

Common Reason for Social Behavior Problems: Inappropriate behavior is positively reinforced
Intervention Name: Reducing Disruptive Behavior with Randomized Group Contingencies

Brief Description:

This intervention uses a group contingency to alter student's disruptive behavior with interdependent group reinforcers. With an interdependent group reinforcer, students have to rely on one another to gain access to the reward. "Reinforcement increases target behavior, whereas punishment decreases the target behavior (Kelshaw-Levering, Sterling-Turner, & Henry, 2000). By removing the reinforcement or "reward" for undesired behavior and increasing the reward for desired behavior with class-wide randomized group contingency, simultaneously ALL students can be rewarded for their positive behavior and potentially punished for negative behavior. There is a large body of evidence on the use of reinforcement to decrease disruptive behavior. This type of intervention is should generalize across settings.

What "Common Problems" Does This Address?

Disruptive behavior is being reinforced while inappropriate isn't being reinforced. Disruptive behaviors include, but are not limited to, off-task behavior, inappropriate vocalizations, out-of area (student not in assigned location), noncompliance, and failing to complete class assignments.

Procedures

1. Make classroom rules chart.
2. Make list of potential reinforcers to class and when reinforcers can be earned (reinforcement schedule)
3. Explain behaviors that must be exhibited in order to earn reinforcers

Option #1

- a. State goal of # of disruptions (i.e.: Class must have 36 or fewer disruptive behavior episodes).
- b. Explain to class that must not exceed # of disruptions listed in step a.
- c. For every student who exhibits target behavior (disruptive behavior), teacher places check next to name of student.
- d. Teacher may provide prompt to remind class about reward
- e. If class meets criteria, randomly select student to draw slip of paper out of reinforcer jar

Option #2

- a. Teacher will explain the jars labeled "behaviors", "group or individual student", "names", and "reinforcer"
- b. Teacher will use checklist to track the target behaviors of all students in class, if target behavior is exhibited, then teacher will check the box.
- c. Teacher may provide prompt to remind class about reward
- d. At the end of each period (reinforcement schedule), teacher will select a behavior from the "behaviors jar", then select a slip from the "group or individual student" jar, if "individual student" is selected; teacher will select a name from the "names" jar. Lastly, teacher will select a reinforcer. Teacher MUST make the selections in this order.
- e. If class and/or student meets criteria of behavior, then teacher will announce to class what reinforcer the class earned. If class DID NOT meet criteria of randomly selected contingencies, teacher WILL NOT announce the results in order to reduce negative consequences for individual students who prevented class from earning reinforcer.

Critical Components that must be implemented for intervention to be successful:

Clearly defined set of rules displayed in classroom. Discuss the rules with students, emphasizing the purpose and importance of each rule. Provide specific examples for each rule

Critical Assumptions/Problem-Solving Questions to be Asked:

Assumptions: The original validation of this intervention included implementation with students in 2nd grade general education classroom. This intervention has the following assumptions:

- Intervention includes the following criteria: The class has been systematically observed and disruptive behaviors specifically identified prior to implementing the intervention.
- The number of disruptive students should not encompass more than 33% of the targeted classroom population.
- Rewards must be valuable and reinforcing to the entire class.
- The class is expected to work together in order to achieve the rewards.
- Reinforcement schedule is consistent

Do students successfully know how to perform the appropriate behavior?

- If yes, continue with intervention as described
- If no, see intervention for “Student has not learned behavior/skill” prior to implementing intervention. Once students have learned appropriate behavior, continue with intervention as described.

Materials

- Classroom rules chart
- Reinforcers list
- Jars (Opaque)
- Note cards/slips of paper

References

Kelshaw-Levering, K., Sterling-Turner, H.E., Henry, J.R., & Skinner, C.H. (2000). Randomized interdependent group contingencies: Group reinforcement with a twist. *Psychology in the Schools*, 37, 523-533.