The Behavior Intervention Guide
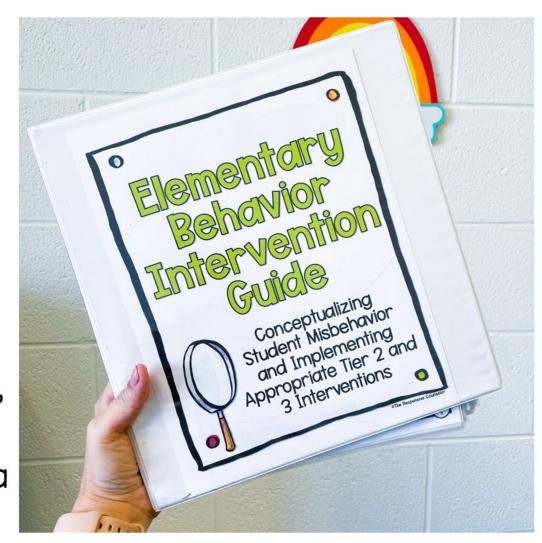
for elementary counselors

Conceptualizing Student Misbehavior and Implementing Appropriate Tier 2 and 3 Interventions

notes to the counselor/teacher

- Every year as an educator, you will have students that exhibit unexpected and/or inappropriate behaviors, and a one-size-fits-all approach won't work.

- This guide will help you navigate determining student needs and selecting and implementing effective tier 2 and 3 interventions.

- It was created with the school counselor, school social worker, and school psychologist in mind. That said, it will be a helpful tool for any member of an MTSS or Child Study team.

Elementary Behavior Intervention Guide

Conceptualizing Student Misbehavior and Implementing Appropriate Tier 2 and 3 Interventions

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intervention types

Guide includes three different lenses for conceptualizing misbehavior and creating interventions:

Types of Interventions

There are three main categories of behavior conceptualization and interventions you might use with students (or even classes) in schools. What you use depends on the specific behavior and students involved, as well as with the resources of your school.
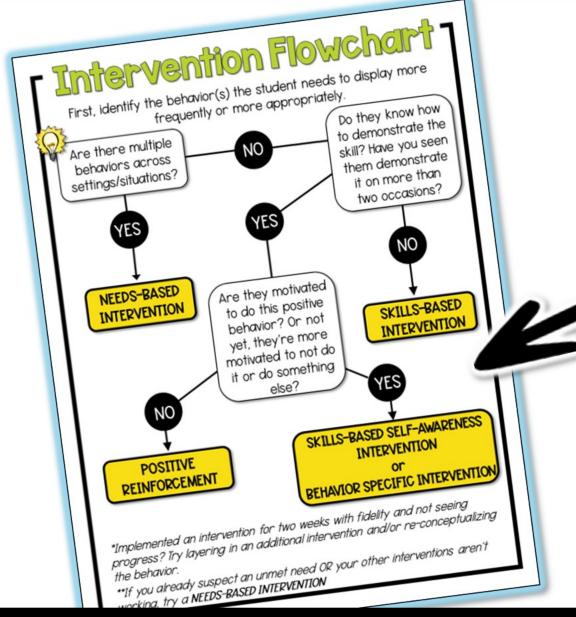
Unmet Needs and Needs-Based Interventions: A student's behavior may be due to an unmet need they have. If the school team can help them get their needs met, they will be better able to meet the behavioral expectations of the school.

Lagging Skills and Skills-Based Interventions: Misbehavior may really be due to a lagging skill. Students may need direct instruction or scaffolding in order to demonstrate the skill.

Competing Motivations and Positive Reinforcement Interventions: Students are given something they like or want after they exhibit the desired behavior(s). They are reinforced for the behavior in hopes of increasing the likelihood and frequency of the desired behavior(s). This intervention is useful when a student *can* show the behavior, you've seen them do it, and you believe they would benefit from additional motivation to do it more.

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intervention types

Intervention Flowchart

First, identify the behavior(s) the student needs to display more frequently or more appropriately.

Are there multiple behaviors across settings/situations? → NO → Do they know how to demonstrate the skill? Have you seen them demonstrate it on more than two occasions?

Are there multiple behaviors across settings/situations? → YES → **NEEDS-BASED INTERVENTION**

NO (from "Do they know how to demonstrate the skill?") → **SKILLS-BASED INTERVENTION**

YES (from flowchart) → Are they motivated to do this positive behavior? Or not yet, they're more motivated to not do it or do something else?

Are they motivated... → NO → **POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT**

Are they motivated... → YES → **SKILLS-BASED SELF-AWARENESS INTERVENTION or BEHAVIOR SPECIFIC INTERVENTION**

*Implemented an intervention for two weeks with fidelity and not seeing progress? Try layering in an additional intervention and/or re-conceptualizing the behavior.

**If you already suspect an unmet need OR your other interventions aren't working, try a NEEDS-BASED INTERVENTION

No time to read through the whole guide?

Use the quick-start flowchart to start planning right away!

unmet needs

- Descriptions, examples, clues, rule outs, and interventions for 3 different unmet needs:

  - Attention and Connection

  - Power, Control, and Self-Competence

  - Regulation

lagging skills

- Lagging skills list

- Explicit skills-based intervention ideas

- Self-awareness intervention ideas

competing motivations

- Explanation of competing motivations
- Positive reinforcement intervention examples
- Multiple tips for successful implementation

specific behaviors

Problem solving tips and intervention ideas for 9 specific behaviors:

- Elopement
- Incomplete work
- Blurting
- Out of assigned area
- Opposition/Defiance
- Chattiness
- Trouble transitioning
- Aggression
- Stealing

Specific Behavior: ELOPEMENT

DEFINITION: Leaving whatever main area they are expected to be in without permission. Eg. Walking ou the classroom, going to the wrong area of the playg etc. Elopement is generally considered a dangerous behavior because it often means the student is unsupervised and/or may leave the building

WHY?: Have you determined *why* they are eloping

- ✓ Is it too loud and they need to have noise ca headphones available?
- ✓ Is it to get some gross motor movement an options for this within the room (or just ou hall)?
- ✓ Is it work avoidance due to academic cho they need academic assistance and/or ac

ELOPEMENT Interventions

Whether or not you know the reason behind a student's elopements, here are some interventions you can try:

Break Sticks: Student is taught how to appropriately an safely leave class, including where they are allowed to Student is given X number of sticks per day. They can their teacher a stick as a way to leave class and take a break. Click here for more details (link to page in emo regulation section).

Visual Communication Board: Students who elope ar too upset to verbally communicate their needs. Prov them with visuals for needs they may have (take a b from work in class, get a drink of water, talk to a s adult, etc.) that they can point to as a way to comm

Specific Behavior: INCOMPLETE WORK

DEFINITION: When a student is given an independen task or assignment, work is not finished or is partiall complete (less than 50% done or 0 complete).

WHY?: Have you determined *why* the student is not completing the work?

- ✓ Is the task or assignment too hard/above student's instructional level or is the assignment too easy?
- ✓ Does the student lack the reading and writing skills to complete the assignment? Do they understand the tas requirement?
- ✓ Was the student is engaged in lesson prior to being given assignment?
- ✓ What is the behavior that the student is demonstrating when he/she is not working (ie. head down, deliberate refusal, talking to peers, frequently asking for help,

INCOMPLETE WORK Interventions

Whether or not you know the reason behind a student's incomplete work, here are some interventions you can tr

Chunking: Student is given a designated number of tasks/items to complete prior to taking a break. The stud can learn to check in with teacher or peer to check th work was completed prior to taking break This can also be completed by taking a blank sheet of and cover up every item other than what you want th student to complete. After they complete that, teach move the sheet down.

Beat the Clock: Time limits for assignments (or a sm portion of an assignment) are combined with "bea clock" goals to motivate the student to complete clock" goals to make assignments more fun ar assignments. Be sure to set reasonable but challer

Specific Behavior: BLURTING

DEFINITION: This is for the student who may demonstra difficulty with impulse control and waiting their turn Similar behaviors include: Saying the first thing on the mind, interrupting teacher and/or peers, raising their h before questions are finished, start working before told or before directions are given, and unable to control t immediate reactions or think before they act.

WHY?: Have you determined *why* they are blurting?

- ✓ Does the student often blurt out the right or alv the wrong answer?
- ✓ What reaction does the student receive when blurt out (from the teacher and peers)?
- ✓ Does the student know and understand the c expectations when they want to express their thoughts?
- ✓ Does the student respond to praise when th

BLURTING Interventions

Whether or not you know the reason behind a studen blurting, here are some interventions you can try:

Stop and Jot: Provide the student with a chosen color p on their desk. Explain to the student that when they war share their answer, they can write it on the post-it. The teacher will come by, read the post-it and do an individua check-in. Over time your goal (as the teacher) will be to check in less often...waiting until the student has 2-3 post notes before they check in.

3 Tokens: Provide student with 3 of something (tickets, math cubes, coins, etc). Show the items to student, and explain every time they want to share first they can trade an item for that opportunity. If they blurt, you will take one the same as if they asked to share. Tokens can be reset in the morning and/or afternoon

★★★★★ **reviews**

"This is an EXCELLENT resource for all things behavior and it has helped me when working with school-based intervention teams. It has great recommendations and things to keep in mind for each behavior. Well done."
–Laura C.
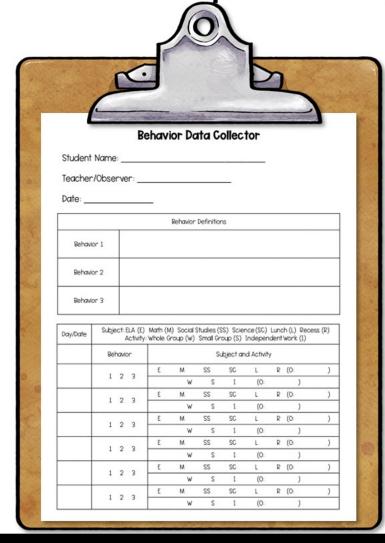
"This binder is my go to for helping students with behavioral challenges. It is filled with useful information and questions to help determine the purpose of the behavior, and then guide you to strategies to help with that behavior. I wish I had access to this resource years ago, it is a gem!"
–Natalie P.

included forms

Editable planning forms:

Behavior Data Collector

Student Name: _____

Teacher/Observer: _____

Date: _____/_____/_____

Behavior Definitions	
Behavior 1	
Behavior 2	
Behavior 3	

Day/Date	Subject: ELA (E) Math (M) Social Studies (SS) Science (SC) Lunch (L) Recess (R) Activity: Whole Group (W) Small Group (S) Independent Work (I)								
	Behavior	Subject and Activity							
	1 2 3	E	M	SS	SC	L	R (O:)		
			W	S	I	(O:)			
	1 2 3	E	M	SS	SC	L	R (O:)		
			W	S	I	(O:)			
	1 2 3	E	M	SS	SC	L	R (O:)		
			W	S	I	(O:)			
	1 2 3	E	M	SS	SC	L	R (O:)		
			W	S	I	(O:)			
	1 2 3	E	M	SS	SC	L	R (O:)		
			W	S	I	(O:)			
	1 2 3	E	M	SS	SC	L	R (O:)		
			W	S	I	(O:)			

Social, Emotional, & Behavioral Intervention Plan

Student Name: _____

Homeroom Teacher: _____

Date: _____

Target Behavior(s)	
Baseline Data	
Progress Monitoring Tool/ Continued Data Collection	

Intervention(s)	Person(s) Responsible

BEHAVIOR PROGRESS MONITORING

Name:_____   Week:_____

2 = Exhibited behavior fully without reminders

1 = Exhibited behavior after reminders and/or redirection

0 = Did not exhibit behavior

	Used Respectful Words With Others	Shared and Took Turns	Used Coping Strategies When Upset	Appropriately Asked for Help	Attempted Work/ Academic Assignments
Monday	2 1 0	2 1 0	2 1 0	2 1 0	2 1 0
Tuesday	2 1 0	2 1 0	2 1 0	2 1 0	2 1 0
Wednesday	2 1 0	2 1 0	2 1 0	2 1 0	2 1 0
Thursday	2 1 0	2 1 0	2 1 0	2 1 0	2 1 0
Friday	2 1 0	2 1 0	2 1 0	2 1 0	2 1 0

Total points possible: _____   Points earned: _____   % of Points: _____

printable tools

Print-and-Go intervention tools for students and faculty:

(example behavioral cue cards – make your own or use these – laminate, cut, hole punch, an teacher can wear on a lanyard)

Keep Hands and Feet to Self

Do Your Work

Voice Off

Stay in Your Area

(example behavioral cue cards – make your own or use these – laminate, cut, hole punch, an teacher can wear on a lanyard)

Share and Take Turns

Listen

Wait Patiently

Think Before You Speak

...lking Feet

Raise Your Hand

(example reminder bracelets – make your own or use these – make several copies on colored paper, cut and ready for students)

I CAN KEEP MY HANDS AND FEET TO MYSELF

CARE ...INGS

Secret Missions

Write the day or date you complete each mission in the box

Restorative Questions

When ...thing has gone wr...

...s affected by

...ed to do to m...

...s been hu...

...el?

...rt for you?

...to be better...

De-Escalat...

- I see you (action).
- Are you feeling (emotion...
- I can see you're feeling...
- What are you feeling (e...
  - If needed: who/what/...
    feel that way?"
- Ok. You're (emotion)...
- What do you want?
- What have you tried...
- What could you do...

Give so... quality c...

I like you ...

Ask some... they are ...

How ar... you today...

Let someo... front of yo...

You can... first.

Emotion Coaching Script

- Reflect the feeling
  - "It looks like you're feeling worried right now. Maybe worried about having to write three paragraphs."
- Validate/affirm the feeling
  - "I can understand being anxious or worried about that. You haven't done that kind of writing before."
- Prompt the use of a coping strategy
  - Model and use the strategy with them if needed
  - Refer to classroom coping visuals
- Provide specific praise after the student is regulated
  - "You were worried and you took care of that feeling by using a fidget for a couple minutes and then you got to work. That's awesome!"
- Afterwards, ask the student to

Help

To Be Left Alone

Stuffed Animal or Fidget

I NEED...

A Drink of Water

A Hug

To Talk

To Draw or Write About It

To Take a Break

(hang at eye level on or right next to the door)

STOP

Ask for a

My Waiting Maze

Use your finger to go through the maze while you wait.

My Wa...
Use your f...
the maze

...ing Maze
...r to go through
...ile you wait.

My Waitin...

Use your finger to go through the maze whil...

keeping it digital

If you're a digital soul, the table of contents is hyperlinked so you can easily access what you need quickly!

Behavior Intervention Guide.pdf (SECURED) - Adobe Acrobat Reader DC (32-bit)

File   Edit   View   Sign   Window   Help

Home   Tools   Behavior Interventi...   ×

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Table of Contents

90°F Mostly sunny

Lagging Skills

We ask a lot of our students. They have to sit, focus, do challenging work, work with peers, accept disappoint, follow directions, be flexible, and more. Doing all of these things successfully requires a number of different social, physical, emotional, and intellectual skills. Some of our students have not fully developed all of these needed skills yet; they are "lagging skills".

Lagging Skills:
Some skills needed in schools that might be lagging in some students include: focusing attention, getting started on work, solving conflict effectively, self-awareness, compromising with peers, asking for help, reading social cues, connecting choices with consequences, transitioning between activities, being flexible with thinking and changes, etc. In an hour time span in school, students are asked to use many, many skills.

Skills-Based Interventions: Misbehavior may really be due to a lagging skill. If we can help them to develop the skill, they can meet school expectations better. Students may need direct instruction or scaffolding in order to demonstrate the skill. Or, they may need increased self-awareness.

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Lagging Skills List

- Focusing attention
- Getting started on work
- Solving conflict effectively
- Self-awareness of actions
- Compromising with peers
- Asking for help
- Identifying solutions to a problem
- Reading social cues
- Connecting choices with consequences,
- Transitioning between activities
- Being flexible with thinking and changes
- Using a social filter
- Identifying, expressing, and taking care of feelings
- Persevering through challenging work
- Staying organized
- Staying on task
- Taking responsibility for actions
- Believing in themself as good and capable person
- Waiting patiently
- Making and keeping friends

Ask: What are the child's difficulties and when do these difficulties happen?

This list is not all encompassing but covers a broad range social, emotional, and behavioral skills needed in school

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And if you're more into hard copies of things, place the pages in a binder for easy reference!

intervention cards

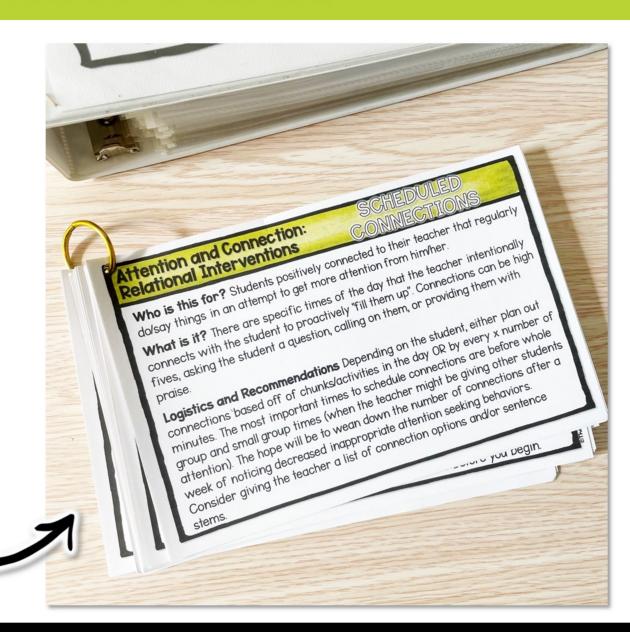Or keep some of the pages on a ring for "grab and go interventions"!

table of contents

more ★★★★★ reviews

"This resource is AMAZING. Everything is explained with so much clarity and detail. It's such a helpful resource when you're in both a proactive or problem-solving mode. Highly recommend!!"
—Allison Y.

"This quickly became my "go to" resource during MTSS meetings. This behavior intervention guide was extremely organized and detailed. I was able to easily locate specific interventions that met the student's needs that we were discussing. I'm glad I invested in this product."
—Kimberly B.

this guide is not...

- This is not a "how-to" for conducting functional behavior assessments, though it does include information to help determine what may be driving the behavior in order to select the most appropriate intervention(s).

- It also does not include all possible "in the moment" behavior response strategies outside of some opposition-specific suggestions. The focus is on proactive interventions to document on a behavior support plan vs. more informal strategies or tips.

- Most interventions are for individual students. There are some included that work for whole classes (specifically in the *positive reinforcement* and the *power, control, & self-competence* sections), but this guide does not encompass a wide range of effective classwide interventions.

- This guide does *not* include printable materials for every intervention. Some are provided, and some examples are provided, but you may need to create some of your own printables specific to your student(s).

Hi, I'm Sara! I create resources for elementary students, counselors, and teachers that improve social emotional learning and help students be their best selves. My focus is creating resources that are *effective* (using research-based best practices) and *engaging* (through collaborative learning and relevant scenarios) for all types of learners and populations.

Education

B.A. from Michigan State University
Psychology and Anthropology

M.S. from Vanderbilt University
Community, Research, and Action

M.Ed. From Vanderbilt University
Human Development Counseling:
School Counseling & Mental Health

Experience

I'm a former school counselor from a large southeastern school district with a wonderfully diverse group of students. I created and implemented a data-based comprehensive school counseling program while helping classroom teachers and administrators implement schoolwide SEL and restorative practices. Now, I share my ideas and resources to reach students and help educators across the world!

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