

TABLE OF CONTENTS

About the Authors	vii
Preface	ix
PART ONE: GETTING ACQUAINTED	1
1.1 Introduction	2
1.2 Program Overview	6
1.3 FIRST STEP Next Materials	11
PART TWO: GETTING STARTED.....	17
2.1 Screening and Eligibility.....	18
2.2 Classroom Context	27
PART THREE: IMPLEMENTING THE PROGRAM	33
3.1 Implementation Outline.....	34
3.2 Pre-Implementation	38
3.3 Coach Phase	79
3.4 Teacher Phase	101
3.5 Maintenance	112
3.6 Troubleshooting	121
PART FOUR: EVIDENCE BASE.....	139
REFERENCES	169
APPENDICES	
Appendix A: Teacher’s Workbook Thumbnails.....	175
Appendix B: Home and School Connections Workbook Thumbnails.....	195
Appendix C: CD Contents.....	213
Appendix D: DVD Contents—Viewer’s Guide.....	217

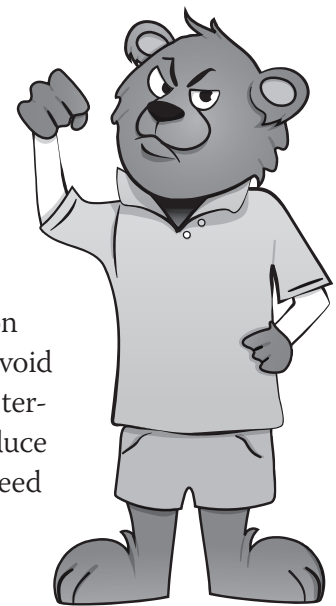
1.1 Introduction

FIRST STEP Next is a family-supported classroom intervention for students who engage in higher-than-normal rates of externalizing (acting out) behavior. FIRST STEP Next candidates are young students who often present severe management challenges for school staff. They engage in behavior problems such as teacher defiance, conflict with peers, and behaviors that disrupt the classroom. These students often resist the ordinary demands of schooling, such as focusing attention, complying promptly with teacher directives, and sharing and cooperating. About 9% of today's K–12 students display this externalizing behavior pattern.

FIRST STEP Next was developed as an individualized intervention for addressing the problem behaviors presented by these students. A typical profile follows for the increasing numbers of very young students who can hold school staff and their fellow students hostage.

CASE EXAMPLE

At 5 years of age, Tommy began his school career in Ms. McEvoy's kindergarten class. He was large for a kindergartner and easily intimidated most of his fellow students. From Day 1 of school, Tommy ignored most directions and complied only infrequently. Tommy's disruptions created a stressful classroom climate, reduced instructional time, and created a hostile relationship with his teacher. Tommy's behavior was equally problematic on the playground, where his bullying quickly led peers to avoid him. Though academically talented, Tommy was off to a terrible start. Within days, Ms. McEvoy was desperate to reduce Tommy's disruptive influence on her classroom and in need of assistance.



FIRST STEP NEXT STUDENTS

FIRST STEP Next is for students enrolled in Pre-K through grade 2. The program is designed to catch young students just before and following school entry so we can teach them a pattern of behavior that will lead to school success. Researchers have found that school success works as a protective factor in the child's life in school and out of school. Starting preventive interventions at elementary school entry and continuing them through grade 6 has been found to have greater effects on both educational outcomes and health-risk behaviors than intervening later in the elementary grades. These findings suggest that early and continued intervention in the elementary grades can help put children on a positive developmental course that is maintained through high school (Hawkins, Catalano, Kosterman, Abbott, & Hill, 1999).

School success works as a protective factor in the child's life in and out of school.

RATIONALE

When young students consistently fail to meet behavioral expectations at school, such as following directions and getting along with their peers, they are at risk for developing a pattern of antisocial behavior. Examples of antisocial behavior include physical aggression, severe tantruming, hostile reactions to social bids by peers, defiance of adult directives, vandalism, disturbing and disrupting others, ignoring correction attempts by adults, pestering, and overactivity.

These students often enter school with an antisocial behavior pattern already developed. Sometimes, they are inadvertently socialized to behave antisocially by their families and primary caregivers. If left unattended, these children are likely to manifest antisocial behavior throughout their school careers and often their adult lives.

Over the developmental age span (birth through age 18), antisocial behavior patterns prove to be extremely costly to individuals, families, and society in both social and economic terms (Patterson, Reid, & Dishion, 1992; Reid, 1993). Children who bring an antisocial behavior pattern to the schooling experience have a greatly increased risk for a host of long-term negative outcomes, including rejection by teachers and peers, school failure and dropout, delinquency, assignment to alternative school settings, vulnerability to gang membership, relationship problems, and, in some cases, interpersonal violence (Cicchetti & Nurcombe, 1993; Reid, 1993).

Antisocial behavior patterns prove to be costly to individuals, families, and society.

The number of children entering school with this behavior pattern has been increasing at an alarming pace over the past decade. School professionals are seeing mature acts of deviance, such as gang affiliation and attacks on adults, that would have been unthinkable among very young children just a few years ago. These children do not respond to corrections and adult management strategies as other children do. Unfortunately, preschool and primary grade teachers are generally not well prepared to cope with the problems that these children present in the classroom and on the playground.

Early intervention programs have the potential to prevent long-term negative outcomes if they are of high quality and are comprehensive in nature.

Effective programs for teaching antisocial children an adaptive pattern of behavior are currently in desperately short supply. Fortunately, there is solid evidence that effective early intervention programs have the potential to prevent long-term negative outcomes, if they are of high quality and are comprehensive in nature (Zigler, Taussig, & Black, 1992). Effective early intervention is one of the best methods for teaching young children about choices and consequences and for preventing delinquency in adolescence.

Young students with antisocial behavior patterns can learn to adapt to the school environment. With coaching and support, students can be taught to replace maladaptive behaviors, such as tantrums, defiance, and aggression, with more socially acceptable alternatives, such as soliciting help, responding to adult directives, and effectively problem-solving peer conflicts. By diverting at-risk children from a path leading to an antisocial pattern of behavior, we can prevent later negative outcomes that are destructive and very costly to the child, family, school, and ultimately society.

FIRST STEP Next is an early intervention program specifically developed for young students who either display an antisocial behavior pattern or show clear signs of developing one. FIRST STEP Next is a joint home and school intervention that enhances early school experiences. It assists at-risk children in getting off to the best start possible in their school careers by teaching them to get along with teachers and peers and to engage in schoolwork in an appropriate manner.

FIRST STEP NEXT VALIDATION

First Step, originally published in 1997, is supported by a robust evidence base of efficacy and effectiveness studies. Research has consistently demonstrated the program's impact on improving social skills and adaptive behavior and decreasing the

rate and severity of problem behavior. The program has been successfully used in a wide variety of settings and with diverse students (Walker, Severson, et al., 2014). While randomized, wait-list designs have demonstrated the program's efficacy under controlled conditions (Diken, Cavkaytar, Batu, Bozkurt, & Kurtyilmaz, 2010; Walker, Kavanaugh, et al., 1998; Walker, Seeley, et al., 2009), research has also provided compelling evidence for the effectiveness of First Step when implemented in more realistic conditions typical of school-based settings, with substantially less involvement from program developers and researchers (Sumi et al., 2013; Walker, Golly, McLane, & Kimmich, 2005).

First Step was initially developed and evaluated via a 4-year federal grant to the senior author that ran from 1992–96. During the nearly two decades since the program was created, additional competitively awarded grant funds have been invested in improving, refining, and evaluating its effects. First Step has been adopted and successfully implemented in the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Holland, Norway, and Turkey. It has also been used successfully with African American, Latino, and Native Hawaiian students in the United States. A comprehensive description of the evidence base for the First Step program is provided in Part Four of this guide.

RECOMMENDED INTERVENTION

First Step is broadly recognized as an evidence-based program and has been included in over a dozen listings of recommended early intervention programs for young children who have disruptive behavior patterns that threaten their school success. These include:

- The What Works Clearinghouse of the U.S. Department of Education
- Model Program Guide of the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention
- The American Psychological Association
- The Crime Solutions Program of the National Institute of Justice
- The Canadian Registry of Effective Mental Health Interventions
- The National Council for Special Education
- The National Association of Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports
- The RTI Action Network of the National Center for Learning Disabilities
- The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
- The New South Wales Community Service Agency of Australia

1.2 Program Overview

FIRST STEP Next is set up and coordinated by a behavioral coach (e.g., school counselor, behavioral specialist, early childhood educator, etc.) who works collaboratively with a classroom teacher. The FIRST STEP Next coach facilitates program implementation and leverages the combined support of the focus student's teacher, parents,* and peers to accelerate and maintain acquisition of critical school success skills.



Teacher



Coach



Class



Parent

DURATION

The intervention requires 2 to 3 months to implement and is then followed by a Maintenance Phase for the remainder of the school year.

THE FIRST STEP NEXT PROCESS

Multistep screening: The screening process gathers teacher-supplied information about the context in which the problem behavior occurs, records data from direct classroom observations, and evaluates student problem behavior through teacher behavioral ratings.

* Students' primary caregivers may be parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles, or foster parents. As it is cumbersome to reference all these important adults, we use the term *parent* or *family member* when referring to a student's primary caregiver.

One-on-one skill instruction with a behavioral coach: The FIRST STEP Next coach teaches the focus student a series of school success skills, referred to as Super Student Skills (the content of these skills is summarized in the Skill Chart shown in Figure 1a below). The coach then works with the teacher and student’s parents to ensure that these skills are recognized and supported both at home and school.

Classroom game in which the student earns points and praise for displaying school success skills: The coach uses a card with the color green on one side and red on the other to provide continuous behavioral feedback. Points are awarded for appropriate behavior at specified intervals. If the point goal for the day is met, the student earns a group activity reward that is shared equally with classmates.

After the focus student demonstrates program success with the coach, responsibility for running the classroom game is transferred to the teacher. During this phase, the coach continues to monitor implementation and provide troubleshooting help. Gradually, the program is faded over the 2- to 3-month implementation period, with “booster shots” of procedures to maintain the student’s improved behavior.

Home component linking skills introduced at school to the home context: Parents participate in the program by praising and rewarding their child for doing well at school, reviewing school success skills at home, and completing activities that promote positive parent-child interactions.

The following sequence of skills can be customized for individual students.

Figure 1a Skill Chart


Super Student Skill and Lesson Purpose	Action Steps
<p data-bbox="277 1297 760 1333">Guideline: Cooperate With Others</p> <p data-bbox="212 1388 565 1423">Skill ____: Follow Directions</p> <p data-bbox="212 1451 824 1669">Learning to follow directions is a basic behavioral skill. The skill of following directions teaches the student behaviors that operationalize the guideline “be cooperative.” By learning how to follow directions, the young FIRST STEP Next student gains access to school success.</p>	<div data-bbox="889 1310 1198 1696" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px;"> <p data-bbox="966 1339 1122 1360" style="text-align: center;">Follow Directions</p> <p data-bbox="943 1367 1144 1388" style="text-align: center;">Freeze and listen to the teacher.</p> <p data-bbox="927 1394 1161 1415" style="text-align: center;">Do what the teacher asks right away.</p>  </div>

Figure 1a (cont.) Skill Chart




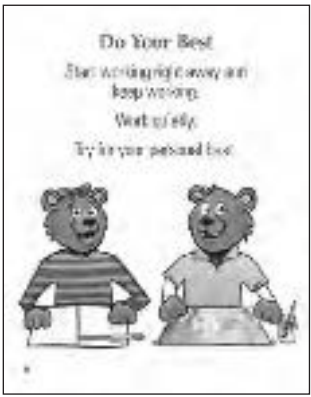


Super Student Skill and Lesson Purpose	Action Steps
<p style="text-align: center;">Guideline: Be Safe</p> <p>Skill ____: Be Safe</p> <p>Knowing the difference between safe and unsafe behavior is a critical skill that every young child must learn. This lesson teaches the focus student three basic rules that set the foundation for safe behavior at school.</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px;"> <p style="text-align: center;">Be Safe</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Walk in the halls and classroom. Stay with your class. Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself.</p>  </div>
<p style="text-align: center;">Guideline: Cooperate With Others</p> <p>Skill ____: Ask for Attention the Right Way</p> <p>Some students have difficulty adjusting to the school context, where adult attention must be shared with many other children. This lesson teaches the student to ask for adult attention in a way that minimizes disruption to the class and teacher.</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px;"> <p style="text-align: center;">Ask for Attention the Right Way</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Ask yourself, "Is it the right time to get attention?"</p> <p style="text-align: center;">If yes, quietly raise your hand. Then wait patiently for help.</p>  </div>
<p style="text-align: center;">Guideline: Cooperate With Others</p> <p>Skill ____: Be a Team Player</p> <p>The school setting often requires students to participate as part of a group. In this lesson, the focus student is taught basic skills for how to be a good team player, including how to look around and do what others are doing (participate), take turns, share, and use polite and helpful words when interacting with others.</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px;"> <p style="text-align: center;">Be a Team Player</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Look around and do the right thing. Take turns and share. Use nice words.</p>  </div>

Figure 1a (cont.) Skill Chart

Super Student Skill and Lesson Purpose	Action Steps
<p>Guideline: Be Responsible (for Yourself)</p> <p>Skill ____: Do Your Best</p> <p>Do Your Best reinforces productive work behavior that young students need to support their academic success in the future. This lesson teaches the student to work quietly and do his/her <i>personal</i> best.</p>	
<p>Guideline: Be Responsible (for Yourself)</p> <p>Skill ____: Be Cool</p> <p>Many young students need to learn how to de-escalate before frustration turns into a disruptive temper tantrum. This lesson teaches the focus student to recognize feelings of frustration and use a three-step procedure for positively coping with these feelings.</p>	
<p>Guideline: Be Responsible (for Yourself)</p> <p>Skill ____: Mistakes Are Okay</p> <p>Mistakes are often a trigger for disruptive behaviors. The steps introduced in this lesson help a student diffuse frustration. Because mistakes are essential for learning, this skill provides a gateway to both behavioral and academic learning.</p>	

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The FIRST STEP Next coach, the focus student, and the focus student's teacher, parents, and peers all play essential roles in a FIRST STEP Next implementation.

Coach

The coach's responsibilities include setting up and coordinating the program, introducing the Super Student Skills to the focus student, maintaining communication with the teacher and parents, and troubleshooting and monitoring implementation. Those best qualified for the coach's role are building-level school psychologists, behavioral and special education coaches, and others with training in positive behavior supports. With training, retired teachers, graduate students, and carefully selected instructional assistants can also provide focus students and their families and classroom teachers with needed assistance.

District Coordinator

Sometimes, FIRST STEP Next implementation may be overseen by a district-level coordinator. The coordinator may assume responsibility for intake of referrals from schools and initial screening and eligibility decisions. The coordinator may also assign coaches, train and mentor coaches, and assist with maintenance planning for the next year. Coordinators are typically school psychologists, interventionists, or special education support personnel with advanced training in positive behavior supports.

Student

The focus student's role is to cooperate with instruction and participate in Super Student Skills Lessons, the Green Card game, and home activities.

Teacher

The classroom teacher works collaboratively with the coach to implement the program, gradually taking on more responsibilities as the student demonstrates success.

Parents

The parents praise and support the child's school performance, provide home rewards and recognition, and complete brief activities to review skills and facilitate positive interactions at home.

Peers

Peers serve as an important source of support and encouragement for the program and the student's success.

1.3 FIRST STEP Next Materials

FIRST STEP Next is jointly implemented by the coach and teacher and supported by the parent/family. Materials needed for each partner in intervention are included with the program. This section lists all materials and briefly describes their purpose.

The FIRST STEP Next tote bag includes:

- Coach's Guide (includes CD of Materials and Training DVD)
- Super Student Lessons
- *Super Students!* Book
- 3 Green and Red Cards and lanyards
- Cooperation Cards
- 6 Reward Cards
- Dry-erase marker
- Three FIRST STEP Next Student Sets



Coach's Guide

This guide provides a complete description of the FIRST STEP Next program, instructions for implementing the program, behavioral lessons, and a summary of research supporting FIRST STEP Next.

CD of Materials

The CD contains reproducible materials for use by the coach, teacher, and parent. For a complete list of materials, see the readme file on the CD or Appendix C in this guide.

The CD also contains audio recordings that correspond to point intervals for each program day. Recordings are provided as MP3 files so they can be used with a wide variety of devices, such as iPods, cell phones, and tablet computers.



Four Classroom Expectations Lessons have been included as reproducible handouts for teachers who want additional support in creating a calm, orderly classroom environment.

Training DVD

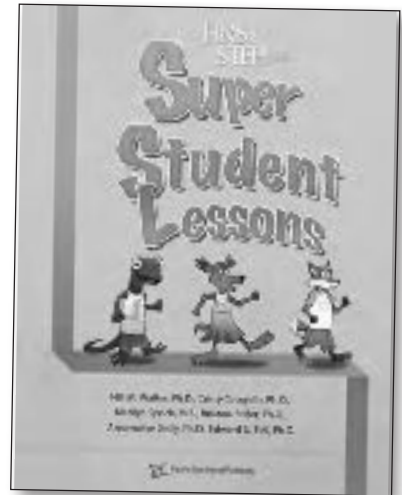
The DVD shows how both the coach and the classroom teacher implement the major components of FIRST STEP Next. This DVD may be used during inservice training or for self-study.



Super Student Lessons

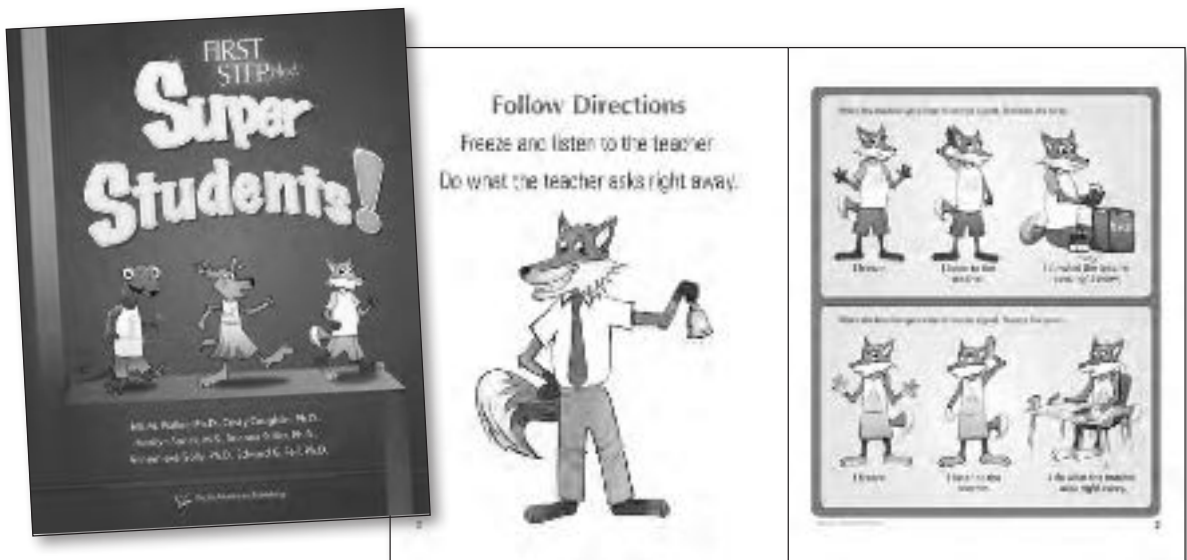
Coaches use the Super Student Lessons to deliver explicit one-on-one behavioral lessons. Lessons include:

- Follow Directions
- Be Safe
- Ask for Attention the Right Way
- Be a Team Player
- Do Your Best
- Be Cool
- Mistakes Are Okay



Super Students! Book

This full-color book is used during the behavioral lessons to provide visual support when teaching the skills steps.



Cooperation Cards

The focus student earns Cooperation Cards for following directions and working hard during his/her one-on-one lessons with the coach.



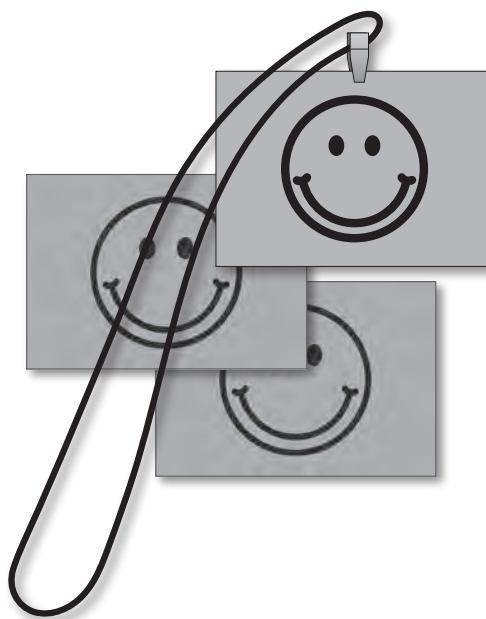
Reward Cards

The coach writes a mystery reward on the back of each of six Reward Cards and places the cards in a paper bag. (Rewards are supplied by the school and include privileges such as being line leader and low-cost items such as stickers.) At the end of each behavioral lesson, the focus student trades Cooperation Cards for a reward randomly picked from the bag.



Green and Red Cards

Three Green and Red Cards with lanyards are provided for use by the coach or teacher to provide visual behavioral feedback to the focus student.



FIRST STEP NEXT STUDENT SET

Each FIRST STEP Next Student Set contains the following folders:

- Teacher's Materials/CLASS Folder
- Family's Materials/Home and School Connections Folder
- Coach's Materials/Student Records Folder

You will need a Student Set for each student who participates in FIRST STEP Next. (Purchase additional FIRST STEP Next Student Sets at www.pacificnwpublish.com.)

Teacher's Materials

Teacher's Materials/CLASS Folder

The teacher uses this folder to keep all forms and hand-outs shared by the coach organized for ease of use.

Teacher's Workbook

This 36-page workbook provides scheduling information, an overview of FIRST STEP Next, practical tips for supporting student behavior, and detailed implementation information. It also contains the teacher agreement and miscellaneous forms to support implementation.



Skill Review Chart

This double-sided quick reference sheet allows the teacher to easily review all FIRST STEP Next behavioral skills.



Green and Red Card

During the CLASS Sessions in the Teacher Phase, the teacher uses the Green and Red Card to give the focus student continuous feedback about behavior.

Family's Materials

Family's Materials/Home and School Connections Folder

This folder keeps FIRST STEP Next family materials organized.

Home and School Connections Workbook

This 32-page workbook provides parents with a daily log to prompt important positive interactions with their child. Brief activities reinforce practice and reward the student for using new behavioral skills every day.

Super Students! Coloring Book and Crayons

With the coloring book, the family reviews the Super Student Skills and helps the student generalize the skills at home and in the community.

Skill Step Lesson Cards

The Skill Step Lesson Cards list the steps for each skill. Families use these cards to review skills and to play the games suggested in the Home and School Connections Workbook.

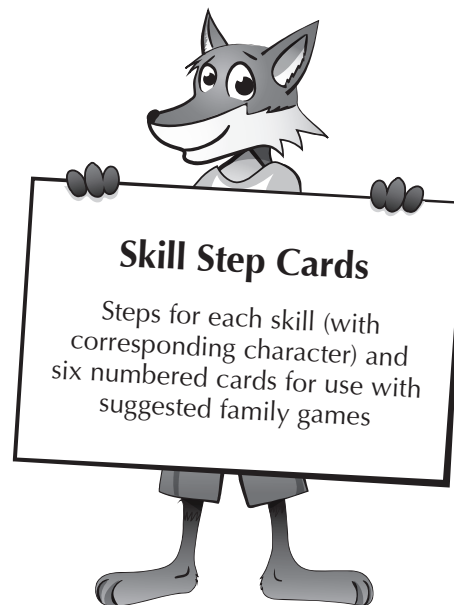
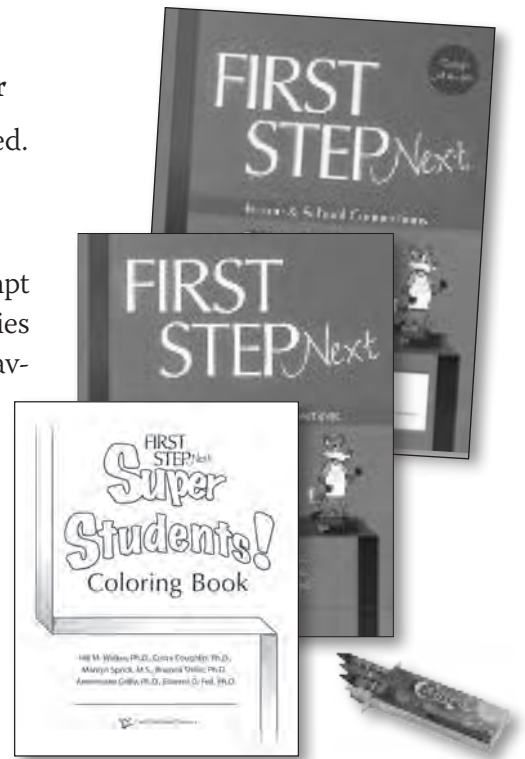


Table of Contents

FIRST STEP Next Family Agreement iv
How to Use the Home and School Connections Log. v

Home and School Connections Log

Follow Directions 1
Be Safe 4
Ask for Attention the Right Way 7
Be a Team Player 10
Do Your Best 13
Be Cool 16
Mistakes Are Okay 19

Tips for Improving Your Child’s Behavior

Increasing Responsible Behavior 22
Decreasing Misbehavior 23
Decision Tree for Misbehavior 24

Appendix: Super Student Skills at a Glance 25



How to Use the Home and School Connections Log

DAILY CONNECTIONS NOTE • DAY 1 Form SR13

Student: Angel Date: 9/30 Goal: 32 points Points earned/possible: 38 /40

Class reward: Playing musical instruments
 Coach signature: Cristy Coughlin
 (Draw a happy face or write something like, "Try again tomorrow.")

GOALS

- 1) Be Safe
- 2) Cooperate With Others
- 3) Be Responsible for Yourself

Today in school, we worked on the following skills:

- Follow Directions
- Be Safe
- Ask for Attention the Right Way
- Be a Team Player
- Do Your Best
- Be Cool
- Mistakes Are Okay

Positive Comments:
Angel had a super day. Please give him a high five! He exceeded his goal and earned 38 points. Wow!

Home reward: Go to the park
 Parent signature: Mrs. Robles

© 2015 Pacific Northwest Publishing FIRST STEP_{Next}

Daily Connections Note

Daily Connections Note. Check (✓) your Home and School Connections Log when you've delivered a reward or encouraged your child to try again tomorrow. Have your child put the Daily Connections Note in his/her backpack or jacket pocket as soon as you sign it.



Important

If your child did not earn the reward, just say, "Try again tomorrow." Avoid asking why or lecturing.

Day 1 Tasks Date: 9/30

DAILY CONNECTIONS NOTE

- Give compliments, smiles, and a reward.
- Or say, "That's okay. You can try again tomorrow."

..... **ADDITIONAL OPTIONS**

1. COLORING BOOK (p. 2): Read and then have your child act out each skill step. Then color the page together.

2. ACTIVITY Choose an activity from the Activity Bank to play for 2 to 5 minutes.

3. TALKING TOGETHER
 Today at school, we:

Home and School Connections Log

ADDITIONAL BUT IMPORTANT OPTIONS IN YOUR LOG

Join in! These activities will help your child be successful. We hope they will become a fun and routine part of your day.



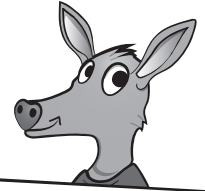
Tip

If possible, find a regular time to do the activities in your Home and School Connections Log—before or after dinner, or even as part of your bedtime routine.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR ADDITIONAL OPTIONS

1. Super Students! Coloring Book

Check (✓) when you've read pages in the coloring book with your child. Follow the simple directions in the log and color the page together.



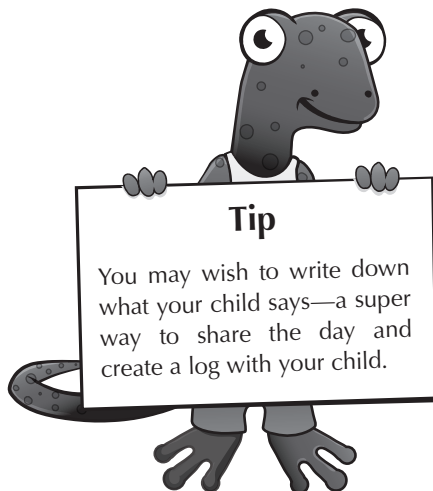
Tip
Have your child pick a space to color. Then select another space for yourself (e.g., your child might choose to color a character and you might color the sky). Compliment your child's best efforts.

2. Activity

Check (✓) when you've had time to play a game from the Activity Bank. Many of the activities are traditional childhood games that teach young children skills for following directions, being safe, asking for attention, etc.

3. Talking Together

Check (✓) when you've given your child a sentence starter to complete. Say something like, "Let's talk about school. Can you finish this sentence? Today at school, we . . ."



Tip
You may wish to write down what your child says—a super way to share the day and create a log with your child.

<i>Day 1 Tasks</i>	
Date:	<u>9/30</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DAILY CONNECTIONS NOTE	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Give compliments, smiles, and a reward.• Or say, "That's okay. You can try again tomorrow."	
..... ADDITIONAL OPTIONS	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1. COLORING BOOK (p. 2):	Read and then have your child act out each skill step. Then color the page together.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2. ACTIVITY	Choose an activity from the Activity Bank to play for 2 to 5 minutes.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3. TALKING TOGETHER	Today at school, we: <i>learned about kangaroos. We learned that they are called marsupials. That means they carry their babies in a pouch! I think that's really cool.</i>

Thank you! Your active participation in FIRST STEP Next creates a wonderful opportunity for your child to be successful across settings.