

**EAPRIL 2014 Conference**

**Guided Notes for the presentation**

**“Managing students with behavioral problems in general education classrooms: The effectiveness and importance of a function-based social skills program”**

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### Objectives

- Students with behavioral problems in general education classrooms
- Evidence-based practices for students with behavioral problems
- Research study design and outcomes
- Video clips

### Introduction

- Students with behavioral problems exhibit internalizing/externalizing behaviors that fall significantly beyond age-appropriate and cultural norms (Heward, 2013)
- They \_\_\_\_\_ over time and present \_\_\_\_\_ in peer and adult \_\_\_\_\_
- Highest increase of student referrals for psychological assessment due to emotional and/or behavioral problems (36%). Majority of referrals relates to males (66.6%) and comes from Pre- and Primary Education (62%) (Cyprus Ministry of Education & Culture, 2014)

### Prevention rather than remediation

- Early exposure to adverse family, neighborhood, school, and societal risk factors leads to development of maladaptive behavioral patterns during school life (Sprague & Walker, 1999)
- Emphasis on preventative-based ecosystemic approach. The earlier \_\_\_\_\_... (Conroy & Brown, 2004; Webster-Stratton & Taylor, 2001)
- \_\_\_\_\_ as a best practice for students with behavioral needs (Scott & Kamps, 2007; Payne et al., 2007)
- A set of processes (rating scales, direct observations, interviews, systematic manipulations) for (a) collecting information about student problem behaviors, (b) defining environmental events that are to problem behaviors, and (c) implement a function-based behavioral intervention (O’Neill et al., 2015)

### Evidence-based strategies for students with behavioral disorders

- Research-based strategies that have been proved to \_\_\_\_\_ student desired outcomes (Dunlap et al., 2006)
- Examples of evidence-based classroom interventions include:
  - positive behavior supports (Sailor et al., 2011)
  - social skills instruction (Gresham et al., 2006)
  - \_\_\_\_\_ (Patton et al., 2006; Briere & Simonsen, 2011; Joseph & Eveleigh, 2011)

- function-based interventions (Payne et al., 2007)

### Research significance

- Focus on a Cypriot cultural context
- Focus on the design and implementation of preventative interventions for at-risk students
- Target self-monitoring behavior as a replacement behavior that would serve the same function as the off-task behavior

### Research purpose

- To examine the effectiveness of a function-based social skills intervention program on the:
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_ of four second-grade male students in an elementary school in Cyprus
- To examine participants' views on the social validity of the social skills intervention program

### Methods

- Participants
  - 4 male students in Grade 2 (ages 7-8 years old)
  - Selection criteria
    - Teacher nominations of possible students with off-task behaviors during classroom instruction
    - At least 20% of off-task behavior as verified by a total of 5-hour preliminary ABC direct observations per student in classroom (ABC: Antecedent- Behavior – Consequence)
    - Parental consent
- **Dependent variables (what was measured)**
  - \_\_\_\_\_ (e.g., playing with instructional materials, keeping eyes and body away from the teacher or the assigned work, etc)
    - Measured by 10-second partial-interval recording
  - \_\_\_\_\_: correct and complete classwork assignments
    - Measured by a 5-point interval scale completed by teacher
- **Independent variable (what was manipulated)**
  - A two-component social skills intervention program: (a) direct social skills instruction (4 training sessions), and (b) self-monitoring system (one training session)

- **Reliability & treatment fidelity**
  - Interobserver agreement reliability checks per each DV for more than 30% of sessions
    - Off-task behavior (Baseline: 99.35%, Intervention 99.64%)
  - Procedural integrity checks for IV conducted by a second observer for more than 30% of intervention sessions
    - Social skills: Mean agreement 99.68%
    - Self monitoring: Mean Agreement 90.92%
- **Research design**
  - Quantitative experimental single-subject research
    - Multiple-baseline design across subjects (Baer et al., 1968; Cooper et al., 2007)

## Research procedures

- **Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) procedures**
  - Identified function of student's problem behavior via interviews, ABC direct observations, scatter plot
  - Developed hypothesis statement to explain problem behavior
    - “When teacher asked Tony to complete math worksheet, he played with his materials in order to avoid the task.”
- **Experimental phase A (baseline)** – “Classroom regular business work”
  - Teacher awarded/removed team points every day based on students' compliance to the visually displayed classroom rules
  - At the end of the week, teams could possibly exchanged cumulative points with preferred items
- **Experimental phase B (intervention)** – “Social skills training and self monitoring”
  - \_\_\_\_\_ (four 35-minute sessions)
    - Introduction and rationale of the target social skill
    - Definition of the social skill components (examples and non-examples)
    - Model social skill
    - Guided practice with role playing

- Independent practice with various scenarios
  - Schedule of Reinforcement
  - Assessment (mastery criterion: 100% correct performance on 3 scenarios presented before moving on to the next session)
- \_\_\_\_\_ (one 35-minute training session)
- Practice the use of self-observation, self-recording, self-assessment during training session and classroom instruction
- **Self monitoring in the classroom**
    - Student and adult had a separate self-monitoring card along with a timer.
    - When timer went off simultaneously, adult and student recorded separately on the card.
    - At the end of classroom instruction, student recordings were checked for accuracy
    - When student met his target goal (e.g., 105 points), then the student was allowed to use the Spinner and select a preferred reward
  - **Experimental phase C (maintenance)** – “Self monitoring with no timer”

### Results – Graphs

- Percentage of 10-second intervals of off-task behavior
- Frequency of academic achievement
- Frequency of academic achievement

### Social Validity

- Students’ views were measured via semi-structured interviews by an independent observer
- Teacher views were measured via a questionnaire with open- and close-ended questions

### Conclusions

- A strong functional relationship between students’ off-task behavior and social skills intervention program
- Large effect sizes (2.8 – 6.0) denote the practical significance of the study
- Students and classroom teacher viewed positively the scope, procedures and outcomes of this program