

# The Behavior Intervention Plan

Students in alternative programs, although having many individual needs, have one characteristic in common. They are all non-compliant. Whether the student is one who acts out, breaks the rules, refuses to listen to authority figures or one who is a quiet, rebellious non-participant, all are non-compliant to the expectations of the school and social environment.

Students with behavior problems, who are in alternative programs, require behavior management strategies that are carefully developed and are consistent, regardless of who is teaching the individual or group. There are several key premises that form the basis for the development of an effective intervention plan.

## Staying In The Program

Based on the fact that many of these students have already experienced discipline measures, including suspensions, the intervention plan is designed to maintain students' daily attendance in the program as long as possible. Students must remain in the program if they are to benefit from the instructional activities offered to change their behavior.

## Knowing The Consequences

The behavior intervention plan needs to be structured in such a way that students know exactly what the consequences of their behaviors are each time there is an infraction.

## Consistency

With a predictable set of consequences, the plan can be used in the same manner by all staff. The consequences are cumulative throughout the day, so that all staff know each student's status for the whole day. The predictability of consequences also enables staff to deliver their feedback in a calm, dispassionate manner.

## Behaviors Not Allowed

In an alternative program, it is necessary to work through the non-compliant behaviors with the students. In developing a workable behavior intervention plan, however, there are certain behaviors that cannot be allowed to continue under any circumstances.

Swearing at or being disrespectful to teachers and staff cannot be tolerated, as this behavior tends to escalate out of control with peers supporting or modeling each other. Also, physical aggression towards any individual in the program cannot be tolerated.

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# Removed For The Day

Excluding the aggressive bullying described above, there are many times throughout the school day when students are non-compliant by demonstrating behaviors that keep them from achieving. In these cases there needs to be opportunities for the students to become aware of these behaviors and to be able to work towards solving behavior issues. The behavior intervention plan must be structured in such a way that it gives students some chance to correct these non-compliance issues.

## **Tolerance Level**

But as in real life, these opportunities cannot be unlimited. Therefore, the behavior intervention plan is built around timing non-compliance throughout the day to an agreed upon tolerance level.

## **Debriefing Times**

By monitoring cumulative times of non-compliance, it is possible to build into the behavior intervention plan scheduled opportunities for debriefing and problem solving, in an attempt to make the students aware of their behaviors and to find new strategies they can try when the students return to the classroom after each of these sessions.

## **Out Of The Program For The Day**

The behavior intervention plan is designed so that if after a reasonable amount of time and intervention the student has been unable or has refused to cooperate in problem solving it may be necessary for the student to go home for the remainder of the day and return to the program the next day to try again. These short term behavior withdrawals allow staff to continue to maintain a more workable environment for those students who are putting some effort into learning to comply.

## **Cumulative Time**

Issues of non-compliance are timed cumulatively throughout the day. The use of stop watches and the recording sheet discussed in the section on evaluation and reporting are used by the staff. After the first ten minutes of non-compliance, a staff member will remove the student from the group setting for an individual debriefing session, where the staff and student will explore together the reasons for the non-compliance and possible solutions.

## **Strategy To Return**

The student does not return until successfully coming up with a strategy to use upon rejoining the group setting. Once the student returns to the group, non-compliance time may accumulate to the twenty minute mark. Again the student is removed for an individual session with a staff member for debriefing.

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