Proactive Strategies / Behavior Plans to Reduce Problem Behaviors in the Classroom Setting

Shore Center
February 17, 2017

Presented by:
Gina Tirri, M.S. Ed., BCBA
Carbone Clinic
Presentation Overview

• Proactive vs Reactive
• Quick Review
  – Reinforcement
  – Function of Behavior
• Components of an Effective Classroom
Proactive

Do you???

Reinforcement
social  tangible  sensory

Prompt
New Behaviors

Model

OR???

Do you put fires out with gasoline?

Reactive
• **Reactive Strategy** of behavior management involves the immediate termination of the undesired behavior.
  – send a student out of class
  – reprimand student in the hope that the behavior will end – many times it does for the moment
  – “pay attention” to the student in the hopes they will calm down – many times they will

**Why do we do this?**

• Simple & quick
• Immediate results – we “feel” like it’s getting better (moment)
• Easy – requires no planning – not much thinking
• We don’t analyze behavior – functions
• We don’t rely on data

• **Proactive Strategy** of behavior management uses evidenced-based practices to understand behavior and arrange the environment and teaching conditions to teach replacement behaviors and avoid problem behaviors
  – Have a behavior plan with replacement behaviors
  – Provide high rates of reinforcement for desirable behaviors
  – Have plans
  – Evidence-based classroom management

**Why is this hard?**

• Requires planning
• Requires organization
• Requires an understanding of behavior (basic ABA)
• Effortful for teachers and staff
Understanding Behavior and Reinforcement – A Review
Reinforcement Defined

WHAT IS REINFORCEMENT?
• Reinforcement is anything that INCREASES behavior.
  – Can include gaining access to desirable items (food, toys, videos etc.)
  – Can also include the removal of bad things (class work, putting shoes on, transitions etc.)

  – There are two types of reinforcement:
    • Positive Reinforcement (+)
    • Negative Reinforcement (-)
Positive Reinforcement

- Follows behavior

- Something is added after a behavior
  - Think of addition +

- That behavior keeps happening
  - Behavior increases
Negative Reinforcement

- Follows behavior

Something is taken away after a behavior

- Think of subtraction -

That behavior keeps happening

- Behavior increases
Both increase behavior!!!
Increase Behavior

• Reinforcement will increase behavior and when applied correctly, positive and desirable behavior will increase.

• However, we can also increase problematic or undesirable behavior.

• We know that problematic behaviors in the classroom are usually shaped up through accidental reinforcement or incorrect use of reinforcement – usually from not understanding functions of behavior.
Major Functions of Behavior

1. Socially Mediated Positive Reinforcement
2. Socially Mediated Negative Reinforcement
3. Automatic Positive Reinforcement
4. Automatic Negative Reinforcement
Functions of Behavior

To get something

Preferred task/item  Teacher/Parent/Peer  Sensory

Attention

To get away/avoid

Task/Activity  Teacher/Parent/Peer  Sensory
Functions of Behavior

• What is the reason the behavior occurred?
• What is the pay-off?
• What does the student get?
• What does the student avoid?
• How has the student learned this behavior?

• Why is it important for us to know the reason?
Functions of Behavior

- Things to remember about problem behavior...
  - Children often use problem behavior to communicate.
  - Children engage in problem behavior because there is a skill deficit in their repertoire, or many skill deficits.
  - Problem behavior often interferes with learning.
  - The goal is to understand the reason, or function, so the teacher can make changes to reduce the likelihood students will engage in problem behavior and increase learning opportunities to teach new skills that will ultimately replace problem behavior.
Identifying Reinforcers

• Did the behavior increase?
  – If you answered YES – the behavior was reinforced
• Was something added?
  – If you answered YES – the behavior was positively reinforced
• Was something taken away?
  – If you answered YES – the behavior was negatively reinforced

The first step in any behavior change plan is to identify and control specific reinforcers to change the behavior.
Positive and Negative Reinforcement

• Simply put...
  – Positive Reinforcement adds good stuff
    • “Good job putting your shoes on!”
  – Negative reinforcement ends bad stuff.
    • “Ok, I’ll wait till your ready to put your shoes on”

But both will increase behavior.......one desirable (compliance with putting shoes on) and the other non-compliance (avoiding putting shoes on)
How to Avoid Being Reactive?

• Understand the functions of behavior
  - Why did that just happen?
  - There is a reason (function) that just happened!

• Understand the effects of reinforcement
  - Did I inadvertently reinforce the behavior?
  - Did I pay attention to the behavior and I should have ignored it?

• Question yourself – what went wrong?
  - What role did I play in the episode of problem behavior?
  - What part of the day broke down?

• Use evidence-based proactive (antecedent) procedures in your classroom!!!!
How do I avoid being reactive?

**Step 1** – Have a behavior plan that clearly identifies *function* of behavior and identifies the *reinforcer* for the staff.

**Step 2** - Use *evidence-based* and antecedent (pro-active) teaching procedures and classroom management techniques to off-set the inclination for students to engage in problem behavior.

---

**A**

Antecedent

Spend most of you time here - arranging the environment before the problem behavior happens; concentrating on curricular modifications, effective teaching procedures and effective classroom management techniques

**B**

Behavior

**C**

Consequence

If you find yourself spending most of your time here, responding to problem behavior after it happens, you are too late and you are simply “putting out fires”
What are the Effective Evidence-Based Techniques?

• A review of the recent literature found that between the years of 1996-2005 3,772 articles were found that included the words “evidence-based” as compared to 34 articles from 1986-1995.

• 3 central classroom components were found to be important teacher behaviors in order to have successful classrooms where students made academic progress and problem behavior was reduced.

  1. Proactive Behavior Management Practices
  2. Maximized allocation of time for instruction
  3. Arrangement of instructional activities to maximize student engagement and achievement

(Sugai & Horner, 2002)
3 Core Classroom Components: Further Defined

• Teacher behavior grouped into 5 major categories for an effective classroom
  1. Physical arrangement of classroom
  2. Structure of classroom environment
  3. Instructional Management
  4. Effective ABA procedures to increase behavior
  5. Effective ABA procedures to decrease behavior
1. Physical Arrangement

- The use of permanent structures – walls, dividers, closets that define the physical space
- The placement of furniture – desk, tables, etc.
- Organized arrangement of materials

Does the material located in this area define the expected behavior?
Physical Arrangement

Notice the tops of furniture – clean, free of clutter, useful materials
Defined Space

- Clear boundaries
- The space defines the activity
- Good flow for movement
- Clean and clear of clutter
Layout Conducive to Activity

- Group Activity
- Board is accessible by all
- Board is within distance of all students
- Board is in front of students
Physical Space

• Are the materials needed for the space readily available?
  • Art center – located near the sink? Materials within arms length?
  • Book Corner – books readily available, comfortable seating
  • Independent Work – independent activities, easy to complete
  • 1:1 work – all ITS materials

• Does the furniture allow to a good flow and movement but not allow for free running around?
Evidence

• Studies have shown classrooms with more structure have students who have made greater gains in academic and social behavior.

• Studies have also shown that students have greater task independence when in structured classrooms. (Morrison 1979)
2. Classroom Structure

• Post, Teach, Review, Monitor and Reinforce Expectations

• Active Supervision – for both students and staff
Post, Teach, Review, Monitor and Reinforce Expectations

• Establish expectations by identifying the desired behavior and provide those behaviors the opportunity to come in contact with reinforcement.

Why reinforce?

• I like how you lined up fast
• I like you responded quickly – here is a token
• You cleaned up so nicely – give yourself a check
• Student walked next to teacher – teacher gave him a piece of chip

• If behavior is not part of the child’s repertoire, prompt and reinforce and over time fade your prompts.

• You say “line up” and the student does not move – you provide a physical prompt and then reinforce – fade prompts over time
• You call on a student during group who does not respond – you provide a prompt and reinforce – fade prompts over time
Active Supervision

• Defined as the teacher moving, looking around, interacting with the students and providing reinforcement contingent for engaging in desirable behavior.
  – How many teachers work in a cocoon?

• Teacher needs to constantly active supervise both staff and students
  – How many teachers active supervise the staff in the room?
Evidence

• Providing reinforcement for expected behavior is associated with decreased problem behavior and increased appropriate behavior

• Pairing rules with reinforcement also has been shown to yield the greatest gains in behavior

(Johnson, Stoner, & Green, 1996; Lo, Loe, & Cartledge 2002; Rosenberg 1986)
Evidence

• Active supervision has been shown to decrease classroom wide episodes of problem behavior (De Pry & Sugai, 2002)

• Active supervision has been shown to produce higher levels of participation (Schuldheisz (van der Mars, 2001)

• Colvin and colleagues (1997) have found that the degree of active supervision – and not the teacher to student ratio accounted for the most change in problem behavior during classroom transitions.
3. Effective Instructional Management

- Defines as how a student participates during classroom or individual instruction
  - 2 types student participation:
    - Passive – listening
    - Active – writing, answering, doing (moving)
- Active engagement (paired with reinforcement) is the best mediating variable between instruction and academic achievement
- Active engagement (paired with reinforcement) is also incompatible with problem behavior
How to Increase Active Engagement?

1. Create multiple opportunities to respond (OTR)

- An (OTR) is a **teacher behavior** that prompts or elicits a student response.
- Two common methods to increase the rate of OTR’s in the classroom
  - Choral Responding – students respond together
  - Response Cards – erasable boards, post-it’s
How to Increase Active Engagement?

2. Direct Instruction

- Characterized as an approach to classroom teaching by presenting clear demands, use of hand signals, carefully sequenced curriculum, and the use of prompt and prompt fading, high rates of OTR’s, systematic feedback (both reinforcement and error correction)

Older Learner Group with Brian

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DOC0HNdtxuRg
• Certain curriculums make use of these evidence-based teaching procedures in pre-packaged curriculums
  – Reading Mastery
  – Di Math & Connecting Math Concepts
  – Language for Learning
  – Language for Thinking
  – Reasoning and Writing
  ....just to name a few

• Involved in the largest study in US history showing the effectiveness of these procedures (Project Follow Through)
Ways to increase Active Engagement

3. Use of Effective Teaching Procedures when working 1:1 with students

- Many students with significant language delays are often put in situations where they are required to work 1:1 with teachers
- During this time, high rates of OTR are presented
What are the effective Teaching Procedures?

1. Pair instructional environments with reinforcement
2. Mix and vary instructional demands
3. Reduce learner errors
4. Intersperse easy and difficult demands
5. Fade in number of demands
6. Fade in effort of demand
7. Pace instruction properly
8. Teach to fluency
9. Deliver reinforcement immediately
10. Use extinction when needed
Evidence for Active Participation

• Studies have shown that active participation increase both student achievement and desirable behavior

• A functional relationship was demonstrated between increasing the pace at which the teacher presents students with OTR’s and an increase in on-task behavior, increase in academic engagement, decrease in problem behavior and increase in correct responses.

(Carnine 1976; Sutherland, Alder, & Gunter 2003; West & Sloan, 1986; Sindelar, Bursuck, & Halle, 1986; Carbone et al., 2007)
4. Effective ABA Procedures to Increase Behavior

• ABA procedures used to acknowledge appropriate behavior

1. Immediate and contingent positive feedback
   • Immediately providing reinforcement when a desired behavior occurs

2. Group Reinforcement Contingencies
   • When a common expectation is set for the entire class
   • The entire class earns the desired outcome

3. Behavior Contracts
   • Written documents that specify the relationship between the desired behavior and outcome
4. Token Economies

- Students earn tokens for the occurrence of the desired behavior
- Tokens are then “cashed” in for a back-up reinforcer
Evidence

• Studies support the use of multiple classroom management techniques
• Praise is the simplest and easiest and has the strongest empirical support for increasing desirable behavior.
• The use of praise becomes more effective when it is specific.
5. Effective ABA Procedures to Decrease Problem Behavior

• ABA procedures used to decrease behavior

1. Specific Error Correction
   • A brief statement when the undesirable behavior occurs and then explicitly explains what should happen next time

2. Performance Feedback
   • The use of data and graphs (charts and reports) to “show” performance and then a level of desired behavior is set
   • Can also be used to increase behavior (reading fluency)

3. Differential Reinforcement
   • Provide reinforcement for the desirable behavior and in turn decreases the likelihood that the undesirable behavior will occur.
4. Planned Ignoring
   • Systematically withholds attention for behavior maintained by attention

5. Response Cost
   • When a token is removed contingent upon the occurrence of the undesirable behavior

6. Time Out from Reinforcement
   • When a student is removed from a reinforcing to a less reinforcing environment
Evidence

- There is extensive empirical support for the use of the above procedures
- Providing systematic performance feedback for social behaviors led to an increase in appropriate behavior
- Publicly posting performance data has been shown to both increase and decrease behavior.
- Differential reinforcement has been shown to decrease behavior while increasing appropriate behavior
- Response cost has been shown to significantly decrease behavior

(Trice & Parker, 1983; Deitz, Repp & Deitz, 1976; Brantly & Webster, 1993)
Classroom Management Begins Long Before the Students Enter the Classroom

- Effective teachers plan their school day out
- Effective teachers manage not only students in his/her class but the staff as well
- Effective teachers rely on evidence-based procedures
- Effective teachers rely on data to make decision
Questions????

Thank you!!