Effective Classroom Behavior Management

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Child Mind Institute

Founded in 2009

The only independent nonprofit organization exclusively dedicated to transforming mental health care for children everywhere.

To help children reach their full potential we must:

• Develop more effective treatments for childhood psychiatric and learning disorders.
• Empower children, families and teachers with the scientifically sound information they need.
• Build the science of healthy brain development.

The Child Mind Institute does not accept funding from the pharmaceutical industry.

“The Child Mind Institute dares to imagine a world where no child suffers from mental illness.”

-Brooke Garber Neidich, Chair, Child Mind Institute
Upcoming Events

Behavioral and Emotional Skills Training: A 1-day Workshop for Parents and Caregivers
Presented by Mandi Silverman, PsyD, MBA, Clinical Psychologist; ADHD and Disruptive Behavior Disorders Center & Michelle Kaplan, LMSW, Clinical Social Worker
**Friday, November 13, 2015**
Time: 09:00 AM — 03:00 PM
Where: Child Mind Institute, 445 Park Avenue

Building Brave Muscles: Behavioral Treatment for Selective Mutism
Presented by Laura Kirmayer, PhD, MSW, Director of Brave Buddies Associate Psychologist, Anxiety and Mood Disorders Center
**Wednesday, November 18, 2015**
Time: 06:15 PM — 07:30 PM
Where: Child Mind Institute, 445 Park Avenue

Windward Teacher Training Institute at the Child Mind Institute: Expository Writing Instruction: Part One (Hochman Method)
Instructed by Betsy M. Duffy, M.S.Ed., Director of Language Arts at The Windward School & Dr. Hochman
**Tuesday, January 12, 2016**
Time: 09:00 AM — 01:00 PM
Where: Child Mind Institute, 445 Park Avenue

For more information, please visit childmind.org/en/events
Outline

• The Scope of Behavioral Issues at School
• Promoting Students’ Positive Behaviors
• Applying Interventions to Case Examples
• Creating A Self-Care Plan for Educators
Warm-Up Exercise

• What do you think of when you hear the words, “behavior management”?

• What situations give you the most trouble when it comes to child or teen behavior at school?

• What are some of the major strategies you use to shape student behavior?

• What kinds of support have helped in the past with student behavior at school?

• What kinds of student behaviors keep you up at night?
Elements of a CBT Approach

- Collaborative Empiricism
- Data-driven
- Proactive & Directive
- Practice-Focused
- Emphasis on Positive Feedback

"Do you know how much it cost me to learn all this psychobabble?"
EMOTIONAL & BEHAVIORAL ISSUES AT SCHOOL
The Biopsychosocial Model

Source: Psychology Today
Behavioral Issues

Common ADHD Symptoms
• Inattention & distractibility
• Careless errors
• Difficulty following instructions
• Difficulty organizing tasks
• Avoiding tasks requiring sustained attention
• Fidgeting or difficulty remaining seated
• Interrupting or blurting out answers
• On the go, running, and climbing
• Difficulty waiting turn

How does this affect teacher-student interaction?

Approach to Psychosocial Intervention
• Psychoeducation
• Behavioral parent/teacher training
• Organizational skills interventions
• CBT for older kids
Behavioral Issues

Common Behavioral Symptoms

- Temper tantrums
- Argumentativeness & defiance
- Easily annoyed
- Annoying others on purpose
- Fighting, bullying, and peer conflict

How does this affect teacher-student interaction?

Approach to Intervention

- Psychoeducation
- Behavioral parent/teacher training
- CBT for older kids
Multiple Sources of Behavioral Concerns at School

- Depression and mood disorders
- Anxiety disorders
- Autism spectrum disorders
- Speech/language difficulties
- Learning disorders
- PTSD

The balance: keeping educators informed and engaged in applying transdiagnostic strategies without burnout
Teacher Stress

Professional investment

Workload

Administration issues

Parent issues

Different roles

Lack of time/resources

Student Behavior

Lack of on-the-job success

Poor colleague relations

Lack of resources

Emotional exhaustion
PROMOTING STUDENTS’ POSITIVE BEHAVIORS
School-Wide Support and Intervention

Three Tiers of Intervention

- **Tier 1- Primary Intervention**
  - School-wide
  - Staff trainings, student skills curricula, core values, school-wide rewards
  - Meant to be effective for **84%** of students

- **Tier 2- Secondary Intervention**
  - Group-level
  - Targeted teacher training, class rules/expectations, classroom behavior systems (both for positive and negative behavior)
  - Meant to be effective for remaining **11%**

- **Tier 3- Tertiary Intervention**
  - Highly *Individualized*, requiring trained Staff
  - Likely involvement of mental health professionals
  - Meant to be effective for remaining **5%**

(Akin-Little et al., 2009)
Classroom Observation Exercise
The Coercive Cycle

Teacher gives command

Teacher raises voice

Teacher threatens

TEACHER REINFORCED BY COERCIVE BEHAVIOR

Student ignores/defies

Student argues/escalates

Student complies
The Coercive Cycle

Teacher gives command

Teacher raises voice

Teacher threatens

Teacher gives in

Student ignores/defies

Student argues/escalates

Student continues to escalate

STUDENT REINFORCED BY COERCIVE BEHAVIOR
Stopping the Snowball Effect of Misbehavior
The Power of Your Attention

NEGATIVE BEHAVIOR GETS REINFORCED

PAY ATTENTION TO NEGATIVE BEHAVIOR

POSITIVE BEHAVIOR DOES NOT STRENGTHEN

IGNORE POSITIVE BEHAVIOR
The Power of Your Attention

Become a detective for positive behavior

NEGATIVE BEHAVIOR REDUCES

POSITIVE BEHAVIOR STRENGTHENS

IGNORE NEGATIVE BEHAVIOR

PAY ATTENTION TO POSITIVE BEHAVIOR
Unifying Concepts for Behavior

• **Most important behavioral determinants:**
  - Attention (from parents, teachers, and peers)
  - A-B-Cs of behavior
    - Antecedents (setting a situation up for success)
    - Behaviors
    - Consequences (Reinforcement and Punishment)

• **Behavior change is gradual**
  - Behavior is shaped by many interactions over time, not just by a single moment
  - Behavioral work is more about being proactive than reactive

• **When encountering trouble:** regroup, seek support, and tweak the plan for tomorrow

• **Remember:** Behavior requires just as much support as anxiety or depression, but it inspires nowhere near the same level of empathy.
The Hierarchy of Behavioral Techniques

- Planning, teaching, & modeling related to good behavior & expectations
- Frequent reinforcement for positive behavior
  - Specific positive feedback
  - Token economies, charts, behavioral contracts, and privileges
- Actively withdraw attention from minor misbehavior
  - Wait and praise the “positive opposite”
  - Redirection and distraction
  - Differential reinforcement
  - Using when-then & two-choice statements
- Give good directions
- Sparingly provide immediate, incremental consequences for misbehavior
  - Checks/color change
  - Removal of privileges
  - Time-out or removal from classroom

Based on Parent Management Training (PMT, Kazdin, 2005), Parent-Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT, Eyberg, 2009), and Teacher-Child Interaction Training (TCIT, Fernandez et al., 2015)
Verbalizations in the Classroom

Frequent teacher speech patterns:

- Provide **neutral information** about class material, expectations, and transitions
- Ask **questions** about class material
- Give **directions** about academic tasks

Based on Parent Management Training (PMT, Kazdin, 2005), Parent-Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT, Eyberg, 2009), and Teacher-Child Interaction Training (TCIT, Fernandez et al., 2015)
Verbalizations in the Classroom

Use these **as often as possible**: 

- **Specific positive feedback** for positive student behavior
- **Describe** students as they engage in appropriate behaviors
- **Reflect** students’ responses
- **Ignore** minor misbehavior while directing attention to more positive student behaviors

Based on Parent Management Training (PMT, Kazdin, 2005), Parent-Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT, Eyberg, 2009), and Teacher-Child Interaction Training (TCIT. Fernandez et al., 2015)
Verbalizations in the Classroom

Limit these verbalizations:

- Rapid-fire **questions** or questions about behavior
- Frequent **commands** without feedback
- **Criticism** of student work or behavior

Based on Parent Management Training (PMT, Kazdin, 2005), Parent-Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT, Eyberg, 2009), and Teacher-Child Interaction Training (TCIT, Fernandez et al., 2015)
Setting the Stage for Success

Giving Good Directions:

• Direct (telling, not asking)
• Positive (what TO do)
• Single (one at a time)
• Specific
• Age-appropriate
• Normal Tone of Voice
• Polite and Respectful (Please…)
• Explained before directions/after compliance

Drawn from evidence-based models such as: Parent Management Training (PMT, Kazdin) & Parent-Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT, Eyberg)
Setting the Stage for Success

Facilitating Compliance:

- Use guidelines for giving good directions
- Lead with labeled praise before giving directions
- Incrementalize larger tasks
- Always follow compliance with labeled praise
- Utilize differential reinforcement whenever possible
- Shape and reinforce even small steps toward compliance

Drawn from evidence-based models such as: Parent Management Training (PMT, Kazdin) & Parent-Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT, Eyberg)
Guidelines for Consequences for Misbehavior

Most effective/utilized consequences:
• Check/color system
• Removal from activity or classroom (and peer/teacher attention)
• Removal of privileges
• Corrective, in-school meeting

Major aspects of effective consequences:
• Administered *calmly*
• Used *sparingly*
• Administered *immediately* after a behavior
• Incrementalized (*small doses*)
• *Consistently* applied

Drawn from evidence-based models such as: Parent Management Training (PMT, Kazdin) & Parent-Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT, Eyberg)
Guidelines for Consequences for Misbehavior

What consequences **DO:**

- Stop the behavior in the immediate sense
- Clearly delineate negative behaviors

What consequences **DON’T** do:

- Lead to better behavior in the immediate and long term
- Make the student think about what they’ve done
- Make a larger impact when escalated

Drawn from evidence-based models such as: Parent Management Training (PMT, Kazdin) & Parent-Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT, Eyberg)
Tailoring Interventions to Developmental Stage

• Age-appropriate behavior tracking or rewards
• Influence of other areas of difficulty
• Reinforce higher level skills:
  ▪ Self-advocacy
  ▪ Positive coping and communication skills
  ▪ Consultation with staff or peer supports
• Collaborative engagement of student in goal-setting:
  ▪ Behavioral Contracts and having a “point person”
  ▪ Clearly defining incremental steps on goals
  ▪ Frequent check-ins

Drawn from evidence-based models such as: Parent Management Training (PMT, Kazdin) and Defiant Teens (Barkley)
Problem-Solving Skills for Teens

- Define the problem and gather information
- Identify goals and common interests
- Generate possible solutions
- Evaluate each solution in detail
- Select a possible solution to try out
- Implement the plan for a short period of time
- Evaluate implementation

Drawn from evidence-based models such as: Parent Management Training (PMT, Kazdin) and Defiant Teens (Barkley)
Having Difficult Conversations with Teens

**DO these things:**
- Set up a time to talk in advance
- Plan for “talking points”
- Highlight student successes
- Be brief and clear with information/expectations
- Use “I” statements
- Stay focused on current events
- Speak as you would like to be spoken to
- Make space for discussion
- Predict future success
- Emphasize trust and open communication

Drawn from evidence-based models such as: Parent Management Training (PMT, Kazdin), Managing and Adapting Practice (MAP, Chorpita), and Defiant Teens (Barkley)
Having Difficult Conversations with Teens

Try to **AVOID** these things:

- Ambushing the student
- Disputing “the facts”
- Being condescending or criticizing
- Reviewing negative events or failures of the past
- Yelling or making threats
- Making negative predictions
- Negative nonverbals
- Thinking you only need to discuss things once

Drawn from evidence-based models such as: Parent Management Training (PMT, Kazdin), Managing and Adapting Practice (MAP, Chorpita), and Defiant Teens (Barkley)
CREATING AN EDUCATOR SELF-CARE PLAN
The CBT Big Three: Thoughts-Feelings-Behaviors

- **Feelings** of stress can be managed by addressing **thoughts** (cognitions) and **behaviors** (actions)

- Underlying assumptions/thoughts can often lead to unpleasant feelings and negative behaviors, which can lead to a downward spiral or just an overall negative sense of well-being

- We can adjust this by how we modify our thoughts, change our behaviors, or better cope with our emotions
An example of a negative pattern:

**Event:** Difficult deadline at work

**Thought:** “It won’t get done in time.”/”I won’t do it as well as I want to.”/”My boss will not be pleased”

**Feelings:** Worry, Guilt, Shame, Frustration, Disappointment

**Behavior:** Lashing out at loved ones, Avoiding coworkers, Disrupted sleep/eating
Skills for Stress Management

Adjusting each component to maximize well-being:

**Event:** Difficult deadline at work

**Thought:** “I’ve done this before and I was successful. I can do it again.”/”I’m up for the challenge.”/”I know that I will do my best, and my work will reflect that.”

**Feelings:** Encouragement, Pride, Happiness, Excitement

**Behavior:** positive interactions with colleagues & family, better focus & attention, completed tasks
A Mini Self-Care Plan

• Take a moment, and think of three **thoughts** that you have at work or at home that you find de-motivating or stressful
  ▪ Then, work on positive coping thoughts for each one
• Take a few seconds, and list 3-5 coping activities that you find **mood-improving/relaxing**
• List **2-3 goals** that you have been struggling to organized on
  ▪ Then, list 3-5 action steps with dates of completion for them
• Also, are there aspects of **communication with colleagues** that you’d like to improve?
• Are there particular kinds of **support** for which you could advocate?
Educator Self-Care

• Make use of outlets for stress relief:
  ▪ Partners, colleagues, and friends
  ▪ Breaks, exercise, snacks
  ▪ Sleep, perspective, and sense of humor
• Set small goals, prepare for hiccups
• Make adjustments, but don’t give up
• Seek extra support when you need it
• Reinforce yourself and each other (parallel process)
• Remember that change is gradual AND that you can be a major force for change
Educator Coping Thoughts

- I want to be a source of support for this student.
- This issue might go deeper than just this moment. I might just have to dig a bit deeper to understand and empathize.
- Just take it one moment at a time, & lead with specific praise.
- I’ve got support. I’ll consult and try another plan tomorrow.
- Putting in the effort now decreases stress later.
- *Flip the paradigm, catch them being good, and be ready for extinction bursts*

*What are some of the coping thoughts you can be prepared with?*
Selected Resources

- Articles & resources @ the Child Mind Institute: www.childmind.org
- School-based behavioral intervention
- Behavioral Intervention at Home
Would You Like One of our Clinicians to Present for your Organization?

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