

# Positive Behavior Support

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## Introduction

Over the years, our school has participated in many programs that have focused on school-wide improvement. However, one area that presented our staff with on-going concerns was the inconsistency of our expectations for student behavior—especially on the playground. In an attempt to address these concerns, our staff chose to implement positive behavior support (PBS).

Our school moved from a partially implemented PBS system in 2007-2008, to a fully implemented PBS system in 2008-2009. During that time, we learned a great deal about the implementation process. Most importantly, we learned about the value of our behavioral data as we work to support our at-risk students.

Therefore, as we prepare to move forward to the third year of PBS, we have identified some specific areas within our system that need to be improved.

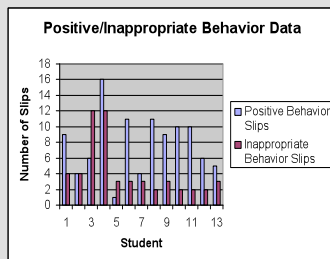
## Goal-Rationale

### GOAL

To increase the total number of positive behavior slips received by all at-risk students to a ratio of at least 5:1. Five positive behavior slips to every one inappropriate behavior slip.

### RATIONALE

After reviewing the PBS data for the 2008-2009 school year, it was determined that only 23% of the at-risk students were receiving the desired 5:1 ratio. The graph below illustrates the total number of positive/inappropriate behavior slips awarded to the at-risk students during the 2008-2009 school year.



## Research

A major advance in school-wide discipline is the emphasis on school-wide systems of support that include proactive strategies for defining, teaching, and supporting appropriate student behaviors to create positive school environments. Instead of using a patchwork of individual behavioral management plans, a continuum of positive behavior support for all students within the school is implemented in areas including the classroom and non-classroom settings (such as hallways, restrooms). Positive behavior support is an application of a behaviorally-based systems approach to enhance the capacity of schools, families, and communities to design effective environments that improve the link between research-validated practices and the environments in which teaching and learning occurs. Attention is focused on creating and sustaining primary (school-wide), secondary (classroom), and tertiary (individual) systems of support that improve lifestyle results (personal, health, social, family, work, recreation) for all children and youth by making problem behavior less effective, efficient, and relevant, and desired behavior more functional (OSEP, n.d.).

Although the three-level approach to school-wide positive behavior support is designed to meet the needs of the entire school population, it is especially suited to the specific needs of at-risk students (Turnbull, 2002). PBS is a well-rounded approach that supports students' positive behaviors, thus increasing their likelihood for success. In addition, by supporting at-risk students, schools can attempt to change undesired behaviors before they become a severe problem with the need for more severe interventions (Crone, Horner, & Hawken, 2004).

Note: There is a tremendous amount of research in the area of positive behavior support. I have found the articles on school-wide PBS to be the most valuable in addressing specific questions regarding implementation.

## Goal Achievement

### OPTIONS

- Additional PBS training for staff.
- Reward teachers for rewarding students.
- Assign at-risk students to a specific adult.
- Set specific targets for all staff members.
- Momentary time sampling.
- Weekly behavior focus for at-risk students.

### PLAN

After considering the options for achieving a 5:1 ratio of positive behavior slips to inappropriate behavior slips, I selected momentary time sampling as the best method for accomplishing the goal. Momentary time sampling will require staff members to set up time intervals in which to observe student behavior. The behavior will be recorded at the end of each interval, and data will be used to provide teachers with frequent opportunities to award positive behavior slips.

### TIMELINE

The following timeline will be used to accomplish the desired goal:

#### August

- Discuss current PBS data with all staff members.
- Identify at-risk students.
- Train staff in the use of momentary time sampling.
- Distribute positive/inappropriate behavior slips.

#### September-June

- Use momentary time sampling with at-risk students.
- Review behavioral data at the end of each month.
- Check for a 5:1 ratio for all at-risk students.
- If a 5:1 ratio is accomplished, continue with current practices.
- If a 5:1 ratio is not accomplished, increase the frequency of time intervals.

### RESOURCES

Implementation of this goal will be carried out by the classroom teachers, and therefore, will require no additional staffing. The only necessary resources will be one hour of staff development time to train staff in the use of momentary time sampling, one hour per month to review behavioral data, and \$100 for the cost of printing the positive/inappropriate behavior slips. All staff development, as well as all monthly PBS meetings will occur during regular work hours, so no additional costs will be incurred.

## Projected Outcomes and Conclusions

PBS research supports the idea that at-risk students experience greater success in school when systems are in place to reward positive student behaviors. With this being said, I would predict that the use of momentary time sampling would increase the number of positive behavior slips received by at-risk students. In addition, by increasing the frequency of positive student rewards, I would anticipate that the number of inappropriate behavior slips would drop considerably. These outcomes are supported by the behavioral data from 2008-2009 in which the majority of students with the desired 5:1 ratio also received the lowest number of inappropriate behavior slips.

Therefore, I would conclude that if teachers use momentary time sampling to fidelity, all at-risk students can achieve the desired 5:1 ratio of positive behavior slips to inappropriate behavior slips. This should provide students with adequate support to change or prevent problem behaviors. In addition, momentary time sampling will provide data that is both quick and accessible for teachers, yet does not interrupt the delivery of instruction in the classroom. This should prove to be invaluable as teachers work to support at-risk students.

## References

Crone, D., Horner, R., & Hawken, L. (2004). Responding to problem behavior in schools: The behavior education program. New York, NY: Guilford Press.

OSEP Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavior Interventions & Supports. (n.d.). School-wide PBS. Retrieved September 22, 2008, from <http://www.pbis.org/schoolwide.htm>

Turnbull, A., Edmonson, H., Griggs, P., Wickham, D., Sailor, W., Freeman, R., et al. (2002). A blueprint for schoolwide positive behavior support: Implementation of three components. Council for Exceptional Children, 68, 377-402. Suggestions for Further Research