned ignoring becomes much more powerful when, at the same time, the teacher provides regular attention whenever the student engages in positive, replacement behaviors. In fact, the tandem efforts of (1) removing teacher attention from misbehavior while (2) rechanneling that attention toward positive behaviors is one of the most effective behavior management combinations available.
  - **Praise Peers: Shape Behavior Through Vicarious Reinforcement** (Majeika et al., 2011). Teacher approval can be a powerful motivator. The teacher can capitalize on this fact by publicly praising on-task peers sitting near the target (misbehaving) student. When the target student then engages in academic work, the teacher makes sure to praise that student as well.
  - **Precision Requests: Make Directives and Consequences Clear** (De Martini-Scully, Bray, & Kehle, 2000; Musser, Bray, Kehle, & Jenson, 2001). The *precision request* structures communication with the student in a concise, respectful format that preserves adult authority and increases the likelihood of student compliance. In preparation, the teacher decides on appropriate consequences for non-compliance. Examples of suitable consequences include loss of free time, phone call to a parent, loss of a point or token, or restriction of activities at recess. When making a precision request, the teacher follows these steps:
    1. *Make first request: "Please..."*. The teacher states a brief request that starts with the word 'Please' and -- whenever possible--frames the request as a goal behavior rather than as a behavior to stop (e.g., "Rick, please open your math book and begin the assignment written on the board"). The teacher then waits 5 seconds for the student to comply. If the student complies, the teacher praises the student (e.g., "Thank you for starting your math assignment").
    2. *Make second request: "I Need..."*. If the student fails to comply with the first request within 5 seconds, the teacher repeats that request. This time, the teacher starts the request with the phrase "I need..." (e.g., "Rick, I need you to open your math book and begin the assignment written on the board"). Again, the teacher waits 5 seconds for the student to comply. If the student complies, the teacher praises the student (e.g., "Thank you for starting your math assignment").
    3. *Deliver consequence for non-compliance.* If the student fails to comply to the second request within 5 seconds, the teacher follows through in delivering the pre-determined consequence for non-compliance.



- **Redirect the Student: Get Them Back on Track** (Dhaem, 2012; Simonsen et al., 2008). When the teacher observes the student begin to engage in problem behaviors, the instructor redirects that student back to task, either verbally (e.g., "Tom, stop talking and start your assignment") or non-verbally (e.g., giving that student a significant look and negative head shake). Redirects should be brief and calm in tone. NOTE: Teachers can also redirect without distracting the class by using 'tweets'--brief behavioral reminders written on post-it notes and placed on the student's desk.
  
- **Response Cost: Deduct for Misbehavior** (DuPaul & Stoner, 2002). Response cost is a strategy in which the teacher assigns an incentive (e.g., points, tokens, or classroom privileges such as free time) to the student at the start of the session. Each time that the student misbehaves during the session, that student loses a point, token, or increment of privilege (e.g., losing 5 minutes of free time). At the end of the session, the student is awarded any points, tokens, or privileges that remain. In preparation for response cost, the teacher must establish incentives that the student(s) would value--either setting up a classwide or individual point/token system tied to rewards or making available classroom privileges. The student(s) must also be trained in how the response cost system operates, including a clear understanding of what problem behaviors will result in response-cost deductions and what positive, replacement behaviors they are expected to display.

Response cost, like all punishment strategies, should be used only when it is clear that the problem behavior is fully under the student's control. Before using response cost, the teacher should ensure that the student has the required skills, training, and self-control to avoid the problem behavior and to engage in a positive, replacement behavior.

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## How to Reduce Disruptive Behaviors Through a Brief Escape Break: Class Pass

**Description.** When students engage in disruptive behaviors in the classroom, they may be seeking to escape or avoid an academic task (Packenham, Shute, & Reid, 2004). With the Class Pass intervention, the student is able to use a limited number of passes to take brief (8-12 minute) work breaks to engage in preferred activities without disrupting instruction (Collins et al., 2015; Cook et al., 2014). To promote increased work tolerance, however, the student is also given an incentive to retain passes unused to redeem later for rewards.

This article lays out the procedures for using Class Passes (based on the work of Collins et al., 2015; Cook et al., 2014).

**Preparation.** In advance of the Class Pass intervention, the teacher:

1. **decides how many Class Passes to issue.** The teacher determines the number of Class Passes issued to the student each day. As a guide, research shows that 3 passes per day (elementary) or class period (middle or high school) have generally been sufficient to substantially increase academic engagement. Sample Class Passes can be found later in this document.
2. **determines the length of the work break.** When the student uses a Class Pass, that learner receives a short break from academic work. The teacher chooses the length of these brief breaks. Research supports a 10-minute break period for elementary students and a 5-minute break for secondary-level students.
3. **decides on the minimum wait-time between work breaks.** Once a student has used a Class Pass to take a break, that student is expected to resume work for a minimum period before being allowed to request another break. The teacher chooses the minimum wait-time period between breaks. Research suggests that a minimum wait-time of between 7 and 15 minutes to be effective.
4. **identifies allowed break activities.** The teacher and student develop a list of activities that the student can engage in during work breaks. Acceptable activities should be reinforcing for the student, cause minimal distraction to peers, and be manageable within the time-limits of the break (e.g., 10 minutes). Examples of appropriate activities might include drawing at one's desk or using a computer math-skills program at the back of the classroom. If there are particular rules or exceptions associated with any of the activities, these expectations should be clearly defined. For the activity *using a computer math-skills program*, for example, teacher and student may agree that this activity is available throughout the day *except* when other students are using that program for math instruction. More detailed instructions for identifying break activities can be found in the organizer *Class Pass: Selecting Break Activities* that appears later in this document.
5. **creates a reward menu.** The teacher and student identify several positive reinforcers ('rewards') that the student can access by redeeming unused Class Passes. These rewards are arranged in a menu format, with information about how many unused Class Passes are required to access each reward. Appropriate reward choices are those that are permissible in the classroom or school, viewed as reinforcing by the student, and available at little or no cost. Guidelines for assembling a reward menu can be found in the organizer *Class Pass: Building a Reward Menu* that appears later in this document.

**Student Training.** When the Class Pass program is ready to start, the teacher trains the student. The training should follow the sequence of coach (the teacher describes the procedures), model (the teacher demonstrates for the student what the procedures look like), and practice (the teacher has the student practice the procedures with instructor feedback). While this training can most likely be completed in a single session, the teacher should be prepared to provide additional training sessions if the student needs them.



Most of the steps that the student is to be trained in are explained in the 'Procedures' section that follows. During this training, the teacher also:

- **helps the student to recognize signs that a work-break is needed.** The teacher tells the student that a work-break might be needed when the learner feels confused, bored, frustrated, or tired during academic work. The student can then be prompted to come up with specific examples of when they might need to take a work-break.
- **identifies the sequence for requesting a work-break.** The student is told that, to initiate a work-break, he or she raises a hand and waits patiently for teacher acknowledgement and approval before starting the break.
- **informs the student when work-breaks are not permitted.** The student is informed that Class Pass breaks are off-limits (1) during exams, (2) if the student has already used up all available Class Passes for the session or day, or (3) if the student requests a work-break too soon after requesting a previous work-break.

**Procedures.** When the Class Pass is in effect, here are the daily steps that make up this intervention:

1. **The teacher issues the allotted Class Passes.** The instructor starts the day or period by issuing the student the agreed-upon number of Class Passes (e.g., 3).
2. **The student requests Class Pass breaks when needed.** During academic tasks, the student monitors his or her emotional response. If needed, the student signals the request for a Class Pass break by raising a hand and waiting for the teacher to acknowledge and approve the request. The student surrenders a Class Pass and begins the break.
3. **The student takes the timed work-break.** When the student starts the work-break, the teacher or other supervising adult starts a timer set to the break length. At the end of the break, the student returns to the work setting and resumes the academic task.
4. **The student is credited with unused Class Passes and selects rewards.** At the conclusion of the instructional period or day, any Class Passes the student has not used are credited to that learner. Periodically and in a timely manner (e.g., daily, every other day), the student has an opportunity to review the reward menu and 'purchase' rewards for which the student has collected sufficient Class Pass credits.

**Troubleshooting/Tips.** Here are teacher tips to get the greatest benefit from using the Class Pass intervention:

- **Remind students to use the strategy.** When the teacher observes the student being non-compliant, appearing frustrated, or otherwise displaying potential escape-and-avoid behaviors, the instructor can gently remind the student of the intervention: e.g., *"You can follow instructions or you can take a Class Pass break. It's your choice."*
- **Pair Class Passes with academic supports.** If the student appears to habitually engage in behaviors to escape or avoid academic tasks, it is likely that the learner experiences real difficulty in completing the assigned work. In this common scenario, the Class Pass system can quickly reduce disruptive behaviors—but does not address the academic deficits that are the root cause of those behaviors. Students who fit this profile, therefore, should also be provided with appropriate academic supports to help them to successfully complete schoolwork and eventually eliminate the need for scheduled work-breaks.
- **Periodically update activities and rewards.** To maintain the effectiveness of the Class Pass system, the teacher may want to re-meet with the student every several weeks or so to update the work-break activities and Class Pass reward menus. Refreshing these intervention elements occasionally can sustain student motivation.
- **Fade Class Passes over time.** As the student shows the ability to tolerate longer work-periods and save unused Class Passes for rewards, the teacher should frequently reinforce the student by praising gains in academic engagement as well as increased work production and improved grades. Along with consistent use of



praise, the instructor can gradually reduce the number of Class Passes assigned per day (e.g., dropping from 3 to 2, etc.) until the student is able to complete academic work without supports and the intervention can be discontinued.

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## Class Pass: Selecting Break Activities

**Directions.** Follow these steps to develop a menu of break activities that the student can access with a Class Pass.

Step 1: Meet with the student. Together develop a list of acceptable and engaging activity choices the student can engage in when taking a 'Class Pass' break. List those choices in the 'Break Activity Choice' column. NOTE: Listed activities should be acceptable to the instructor, manageable within the classroom or school setting, and feasible to complete within 8-12 minutes.

Step 2: For each approved activity, use the 'Location/Supervision/Details' column to describe its location (e.g., back of the classroom, neighboring classroom), the adult(s) who will supervise the student, and any additional important details (e.g., accessing materials for the activity).

Activity	Break Activity Choice	Location/Supervision/Details
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
10		



## Class Pass: Building a Reward Menu

**Directions.** Follow these steps to create a menu of rewards for which the student can redeem unused Class Passes.

Step 1: Assemble a list of possible rewards that are affordable, appropriate for your classroom or school, and potentially motivating for students. Here are two good sources for inexpensive or free reward ideas:

- A list of rewards compiled by Dr. Laura A. Riffel:  
<http://www.wisconsinpbisnetwork.org/assets/files/resources/Free%20or%20Inexpensive%20Rewards.pdf>
- Jackpot! Reward Finder: <http://www.interventioncentral.org/teacher-resources/student-rewards-finder>

Step 2: Review with the student your set of reward ideas. Ask the student whether he/she likes each reward 'a lot' (thumbs up) 'a little' (thumbs sideways), or 'not at all' (thumbs down). In the 'Reward Choice' column, list any for which the student indicates a strong preference (i.e., 'I like a lot!'). If a reward can be delivered only under certain conditions (e.g., by a specific person, at a certain time of day), use the 'Details' column to describe those conditions.

Step 3: Record in the "Number/Passes Needed" column the number of Class Passes required for each reward.

Reward	Number/Class Passes Needed	Reward Choice	Details
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			



# Sample Class Passes

Class Pass 

Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Classroom: \_\_\_\_\_

Class Pass 

Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Classroom: \_\_\_\_\_

Class Pass 

Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Classroom: \_\_\_\_\_

Class Pass 

Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Classroom: \_\_\_\_\_

Class Pass 

Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Classroom: \_\_\_\_\_

Class Pass 

Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Classroom: \_\_\_\_\_

Class Pass 

Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Classroom: \_\_\_\_\_

Class Pass 

Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Classroom: \_\_\_\_\_

## Managing Academic Anxiety Through an Antecedent Writing Activity

**Description.** Students may become anxious when faced with academic tasks such as test-taking—to the point at which the anxiety seriously interferes with their work performance. Being barraged with anxious thoughts while trying to complete academic tasks is a negative form of multi-tasking and taxes working memory (Beilock & Willingham, 2014). Anxious thoughts divert attention and thus degrade student performance.

One strategy that can help students to minimize the intrusion of anxious thoughts during a stressful test or assignment is to have them first complete a brief (7- to 10-minute) writing exercise in which they write about their anxiety (Park, Ramirez, & Beilock, 2014). This activity can lower anxiety levels and thus allow the student to complete the academic task without interference.

We term this strategy an ‘antecedent writing exercise’ because the writing assignment precedes—and therefore reduces or eliminates—the academic anxiety.

**Procedure.** Just before an individual student or larger group begins a high-stakes academic task that is likely to trigger anxiety, the teacher hands out a worksheet with these (or similar) instructions (adapted from Beilock & Willingham, 2014):

=====

*I would like you to write honestly about what you are thinking and feeling as you prepare to take this exam/start this assignment.*

*Because everyone is unique, there is no ‘correct response’ to this writing task. You should just describe as fully as you can your thoughts and feelings about the exam/assignment. You can also write about how your current thoughts and feelings might be the same as—or different from—those you experienced in similar past situations.*

*You will have \_\_ minutes to write. Please keep writing until you are told to stop. I will not collect this assignment.*

=====

The instructor gives students 7-10 minutes to complete the writing assignment. Students are then instructed to put their compositions away (they are not collected). The class then begins the high-stakes academic task.

**Tips for Use.** Here are suggestions for using this antecedent writing exercise:

- *Administer to the entire class.* Certain academic tasks, such as important tests, will trigger anxiety in many, if not most, students in a classroom. Teachers can use this writing exercise with the entire group as an efficient way to ‘take the edge off’ this anxiety for all students and potentially improve their test performance.
- *Teach students to use independently.* Some students experience significant levels of anxiety even during independent work – such as math homework. This writing exercise can be a good warm-up activity that students can use to allay anxiety and increase their academic focus.

### References

Beilock, S. L., & Willingham, D. T. (2014). Math anxiety: Can teachers help students reduce it? *American Educator*, 38(2), 28-32, 43.

Park, D., Ramirez, G., & Beilock, S. L. (2014). The role of expressive writing in math anxiety. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Applied*, 20(2), 103-111.

## Reducing Disruptive Behavior Through Antecedent Physical Exercise

**Description.** Students who display frequent disruptive behaviors can show greater levels of control and compliance after they have engaged in at least 30 minutes of sustained physical exercise. This technique is called 'antecedent exercise' because the physical activity precedes—and therefore prevents—problem behaviors (Folino, Ducharme, & Greenwald, 2014). The positive effects of antecedent exercise have been found to last up to 90 minutes.

**Procedure.** The essentials of antecedent exercise are taken from Folino, Ducharme, & Greenwald, 2014.

The student engages in sustained moderate exercise for at least 30 minutes. Any mix of activities is acceptable (e.g., having students rotate among a series of exercise 'circuits' such as jumping jacks and sprints), so long as it achieves this steady rate of physical activity. Of course, activities are always supervised by an adult.

The goal is for the student to achieve a 'target heart rate' through most of the activity period, a rate equaling 50 to 70 percent of that individual's maximum heart rate (Folino, Ducharme, & Greenwald, 2014). While not required, the school may want to use inexpensive electronic devices such as wristwatch heart monitors to track heart rate.

**Tips for Use.** Here are suggestions when designing a plan that includes antecedent exercise:

- *Clear the student for sustained exercise.* Antecedent exercise should be no more strenuous than activities that students routinely engage in during physical education. However, the school should verify that the student has no interfering physical limitations or medical conditions before starting an antecedent-exercise program.
- *Consult a physical-education teacher.* The physical-education instructor is a helpful source for exercise ideas that will engage students—and can also provide guidance on how to monitor the student's activity level to ensure that it falls within the moderate range.
- *Schedule strategically.* While antecedent exercise can show follow-up positive effects on behavior for up to 90 minutes, the impact is greatest during the first half-hour. If possible, schedule demanding academic work such as reading instruction as soon as possible after an exercise period to reap maximum benefits.

### References

Folino, A., Ducharme, J. M., & Greenwald, N. (2014). Temporal effects of antecedent exercise on students' disruptive behaviors: An exploratory study. *Journal of School Psychology, 52*, 447-462.



## School-Home Notes: Enlisting the Teacher, Parent, and Student to Improve Behavior

Schools seek effective but workable classroom interventions to address the problem behaviors of younger students. School-home notes are one strategy that holds promise for the primary classroom: the teacher sends home a daily note rating the student's school behaviors (Jurbergs, Palcic, & Kelley, 2007). Based on the teacher report, the parent provides or withholds a home reward. School-home notes have the advantages of both strengthening communication between teacher and parents and including the parent in the intervention as dispenser of praise and home rewards.

**Preparation.** Here are the steps to setting up a school-home note:

1. *Select target behaviors.* The teacher and parent decide on 2-4 behaviors to track through the school-home note. Behaviors listed on the note should be phrased as desired 'replacement' behaviors (that is, positive behaviors to replace the student's current challenging behaviors). For example, a behavior target for a non-compliant child might be "The *student followed teacher requests.*"
2. *Design a school-home note.* The teacher and parent design a note incorporating target behaviors. While any rating format may be used, a simple version may be best--e.g., Yes (2 pts)...So-So (1 pt).....No (0 pts). See the attached school-home note for a generic example. A free application is also available on Intervention Central to create Behavior Report Cards, which can be used as school-home notes: <http://www.interventioncentral.org/teacher-resources/behavior-rating-scales-report-card-maker>
3. *Decide on the cut-point for an acceptable daily school-home note rating.* The parent and teacher decide on the minimum daily points that the child must earn on the school-home note to be eligible to earn a reward. For example, a teacher and parent create a school-home note that has 4 behavior-rating items, with a maximum of 2 points to be earned per item. The maximum points that can be earned per day on the school-home note therefore is 8 (4 items times 2 points per item). The teacher and parent initially decide that the student must earn a minimum of 5 points to earn a daily reward.
4. *Develop a reinforcer menu.* Based on a knowledge of the child, the parent develops a reinforcer ('reward') menu containing 4-8 reward choices. Whenever the student attains a positive rating on the school-home note, he or she can select a reward from this menu.

**Implementation.** Here are the daily steps for using school-home notes:

1. *Rate the student's school behavior.* At the conclusion of the school day, the teacher rates the student's behavior on the school-home note. The teacher meets briefly with the student to share feedback about the ratings and offers praise (if the ratings are positive) or encouragement (if the ratings are below expectations).
2. *Send the completed school-home note to the parent.* The teacher communicates the school-home note results with the parent in a manner agreed upon in advance, e.g., in the student's backpack, via email or a voicemail report.
3. *Provide the home reward.* The parent reviews the most recent school-home note with the child. If the child attained the minimum rating, the parent provides praise and allows the student to select a reward from the reinforcer menu. If the student failed to reach the rating goal, the parent withholds the reward but offers encouragement.



**Maintenance.** These are two items that are periodically updated to maintain the school-home note program:

1. *Refresh the reinforcer menu.* Every 2 to 3 weeks, the parent should update the reinforcer menu with the child to ensure that the reward choices continue to motivate.
2. *Raise the school-home note goal.* Whenever the student has attained success on the school-home note on most or all days for a full 2 weeks, the teacher and parent should consider raising the student point goal incrementally.

### Reference

Jurbergs, N., Palcic, J., & Kelley, M. L. (2007). School-home notes with and without response cost: Increasing attention and academic performance in low-income children with attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder. *School Psychology Quarterly, 22*, 358-379.



## School-Home Note

Student Name: _____ Grade: _____ Person Completing This Note: _____					
<b>Student Behaviors</b>	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI
	_/_/_	_/_/_	_/_/_	_/_/_	_/_/_
<i>The student completed classwork in a satisfactory manner</i> Yes          So-So          No 2              1              0					
<i>The student used class time well.</i> Yes          So-So          No 2              1              0					
<i>The student got along well with peers.</i> Yes          So-So          No 2              1              0					
<i>The student followed teacher requests.</i> Yes          So-So          No 2              1              0					
(Optional Behavior)  _____  _____  Yes          So-So          No 2              1              0					
Comments [Optional]: _____ _____ _____					

**Parent Sign-Off (Optional):** I have reviewed this School-Home Note and discussed it with my child.

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## How To: Reduce Time-Outs With Active Response Beads

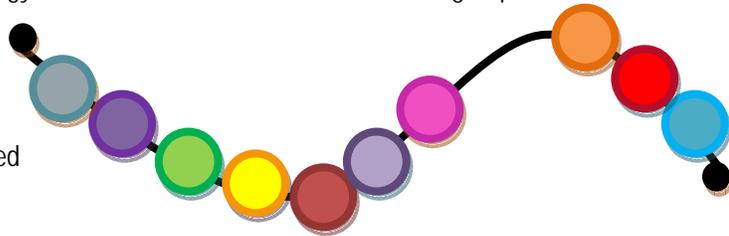
Students with behavioral disorders or ingrained patterns of non-compliant or defiant behaviors may receive in-class or out-of-class time-out as a disciplinary consequence. However, use of time-out (from reinforcement) has the serious drawback that students miss instruction while in time-out. Furthermore, because students are often directed to time-out when emotionally upset, there is a significant likelihood that they will resist the time-out placement, thus creating the potential for teacher-student power-struggles, classwide disruptions, and other negative outcomes.

Active-Response Beads-Time Out (ARB-TO: Grskovic et al., 2004) is an intervention to replace in-class time-out that is easy to use. It promotes students' use of calm-down strategies when upset, enhances behavioral self-management skills, and minimizes exclusion from academic activities.

**Preparation.** The teacher makes a sufficient number of sets of Active Response Beads (ARBs) to use in this intervention--depending on whether the strategy is to be used with one student, a small group, or the entire class.

The materials needed to create a single Active Response Bead set are:

- ten 3/4-inch/1.9-cm beads with hole drilled through middle
- A 38-cm/15-inch length of cord



To make a set of Active Response Beads, the teacher strings the 10 beads on the cord and ties a knot at each end.

**Training.** The teacher meets for at least 2 sessions with the student(s) who will be using the Active Response Beads-Time Out strategy. The teacher introduces ARB-TO as a way to self-manage emotions and classroom behaviors to increase classroom success and reduce number of time-outs. In each training session, the teacher and student practice steps of the ARB-TO procedure (outlined below). Training concludes when student(s) demonstrate understanding and compliance with the procedure.

**Procedure.** The ARB-TO can be used whenever the student displays defiant, non-compliant, acting-out, or escalating behaviors (e.g., refuses to engage in classwork, leaves seat without permission, talks out, makes rude or inappropriate comments or gestures, or engages in less-serious acts of aggression or property destruction). **NOTE:** Educators should be aware that the teacher's role in providing prompts, feedback, and praise to the student throughout the ARB steps is crucial to the intervention's success.

Here are the 4 ARB-TO steps:

<b>1</b>	<b>Teacher Initiates ARB-TO Strategy</b>
	<p><b>Teacher:</b> The teacher directs the student to "go get an ARB".</p> <p><b>Student:</b> The student walks to the teacher's desk (or other classroom location), picks up a set of Active Response Beads and returns to seat.</p>

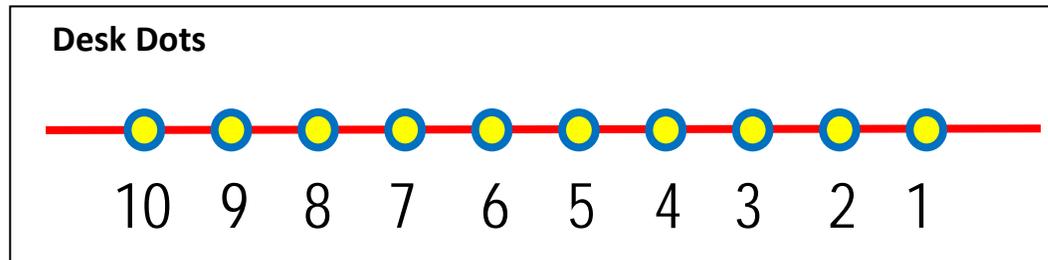


<b>2</b>	<b>Student Uses Active Response Beads</b>
	<p><b>Teacher:</b> The teacher praises compliance and directs the student to begin the ARB-TO procedure:</p> <p>"Thanks for getting your ARB . You need think-time for [describe problem behavior]. Put your head on the desk and use your ARB."</p> <p><b>Student:</b> The student puts head on desk and counts down slowly from 10 to 1. The student starts counting in an audible voice. With each number in the count, the student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• takes a deep breath and slowly releases;</li> <li>• moves a bead along the cord from the left to the right side of the ARB;</li> <li>• gradually reduces voice volume--to conclude in a whisper on the last number.</li> </ul> <p>Upon completing the count, the student raises head from desk.</p>
<b>3</b>	<b>Student Returns ARB to the Teacher</b>
	<p><b>Teacher:</b> The teacher praises successful use of the ARB-TO strategy and prompts the student to return the ARB to the teacher</p> <p>"Good job using the ARB. Please bring it up to me."</p> <p><b>Student:</b> The student gives the teacher the ARB and returns to seat.</p>
<b>4</b>	<b>Teacher Redirects the Student to Academic Task</b>
	<p><b>Teacher:</b> The teacher again praises use of ARB-TO, directs the student to resume the academic task or rejoin the academic activity, and offers support as needed.</p> <p>"Thanks for using the ARB and for returning it to me. Please continue with your assignment/ rejoin our activity. I will be over to check on how you are doing in a moment."</p> <p><b>Student:</b> The student resumes the academic task or rejoins the learning activity.</p>



**Adaptations.** Here are two adaptations of the ARB-TO procedure to increase convenience and extend student skills:

- *Replace Beads With 'Desk Dots'.* Teachers may want to use the student self-directed calm-down strategy



represented by ARB-TO but also wish to avoid managing sets of beads or having emotionally upset students leave their seats to retrieve bead sets. A low-key adaptation of the ARB-TO is the substitution for the beads of a series of 10 dots numbered in descending order printed on a slip of paper and affixed to the student's desk. The student is then trained, when directed by the teacher, to apply the ARB-TO count-down/calm-down procedure using dots.

- *Train Students to Self-Manage Use of ARB-TO.* As students become familiar with, and comfortable using, Active Response Beads-Time Out, the teacher can give those students their own bead sets. Students would then be encouraged to monitor their own emotional states and use the beads (or Desk Dots) when needed as a calming device--without teacher prompting.

## Reference

Grskovic, J. A., Hall, A. M. Montgomery D. J., Vargas, A. U., Zentall, S. S., & Belfiore, P. J. (2004). Reducing time-out assignments for students with emotional/behavioral disorders in a self-contained classroom. *Journal of Behavioral Education, 13*(1), 25-36.