Prince Edward Island
CANADA

Department of Education
Student Services

Meeting Behavioural Challenges

Creating Safe and Caring Learning Environments

A Teacher Resource

Acknowledgements

The Council of Atlantic Ministers of Education and Training (CAMET) believes that all students have the right to a quality education and that students and teachers share a responsibility to behave in a way that is respectful of the rights of all students, teachers, and staff in the school. As well, teachers have the responsibility to provide education to all students and the right to teach in a peaceful climate, conducive to the learning of all students.

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Meeting Behavioural Challenges—Creating Safe and Caring Learning Environments: A Teacher Resource is a revised edition of the Newfoundland and Labrador document, *Behavioural Challenges: A Supportive Shared Approach.* Various working groups were involved in developing and revising this document. Many thanks are extended to all members of these groups. Care has been taken to trace ownership of copyright material contained in this resource book. Any information that will allow the Council of Atlantic Ministers of Education and Training to rectify any reference or credit in subsequent editions would be received gratefully by CAMET.

This resource can be accessed on the Department of Education's Web site at: ***www.gov.pe.ca/photos/original/ed_mebech.pdf***

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Introduction

Introduction

Being an educator in today's schools demands more than teaching reading, math, science, arts, and other academic content. Today's teacher must be able to accommodate students with significant learning and behavioural issues. School personnel and parents/guardians can be successful in reducing challenging behaviour by implementing a proactive/early intervention program. Best practices indicate that a critical step to successfully reducing challenging behaviours is a systemic change in how schools approach behavioural issues. Reactive, individual approaches to behaviour management have not proven to be successful and can lead to a sense of frustration and failure for teachers. Systematic team approaches provide support to teachers and more effectively address behavioural issues in schools.

Establishing a school-wide behaviour support system is a key step in building and maintaining a positive learning environment. Positive Behaviour Interventions and Supports (PBIS), Effective Behaviour Supports (EBS), and Positive Behaviour Supports (PBS) are interchangeable terms for an approach found in current literature that enhances the capacity of schools to deal with behaviour issues and provide support to all students. The model promotes a proactive school-wide approach to positive discipline that is based on the assumption that desirable behaviour should be taught and reinforced. It recommends that each school identify its individual needs through systematic data collection and analysis and work together as a team to provide a consistent and positive approach to discipline within the school. (Source: ***www.pbis.org***)

Behavioural interventions and supports must be put in place for the whole school (primary prevention). For 80–85 percent of students, this positive learning environment will enhance their school experience. However, the remaining 15–20 percent of students may, for some reason, be at risk for school failure and present with behavioural issues. For 10–15 percent of students, increased supports (secondary intervention) in the form of additional resources and targeted specialized interventions will be necessary to engage them effectively in school. For the remaining 1–5 percent, more intensive interventions (tertiary intervention), such as individualized plans, community involvement, alternative school placements, or crisis intervention plans, may be required. Any and all interventions and supports must be driven by school-based data and with parental/guardian involvement. (Sugai & Pruitt, 1993).

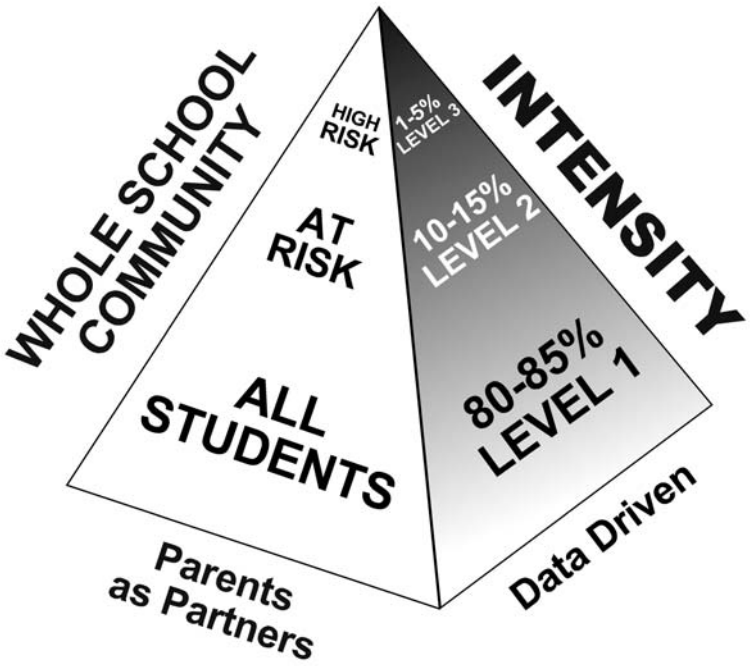


Figure 1(a).Positive Behavioural Interventions and Supports: Whole-School Interventions

Achieving a school-wide approach to positive behavioural interventions and supports is a dynamic process requiring involvement of the whole school community.

"Discipline" is defined as "steps, policies, or actions implemented by school staff to enhance student academic and social successes." (See "School-wide Approaches: A Positive Process" in *Meeting Behavioural Challenges: Creating Safe and Caring Learning Environments—A Teacher Resource*, 2005) Specifically, a proactive school-wide approach to positive discipline requires the following:

- commitment from the administration
- team-based implementation
- commonly defined behavioural expectations
- teaching behavioural expectations
- acknowledging and reinforcing appropriate behaviour
- monitoring and correcting unacceptable behaviour
- using information for decision-making
- parent/guardian and community involvement

School-wide planning relies on the following factors:

- a focus on positive programming
- total staff involvement (including custodial, secretarial and bus driver staff) and parental/guardian support
- commonly shared knowledge base
- enthusiastic support and active participation by administrative staff
- agreement on procedures for dealing with inappropriate behaviour
- structured staff development, decision-making and an implementation plan
- procedures for building individualized programs for students who do not respond to the school-wide management system

(Sugai & Pruitt, 1993)

How to Use This Resource

This resource has two components which complement and reference one another. Together they provide the theory as well as activities to develop an approach that fits the needs identified at each individual school. The ***Teacher Resource*** was developed to provide the theory and understanding around behavioural challenges. The ***Staff Professional Development Resource***, in the form of a workbook, was developed to facilitate the whole school planning required for the implementation of a system of school-wide positive behavioural interventions and supports.

The Teacher Resource

The Teacher Resource provides reading material to enhance the understanding of student behaviour. By building knowledge and awareness of student behaviour, teachers can plan and respond effectively and develop positive classroom and school climates.

This component describes three levels of intervention for responding to behavioural issues. Level I describes a global response to behaviour, with school-wide approaches developed in a positive school climate as the foundation and effective classroom management strategies, which can be applied by teachers to benefit all students. Level II refers to the problem solving approach that is required for students who are at risk for challenging behaviours. Level III discusses individualized planning for students who display significant behavioural challenges.

This resource enables school communities to gain a broader understanding of behaviour, determine needs through data collection, and formulate plans that will share responsibility for, and enjoyment of, a positive learning environment for all of its members. It can be read in its entirety, or sections can be used as they relate to needs at the school level, as well as to supplement the Staff Professional Development component. Notes are provided in each resource to enable cross referencing of related material.

Staff Professional Development

This component is intended to serve as a tool to assist the school community in designing and implementing a proactive, school-wide approach to creating a safe and caring environment and to providing positive behaviour support for all students, both within and outside the classroom. It is divided into four sections, each dealing with different aspects of school-wide behaviour planning. It is expected that schools will cover Section I: *Basic Principles and Framework – School Wide Discipline* and Section II: *Creating a Positive School Climate – A Culture of Competence* in the order outlined, since they present the basic premises of the school wide approach. Section III: *The Continuum of Interventions– Data -Based Decision Making* gives the school community the tools needed to choose and carry out appropriate interventions. Once Part 1 of this section has been completed, the data collected will indicate where interventions are most needed in any given school and will determine the order in which the subsequent parts are covered. Section IV addresses individual behaviour and social/emotional disorders.

A school may decide to do one or more parts at a sitting, depending on the time available.

Each section develops a theme and contains a short introduction to the content and ideas, followed by work sheets, discussion topics, and/or activities intended to enable schools to personalize the information for their own use. Toolkits, containing supplementary resources, are often included to complement the activities. Each section provides food for thought to enhance a school's professional development. The resource also includes various assessment tools.

Preamble

Preamble

Setting the Stage

Meeting Behavioural Challenges—Creating Safe and Caring Learning Environments: A Teacher Resource (2005) emphasizes a holistic, collaborative approach to meeting the needs of students who exhibit behavioural challenges. The way that students learn and behave is, and continues to be, of major importance for educators and society at large. Teachers are often faced with frustrations and challenges when educating students who exhibit behavioural difficulties, and program planning for these students can be complex. This document is intended to assist educators with this endeavour.

Public education is based on the philosophy that educational opportunity and success are available to ***all*** students and that the primary goal of the school is learning. Therefore, schools need to develop a continuum of interventions to meet the continuum of student needs within the school. Classroom teachers are responsible for providing support to students with diverse learning and behavioural needs, and supporting students is a priority. Therefore, teachers must develop a repertoire of strategies and behaviours in order to achieve the goal of helping students reach their maximum potential. Teachers need to use their understanding of behaviour when they work with school based teams to help identify and solve problems through collaboration and consultation. Teachers must engage in a process to examine how established stereotypes about race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, etc., may affect the school environment and impact on behaviour. School personnel can begin this process by examining their own beliefs, values, and experiences, as well as their expectations for students.

Before reading the information presented in this document, it may be helpful to consider the following key assumptions about behaviour:

- Behaviour has a purpose/function
- Behaviour is the response of an individual to his or her environment
- Many behaviours are learned; therefore, can be unlearned or changed
- Problem behaviours may be maintained by the environment
- Behaviour may be a way of communicating
- Survival strategies learned in early life may not be functional in later life.

Teachers need to have a clear understanding of students and their behaviour in order to address challenging behaviours in an appropriate manner. When students behave in ways affirmed and sanctioned by their culture, and when those ways are unfamiliar to or misinterpreted by teachers, the behaviour is often perceived as inappropriate. A greater understanding of diversity can influence the way school personnel approach behaviour problems and lead to a positive rather than punitive approach. Research confirms that using positive interventions has a higher degree of success than using punitive responses (Manitoba Education, 2001).

Schools need to develop a continuum of interventions to meet the needs of all students. Universal interventions, including school-wide approaches and classroom management, will elicit appropriate behaviour from 80–85 percent of the student population of a school; specialized group interventions will be required for 10–15 percent of the school population who are at risk for behaviour problems; and specialized individual interventions are required for 1–5 percent of the student population who have severe/intense challenging behaviours (Sugai & Horner, 2001).

Behaviour is measured by three variables: intensity, frequency, and duration. The combination of these variables needs to be considered in determining the level of response that would be most appropriate. This teacher resource describes three levels of response to behavioural issues:

Level I describes a global response to behaviour, with school-wide approaches developed in a positive school climate as the foundation and effective classroom management strategies that can be applied by teachers to benefit all students.
Level II refers to the problem solving approach that is required for students who are at risk for behavioural challenges.
Level III discusses individualized planning for students who display significant or chronic behavioural challenges.

Working with students who exhibit behavioural challenges can be very demanding and stressful. It is important for individuals assuming this role to take care of themselves. We have to take good care of ourselves in order to provide good care to others. As teachers, we are responsible for all students within our classrooms, but that does not imply that we work in isolation. It is important for us to collaborate and consult with other professionals as the need arises. Persons who can support the teacher include the school administrator, school counsellor, psychologist, other teaching staff, school/district student services personnel, parents/guardians, and service providers from other government departments and agencies.

Traditional Responses

All students may exhibit challenging behaviours from time to time; however, some students will exhibit emotional and/or behavioural difficulties that are severe in nature.

It may be tempting to respond to these behavioural difficulties with "cookbook" solutions. Some of the most common responses are:

- the system follows a fix-it philosophy. Immediate and formal referrals are made to the psychological and psychiatric communities for the "answers". Pharmacological control of behaviour may be seen as the first and perhaps only intervention. In short, all of the solutions for the student's difficulties lie outside the school.
- solutions are seen purely in resource terms. More "new bodies" are required to help the school control the student.
- strict punitive measures are enforced, and the student spends much of his/her time at home due to repeated long-term suspensions.

Although these type of responses may elicit immediate results, they create a false sense of security that does not benefit anyone in the long term. They foster environments of control and can inadvertently provide occasions when antisocial behaviours are reinforced. School systems that rely on these responses in isolation rarely achieve meaningful and permanent change in student behaviour. Accountability for teaching appropriate behaviour is ignored.

Premises

If schools adopt the following four premises and work collaboratively, then they will have achieved a supportive shared approach that promotes meaningful and permanent change in behaviour.

Premise One

The behavioural dimension of schooling is directly related to the pedagogical dimension. If schools and classrooms are organized to promote orderly conduct and appropriate behaviour, then the amount and effectiveness of instructional time will be maximized. Conversely, if the behavioural climate in schools and classrooms is chaotic, then learning will decrease accordingly.

Premise Two

Given the diverse nature of students in classrooms, there will be a wide variety of behaviours displayed. Educators must be aware of the range of diversity within student populations and how students' psycho-social, neurological, cultural, developmental, or academic differences influence behavioural functioning.

Premise Three

Coherency and consistency must exist throughout the school system when addressing behavioural issues. There must be one philosophy with respect to behaviour, not several divergent philosophies trying to exist within one organizational framework. Consistency in responding to inappropriate behaviour is important; however the type of response needs to acknowledge the individual needs of the student. Responses to inappropriate behaviour must be free of discrimination.

Premise Four

The school cannot unilaterally accept total responsibility for meeting the complex needs of students exhibiting behavioural difficulties, nor can it divorce itself entirely from providing an education to these students. A special effort must be made to connect with those students who have a history of weak attachment to school. Behavioural intervention is best done in a whole-school context in which the school system openly collaborates and forms partnerships with students, parents/guardians, and other agencies that serve children/youth.

Response from the Whole School Community

The **whole school community** must support and respond in a shared approach. Conceptually, the whole school community is a collection of individuals or agencies who share a common concern for the safety, well-being, and quality education of all the students who attend a given school. There must be cooperation, collaboration, and commitment of all stakeholders. The following are essential characteristics of a whole school community.

Ownership

Within the school organization, the school accepts ownership for all students, no matter what the nature of their needs or abilities. There is an acceptance of student diversity. The staff, as a collective entity, is optimistic about providing a positive school experience for all students.

Shared Responsibility
All teachers share responsibility for all students. There is less reliance on experts and more on developing and sharing expertise within the school. Individual staff members share their knowledge with others to benefit all students. Teachers share relevant curricular, instructional, and student-specific information with others on a need-to-know basis.

Shared Skills
Teachers are provided with, and expected to engage in, opportunities to gain essential knowledge and skills. They are also given opportunities to share with co-workers the knowledge and skills they have obtained.

System of Support
A system of providing support to students and teachers is an integral part of the school's overall planning process. A safe and caring learning environment nurtures wellness in the whole school community.

Cultural Responsiveness
A school system that promotes positive relationships among minority and majority cultures empowers students to value all cultures and provides a foundation for supporting widespread school success.

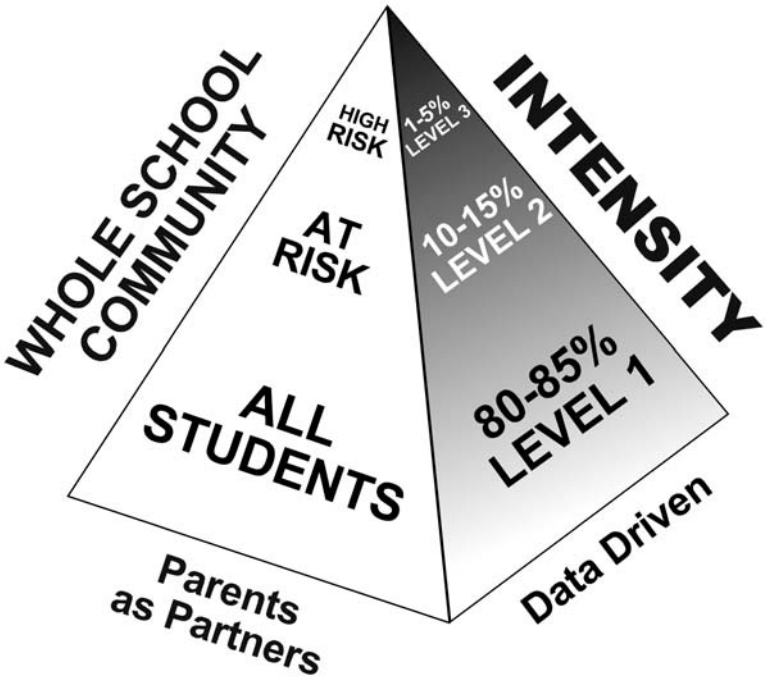
Problem-Solving
A school-wide approach to problem solving regarding curricular or student-specific issues is encouraged. Each member of the staff is seen as a valuable partner in improving instruction and enhancing the total school environment. Specialist teachers are not seen as the "experts" or "owners" of the students exhibiting emotional/ behavioural difficulties. The problem solving approach is a tool that is known and used by all partners.

Collaboration
Collaboration with other members of the community is promoted. Community and government agencies have a role to play in supporting the school community. Truly effective approaches include interagency communication, problem solving, and planning.

Parental/Guardian Partnerships
Parents/guardians play an integral role. They are involved in the process from the onset and are seen as integral partners in developing and implementing behavioural interventions.

A Supportive Shared Approach to Meeting Behavioural Challenges

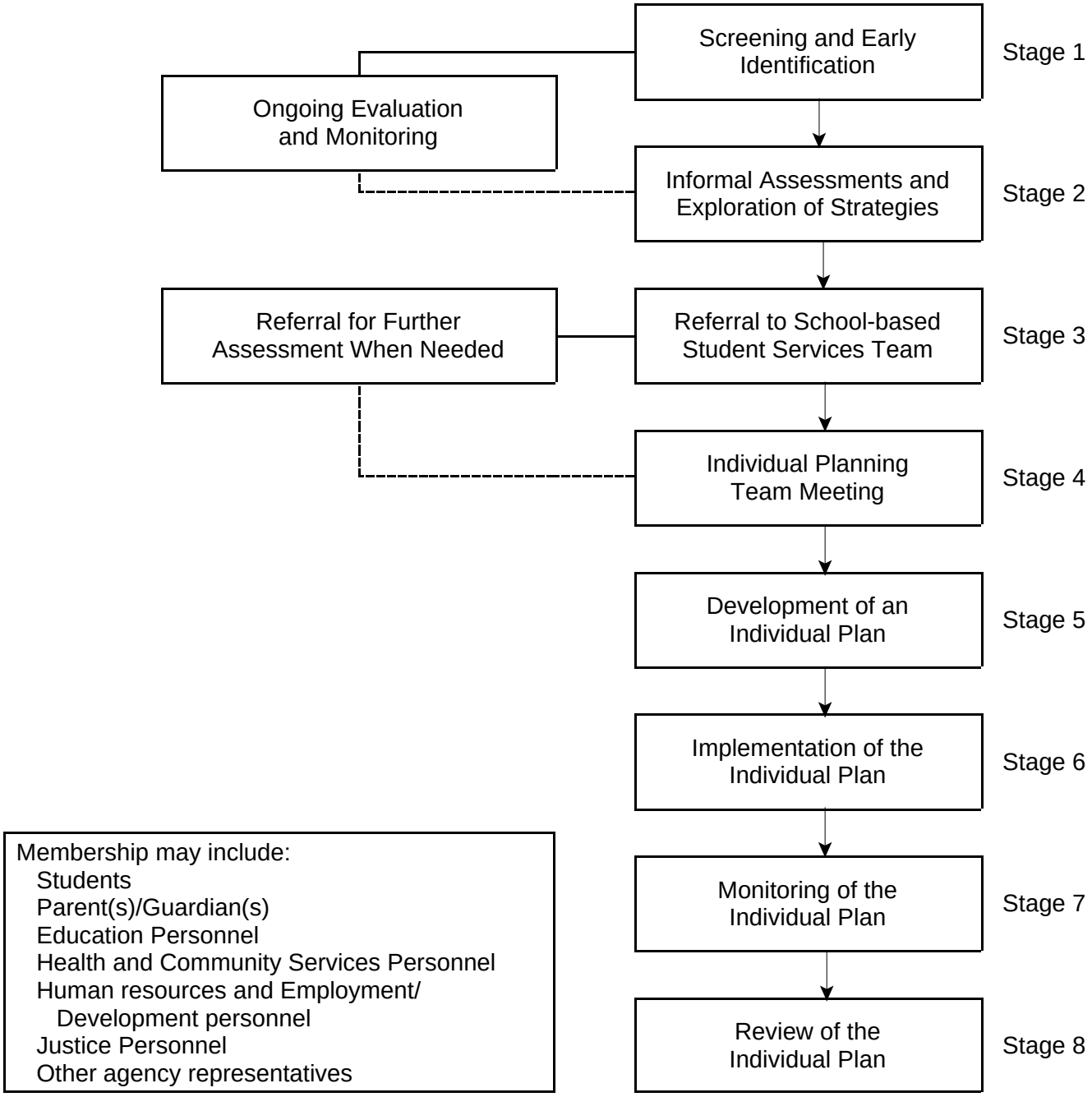
Figure 1(b) illustrates a supportive shared approach to behavioural challenges which is based on three levels of intervention: School-wide approaches and classroom management (level 1), problem solving (level 2), and individualized planning (level 3) for students at high risk. These represent a continuum of supports and services that will address all needs within the school community.



As one proceeds from the base of the triangle upwards, the structures/interventions become more focussed as the degree and the kind of behaviour become more severe. The shape indicates that there are fewer students requiring more intense services. Each level within the triangle is dependent upon the previous level as it flows from one to another. Essentially, these levels must build on each other if they are to be effective in addressing behaviour.

An Individual Planning Process

An individual planning process, such as outlined in the flowchart below, should be followed in order to ensure that the student's needs are met with a systematic continuum of responses. It may not be necessary to complete the whole process for all students if interventions are proven successful.



The following is a more in-depth description of the individual planning process* as shown in the flowchart on the previous page.

Stage 1: Screening and Identification
In collaboration with the parent(s)/guardian(s), other teachers in the school, and other service providers, the classroom teacher attempts to define the problem. Observations, informal classroom assessments, and interventions, as well as contacts with parents/guardians, counsellors, teachers, and others are documented. The process of identifying a need, clarifying a problem, and recording the student's strengths and needs in the area has begun.

Stage 2: Assessment and Exploration of Strategies
A continuation of the process may involve the classroom teacher trying various strategies available within his/her repertoire, seeking supportive input from other teachers and professionals. The school counsellor and/or resource/special education teacher may assume a central consultative role and/or provide short-term individual interventions.

If the classroom teacher is satisfied that the above two stages have been completed but the student still requires further interventions to address his or her behavioural needs, then a referral is made to the school based Student Services Team

Stage 3: Referral to the School Based Student Services Team
If challenging behaviours continue, and when all avenues have been exhausted, a referral for the student should be made. The school based Student Services Team might invite other agencies who are also working with the child/youth: a social worker, youth corrections worker, or someone from the mental health field. All persons problem solve using a collaborative and consultative approach. There may be a need for further assessment involving informal and formal measures from a variety of sources or agencies. Consent for release of information and consent for assessment must be obtained from parent(s)/guardian(s) at this time.

Stages 4 and 5:
Individual Planning Team Meeting and Individual Plan Development
An individual planning team meeting is held, and a person is selected to be responsible for coordinating the development and implementation of the plan. A plan is developed based on the strengths and needs of the student demonstrating significant emotional/behavioural challenges and, by definition, will reflect a number of concurrent and complementary interventions at school, at home, and in the community.

Stages 6 and 7: Implementation and Monitoring of the Individual Plan
Once a plan is written, it must be effectively implemented with changes being made as needed. If other helping agencies are working with the student/family, then the comprehensive services should be delivered in a coordinated manner.

Stage 8: Review of the Individual Plan
Assessment/intervention is an ongoing process with constant monitoring and at least one documented formal review of the plan annually to ensure that the student's needs are being met.

* Refer to provincial guidelines

Although some students may require long-term supports, others will demonstrate improvements to such a degree that specialized interventions are no longer needed. In such an event the ***exit procedure*** should continue as follows:

- If the student has achieved the goals and objectives of the plan, and there is convincing reason to believe that improvement can be sustained with normal programming supports, then the student services team will document this and discontinue intervention.
- As members of a team, classroom teachers and other support personnel continue to monitor the student's progress and maintain classroom support when necessary.
- Records compiled in the assessment and monitoring process will be maintained with confidentiality in accordance with district/provincial guidelines.

Level 1:
School-Wide Approaches –
A Positive Process

School-wide Approaches – A Positive Process

As we read current research about teaching students with behaviour challenges, we encounter several different terms such as Positive Behavioural Supports (PBS), Effective Behavioural Supports (EBS), and Positive Behavioural Interventions and Supports (PBIS). These terms are used interchangeably and suggest that the most effective way of dealing with student behaviour is to establish a school-wide behaviour support system. This method goes beyond managing behaviour or taking one approach to changing behaviour—to using multiple approaches: altering the environment, teaching skills, and focussing on positive behaviour. It recommends that educators and parents/guardians take the time to understand why a challenging behaviour occurs to determine the purpose or function of the behaviour. Once this is understood, appropriate strategies or interventions can be used to help students learn new behaviours.
(Source: ***www.pbis.org***)

The behavioural climate of a school rests on a solid school wide approach. This may be achieved through various methods such as positive behaviour supports and codes of conduct. Level I reflects such an approach. Whatever the philosophy ascribed to, ***discipline*** is an essential aspect of a positive school climate. For the purpose of this resource, discipline is defined as "the steps or actions, teachers, administrators, parents, and students follow to enhance student academic and social behaviour success."
(Source: ***www.pbis.org/english/Schoolwide_PBS.htm***)
Successful discipline methods teach appropriate behaviours and are never punitive in nature.

Discipline is an educational process that helps individuals develop self-control and a sense of responsibility for the collective good. Effective discipline policies and programs need to be based on the general premise that discipline is an integral element of teaching aimed at promoting academic success and teaching the common values and socially appropriate skills that enable students to work cooperatively within groups. Students come to realize that a measure of personal compliance and cooperation is necessary if the group is to function in a reasonable and productive manner. When applied judiciously and consistently, such policies are more liberating than restricting for students (Manitoba Education, 1991).

All schools should formulate a school-wide policy to address behavioural issues based on a whole school community concept. The policy should include a mission statement declaring the school's role in the child's development and education and should be based on articulated principles that reflect the developmental needs of students. The manner of policy development should also be governed by principles of best practice. A school code of conduct must be developed to operationalize the school's mission statement using concise language that is easily understood by students, staff, parents/guardians, and the community.

Note: For more information about the development and implementation of policies that address behavioural issues, refer to your provincial/district guidelines.

School Policies

School policies that address behavioural issues should be based on the following principles:

Principle 1

Policies are created through a consultative process, involving all stakeholders of the school community.

When writing a school code of conduct,

- the following stakeholders are included:
  - administrators
  - teachers
  - parents/guardians
  - students
- the rights and responsibilities of students and staff are included
- positive language is used
- all stakeholders are given the opportunity to review and make necessary revisions to the contents

Principle 2

Policies are sensitive to the developmental levels and special needs of students. While they must be consistently followed, they must also be flexible enough to provide for reasonable adjustment in various circumstances.

- Behavioural interventions take into account individual differences in the following areas of development:
  - social
  - emotional
  - cognitive
  - physical
  - sexual
- A range of options should be available for students with severe emotional and behavioural needs, generally implemented from restrictive to more restrictive. Some of these options are:
  - additional responses to support the students in the classroom/school environment
  - alternative programming
  - alternative setting within the school
  - alternative placements outside the school with constant monitoring to determine when to return the student to placement with his/her peers.

Principle 3

Policies address supportive prevention/intervention strategies and outline appropriate procedures and responses to be used with students.

Teachers and administrators dealing with behavioural incidents should ensure the following:

- interventions used are based on the seriousness and frequency of the behaviour
- the student shares her/his side of the story with the teacher and administrator dealing with the incident
- the meaning and intent of the behaviour are taken into account when determining its seriousness and its consequences
- contact with parents/guardians is made, when deemed necessary
- behavioural incidents and/or intervention strategies are adequately documented
- the student/parent(s)/guardian(s) have a right to appeal decisions

Principle 4
Discipline is an essential aspect of a positive school climate.

It is important that the school has
- developed a clear school mission statement
- developed a process to operationalize the school code of conduct
- developed a shared responsibility for all students by all staff
- established a safe, well-ordered learning environment
- established consistently high expectations for student and staff behaviour
- established mechanisms to reinforce and acknowledge appropriate behaviour
- established a range of appropriate and immediate consequences for inappropriate behaviour, which are applied consistently throughout the school
- adopted/designed incentive programs that promote student achievement and attendance
- adopted/offered activities that promote school spirit
- addressed school climate through the school improvement process
- established liaison with community agencies
- adopted a mentoring program for new teachers
- adopted a mentoring program for students

Principle 5
Discipline is a compilation of concepts and skills that have a positive impact on learning (Willms, 2000). **Discipline is not punishment.** It is preventive as well as corrective/ instructive and should foster integrity and dignity while promoting the development of accountability and self-management. Approaches should be proactive rather than reactive.

This is accomplished by teaching and using the school's code of conduct to
- communicate clear expectations for acceptable behaviour to all students, staff, and parents
- provide rationale for behavioural expectations that is understood by students, teachers, and parents/guardians
- provide instruction and/or awareness sessions to all students in areas such as
  - study skills/learning strategies
  - peer tutoring
  - self-awareness
  - self-esteem
  - self-concept
  - self-discipline
  - social skills
  - problem-solving skills
  - conflict resolution
  - stress/anger management
- provide professional development sessions for teachers and parents/guardians in areas such as
  - conflict resolution
  - non-violent crisis intervention
  - parenting skills
  - behaviour intervention techniques
  - suicide prevention
  - detecting and responding to signs of abuse
- focus on the inappropriate behaviour, not the individual:
  - have the student make value judgements about his/her behaviour
  - hold the student accountable for his/her actions
  - relate the consequences to the behaviour
  - refer the student to a counsellor for follow-up interventions
  - design behaviour intervention plans for individuals when needed
- deal with behavioural issues in a calm and controlled manner

Level 1: Classroom Management

Classroom Management

The classroom is a place of learning. Classroom practices that engage students in learning will minimize inappropriate behaviour.

All classrooms need rules and routines to function effectively. It is essential for each teacher to practise good classroom management skills and provide clear instruction. Classroom management is a highly complex collage of concepts and skills that are used to blend the behavioural and pedagogical dimensions of teaching. Teachers who are flexible, have goals in mind, see others' viewpoints, use all resources available, use problem-solving skills, use existing strategies, and generate new strategies are more likely to be successful (Boulton, 1993). Because teaching should reflect what we know about how learning occurs, it is useful to examine various classroom management/discipline styles.

Teacher as Classroom Manager

Frequently, teachers inquire as to the most effective classroom management style to adopt in their day-to-day teaching. There has been much research on classroom management. The following three styles will be discussed: Permissive, Authoritarian, and Authoritative.

Permissive *(also referred to as "non-assertive" or "laissez-faire" or "hands off")*
Teachers who use the permissive style may not be confident of their authority and have little will or skill to impose authority when circumstances require it. The consequence of such teacher behaviours is that the locus of behavioural control moves to the students themselves. The teacher places few demands or controls on the students. It is a "do-your-own-thing" type of classroom. Inappropriate student behaviour results when teachers abdicate their authority in the classroom environment.

Authoritarian *(also referred to as "aggressive" or "hands clenched")*
In this mode, teachers assume absolute authority in the classroom and may use that authority in an arbitrary, penalizing fashion. Firm limits and controls are placed on students. The teacher demands "You do it my way."

Essentially, classes run in the authoritarian style are anxiety-filled learning environments. Students become wary or fearful of the teacher, and some students who are inclined to be adversarial will react to the teacher with confrontational behaviours.

Authoritative Discipline *(also referred to as "hands joined")*
A more balanced and effective classroom management style is the authoritative mode. Teachers assume authority while allowing for student involvement and decision making with respect to the behavioural climate of the class. Teacher authority is fair, consistent, firm, and based on respect for the students. The preservation of the students' dignity is essential.

A teacher who uses the authoritative style is confident and self-respecting in his or her exertion of authority, while still having the students feel valued and respected. The locus of behavioural control does not lie solely with either the teacher or the students. Rather, control is a shared dynamic between the teacher and students. It is a joint effort to "figure out a way".

Cooperative Discipline (Albert, 1996) is an example of this approach. Students are validated and granted the opportunity to share in the responsibility for their own behaviour(s). Cooperative discipline operates on the premise that every student has the potential for choosing appropriate behaviour and for becoming a more responsible citizen of the school community, regardless of background, past performance, or current level of functioning. The teacher's role is not to control students' behaviour, but to motivate, influence, and guide students to choose appropriate behaviour.

Cooperative Discipline outlines for teachers the skills necessary for identifying the goal of a particular inappropriate behaviour (attention, power, revenge, or avoidance of failure), the strategies for intervening at the moment of inappropriate behaviour, and the techniques for building student self-esteem for future positive interactions. This approach attempts to meet students' basic need to belong by helping them to feel that they are capable of completing tasks in an acceptable manner, connected with teachers and classmates, and contributing members of their classrooms in a significant way.

This approach offers a process that is corrective, supportive, and preventive. It encourages teachers to work hand in hand with students, colleagues, and parents/guardians to resolve behavioural issues. (Albert, 1996).

Of the three classroom management styles, most would agree that the authoritative approach is more appropriate for today's society. It promotes teaching and modelling of appropriate behaviour as a developmental process that fosters self-responsibility and a responsibility for the well-being of others (Santrock, 2003).

The Classroom Management System

A style of classroom management that offers essential skills and strategies is important for teachers as they establish a healthy behavioural climate in their classrooms. The teacher's management style, together with clearly stated expectations that are consistently applied, constitute a "classroom management system". Teachers must have high expectations for all students, while recognizing individual behavioural and learning capabilities. The focus is student centred and endeavours to create a safe and caring learning environment.

Guidelines for Establishing Expectations within the Classroom:

Engage students in appropriate and motivating learning activities in a structured environment.

- Minimize inappropriate behaviour by having students actively engaged in learning.
- Focus on learning outcomes, using a variety of teaching and assessment strategies.
- Communicate learning outcomes to students and parents/guardians.

Recognize exemplary behaviour on the part of individuals and the group.

- Reinforce positive behaviour.
- Initiate parent/guardian contact for positive behaviours.
- Model desired behaviours.
- Encourage students to select appropriate behavioural choices.

Establish logical, fair, and age-appropriate consequences for inappropriate behaviour that demonstrate a caring and nurturing environment.

- Develop a mutual understanding of the rights and responsibilities of students through a consensus building process.
- Promote a climate of individual and group responsibility rather than of blind adherence to rules.

Respond assertively to behaviours that are disruptive or are infractions of the established rules. There are times when it is important to "pick your battles" and ignore minor inappropriate behaviours that are not overly disruptive to the class.

- Focus on the behaviour, not the student.
- Deal with inappropriate behaviour by being assertive, consistent, and persistent; avoid using sarcasm and embarrassment.
- Deliver consequences of inappropriate behaviours in a calm and positive, but assertive, tone.

Be adaptable.

- Entertain a classroom discussion if a rule no longer seems to be functional or useful and if students can offer well-considered reasons for changing it.
- Adopt new approaches if a particular discipline technique does not seem to work with a student.
- Tailor behaviour intervention techniques to meet the individual needs of the student while respecting the diversity of students within your classroom.

The following questions highlight some worthy considerations when developing, establishing, and maintaining classroom expectations and routines (Colvin & Lazar, 1997; Kame'enui & Darch, 1996; Kerr & Nelson, 1998; Sprick, 1981; Sprick, Garrison, & Howard,1998; Sugai & Tindal, 1993).

- How do I teach useful, appropriate, and important skills and knowledge to students?
- How do I use effective instructional strategies and curricula to teach these skills and knowledge?
- Is my instruction designed to maximize successful student engagement? How?
- How have I taught classroom rules and expectations directly to students?
- How have students demonstrated mastery of classroom expectations and routines?
- What obstacles prevent students from performing desired classroom expectations and routines?
- Have I taught and do I use procedures for encouraging (positively reinforcing) appropriate displays of classroom rules and expectations? How?
- Have I taught and do I use a continuum of procedures for discouraging/preventing rule violations? How?
- How have I established and taught students the difference between teacher- or classroom-managed and administrator-managed problem behaviour?
- How do I modify my instruction to maximize student learning and to accommodate individual student differences?
- Do I have procedures in place for monitoring student behaviour and the effectiveness of my classroom management practices? What are they?

Note: Refer to Section II, Part 4, "Reinforcing the Behaviours We Want to See", in *Meeting Behavioural Challenges: Creating Safe and Caring Learning Environments—Staff Professional Development Resource*, (2005) to more closely examine your own classroom management style.

Ecological Factors

The teacher can carefully structure a classroom to facilitate positive teaching/learning practices.

- Seating, table arrangements, and positions of learning centres should allow the teacher to view all students at all times. This is especially applicable in primary and elementary classrooms where displays, easels, shelving, and dividers sometimes create tempting areas for challenging behaviours.
- Seat students who display disruptive behaviour next to you and do not allow students who display inappropriate behaviours to sit next to each other.
- Maximize teacher movement by considering furniture arrangements. In classes where the teacher is a physical presence, there are fewer behavioural issues. The teacher should constantly move around the classroom.
- Use interesting displays that reflect students' work.
- In primary and elementary classrooms, have a quiet corner or cubicle for in-class time-out.

Teacher as Observer

Teaching is a multi-levelled task. At any given moment, the teacher is instructing, evaluating, orchestrating various tasks, and planning ahead. Concurrent with these management tasks is another function, ongoing observation, which is virtually automatic for many teachers. As they work, teachers continuously scan the behavioural climate of the room.

Preventing Disruptive Events

Teachers know their students and their potential for inappropriate behaviour. Teachers need to be aware of what is happening in the class at all times and to be alert and vigilant in perceiving the beginning stages of a disruptive event.

The ABCs of Behaviour

Knowing **How**, **When**, **Where**, and **Why** a student may be disruptive will allow the teacher to identify potential situations and act in a preventive manner. The **Antecedents** are what events and/or circumstances come before – signalling that acting out is about to occur. The **Behaviour** is what actually occurs or happens; the overt challenging behaviour patterns that are of concern. What follows the behaviour is termed the **Consequence.**

To identify the antecedents and consequences of a particular behaviour, the following steps are suggested. First, the challenging behaviour is described in objective, behavioural terms, then the setting in which the behaviour occurs (antecedents) and the actions that usually follow the behaviour in that setting (consequences) are described. This assessment will help determine the conditions that are maintaining the behaviour. Often a change in environmental circumstances can lead to a corresponding change in behaviour. (For more detailed information, refer to pages 41 – 43 in this document and *Meeting Behavioural Challenges– Creating Safe and Caring Learning Environments: Staff Professional Development* Resource, Section IV, Part 1, "Identifying the Functions of Behaviour")

Diverting Disruptive Events (breaking the chain of inappropriate behaviour)

If an antecedent is perceived, the teacher should take action to stop the disruptive behaviour from occurring and to redirect the student toward behaviours that are acceptable. A knowledge of antecedents and consequences and their combined effects upon behaviour allows teachers to manage behaviour in a more systematic and successful manner. Change can take place if teachers:

- change or remove antecedents;
- teach a child replacement behaviours; and/or

- remove consequences that are reinforcing.

Behaviours followed by pleasant consequences have an increased likelihood of reoccurrence.

Teacher as Human Relations Expert

Teaching requires highly developed interpersonal and intrapersonal skills. The effective teacher is aware of the students' needs, interests, abilities, approaches to academic tasks, and relationships with peers and teachers. The ability to form and promote positive constructive relationships with students is a crucial attribute of good teaching.

- Base relationships with students on mutual respect. Simply defined, respect refers to teacher attitudes that convey the teacher's high regard for the student as a person.
- Be an active listener. Appropriate eye contact, body language, and tone of voice indicate to students that you are actively engaged in what they are saying. Listen to the whole message before planning a response.
- Make positive statements about students. The statements must be genuine, because students will not respect individuals who flatter simply to manipulate behaviour.
- Be aware of how social identities of self and others influence behaviour. An individual's social identity has a reference group orientation and includes such characteristics as gender, race, religion, ethnicity, language, ability, sexual orientation, age, socio-economic status, etc.
- Challenge stereotypes.
- Teach and model respect for diversity.

And Most Importantly: Teacher as Teacher

Classroom management is the art of bringing behavioural and pedagogical dimensions together to facilitate learning. Good teaching skills and knowledge of content are central to effectively promoting learning.

- Aim to make learning interesting and active. Students who are engaged in their schoolwork are not engaged in inappropriate behaviour.
- Strive for clarity in all forms of communication. Ambiguous messages leave uncertainty about what is expected.
- Pay as careful attention to unstructured times as you do instructional times.
- Teach appropriate behaviours, while discouraging inappropriate behaviours. Encourage students to ask directly for attention when they think they need it, teach appropriate expression of feelings, etc.
- Model appropriate behaviour by demonstrating calm, reasonable, balanced behaviours yourself. **Teachers are teachers in all situations.**

Disruptive behaviour in the classroom is easily defined. It interferes with or inhibits learning. However, it is very difficult to define a "disruptive student" because any student in the school can be potentially disruptive. There is wide consensus that the best way to deal with disruptive events is to recognize them developing and then interpret and respond at the appropriate time in the chain of inappropriate behaviour. This **preventive** technique involves both observational and behavioural management skills.

Behaviour Management/ Intervention Strategies

Teachers will have students with a range of behavioural issues within their classrooms. The following strategies and tips can assist teachers in addressing these issues.

The Home Connection: Consistently work on setting up good communication with parents/guardians; it is key to effectively addressing challenging behaviours.

Teach Pro-Social Skills: Include non-violent/non-racist/non-sexist ideas, values, and behaviours as a core part of the everyday curriculum. Teach pro-social skills, such as communication, friendship building, accepting/giving constructive criticism, conflict resolution, peer mediation, assertiveness, anger management, problem solving, and decision making. Use cooperative learning groups to expose students to positive small social groups and promote teamwork.

Positive Reinforcers: Teachers can use many types of positive reinforcers to foster appropriate behaviours. However, the reinforcer must be valued by the student in order for desired behaviours to be increased. For example, a student finishes a seatwork assignment (target behaviour) for free time (reinforcer) and is offered a 10-minute break by the teacher (reinforcement). The positive reinforcer may be natural, edible, material, and/or social.

Shaping, Modelling and Positive Reinforcement: The use of these in the form of a token system or behavioural contract may help students develop appropriate behaviours.

The Personal Connection: Have a genuine interest in your students. Greet students at the door. Attend to students as individuals, not just to the class as a whole. Seek to discover what interests or intrigues students. A timely reference to airplanes, sports, horses, television shows, toys, or cars may redirect a misbehaving student.

Behaviour Focus: Be objective and factual when focussing on the behaviour. By referencing classroom or school-wide rules, teachers can deal with the behaviour while minimizing the likelihood that the event will become personalized.

Be Objective, Not Judgmental: Try to hear the student's perspective. Look at issues from a variety of perspectives. Examine the behaviour through a cultural lens.

Show That You are Human: Be prepared to admit mistakes or change your mind, when appropriate.

Humour: When teachers have a mental profile of students, humour can be used (with judgement) to diffuse a potentially disruptive event. Sarcasm and put-downs are not humourous.

Minimize the Power Differential: Sitting behind a desk or standing behind a podium can send the message that we want to create some distance between ourselves and the students.

Address Problem Behaviour Directly and Immediately: Unresolved conflicts and issues often resurface and escalate. Addressing a problem early lessens the chance that it will expand.

Physical Proximity or Touch Control: The teacher is on the scene before disruptive behaviour occurs. Simple proximity communicates that the teacher is aware of what is happening and is prepared to intervene if necessary. To minimize attention-seeking behaviour during a lesson, the teacher simply moves to stand next to the student. No eye contact is made and nothing is said, while the teacher continues

with the lesson. If teachers use touch control (hand on the shoulder or elbow) to advise students of proximity, they should do so with respect to cultural values and norms.

Eye Contact: Making eye contact with a student can do a lot to discourage irritating or attention seeking behaviour(s). However, insisting on eye contact may escalate a student's behaviour or violate cultural norms and values.

Diversion: This method suggests removing a student from a potentially disruptive situation. You may invent an important task that needs to be done immediately or an errand out of the room. This will remove the student from the situation and focus his/her energy in a constructive way.

The Unexpected Compliment: A genuine compliment, quietly delivered at the right moment can defuse a potentially disruptive situation. Avoid hollow flattery because students will not respect overtures that are perceived as phony.

Do the Unexpected: Teachers can sometimes redirect student behaviour by engaging in unexpected activities such as turning out the lights, playing a musical sound, lowering their voice, changing their voice, or talking to the wall. Using this strategy gives the message that you are aware of what is happening and you expect it to stop.

Signalling: Many teachers are masterful at stopping potential problems with a glance, a raised hand, a shake of the head, or a flick of the lights. Some students who have difficulty regulating their own behaviours may require a special signal from the teacher. One-to-one signal systems must be discussed by the teacher and student before implementation in the classroom.

Give Written Notice: Use notes to give a variety of messages, both positive and corrective such as, "Please stop . . . ", "Thank you for . . .". Place this note on the student's desk. There is no need to say a word. This technique works particularly well with high school students.

Use an I-Message: I-messages tell students exactly how you feel without judging or blaming. This is one of the most effective ways of stopping a student who is disrupting the classroom. An I-message contains an objective description of the disruptive behaviour, relays what you are feeling, identifies the effect of the behaviour on others, and finishes with a request. For example, "When you talk to your neighbour, I get annoyed because I lose my train of thought. Please stop" (Albert, 1996)

State "Grandma's Law": First state the behaviour you want, then give permission for the student to do something he or she wants to do afterward. For example, "When you finish that assignment, then you may use the computer." Notice that Grandma's Law always follows a "when-then" format. Avoid using an "if-then" format. A student may interpret an "if" statement as a threat and this could escalate behaviour.

Use "Target-Stop-Do": This three-part message, given in a calm, matter-of-fact tone of voice, *targets* the student name, identifies the behaviour to be *stopped*, and tells the student what he or she is expected to *do* at that moment. For example, "Diane, stop talking to Ben, face me, and see if you can find a solution to problem 3 on the board" (Albert, 1996)

***Adopt a Collaborative Approach*:** Maximize student opportunities for choices within the classroom. Consider the perspective that this is "our" classroom, not "my"classroom. Actively solicit students' opinions. Choices give students a sense of control over their lives, turning their attention away from the behaviour and towards making the choice.

For example, "Marie, you may pass in your assignment Thursday or Friday. You decide."

Involve Students in Decision Making: When we involve students in the decision-making process, we are giving them the legitimate power that helps prevent power struggles. For many students, having their say is as important as having their way.

Delegate Responsibility: Students who have a sense of real responsibility are less likely to strive for power in destructive ways.

De-escalation: Encounters with students can be dealt with quickly and effectively or they can escalate into "nasty" exchanges or power struggles. De-escalation means that the teacher is managing the incident so as to reduce tension and maintain the student in a reasonable, responsive frame of mind.

Psychological and Physical Space: Always give students their space, especially when they are upset or angry. Coming on too strong with an angry person will cause him or her to lash out.

Modelling: Approach incidents in a cool and collected fashion as this manner will serve as a de-escalating agent. Teach appropriate behaviour through modelling.

One On One: Never engage in a public confrontation, if it can at all be helped. Allow the student to save face. Discuss the behaviour later. Find a place where you can approach the student one on one.

Threats/Ultimatums: Do not issue threats or ultimatums that are either impractical ("I am keeping you after school every night for a month.") where the student knows you will not follow through or that will force the student or you into a corner ("You get to the office right now or I'll drag you by the heels").

Acknowledge Students' Power: When you acknowledge that you can not dominate, you admit that students are of equal status as human beings. When students see that no one in the classroom is superior or inferior, you gain their cooperation rather than fuel confrontation. This does not mean that students are permitted to do whatever they want. When you acknowledge a student's power, you can also state your expectation: "Morgan, I can't *make* you do the math problems. But the assignment needs to be completed." As soon as you have made the statement, walk away. It is hard to continue a war of words when the opponent is no longer nearby (Albert, 1996).

Last Word: Beware of students who must have the last word. If you play the same game, it is highly probable the exchange will go on and on. Firmly end an intervention or defer until after class. Be fair and listen to the student.

Secondary Behaviours: Beware of students who bring in secondary behaviours to cloud the issue. For example, a student caught writing an obscene note to a classmate may use argumentative points that result in confrontation where the original issue becomes lost. As above, firmly stop such efforts and stay to the point.

Assertive: Communicate clearly without being aggressive. Keep conversation short and on topic.

Voice Intonation and Nonverbal Cues: Non-violent crisis intervention training emphasizes a calm, empathic, and a directive/assertive manner when dealing with students who are agitated and angry. It is important to use a non-threatening approach.

Remove the Audience: While confrontations invariably intensify when an audience is present, performance is often pointless without an audience to applaud. In the classroom, sending the audience somewhere else is not always feasible. However, removing the audience's attention can be equally effective. You can make an important announcement, initiate a discussion on a topic of general interest, change the activity, or do something unexpected. Anything that distracts the rest of the class removes the audience. Again, walk away from the student whenever possible. Remember, distance makes it difficult for the student to continue the verbal battle.

Use Fogging Techniques: This involves responding to statements as if they are of little or no importance. When students attack verbally, the best strategy to use is a fogging technique. Techniques such as agreeing with the student, changing the subject, stating both viewpoints, refusing responsibility, delivering a closing statement, or taking teacher time-out are unexpected teacher responses that usually discontinue confrontations (Albert, 1996).

Time-out: There are times when students need to be removed from a situation. The frequency and seriousness of the behaviour determines the time-out area and the student's age should be considered when determining its duration. The intent is not to isolate students for great lengths of time, but to give them a supervised time and space, away from others to cool down. Current research suggests that five minutes is an adequate length of time-out for any age. A re-entry plan should start immediately after removal.

Physically Remove the Student: This intervention is used as a last resort. However, there are times when the safety of others becomes a factor. Every school should designate staff members who are trained to remove students in a safe, non-violent manner when the safety of self/others cannot be guaranteed.

While the above strategies are listed separately, they can be combined and used to complement each other. Achieving good classroom management will contribute to learning and an overall positive environment within the classroom, the school, and the school community. The article in Appendix I, "When Students Say "No!" by Mark W. Kandel, discusses a number of practical strategies that teachers can use to prevent potentially confrontational situations from occurring and to help them deal with students who say, "No."

Never underestimate your ability to make a difference. As a teacher, you are shaping young lives. When you reach out to your students, notice their accomplishments and treat them with kindness and respect, you are giving them the positive attention they need. When you model acceptance and tolerance, you're leading the way for them to do the same. (Beane, 1999)

Gathering Data

If a student continues to exhibit challenging behaviours after Level I responses have been applied, the teacher should gather, document, and analyse the following data in order to ensure that s/he has a clear understanding of the situation at hand.

- What are the identified behaviours of concern?
- What does the student perceive the problem to be?
- What are the teacher and student expectations in situations when the behaviour occurs?
- What are the preceding events (antecedents) and consequences of the behaviour?

- What appropriate behaviours can the student currently perform that could serve the same purpose as the inappropriate behaviour?
- Who is there when the behaviour occurs?
  - adult(s)
  - peers
  - other
- Where is the behaviour occurring?
  - structured/unstructured environments
  - during particular noise levels
  - under certain lighting conditions
  - when outside disturbances occur
  - in the gym
  - in the hallways
- How frequent is the behaviour?
  - once a month
  - once a week
  - daily
  - hourly
- What is happening in the student's life that could be contributing to the behaviour?
- School Issues
  - Is it test day?
  - What subject is being taught when the behaviour occurs?
  - Does the behaviour occur when the student is asked to engage in a particular task/activity?
  - Are reinforcers for positive behaviours readily available?
- Home and Peer Issues
  - poor diet
  - lack of sleep
  - lack of exercise
  - life stressors (family move, break-up, etc.)
  - addictions (student or family member)
  - behaviours/attitudes of others who spend time with the student
- Does the student seem to have control over what is happening to him/her?
- When is the behaviour happening?
  - time of day
  - day of week
  - time of year
- What is the student's medical history?
- What is the student's preferred learning style?
- Is the student achieving at her/his current grade level placement?
- What other techniques/strategies can be explored to help the student experience success in the classroom?

After collecting the above data, the teacher may be able to better identify and address the challenging behaviour. If not, then the school based student services team should be consulted to determine the best approach to be taken in meeting the student's specific needs. The school based student services team would include members from the school, the home, and, possibly other outside agencies. The problem-solving process is described in Level II of this document.

Level II:
Problem Solving for Students at Risk

Problem Solving for Students at Risk

Given certain conditions, even a well-adjusted student may present with challenging behaviours in class. Typically, Level I responses in a school environment will deal with these behaviours, but not in all cases. If behaviours persist, the school will need to move to Level II response (See diagram on **page 12).**

If a student's behaviour continues to be challenging, then a referral may need to be made to the school based student services team. Teachers will need to be flexible and have good problem-solving skills as well as access to a problem-solving team.

Level II response encompasses Stage 1: Screening and Identification and Stage 2: Assessment and Exploration of Strategies of the Individual Planning Process, which are explained on page 13 in this document. Together, these two stages can be referred to as the **pre-referral stage**. During the pre-referral stage, the classroom teacher, in collaborative consultation with parents/guardians, other school personnel, and possibly other service providers, attempts to address the behavioural issue. Observations, informal assessments, and interventions, as well as contacts with parents/guardians, counsellors, teachers, and others are documented. The process of identifying a need, clarifying the problem, and recording the student's strengths and needs has begun. A continuation of the process may involve the classroom teacher trying other strategies available within her/his repertoire, while seeking supportive input from other teachers and professionals. Both school-based and district-based teams need to work together to problem solve for appropriate interventions.

Team Problem-Solving Approach

A team problem-solving approach involves the students, parents/guardians, teachers, and possibly others in developing responses to challenging behaviours. There is no "cookbook approach" that will work for all students. There is, however, a process that can assist the school and its teachers in working with students experiencing difficulties. The key often lies in working together with families, developing a team approach, trying to understand the reasons for the challenging behaviour, utilizing interventions that work, and determining appropriate supports.

A team problem-solving approach should occur at all levels: the district, the school, the classroom, and the individual student level. Much has been written about processes that lead to effective problem solving. Most processes can be generically described using the following steps.

Define the Problem(s)

Teams sometimes make the assumption that everyone has a common view of the problem. Quite often this is not the case, and the most difficult task is to arrive at an accepted, shared understanding of the issue and what can or should be done. It is important to avoid presumptions.

In relation to challenging behaviours, student behaviour should be described in clear observable terms: Who did what?, to whom?, when?, under what circumstances?, and how frequently? A bad example is "Susie is aggressive". A good example is "Susie hits smaller female students in the hallway during recess time". A functional behavioural assessment (FBA) may need to be completed to ensure that accurate

information about challenging behaviours is obtained. (For information about conducting a functional behavioural assessment, see pages 41–43 of this document).

Agree upon Goals

The team should state the goals they expect to reach from implementing the problem-solving approach. For example, "To have Susie keep her hands to herself in the hallway during recess time." Desirable goals should be stated positively and should include an appropriate positive behaviour to replace the problematic behaviour.

Share Data

The sharing of previously gathered data is vital. Questions must be asked, views sought, and observations made in order for the team to make informed decisions. This can be accomplished by consulting with people who know and work with the student.

Generate Ideas

In this brainstorming exercise, importance is placed on quantity as much as quality of ideas. Evaluation of options comes later. The central task is to break down accepted barriers, to freewheel, to place all possibilities on the table for consideration. The student may need redirection and positive proactive discipline practices, greater supervision, learning supports, short-term individual or small-group interventions, or coordination of multi-system interventions, and an individualized plan tailored to address his or her individual needs. (Individualized planning for students at high risk is discussed in the next section of this document, Level III response.)

Set Criteria

Criteria are used to refine selected ideas and determine if they have merit. Though the premium value in step 4 is to generate ideas, the task here is to determine parameters for judging the worth of an idea. The following are suggested minimum criteria for assessing ideas in a school setting:

- The integrity of the learning environment must not be compromised.
- All practices must ensure the safety of children.
- Solutions must be practical and workable in the school setting.
- There must be possibility for consensus.
- Ideas must be child-centred.

Applying the above criteria provides the team with a short list of viable ideas that merit evaluation.

Evaluate and Find Solutions

All ideas should be student-centred, relate to the stated goals, and be achievable. A list of positive and negative effects of each idea should be listed. The essential task is to select the idea that brings the most advantages; in other words, choose the approach that has the best chance of solving the problem. Rarely is there total absolute agreement, but if the team follows the principle of consensus (e.g., they can live with the approach, even if they are not totally satisfied with it), then a course of action can be found.

Plan and Implement

Once a course of action is agreed upon, a step-by-step plan is needed. Everyone who has a role in the plan is thoroughly briefed to ensure consistency. For a student exhibiting significant behavioural challenges, this plan may include: employing strategies that have previously been used successfully with the student, implementing various short-term

interventions, formalizing an individual support services planning team, referring the student to school or school district personnel for further assessment, or referring the student to outside agencies for support.

Monitor Progress and Replan if Necessary
No matter how effective the problem solving process, there is the possibility that the planned process or some elements of it, might not work. The team must be open to replanning as necessary. **This does not automatically mean abandoning the plan wholesale and starting from the beginning.** Monitoring allows the team to retain elements of the plan that are being effective, while rethinking others.

The essential task in problem solving is to find a creative but manageable approach to a challenging issue. The adoption of new approaches requires that a school community be open to risk-taking and experimentation. (See "The 30 Minute Problem-Solving Model" in Appendix II of this document.

Support Provisions

Giving due consideration to the availability of resources, teams should use the problem solving process to determine support provisions for students at risk. Students experiencing behaviour issues in schools are a diverse group that require a variety of approaches. These students often need assistance in developing responsible behaviour for getting along with others, for developing positive relationships, for working with others, and for resolving conflict. Therefore, behavioural concerns may be best described along a continuum based on the complexity of programming requirements.

The problem-solving approach is best implemented in an environment that is supportive of students, parents/guardians, and teachers. Supports must be in place at the school and district levels and may include ongoing teams or support structures formed to address certain problematic issues. These would comprise the school's support network. Elements of this network can include:

- School-wide bullying prevention programs
- Peer counselling/helping programs
- Peer tutoring programs
- Student and/or staff mentoring programs
- Parenting programs
- Comprehensive school health programs
- Comprehensive developmental guidance programs
- Social skills/stress/anger management programs
- Individual/group counselling sessions
- Career counselling/career education programs
- Conflict resolution/mediation
- School based Student Services teams
- Crisis response teams
- School improvement committees

Utilizing the problem-solving approach and providing supports to students at risk for challenging behaviour will benefit the entire school community. However, a small number of students (1–5 percent of the population) will require further interventions to address their behavioural needs. The school must work with parents/guardians and students to solve specific behaviour issues in a respectful and caring atmosphere. We must always remember that behaviour challenges may not be solved by the school alone.

The partnership of school and home is a critical component. School staff and parents/guardians need to work together to solve behavioural issues. For some students, it may be necessary to access resources in the community for additional expertise and support. Sometimes, parents/guardians need support to address their own unique challenges. These parents/guardians will need specialized support from the school's interagency partners in order to develop an appropriate response to helping their child and themselves. The development of formal individualized plans for these students at high risk is examined in the next section of this document, Level III response.

Level III:
Individualized Planning for Students at High Risk

Individualized Planning for Students at High Risk

The behaviour of students at high risk is so different in degree and kind from other students that they require individualized planning. Generally, Level I and II responses in a school will meet the behavioural needs of students. However, a small percentage of the student population (1-5 percent) will require more intensive interventions, Level III response.

Level III response includes **Stages 3 to 8** of the Individual Planning Process which is explained on pages 13-14 of this resource. If the classroom teacher has exhausted all strategies within her/his repertoire, but the student still requires further interventions to address his or her behavioural needs, then a referral is made to the school based student services team, commonly multi-agency in nature. Further assessment is conducted if necessary, and an individualized plan is developed based on the student's strengths and needs. The plan is reviewed on a regular basis. An individualized plan is required for students at high risk in order to ensure a coordinated and multidisciplinary approach to services and programming.

Evaluating for Intervention

For intervention purposes, evaluations of students at high risk must include multiple sources of data and assessment. Evaluating academic performance is critical, since most students who have behaviour issues often have serious academic problems as well as problems with social adjustment. Evaluations of physical status and cognitive development are also important, because problems in one of these areas can contribute substantially to behaviour. Evaluating the social environment of the home and school, as well as the student's emotional responses to parents/guardians, teachers, and peers is essential in understanding the social influences that may be contributing to the challenging behaviour. Finally, evaluating the student's language skills can be of major importance. Language disorders and emotional/behavioural disorders are often closely linked. Students who exhibit significant behavioural challenges frequently have difficulty understanding the meanings of other people's language and/or behaviour. They also have difficulty expressing themselves appropriately and effectively (Kauffman, 2001).

Students need not wait months for batteries of psycho-educational tests before intervention is attempted. Schools with Level I and II responses will, by definition, be positively intervening with behaviours prior to a formalized psycho-educational and/or clinical assessment. During the pre-referral stage, assessment and intervention are interactive, complementary activities.

Assessment, in its purest form, is a process undertaken to gain a better understanding of the student as a learner. It is not synonymous with testing, though informal and formal tests may be part of the endeavour at certain stages. Assessment is a continuous, multi-level process in which the student, her/his family, educators, and professionals from other agencies collaborate to learn about the student's strengths and needs.

When a student's behaviour is persistent and problematic, a comprehensive review of her/his academic and behavioural needs would assist in planning for intervention. While curriculum-based assessments are essential in measuring academic performance, behavioural assessments are critical to understanding behaviour.

Functional analysis has been used to identify variables associated with a wide range of challenging behaviours. Functional analysis is an experimental procedure in which environmental events are systematically manipulated in a controlled setting to evaluate hypothesized relationships. It offers precise, objective methods which enhance the development and selection of effective and efficient behavioural interventions. Functional analysis procedures have been extended successfully into school systems to gather information and develop hypotheses on the function of student behaviour. This process, called Functional Behaviour Assessment (FBA), uses a variety of assessment strategies, which may include functional analysis, to identify specific antecedent and consequence events to help identify the function of student behaviour. The following section takes a close look at the FBA process and explores its usefulness for developing behavioural plans.

Functional Behaviour Assessment

Functional behaviour assessment (FBA) is a systematic process of describing challenging behaviour, identifying environmental factors and setting events that predict the challenging behaviour, and guiding the development of effective and efficient behaviour plans. It is a process of gathering information in order to determine the relationship between a student's challenging behaviour and aspects of her/his environment. Through FBA, the specific events that predict and maintain challenging behaviour are identified. Once the function of a challenging behaviour is established, this information is used to identify, teach, and strengthen appropriate replacement behaviours and to reduce the frequency or severity of the challenging behaviour. (Source: ***www.pbis.org***)

The primary outcomes of a functional behaviour assessment include:

- a clear description of the challenging behaviour
- descriptions of the conditions under which challenging behaviour is and is not likely to occur (e.g., antecedents and setting events)
- consequences that maintain the challenging behaviour (e.g., function)
- summary statements or hypotheses
- direct observation data to support the hypotheses

FBA focusses on identifying the functions of behaviour for students. Behaviour is seen as meeting a need for the student. To determine what that need is, we have to look at what is triggering the behaviour (antecedent) as well as what is reinforcing the behaviour (consequence) – in other words, what comes before and after the behaviour, or the ABC pattern of behaviour. Since the behaviour is presently meeting a need for the student, we are not likely to eliminate it unless we can identify ways the student can meet her/his needs so that the behaviour is no longer required or effective for the student. We need to determine the student's need by looking at when and where the behaviour occurs, and what the student gains by the behaviour, and we need to shift the contingencies that are driving the behaviour and make it no longer useful for the student. That is, we need to either eliminate the trigger or enable the student to have her/his needs met without having to use the undesirable behaviour. The four major elements studied in a FBA are problem behaviours, setting events, antecedents, and consequences.

The functions of behaviour fall into four general categories:

- The function is to get something perceived to be desirable:
  - social reinforcement (e.g., a response from an adult)
  - tangible reinforcement (e.g., a classmate's workbook or access to a preferred activity)
  - power/control (e.g., upsetting the teacher)

- The function is to escape or avoid something perceived to be undesirable:
  - an aversive task (e.g., a difficult or lengthy assignment)
  - a situation (e.g., interaction with adults or certain peers)

- The function is both (to get the attention of classmates and escape from a boring lesson).

- The function is to communicate something (e.g., that a student does not understand the lesson or does not like having to answer questions in front of her/his peers).

The student may also find that engaging in a behaviour to accomplish one purpose might lead to the realization of a completely different function. For example: a student who fights to try to escape teasing could discover that fighting itself can be reinforcing (e.g., the physical excitement associated with fighting).

When examining the function of behaviour, it is also important to consider the following three factors:

- More than one behaviour may serve a similar function for a student. For example, a student may talk out, leave the classroom, or touch other people's property to gain teacher attention.
- One behaviour might serve different functions in different contexts. For example, a student may use profanity to gain peer attention in the hallways, but also use the same behaviour to be removed from a difficult lesson.
- Students usually do not display single behaviours, but strings or chains of behaviour that are triggered by social interactions. For example, the first talking–out episode displayed by a student might function to gain adult attention, but as the interaction escalates, talking out might function to escape the situation or gain power.

Identifying and confirming accurate functions of behaviour are important to developing behaviour plans that are efficient, effective, and relevant. For example: If a student engages in disruptive behaviour to get extra assistance with difficult work, the behaviour plan would focus on teaching the student more appropriate ways to get teacher assistance (e.g., raising hand). For the student who bites and spits to escape a difficult task, the behaviour plan would emphasize teaching the student how to ask for help or sign "break."
(Source: ***www.pbis.org/english/main.php3?name=Functional_Assessment***)

FBA is <u>not</u> used directly to diagnose a disability, establish eligibility, determine placement, or determine whether a challenging behaviour is caused by a disability. The FBA process is used to improve our understanding of behaviour and the context in which it is observed and to guide the development of behaviour plans.

Developing Behaviour Plans

Educators, family members, community agencies, and other educational service providers strive to improve the educational and lifestyle outcomes of all students in school. For some students, however, achieving maximum academic and behaviour success requires more specialized and individualized supports. When social skill deficits or challenging behaviours that compete with more desirable behaviours are the concern, a functional, comprehensive, and efficient approach must be emphasized.

Meeting the needs of students at high risk requires a multi-agency, coordinated approach. To accomplish this, an individualized plan must be developed and implemented, based on an understanding of the characteristics of any diagnosed disability as well as the student's strengths and needs. Such a plan needs to be multifaceted and should consider academic, social, behavioural, and familial factors. The student is highly involved in the process, and the plan continues until the goals identified for the student are met with success. This problem solving approach emphasizes the development of effective, efficient, and relevant behaviour plans. This approach includes the following activities:

- careful examination of challenging behaviour and the environmental contexts in which it is observed
- systematic and direct teaching and strengthening of acceptable behaviour that will function as more effective, efficient, and relevant responses than the challenging behaviour
- removing or decreasing the effectiveness of events that trigger and maintain occurrences of the challenging behaviour
- providing comprehensive training, planning, and resources that enable the sustained, accurate, and complete implementation of individualized behaviour plans (See Appendix III, "Components of a Behaviour Plans").

Based on the student's strengths and needs, and giving due consideration to the resources available in the school, district, and community, those involved in planning for the student determine the programming and services required by the student. Students at high risk may require any combination of the following depending on the situation:

- continuous feedback regarding her/his progress
- corrective/instructive discipline; direct teaching of skills or rules
- strong parent/guardian-school partnerships
- counselling and/or family support systems
- modifications to the educational environment
- additional learning supports in order to meet prescribed curriculum outcomes
- recording of incidents and interventions
- behaviour contracts
- programming to address anger management, social skills, metacognitive skills, problem solving, etc.
- a planned response for redirecting and de-escalating disruptive events
- individual emergency response protocols—a planned response for violent/assaultive behaviours that is designed to promote the maximum protection of the student, the teacher or adult caregiver, and the student's peers with debriefing for all stakeholders.
- the assignment of additional personnel
- access to community resources
- temporary instruction in alternative settings (e.g., in-school suspension room, alternative school placement)
- short-term suspension, with home study opportunity provided
- a continuous care plan designed and implemented among service agencies

Note:Re-entry and transitional plans for returning to the regular site need to be developed immediately upon leaving the regular site or entering an alternative support site; keep ongoing contact with the regular site and use it as a resource site.

Behaviour plans should include multi-component interventions to

- create an environment where the challenging behaviour is not necessary (*antecedent)*
- teach replacement behaviours that are more efficient in achieving the same function *(behaviour)*
- change consequences so that the challenging behaviour is no longer effective and the desired or alternative behaviours lead to more desirable outcomes for the student *(consequences)* (Condon & Tobin, 2001)

Based on FBA information, a behaviour plan would include (1) proactive strategies for changing the environment so triggering events are removed; (2) teaching new skills that replace challenging behaviours; and (3) eliminating or minimizing natural rewards of challenging behaviours and maximizing clear rewards for appropriate behaviours.

The focus of a behaviour plan goes beyond reducing challenging behaviour to enhancing the student's overall quality of life. It contains outcomes that include lifestyle improvements such as participation in community life, gaining and maintaining satisfying relationships, expressing personal preferences and making choices, and developing personal competencies.

Antecedent *(Create the Environment)*
Programming for students at high risk usually involves direct instruction in areas such as social skills, stress/anger management, decision making, and impulse control. These students require intensive support from special education/resource teachers, school counsellors, educational/school psychologists and other mental health professionals. The education system alone cannot meet the needs of students at high risk; involvement of mental health, justice, and other supporting agencies improves the quality of support and intervention. It is important that we address the mental health needs of students and the family constellation. Interagency cooperation and communication among all personnel involved with the student is fostered through the individual planning process. The student's chances for success are greatly increased when the team adopts a multi-modal treatment approach to intervention.

Rather than focussing on controlling the acting-out behaviours of students, emphasis for programming should focus on safety issues and developing the academic proficiency and social skills students need to experience success at school. The ultimate aim of any school is to assist students in becoming independent well-functioning individuals. Special education services for students at high risk may need to include academic, emotional, and/or behavioural support. Direct instruction in the areas of social skills development, problem solving, or anger management is essential in increasing the frequency of pro-social interactions with peers and adults.

Through FBA and brainstorming exercises, many proactive strategies may be identified for consideration. The professionals involved in planning for the student will determine which strategies are most promising and suitable for the person and circumstances.

Interventions
Interventions can be directed at circumstances that immediately precede behaviour (antecedents) or broader setting events. Examples of proactive strategies include

- adjusting task characteristics
- reorganizing the physical setting
- clarifying routines and expectations
- revising the activity schedule
- changing social interactions

- providing more opportunity for choices
- enhancing the predictability of the setting
- addressing psychological issues that may be affecting behaviour

For example: For a student who throws materials in anticipation of changes to routine, provide a written or picture schedule and refer the student to it throughout the day. Remove materials prior to transitions.

If a student bites her/his fingernails and cuticles when s/he finishes an activity early, provide him/her with something s/he enjoys doing when activities are finished early.

For the student who makes noises when teacher attention is withdrawn, the teacher needs to teach more appropriate ways of gaining attention.

Behaviour
(Teach Appropriate Replacement Skills)
Challenging behaviours may sometimes be viewed as evidence of skill deficits (i.e., people behave in an unacceptable manner because they lack the skills required to deal effectively with particular situations).

Given this perspective, building competency is critical to producing behaviour change. Therefore, a behaviour plan should target specific skills that need to be taught in order for the student to meet desired identified outcomes. Such skills might include replacement behaviours (e.g., communication alternatives) and other skills that improve overall functioning (e.g., independent living, social skills, leisure/recreation, organizational skills, decision making, problem solving, etc.).

Skills must be taught systematically and effectively. Systematic instruction involves using effective cues, analysing, and breaking down task components, employing appropriate teaching methods (e.g., prompting, shaping, and fading), as well as rewarding and correcting behaviours consistently. If the student does not develop the desired skills, teaching methods should be reassessed. Table 2 provides an example list of functional replacement behaviours and their benefit.

Table 2. Functional Replacement Behaviours and Their Benefit (Scott & Nelson, 1999)

Predictor of Replacement Behaviour	Undesired Behaviour and Payoff	Replacement Behaviour	Function of Both Behaviours	Benefit
Addition problems with regrouping	screams until thrown out of class	raises hand to get assistance	escape frustration	more math completed and less screaming
Line up	pushes peers and ends up at front of line	doesn't touch anyone and is allowed to be first one in line	access first spot in line	no physical aggression in line
Reading groups	refuses directions to read and ends up sitting alone at desk	is allowed to sit and play at desk after reading predetermined number of pages	escape from reading/access playing at desk	student now gets some reading instruction
Robert	when Robert is near, student engages in off-task behaviour to get Robert's attention	completes all assigned tasks and earns time to play alone with Robert	access to Robert's attention	student remains on task and completes assigned tasks

Apply the Competing Behaviour Model

Applying the competing behaviour model is another way of utilizing FBA information when developing a behaviour plan. This model is based on the assumption that many different behaviours, some more appropriate than others, may serve the same function. When a positive alternative behaviour (e.g., replacement skill) provides the same type of consequence that challenging behaviours produce, the likelihood that a person will use the alternative behaviour increases. This is especially true if the positive alternative behaviour is easier, or somehow more efficient, than the challenging behaviour.

Once the core elements of the FBA are identified (challenging behaviours, predictor events or antecedents, maintaining consequences and setting events), those responsible for planning for the student should determine the desired behaviour, the maintaining consequence for the desired behaviour, and a positive alternative behaviour (replacement skill) that will produce the same maintaining consequence as the challenging behaviour. The positive alternative behaviour is more acceptable than the challenging behaviour, but may not be the ultimate desired behaviour. For example, if a student yells or acts out in class to get assistance from the teacher with a task, he or she can be taught to walk to the teacher to request help, while the ultimate desired behaviour may be that the student raise her or his hand.

Developing a behaviour plan based on the competing behaviours model makes challenging behaviours irrelevant (there is no need to do them), inefficient (there are easier behaviours to engage in), or ineffective (challenging behaviours no longer work to produce the desired outcome). To increase the use of positive alternative behaviours, an acceptable replacement behaviour must first be identified, and then systematically taught. To promote performance of desired behaviours, these replacement behaviours must produce adequate maintaining consequences (reinforcers) when they occur. To compete successfully with challenging behaviour, the positive alternative behaviour must be more efficient in producing the desired maintaining consequence than the challenging behaviours that it is replacing (Condon & Tobin, 2001).

Teach Social Skills

To promote the development of social skills, Kauffman (2001) recommends that teachers systematically teach students how to react to various everyday social situations, thereby enabling them to eliminate their inappropriate responses and to exert control over their thoughts and actions. It is of the utmost importance that students learn to interact with others, not only in class, but everywhere.

Teaching of social skills must be planned the same way as that of academic skills. Based on the students' strengths and needs (background knowledge), the teacher must select the skills to be taught. Once these skills are analysed and broken down into smaller steps, they can be taught. It is important to provide the students with opportunities to put these skills into practice in a number of situations and to offer them feedback on their performance.

Social skills are an important aspect of any intervention program for students at high risk. The degree to which students are able to establish and maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships, gain peer acceptance, develop friendships, and terminate negative interpersonal relationships defines social competence and predicts long-term psychological and social adjustment. Students who have emotional/behavioural disorders experience significant deficits in social competence which adversely affect the quality and nature of their interpersonal relationships with peers and adults (Gresham, 2000).

Before discussing the social competence deficits experienced by students, it is important to examine the social behaviour standards set by others in the environments in which the students are expected to function. The standards, expectations, and tolerance levels that teachers hold for students' social behaviour influence their teaching behaviours as well as the peer interactions in the classroom. Research suggests that students who are perceived as being brighter or more competent receive more attention, are provided with greater opportunities to respond, are praised more often, and receive more verbal cues during teaching interactions than students perceived as being less competent (Gresham, 2000). Hence, teachers need to be cognizant of this and ensure that students at high risk are recognized as much as possible for their efforts.

For intervention purposes, Gresham (2000) classifies social skills deficits as either acquisition, performance, or fluency deficits. Making such a distinction suggests that different intervention approaches are required for particular deficits and that different settings are needed for carrying out social skills training.

Gresham (2000) classifies social skills deficits as

- *Acquisition deficits*—refers to students who lack social skills knowledge even under optimal conditions
- *Performance deficits*—refers to students who have the social skills knowledge, but fail to perform this skill at an acceptable level in a particular situation or situations
- *Fluency deficits*— refers to students who know how to and want to perform a given social skill, but do so in an awkward and unpolished fashion

Whereas acquisition deficits seem to be due to restricted learning opportunities for pro-social behaviour, performance deficits appear to be a result of low rates of reinforcement for socially skilled behaviours relative to competing problem behaviours, and fluency deficits seem to stem from a lack of exposure to competent role models or from inadequate rehearsal opportunities for newly acquired or infrequently used social skills.

This classification of social skills deficits is seen as essential in determining the most appropriate intervention strategies for social skills development. It would be inappropriate to teach social skills to a student who already has the skills in her/his repertoire (e.g., a student with a performance deficit), while interventions designed to increase the performance of a social skill (e.g., prompting, reinforcement) are not particularly efficient in remediating acquisition deficits. Finally, students having fluency deficits do not require that a skill be taught nor do they require intervention procedures to increase the frequency of behavioural performances. These students require more opportunities to respond and rehearse (repeat) skills to achieve adequate and effective performance.

Programming in the area of social skills may need to be offered to help the student develop and sustain desirable behaviours. Shaping, modelling, and positive reinforcement, in the form of a token system or performance contracts, may be key components of the student's behaviour plan.

Teach Cognitive Strategies

Interventions that would fall under the cognitive strategies category include self-instruction, self-monitoring, self-reinforcement, and cognitive interpersonal problem solving. All of these techniques aim to help students become more aware of their responses to academic tasks and social problems and to encourage them to become actively involved in controlling their own responses.

Since the majority of students with behavioural difficulties lack the ability to plan and manage their actions constructively, it becomes necessary to teach them strategies for self-control directly, whether individually or in small groups. Self-control is taught by proceeding through a series of steps involving verbalization, modelling, and practice in order to arrive at self-talk that will serve as a guide for behaviour. Self-instruction, self-monitoring, and cognitive restructuring are described in this document because they are the most widely used in classroom settings.

Self-instruction

Self-instruction training teaches students to inwardly give themselves verbal instructions that will serve as the basis of problem-solving strategies, thereby allowing them better control of their behaviour. This involves teaching students to talk to themselves about what they are doing and what they should do. Typically, self-instruction training is a series of steps in which verbal control of behaviour is first modelled by an adult, then imitated by the student, and finally used independently by

the student. Teaching students to use their own language to regulate behaviour has been a successful approach for impulsive students in both academic and social situations. Telling impulsive students to slow down and think before responding may not work; yet if these same students can be taught to tell themselves the same message, they might improve their behaviour considerably.

Self-instruction generally consists of five stages:

- defining the desired behaviour
- planning the strategy
- taking action by inwardly giving oneself instructions
- reinforcing one's behaviour
- correcting one's errors

Self-monitoring

Self-monitoring has been widely used to help students who have difficulty staying on task in the classroom, particularly during independent seatwork time. At random intervals, students are taught to self-record their response (on- task/off-task behaviour) on a form. This technique has been found to be effective in increasing the on-task behaviour of many students, ranging in age from five years to adolescents, who have ADHD and a variety of other disorders. Variations on the procedure have been used to improve academic productivity, accuracy of work, and social behaviour.

Self-monitoring procedures must be simple and straightforward and cannot be implemented without preparing the students. Brief training is necessary, in which the teacher talks with the student about the nature of appropriate and inappropriate behaviour. It is important to note that self-monitoring of appropriate behaviour increases it in most cases. Improvement in behaviour and performance usually lasts for several months after the procedure is discontinued. The beneficial effects of self-monitoring are usually achieved without the use of backup reinforcers; extrinsic rewards are seldom necessary.

Cognitive Restructuring

Cognitive restructuring techniques are intended to make students aware that their behaviour is, to a great extent, related to their personal interpretations of events and to teach them to manage their thinking in order to exercise better control. Cognitive psychologists believe that people can change their emotional and behavioural responses by changing their perceptions and beliefs. By teaching people to more accurately think about their goals, behaviour, and thoughts, their mental health can be enhanced.

Two basic ways that people are taught to think differently are (1) by restructuring their cognition and view of the world and/or (2) by using new or different cognitive skills and strategies. The first method is typically implemented in clinical situations under the guidance of counsellors; while the second method is more common in schools as we teach students to utilize step-by-step thinking aids to improve their memory, comprehension, and ability to solve problems.

Consequence (Change the Consequence)

By manipulating consequences it may be possible to influence a student's motivation and to change long-standing behaviour patterns. Effective interventions involve managing consequences so that reinforcement is given for desired behaviour and withheld in response to problem behaviour. This makes challenging behaviour less effective than positive behaviour for the student. Positive consequence strategies are based on a FBA and incorporate the most natural, least intrusive consequences that adequately address the behaviour.

Types of reinforcement include
- social interactions (e.g., peer helpers)
- activities (e.g., computer time)
- sensory outcomes (e.g., music)
- tangible rewards (e.g., certificates)
- opportunities to escape uncomfortable situations (e.g., errands)

One must consider the reinforcement schedule (frequency of rewards), magnitude (amount or intensity), and immediacy (delay between behaviour and rewards).

A proactive (positive and preventative) approach to consequences must be taken. **Punishment does not teach.** Punishment might signal that a behaviour is unacceptable and might reduce future occurrences of the behaviour in that setting. However, punishment does not teach, strengthen, or encourage acceptable alternative behaviours.

Help Students Generalize and Maintain Acquired Skills

To ensure that students maintain over time and generalize (to other situations) their learned behaviour, skills, and knowledge, the teacher must consider the following in his or her planning:
- teach skills that are useful and adaptive
- use reinforcers that exist in the natural environment
- provide opportunities to rehearse and practise desired behaviours
- practise newly acquired behaviours in different situations
- provide the opportunity for students to be taught by different teachers
- use different teaching approaches
- increase similarities between the training situation and other situations in which the behaviour will be necessary
- reinforce the behaviour at varying intervals
- teach students to manage their own behaviour (e.g., self-instruction)

Like generalization, maintenance of behaviour does not occur naturally. The teacher must systematically use strategies such as over learning, gradual reduction and delay of reinforcement, reduction of concrete assistance, and reinforcement by classmates to allow the students to attain this objective. Successful intervention for a high-risk student is achieved when that individual has learned to independently monitor and control her/his behaviour. Planning for independence should be a crucial component of the student's Behavioural Plan.

Note: Some practical suggestions of how school personnel can deal with antisocial behaviours such as lying, stealing, theft and vandalism can be found in
- *Classroom Perspectives: Teachers Make a Difference* (Government of Newfoundland & Labrador,1995)
- *Teacher Intervention Practices (TIPS)* (Alberta, 1992)
- *Discipline and Classroom Management* (New Brunswick Teachers' Association, 2002)

Emotional/Behavioural Disorders

Students who exhibit challenging behaviours that are long term and resistant to many repeated interventions may have an emotional/behavioural disorder. Some students will require responses that are intensive and pervasive. To be successful in meeting the needs of these students, those responsible for planning for the student must formulate programs that address the student's needs in a meaningful and permanent way. Students with emotional/behavioural disorders will exhibit behaviours that are best addressed through the collaborative efforts of students, teachers, parents/guardians, community members, and government. The level of support required by students with emotional/

behavioural disorders will be more intensive and pervasive, depending on the severity of the disorder.

Students with emotional/behavioural disorders will exhibit behaviours in multiple settings, one of which must be school. These behaviours are more than transient, expected responses to stressors in the student's environment. They persist even with individualized interventions, such as feedback to the individual, consultation with parents/guardians, and modifications of the educational environment.
Emotional/behavioural difficulties are manifested either internally or externally. Some internal and external manifestations are listed on the following page.

Students with emotional/behavioural disorders will either externalize or internalize their difficulty. Almost invariably, the presenting behaviours will result in the student experiencing difficulty with paying attention to academic and social tasks. The presenting behaviours usually consist of disruptive acting-out behaviours or more passive-aggressive avoidance behaviours. Therefore, when we observe chronic symptoms of inattention and/or disruptive/avoidance behaviours, we need to recognize that these may be indicative of disorders such as attention deficit disorders, conduct disorders, mood disorders (e.g., depression), anxiety and related disorders (e.g., obsessions, compulsions), or thought disorders such as schizophrenia.

It is important to recognize that these disorders may not exist in isolation, but may be co-morbid (co-exist with other disorders). Students with emotional/behavioural disorders often exhibit common symptoms. These may include the following:

- aggression
- attention difficulties
- panic attacks
- depressed mood
- suicidal ideations
- hallucinations
- delinquency
- drug/alcohol abuse
- self-stimulation
- sleeping, toileting, eating, speech problems

The psychiatrist or pediatrician is a key member of the planning team and is responsible for making diagnoses and prescribing pharmacological interventions when necessary. Awareness and understanding of these disorders by school based team members is crucial if we are going to effectively support these students.

See "Definition of Terms" in Appendix IV of this document.

Note: Some practical suggestions of how school personnel can address the needs of students with emotional/behavioural disorders can be found in

- *Teaching Students with Emotional Disorders and/or Mental Illnesses* (Alberta, 2000)
- *Teacher Alert System* (Alberta Education, 1991)
- *Teacher Intervention Practices* (Alberta Education, 1992)

Indicators of Internal and/or External Manifestations of Emotional/Behavioural Disorders

Internal Indicators	**External Indicators**
Exhibits pervasive sad affect, depression, and feelings of worthlessness; cries suddenly or frequently	Displays persistent patterns of aggression toward objects or persons to an extent that development or maintenance of satisfactory relationships is prevented
Displays unexpected and atypical affect for the situation	Makes pervasive, oppositional, defiant, or noncompliant responses
Exhibits fear and anxiety	Has significantly limited self-control
Has persistent physical complaints not due to a medical condition	Exhibits persistent patterns of lying, stealing, or cheating
Exhibits withdrawal, avoidance of social interaction, and/or lack of personal care to an extent that maintenance of satisfactory interpersonal relationships is prevented	Is out of touch with reality; has auditory or visual hallucinations, thought disorientation, or delusions
Exhibits persistent patterns of bizarre and/or exaggerated behaviour reactions to routine environments	
Cannot get mind off certain thoughts or ideas; cannot keep self from engaging in repetitive and/or useless actions	

Conclusion

Conclusion

Generally speaking, behavioural issues start before school entry, peak during the middle school years, and usually decline during high school. Not much is heard about students with behavioural difficulties in colleges or universities. However, one does frequently hear reports of abusive relationships in homes and workplaces. Teachers know students who misbehave daily, have witnessed the behaviour, or have heard reports about inappropriate behaviour from others. Students have the right to feel safe, secure, accepted, and valued at school. Yet, one of the greatest challenges of teaching is dealing with disruptions in the classroom caused by students with behavioural issues. Teachers sometimes feel that they have little control over the ways students choose to behave or the individual/family factors influencing students' behaviour.

According to Kauffman (2001), schools can inadvertently contribute to emotional/behavioural issues and academic failure in one or more of the following ways:

- insensitivity to students' individuality
- inappropriate expectations for students
- inconsistent management of behaviour
- instruction in nonfunctional and irrelevant skills
- ineffective instruction in critical skills
- self-defeating contingencies of reinforcement
- undesirable model of school conduct

However, behavioural issues can be greatly reduced in severity by applying appropriate prevention/intervention strategies at school. Building a positive learning environment has to be the foundation of any provincial, district or school policy. Creating a positive school climate involves developing a school community where all members share a set of essential values, participate in decision making, and support a common purpose or aim. It encompasses the way things are done and is a reflection of the values, beliefs, and shared understanding of school personnel, students, parents/guardians, and others involved in the school community. The establishment and maintenance of a positive school environment requires ongoing attention and effort from all within the school community. Positive school environments are warm and accepting of all members. There are high standards for behaviour by members of the school community towards one another. They offer an atmosphere that fosters a caring attitude and mutual respect. Individuals must first feel good about themselves in order to develop positive relationships with others.

Attitudes and skills, with respect to behaviour, partly determine how we will react to students with behavioural issues. It is important that teachers have the knowledge, skills, and supports necessary for dealing with such situations. Teachers need to be aware of provincial, district, and school policies/procedures for dealing with discipline and violent incidents at school.

There is a need for a continuum of responses to meet the continuum of student needs. Therefore, this resource has described three levels of response to behavioural challenges—from school-wide approaches with behaviour policies, developed in a positive school climate as the foundation, to individualized planning for students at high risk. It has discussed several principles upon which school-wide behaviour policies should be based, effective classroom management skills that can be applied by teachers to benefit all students, the problem-solving approach and support networks

required by students at risk, and the formulation of individualized plans for students at high risk.

Teachers are responsible for providing support to students with diverse learning and behavioural needs and therefore require a diverse repertoire of strategies and techniques in order to ensure that students reach their maximum potential. Students who display significant behavioural difficulties present as a challenge for all schools. However, schools are not solely responsible for meeting the complex needs of these students.

The whole school community must respond. Within schools, the approach is shared by forming partnerships with parents/guardians, students, school personnel, district staff, and helping agencies. Teachers and students need to function in an environment that is conducive to learning, and parents/guardians need to feel confident that their children/youth are experiencing such an environment. As school communities work to achieve optimum learning and positive behaviour, significant benefits will be afforded to all.

Appendices

Appendix I: When Students Say "No!"

by Mark W. Kandel

When you ask a student in your class, on the playground, or in the hallways to do something, most will obey you. However, there are times when you ask a student to comply with school rules or make a request and the student confidently, and without hesitation, responds, "NO." This is about the time when a minor altercation erupts into a major problem that could result in the student being reprimanded, given detention, or suspended.

How can we deal with children who say "NO?" Better yet, what can we do to prevent the child from being in a situation where he/she has the opportunity to say "NO?"

Understand Your Students

First, you need to know your students and their "triggers." What words, actions, or phrases seem to put them into a heightened state of anxiety or defensiveness? For example, some children do not respond well to requests early in the morning. Others need to be presented a request in a manner that doesn't appear to be a request. Remember, communication is 80 percent "how" something is said and 20 percent "what" is said.

In addition to knowing the "trigger," you need to know the underlying function of a child's behaviour. Is the child responding in a negative way to get attention, seek power and control, receive a tangible, or escape/avoid a situation or demand? More than likely, children who respond to commands with a "NO" are trying to gain power or control. They may also be trying to gain a degree of independence.

Be Proactive

As much as possible, use strategies that will keep a potential confrontation from occurring.

Establish Classroom Rules

Developing sound classroom rules, posting them, and reviewing them daily will go a long way to preventing potential problems. Try to write rules WITH your students, so they will begin to take ownership. Write the rules in a positive way. For example, rather than the rule, "No running," rewrite that statement in a positive way: "Please walk at all times." It's human nature to be turned off by a series of rules or regulations in which each statement begins with "NO....."

Also, make your rules specific. "Be prepared for class" does not communicate to your students your expectations. Rather, the rule, "Come to class with your pencil, pen, books, and paper" leaves no doubt as to what you expect.

One final note on rules and procedures. Keep your rules to a maximum of five, and make sure they are observable and measurable.

Promote Smooth Transitions

Often students will respond negatively to your commands when they feel pressured to move from one activity to another without sufficient forewarning. Some students will need more preparation than others. Get to them first and begin to move them along so you don't reach a point that becomes confrontational. Also, cue, or signal, students that an activity is coming to an end. And, use close proximity to encourage students to follow your commands rather than putting them on the spot in front of their peers.

Know the Function of the Student's Behavior

It is extremely important that you determine the underlying cause or goal of a student's behavior. We can be effective with an appropriate intervention only when we recognize the purpose the student's behaviour serves. For example, if a student responds to your command with a "NO," is he or she looking for attention? You may respond by keeping the child in for lunch or recess. On the surface, your actions may appear to be a punishment for the student; however, the child enjoys what he or she perceives as some time alone with you.

Is the student trying to escape a situation or demand? You may escalate a situation to the point where you send the child to the office. Once again, you view this as a punishment. On the other hand, this seventh grade boy, who is a poor reader, just escaped the humiliating experience of reading orally in your class.

Finally, is the child responding in a negative way to gain power or control? You may win this confrontational "battle" because you move the child to time-out, send him or her to the office, or assign detention. However, you have lost the "war," because every student now knows what buttons to push to get you into such a state.

Responding to "NO"

There are several strategies a teacher can use to deal with students who say, "NO." Keep in mind, these strategies should be used with other proactive interventions.

Refrain from Escalating a Minor Incident

Often we as teachers share responsibility for escalating a minor incident into a major problem. To reduce the risk of escalating a situation with a student, try to deal in the present. Stay away from reminding the student of past failures and problems.

Talk directly to the student rather than about the student. Be sure to make eye contact, but don't force your students to "look at you when you are speaking." Unless they are hard of hearing, they can hear you. It is humiliating for any of us to look our accusers in the eye when we know we are wrong.

Finally, make statements rather than ask questions. Teachers have a habit of asking the wrong question in a tense situation (How many times do I have to tell you to stop talking?) and getting an unexpected answer from a student ("Tell me 10 more times and I will stop").

Give Choices Whenever Possible

If the circumstance permits, allow your students to have a choice in their daily routines and activities. If a student believes they have some choice in a situation, they feel more independent and may be less likely to confront you with a "NO." For example, if you want students to complete a math and social studies assignment before recess, why not let them choose which assignment they will do first?

Assessing student knowledge also gives you an opportunity to give them a choice. For example, some students may opt for a written test, while others want to create a project. By incorporating students' interests into our daily routines, we give them opportunities to exert some independence and reduce their need to seek power and control by negative means.

Remove the Student

This is easier said than done. Invent creative ways to remove the student from the current situation without you or the student "losing face." It may mean you will have to redirect him or her by sending the child on an errand. You need to plan for these situations. You will not be successful if you try to think on your feet when you have

locked horns with a student in front of 28 peers.

Remove the Audience
Sometimes it is not advisable to remove a student from your classroom. You may have to look for ways to remove the other students. This can be done within the room (e.g., direct your students' attention to a different part of the room: blackboard, overhead) or outside of the room (having students stand in the hallway). While the audience is removed, attempt to de-escalate the situation and come to a temporary solution.

With these last two strategies, it is imperative that you keep other options available, including involving the administration. You need to have planned in advance how to deal with a student who will not remove himself or herself from the room. Don't put yourself or your students in danger.

Agree with the Student
The next time a student responds "NO" and tells you that "you can't make me do it," simply agree with him or her. It is very difficult to argue with someone when they agree with you. By remaining calm and businesslike, you have removed the bait and left the student fishing for another. Understand that the student will likely want to continue to argue. State to the student what you expect, no more. For example, I expect you to do problems one through 10 and turn them in at the end of class. Remove yourself and allow some space. If the child refuses to comply, restate your demand with a consequence. "You can sit quietly and do problems one through 10, or you will lose recess."Another consequence for students who continue to act out may be to send them to time out or the office.

Be careful here. Again, it's important that you know the underlying function of the student's behaviour. Is the child saying "NO" to gain power/control, or is he or she looking to be removed from the room (escape/avoid)? If he or she is trying to escape or avoid, that situation/demand may indicate the child is experiencing difficulty with the assignment.

Contact Parents ASAP
It's very important to keep an open line of communication with your students' families. Equally important is to communicate on a consistent basis when your students are exhibiting appropriate behaviours. By doing this, you will be more likely to have parental cooperation when a student engages in inappropriate behaviour.

Make parental contact on the first offense. Do not let the inappropriate behaviour go to second offense without discussing it with your student's parents.

Inevitably you will encounter students who, when you make a request or demand, will respond with "NO." Be proactive in anticipating these situations and what may trigger them for certain students. Become skilled at identifying the goal or function of a child's inappropriate behaviour and develop strategies to address his or her needs. Don't allow your actions to escalate a minor incident into a major problem.

As the teacher and authority figure in the classroom, know your limits of power. You can't make kids do or think anything they don't want to. Establish a positive classroom environment and provide your students with choices to help them.

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Appendix II: Teachers Helping Teachers – Problem Solving Teams that Work

(The Roeher Institute, 1994)

Why Problem Solving?

1. Immediacy – it offers something right away
2. Ownership – control stays within the group (parent and teacher)
3. Relevance – solutions are tailored to the needs of those involved
4. Empowering – it gets people moving
5. Success orientation – uses strengths as a foundation for change
6. It assumes a collaborative approach
7. It is acceptable within different theoretical perspectives
8. People piggy back – ideas stimulate ideas

General Steps

1. Problem description – what do we want to see change?
2. Problem prioritization – what needs attention/action now?
3. Brainstorming – ideas worth trying
4. Planning – deciding on actions.
5. Implementation – we try it
6. Evaluation – how did it work? New ideas or new goals?

Problem-Solving Teams

Some situations require a team approach where a group of people with different backgrounds bring their particular perspectives to a meeting. A structured, time-limited problem-solving meeting can be the quickest way to see a plan develop. With the most challenging students we all feel powerless—a team meeting helps us to refocus. Ownership and control stay with the classroom teacher but support and assistance are inherent results of the process. It is a non-threatening way to include family and other service providers as partners.

The meeting is a part of the process of assisting teachers in a collaborative way to meet the needs of students. It is one of many tools used by teachers in an inclusive school environment. It is important because it facilitates collaborative, non-threatening opportunities for interaction between school staff, agency staff, and families. It is also attractive because it is time efficient. The follow-up—developing an action plan, monitoring, and adjusting—is most important to ensure that the productive work of the meeting is used to induce significant change for the student, teacher, or school around the presenting problem.

The 30-minute Meeting

Stage 1: The facilitator states the reason for meeting, the process to be followed, and the problem to be dealt with and clarifies as required.

Stage 2: The teacher presents a brief oral problem statement. This has been sorted out beforehand with the facilitator to ensure that the problem is clear.

Stage 3: Team members ask questions of the teacher to clear up questions they may have as to exactly what the problem is, what the circumstances are, and what interventions are now in place.

Stage 4: The facilitator uses a round-table brainstorming approach to generate suggestions for the teacher's consideration. Brief statements are encouraged. Team members direct them to the facilitator. The teacher does not interact with others during this stage.

Stage 5: The facilitator goes over the suggestions and strategies made with the teacher. The teacher may be asked to rate suggestions to try now, to try later, or already in place/does not fit my style.

Stage 6: The facilitator establishes a plan to follow up on the ideas. A meeting to develop the details into a comprehensive strategy will follow. Arrangements for a review meeting with participants are discussed.

Stage 7: The facilitator thanks the team members and ensures that all leave feeling empowered and optimistic.

Appendix III: Components of a Behaviour Plan

- ☐ **Identification of the target behaviour (what, where, when, who, and why)**

  - ✓ Define the challenging behaviour(s) in observable, measurable terms. (What is the frequency, intensity and duration of the behaviour?)
  - ✓ Describe the environment in which the behaviour usually occurs. (In which room? What is the physical arrangement? Are there sensory factors involved?)
  - ✓ Explain when the behaviour usually occurs.
  - ✓ State who is usually present when the behaviour occurs.
  - ✓ Determine the function(s) of the behaviour.

- ☐ **Behavioural outcomes**

  - ✓ Describe the desirable/alternative replacement behaviours. (This is the purpose of the plan.)

- ☐ **Environmental considerations**

  - ✓ Identify any changes that need to be made in the environment in order to prevent the challenging behaviour and to promote the desired (replacement) behaviour.
  - ✓ Specify the extent to which the plan will be implemented in various settings.

- ☐ **Identify strategies/techniques that will be used to change behaviours**

  - ✓ Specify proactive strategies/techniques to decrease the challenging behaviour(s) (e.g., modifying tasks characteristics, clarifying routines and expectations, revising the activity schedule, providing more opportunities for choice, using visual strategies, developing a communication system, providing a quiet area, etc).
  - ✓ Specify strategies/techniques to teach replacement behaviours (e.g., how will you teach social skills, stress/anger management, decision-making, etc.?)
  - ✓ Specify strategies/techniques to increase replacement behaviour (e.g., consider the reinforcement schedule (frequency of rewards), magnitude (amount or intensity of rewards), and immediacy (delay between behaviour and rewards).

- ☐ Identify methods that will be used to achieve behavioural outcomes

  - ✓ direct instruction (individual/group)
  - ✓ counselling (individual/group)
  - ✓ applied behavioural analysis
  - ✓ cognitive behavioural training
  - ✓ social stories
  - ✓ bibliotherapy
  - ✓ drama therapy
  - ✓ music therapy
  - ✓ play therapy
  - ✓ art therapy
  - ✓ other

- ☐ **Roles and responsibilities**

  - ✓ Identify the roles and responsibilities of all persons involved in implementing the plan.

- ☐ **Strategies to transfer skills**

  - ✓ Identify strategies that will be used to teach students to transfer skills learned to other environments, people, etc.

- ☐ **Response protocol**

  - ✓ Identify a planned response to

    - ☞ defuse the behaviour (Interventions focus on preventing future problem behaviours and keeping the student on task.)
    - ☞ deal with out-of-control behaviours that pose a risk of injury to the student or others (Interventions focus on safety.)
    - ☞ support recovery after the behaviour (Interventions focus on re-establishing routines. This includes a re-entry plan, which may be to a specific activity, the classroom, or school.)

  - ✓ Identify the persons responsible at each stage of the response protocol.

- ☐ **Evaluation Plan and Schedule**

  - ✓ Identify how you will evaluate the plan's effectiveness.
  - ✓ Monitor the intervention and evaluate the outcomes.
  - ✓ Determine a schedule for reviewing/modifying the plan. Include dates and criteria for changing/fading the plan

Appendix IV: Definition of Terms

Please note that the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-IV)*, which is used as a reference by psychologists, psychiatrists and other practitioners, was used as a basis for this definition of terms. All conditions require a documented diagnosis through collaboration with professionals.

Anorexia Nervosa: is characterized by a refusal to maintain a minimally normal body weight and a significant disturbance in the perception of the shape or size of one's body.

Asperger's Disorder: is characterized by qualitative impairment in social interaction and restricted, repetitive, and stereotyped patterns of behaviour, interests, and activities, with no significant delays in language, cognitive development, self-help skills, adaptive behaviour, or curiosity about the environment.:

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder: is typically characterized by a persistent pattern of inattention and/or hyperactivity-impulsivity that is more frequent and severe than is typically observed in individuals at a comparable level of development. There must be clear evidence of clinically significant impairment in social, academic, or occupational functioning, which presents in two or more settings.

Autistic Disorder: is typically characterized by the presence of markedly abnormal or impaired development in social interaction and communication and a restricted repertoire of activity and interests.

Bipolar Disorder: is characterized by unpredictable and volatile mood swings, from high energy to rages, which interfere with a child's ability to function effectively at home, at school, and in social situations.

Bulimia Nervosa: is characterized by repeated episodes of binge eating followed by inappropriate compensatory behaviours such as self-induced vomiting; misuse of laxatives or other drugs; fasting; or excessive exercise.

Childhood Disintegrative Disorder: is characterized by a marked regression in multiple areas of functioning following a period of at least two years of apparent normal development. There is a clinically significant loss of previously acquired skills in at least two of the following areas: expressive or receptive language, social skills or adaptive behaviour, bowel or bladder control, play, or motor skills.

Communication Disorders: are typically characterized by impairment in expressive or receptive language skills or articulation, or by the presence of stuttering.

Conduct Disorder: is a repetitive and persistent pattern of behaviour in which the basic rights of others or major age-appropriate societal norms or rules are violated, causing significant impairment in social, academic, or occupational functioning.

Depression and Related Mood Disorders : are characterized by at least two weeks of depressed mood or loss of interest or pleasure in activities, accompanied by symptoms such as significant weight gain or loss; disturbance in sleep (insomnia or hypersomnia); psychomotor agitation or impairment; fatigue; diminished ability to think or concentrate; indecisiveness; feelings of worthlessness or excessive or inappropriate guilt or helplessness; and ideas of suicide, suicide threats or attempts, or recurrent thoughts of death.

Dissociative Disorders: are characterized by a disruption in the usually integrated functions of consciousness, memory, identity, or perception of the environment. This disturbance may be sudden or gradual, transient, or chronic.

Encropresis: is repeated passage of feces into inappropriate places (e.g., clothing or floor) that is most often involuntary but occasionally can be intentional.

Enuresis: is repeated voiding of urine into bed or clothes that is most often involuntary but occasionally can be intentional.

Generalized Anxiety Disorder: is characterized by at least six months of persistent and excessive anxiety and worry.

Learning Disorders/Disabilities: are typically diagnosed when individuals of average to above average intelligence display significant processing deficits in attention, visual processing, auditory processing, visual perception, language, written expression, math, organization, or memory that interfere with their ability to learn.

Intellectual Disabilities: refers to the level of cognitive functioning that is demonstrated by an individual. It is the circumstance in which an individual's cognitive functioning is impeded to the point of causing a significant disability in receiving information from her/his environment, then effectively processing, problem solving, and adapting to this information. The individual's functional ability in the following areas may be markedly affected: language and communication; social interaction; self-direction; self-care; independent travel; learning; and eventual economic self-sufficiency. An intellectual disability is a lifelong condition (Saskatchewan Learning, 2002).

Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder: is characterized by recurrent obsessions or compulsions that are severe enough to be time consuming or to cause marked anxiety or distress and are recognized as excessive and unreasonable.

Oppositional Defiant Disorder: is characterized by a recurrent pattern of negativistic, disobedient, and hostile behaviour toward authority figures. Some of the behaviours exhibited include losing temper, arguing with adults, refusing to comply to adults' requests or rules, and deliberately annoying others.

Panic Disorder: is characterized by recurrent unexpected panic attacks. A panic attack is a discrete period in which there is the sudden onset of intense apprehension, fearfulness, or terror, often associated with feelings of impending doom. During these attacks, symptoms such as shortness of breath, palpitations, chest pain or discomfort, choking or smothering sensations, and fear of "going crazy" or losing control are present.

Personality Disorders: are characterized by an enduring pattern of inner experience and behaviour that deviates markedly from the expectations of the individual's culture, is pervasive and inflexible, has an onset in adolescence or early adulthood, is stable over time, and leads to distress or impairment. There are several types of personality disorders.

Pervasive Developmental Disorder:(not otherwise specified): A condition typically characterized by impairment in the development of reciprocal social interaction or verbal and nonverbal communication skills, or when stereotyped behaviour, interests and activities are present, but do not fall under other categories.

Post-traumatic Stress Disorder: is characterized by the re-experiencing of an extremely traumatic event accompanied by symptoms of increased arousal and by avoidance of stimuli associated with the trauma.

Rett's Disorder: is characterized by a loss of multiple skills following a period of normal development, such as a loss of previously acquired purposeful hand skills and the development of stereotyped hand movements; loss of social engagement; poorly coordinated gait or trunk movements; and severely impaired expressive and receptive language development with severe psychomotor impairment.

Schizophrenia: is a complex biochemical disorder of the brain often marked by disorganization of thought, social withdrawal, lack of attention, and apathy.

Selective Mutism: is typically shown by the persistent failure/refusal to speak in specific social situations.

Separation Anxiety Disorder: is characterized by developmentally inappropriate and excessive anxiety concerning separation from home or from those to whom the individual is attached, which causes clinically significant distress or impairment in social, academic (occupational), or other important areas of functioning.

Specific Phobia: is characterized by clinically significant anxiety provoked by exposure to a specific object or situation, often leading to avoidance behaviour.

Tourette's Syndrome: is a neurological condition characterized by either verbal or motor "tics," which can interfere with a child's learning and social interactions

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