

# **TEACHER'S GUIDE TO BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTIONS**

**Intervention Strategies for  
Behavior Problems in the  
Educational Environment**

**Kathy Cummins Wunderlicht**

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**Behavior  
Number**

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**Behavior  
Number**

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Number**

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**Behavior  
Number**

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**Behavior  
Number**

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**Behavior  
Number**

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**Behavior  
Number**

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**Behavior  
Number**

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**Behavior  
Number**

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**Behavior  
Number**

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**Behavior**

**Number**

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**Behavior**

**Number**

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# I. Introduction

The *Teacher's Guide to Behavioral Interventions* is based on the most commonly encountered behavior problems in the educational environment. The list of behavior problems was compiled as a result of survey activities designed to identify the most common behavior problems encountered by classroom teachers. Input was gathered from 156 classroom teachers and numerous special education personnel from elementary, intermediate, and secondary school settings.

The intent of the *Teacher's Guide to Behavioral Interventions* is to provide educators with a selection of proven interventions for the most common behavior problems encountered in the educational environment. The concept of identifying the most common behavior problems and intervention strategies grew out of years of staffings and in-service presentations where teachers earnestly asked the question over and over again, "What do you do with a student who . . .?" It is obvious that our educators genuinely want to provide an appropriate behavioral support program for those students in need, and the *Teacher's Guide to Behavioral Interventions* is designed to provide the necessary intervention strategies.

The goals and objectives identified in this manual will serve as samples which may be used in writing IEP's for identified special needs students. Criteria for measuring the success of the student's attainment of the goals and objectives must be determined by those professional educators and parents who are aware of the student's current abilities and program recommendations.

The interventions listed under each behavior problem should serve as a guide for program development or change for any student in need of behavior improvement. Interventions may be chosen by a team of professionals, a special educator in a self-contained class or functioning in a resource or consultant capacity, or by a regular education teacher. Professional judgment should dictate the choice of interventions for any particular student. The student's age, gender, grade level, local community standards, and handicap, if one exists, are all to be considered in selecting appropriate intervention procedures. The interventions have been found appropriate for special education as well as regular education classroom environments.

The assumption is made, in any professionally responsible educational setting, that all related vari-

ables will be considered in choosing appropriate interventions designed to facilitate student success. Thorough consideration should identify all related variables influencing student behavior problems in order to appropriately respond to individual situations. Vision, hearing, general health, nutrition, and family case history should be considered in order not to overlook any historical or contemporary determinants of behavior.

The expectation is that the appropriate interventions will be selected, agreed upon, and consistently used by all instructional personnel working with the student. Use of the same interventions by all teachers in all settings greatly enhances the likelihood of student success in the educational environment. These interventions, appropriate for all educational environments, lend themselves particularly well to creating continuity across all the classes and educational settings in which the student functions.

In order to respond to the broad spectrum of implications related to behavior problems, the interventions contained in this manual are designed to represent solutions which are both preventive and reactive. Preventive interventions are environmental modifications used to reduce stimulation, teach the student problem-solving skills, etc. Reactive interventions are more immediately related to the situation, such as removal from the group, increased supervision, natural consequences, etc.

Some interventions in this manual apply to most students and should be considered first in order to provide a more general approach to problem reduction. Other interventions are more specific and should be individually selected for students based on the appropriateness of the intervention to the situation.

For any behavior problem exhibited by students, it will be of value to assess the extent to which institutional variables influence the behavior and possibly contribute to the problem. Limited supervision in play areas, hallways, and during extracurricular activities, as well as arbitrary groupings and seating arrangements are often examples of factors which are inherent in the institutional structure and often contribute to problem behavior. As a first step in improving a situation, these institutional variables should be evaluated and acted upon to reduce the influence of variables which result in unsuccessful behavior.



This manual is designed to respond to the most typical behavior problems exhibited by students in educational settings. The interventions identified herein are appropriate for any student engaging in the behaviors described. The students need not be identified as behaviorally disordered/emotionally disturbed or handicapped in any way. The appropriateness of the interventions relates directly to the behavior problem and not to classification labels. All interventions included have been found to be most successful by administrators, teachers, aides, counselors, parents, and other persons intent on helping students.

Every attempt was made to provide interventions which are likely to contribute to the most positive classroom atmosphere. Additionally, the selection of interventions took into account those interventions which reflect positive teacher behavior expected of educators in our schools. All interventions included in the *Teacher's Guide to Behavioral Interventions* have been proven to contribute to student success in the educational environment.

In addition to providing intervention strategies for the most commonly encountered behavior problems in the educational environment, the *Teacher's Guide to Behavioral Interventions* provides the goals, objectives, and intervention strategies for the behaviors identified by the *Behavior Disorders Identification Scale-Second Edition*. The 83 behaviors included on the *Behavior Disorders Identification Scale-Second Edition School Version* are included in the *Teacher's Guide to Behavioral Interventions* as well as 27 additional behavior problems which are common in educational environments but were not included on the Behavior Disorders Identification Scale-Second Edition.

Dr. Roy Moeller is to be given special recognition for his assistance in the research involved in this project to identify common behavior problems encountered by teachers. And to all the teachers who face the insurmountable task of helping our students succeed, "God bless you."

K.C.W.

## II Using the *Teacher's Guide to Behavioral Interventions* in Conjunction with the *Behavior Disorders Identification Scale-Second Edition*

\*NOTE: If the *Teacher's Guide to Behavioral Interventions* is not being used in conjunction with the *Behavior Disorders Identification Scale-Second Edition (BDIS-2)*, the following procedural steps need not be followed.

Step 1: The student is rated with the School Version of the **BDIS-2**.

Step 2: Conversions of raw scores on the **BDIS-2** are made, subscale scores and percentile scores are determined, and the **BDIS-2** results of rating section is completed.

Step 3: Determine on which of the five characteristics (subscales) the student scores one or more standard deviations below the mean (subscale score below 7).

Step 4: Under each of those characteristics (subscales) on which the student scored one standard deviation or more below the mean, determine which behaviors constitute primary concern in the educational environment (the behaviors with the highest raw scores).

Step 5: Find goals and objectives from the *Teacher's Guide to Behavioral Interventions* (section titled: III. Goals and Objectives) which represent each behavior indicated as a primary concern on the **BDIS-2**.

Step 6: Determine those interventions from the *Teacher's Guide to Behavioral Interventions* (section IV) which are most appropriate in facilitating the student's success and meeting the goals and objectives chosen in Step 5.

Step 7: If there are any behaviors which are of concern on subscales other than those with scores more than one standard deviation below the mean, goals, objectives, and interventions should be selected and written for those behaviors as well.

Step 8: Share those goals, objectives, and interventions strategies selected for the student with all personnel involved in the student's educational program.

## II. Goals, Objectives, and Interventions

### **BEHAVIOR 1: Does not perform or complete classroom assignments during class time**

#### **Goal:**

1. The student will complete classroom assignments during class time.

#### **Objectives:**

1. The student will complete a task before going on to the next task on \_\_\_\_ out of \_\_\_\_ trials.
2. The student will complete \_\_\_\_ out of \_\_\_\_ assigned tasks per day.
3. The student will attempt \_\_\_\_ out of \_\_\_\_ assigned tasks per day.
4. The student will remain on-task for \_\_\_\_ out of \_\_\_\_ minutes per class period.
5. The student will use the time provided on assigned tasks in order to complete \_\_\_\_ tasks per day.

### **BEHAVIOR 2: Does not turn in homework assignments**

#### **Goal:**

1. The student will turn in homework assignments.

#### **Objectives:**

1. The student will complete \_\_\_\_ out of \_\_\_\_ homework assignments each day.
2. The student will complete \_\_\_\_ out of \_\_\_\_ homework assignments each week.
3. The student will bring \_\_\_\_ out of \_\_\_\_ of his/her completed homework assignments to school and turn them in each day.
4. The student will bring \_\_\_\_ out of \_\_\_\_ of his/her completed homework assignments to school and turn them in each week.
5. The student will carry his/her homework assignments to and from school in a book bag/backpack in order to prevent loss on \_\_\_\_ out of \_\_\_\_ trials.
6. The student will perform \_\_\_\_ out of \_\_\_\_ homework assignments at home and return them to school each day.
7. The student will perform \_\_\_\_ out of \_\_\_\_ homework assignments at home and return them to school each week.

### **BEHAVIOR 3: Is disorganized to the point of not having necessary materials, losing materials, being unable to find completed assignments, being unable to follow the steps of the assignment in order, etc.**

#### **Goal:**

1. The student will improve his/her organizational skills related to assignments.

#### **Objectives:**

1. The student will have the necessary materials for assigned activities on \_\_\_\_ out of \_\_\_\_ trials.
2. The student will carry his/her materials and assignments to and from activities in a book bag/backpack in order to prevent loss on \_\_\_\_ out of \_\_\_\_ trials.
3. The student will return materials to their specified locations on \_\_\_\_ out of \_\_\_\_ trials.
4. The student will place his/her completed work in a specified location (folder, "mailbox," etc.) on out of \_\_\_\_ trials.
5. The student will be organized and prepared to work within \_\_\_\_ minutes of the beginning of class.
6. The student will complete one step of the task before going on to the next step on \_\_\_\_ out of trials.
7. The student will complete the steps of the assigned task in sequential order on \_\_\_\_ out of \_\_\_\_ trials.
8. The student will prioritize and complete assignments with the help of the teacher on \_\_\_\_ out of opportunities.
9. The student will independently prioritize and complete assignments on \_\_\_\_ out of \_\_\_\_ opportunities.

## IV. Interventions

### 1 Does not perform or complete classroom assignments during class time

**1.** Reinforce the student for attempting and completing class assignments: (a) give the student a tangible reward (e.g., classroom privileges, line leading, passing out materials, five minutes free time, etc.) or (b) give the student an intangible reward (e.g., praise, handshake, smile, etc.).

**2.** Speak with the student to explain (a) what he/she is doing wrong (e.g., not completing assignments) and (b) what he/she should be doing (e.g., completing assignments during class).

**3.** Establish classroom rules (e.g., work on-task; work quietly; remain in your seat; finish task; meet task expectations; etc.). Review rules often and reinforce students for following rules.

**4.** Reinforce those students in the classroom who attempt and complete assignments during class time.

**5.** Reinforce the student for attempting and completing assignments based on the amount of work that he/she can successfully complete. As the student demonstrates success, gradually increase the amount of work required for reinforcement.

**6.** Write a contract with the student specifying what behavior is expected (e.g., attempting and completing class assignments) and what reinforcement will be made available when the terms of the contract have been met.

**7.** Have the student keep a chart or graph representing the number of class assignments completed.

**8.** Evaluate the appropriateness of the task to determine if: (a) the task is too easy, (b) the task is too difficult, and (c) the length of time scheduled for the task is appropriate.

**9.** Assign a peer to help the student with class assignments.

**10.** Assess the degree of task difficulty in comparison with the student's ability to perform the task.

**11.** Assign the student shorter tasks (e.g., modify a 20-problem math activity to 4 activities of 5 problems each to be done at various times during the day). Gradually increase the number of problems over time.

**12.** Present tasks in the most attractive, interesting manner possible.

**13.** Reduce distracting stimuli (e.g., place the student in the front row, provide a carrel or quiet place away from distractions). This is used as a means of reducing stimuli and not as a form of punishment.

**14.** Interact frequently with the student. Maintain involvement with class assignments (e.g., ask the student questions; ask the student's opinions; stand close to the student; seat the student near the teacher's desk; etc.).

**15.** Allow the student additional time to complete class assignments.

**16.** Supervise the student during class assignments in order to maintain on-task behavior.

**17.** Deliver directions orally to increase the probability of the student's understanding of class assignments.

**18.** Repeat directions to increase the probability of understanding.

**19.** Encourage the student to ask for clarification of directions for classroom assignments.

**20.** Follow a less desirable task with a highly desirable task; make the completion of the first task necessary to perform the second.