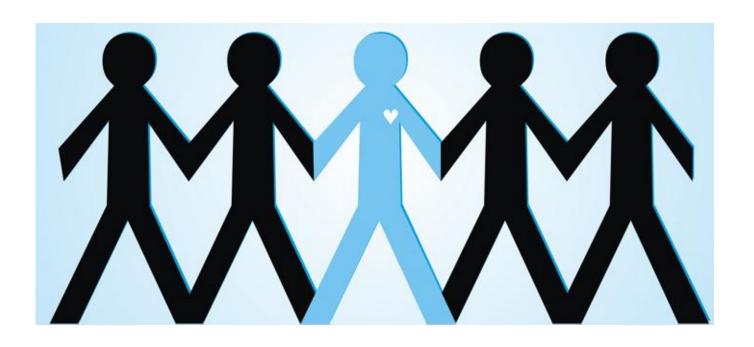# Behavioral Intervention Guide

Addressing Student Behavior:
A Positive Approach

Conducting Functional Behavioral Assessments and
Developing Positive Behavior Intervention Plans

Purpose of the Guide

The purpose of the following information is to provide some ideas on interventions and strategies to include in the Positive Behavior Intervention Plan (PBIP). This guide was written for the team to use when developing the PBIP. These strategies are not meant to be comprehensive or exclusive of other strategies/interventions. They simply represent a set of ideas that could be elaborated and modified for each individual student's behavior. Remember, the interventions chosen for the PBIP should correspond with the function of behavior (e.g., if a student's behavior is attention seeking, the team should choose interventions such as delivering attention only for appropriate behavior and withholding attention for inappropriate behavior).

The contents of this guide include:
- Prevention Strategies
- Teaching Appropriate Behavior
- Increasing Appropriate Behavior (Reinforcement)
- Decreasing Inappropriate Behavior
- Descriptions of Behavioral Interventions (Alphabetical Order)
- Strategies for Effective Behavior Management
    - Do's and Don'ts of Behavior Management
    - Common Problems and Helpful Hints
    - Delivering Effective Commands

Note: Strategies with an asterisk (*) are described or defined in the "Descriptions of Behavioral Interventions" section of this guide.

Prevention Strategies

AVOID CERTAIN TRIGGERS

- Avoid large or noisy crowds
- Avoid long delays
- Avoid repetitive tasks (e.g., writing out spelling tasks)
- Avoid power struggles*
- Avoid long periods of desk work
- Avoid seating arrangements next to instigating peers
- Avoid negative language, such as "no" or "stop"
- Avoid reprimands
- Avoid talking about the student's problem behavior in their presence

MODIFY CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

- Curriculum Adjustments*
    - Appropriate and motivating curriculum*
    - Adjust the amount of assignment given to the student at once
    - Adjust the difficulty of the assignment
    - Intersperse difficult assignments with easier assignments
    - Break assignments into manageable sections*
    - Modify task length*
    - Assign tasks that require active participation
    - Assistive technology devices or services*
    - Allow for "do-overs"*
    - Personal interests used for motivation*
    - Provide extra time to complete assignments
- Instructional Adjustments
    - Shorten the instructional lesson
    - Instructional Pacing*
    - Change voice intonation
    - Peer assisted instruction
    - Direct instruction
    - Increased academic learning time*
    - Student follow-up*
    - Student maintains a planner for assignments
    - Specific, or modified, instructions*
    - Limited number of instructions provided at once
    - Multiple modes of instruction (visual, auditory, hands-on)
    - Increase reinforcement quality of classroom*
    - Increase frequency of task related recognition*

ENVIRONMENTAL ENGINEERING*

- Post all classroom rules and daily schedules in prominent locations*
- Preferential Seating *
- Needed materials are easily accessible
- Rearrange the room or furniture
- Create separate or designated work areas
- Quiet areas*
- Change the lighting
- Adjust sounds (e.g., volume of music, voice volume)
- Minimize or eliminate distracting materials*
- Play music*

PROVIDE STRUCTURE

- Set clear expectations and rules*
- Preview rules and behavioral expectations*
- Structured daily schedule*
- Visual schedule*
- Preview schedule*
- Preferred activities scheduled in daily routines
- Schedule adjustment*
- Non-preferred activities scheduled among preferred activities
- Student involved in planning
- Planned activities for transition times*
- Routines or signals to prepare for transitions
- Minimize down times*
- Predictability*
- Structuring non-instructional periods, including recess

PROVIDE STRATEGIES TO INCREASE COMPLIANCE

- Behavioral momentum*
- Offer choices*
- 5-10 second compliance time window*
- Effective commands*
- Prompting*
- Precision requests*
- Proximity control*
- Quiet start requests*
- Allow flexible seating positions (e.g., stand, sit on knees)
- Systematic prompting (if age-appropriate)*

DESIGN SOCIAL SUPPORTS

- Positive peer role models*
- High rates of positive responses*
- Peer mentor/tutor opportunity*
- Peer involvement and influence*
- Progress Reports*
- Parent-Teacher Communication System*
- Monitoring *
- Personal Connection with Student*
- Participation in extracurricular activities*
- Positive peer reporting*
- Transition supports*
- Meaningful work projects*

PROMOTE SELF-REGULATION

- Allow the student to take frequent breaks during difficult work activities
- Provide time alone or time to regroup after a negative event
- Self-monitoring*

Teaching Appropriate Behavior

REPLACEMENT BEHAVIORS

These are communicative alternatives that provide an immediate mechanism for the student to meet their needs. The important part of this intervention is that the team must know the function of the behavior in order to teach an effective replacement skill.

- **Functional Communication Skills***
  [Verbal & non-verbal (cues, signs, picture cards)]
    - Asking for attention
    - Raising hand
    - Asking for help
    - Requesting an item or activity
    - Asking questions
    - Seeking peer help
    - Requesting a break
    - Request to leave a situation (e.g., "I want to be by myself for awhile")
    - Requesting an alternative activity
    - Appropriately communicating a protest response
    - Negotiating a start time for a task
    - Alternative behaviors for sensory feedback*
    - Requesting movement (e.g., stretch break, squeeze stress ball, move to an empty desk, stand while working, sit on an exercise ball, go for a walk, etc.)
- **Social Skills***
    - Appropriate rejection/Ignoring*
    - Appropriately initiating social interactions (e.g., "Play with me")
    - Socially appropriate play behaviors
        - Suggesting an activity
        - Sharing
        - Waiting for a turn
- **Incompatible behavior***
    - Teaching a student to sit in a chair instead of lie on the floor.
    - Giving a student something to hold or do with his hands to avoid self-injury or other disruptive behavior
    - Sitting with hands folded in lap instead of poking or pinching peers
- **Identify appropriate settings for the behavior** *

OTHER ALTERNATIVE BEHAVIORS

These are skills that teach the student to cope with or tolerate difficult situations. They also alter problem situations and prevent the need for problem behaviors.

- **Organizational skills to reduce frustration**
- **Social skills to increase appropriate peer interactions***
- **Problem Solving skills***
  - Conflict resolution
  - Choice making
- **Tolerance skills***
  - Longer wait times for teacher attention
  - Ignoring instigating peers
  - Delays to get the reinforcer (e.g., waiting for an activity)*
  - Appropriately dealing with peer accusations
  - Walking away from fights
  - Accepting "no"
  - Accepting consequences*
- **Self-management/Coping skills***
  - Breathing exercises
  - Time to vent about frustrations
  - 5 minute walk
  - "Calm down" break*
  - Relaxation strategies
  - Positive self-talk*
  - Self-initiation activities to prevent boredom
  - Behavioral self-control*
  - Anger management*
  - Self-monitor occurrences of behavior*

TEACHING STRATEGIES

- Direct Instruction*
- Modeling*
- Incidental Teaching*
- Practice opportunities*
- Natural opportunities*
- Role-play*
- Verbal reminders*
- Non-verbal reminders*
- Verbal rehearsal*
- Visual strategies*
- Monitoring checklist*
- Task analysis*
- Chaining*
- Shaping*
- Prompting*
- Stimulus cueing*
- Errorless learning*
- Fading*
- Scripts*
- Social skills training*
- Social stories/Comic book conversations*
- Behavioral learning games
- Use of manipulatives*
- Functional communication training (FCT)*
- Technology device instruction*
- Curricular integration*
- Teaching interaction*
- Behavioral self-control training (BSC)*
- Integrate curriculum into music*
- Momentum training with relaxation strategies*
- Self-management*

Increase Appropriate Behavior

TYPES OF REINFORCERS (with examples)

- Specific verbal praise*
- Social interactions
    - 1:1 conversations with certain people
    - Talking about their interests
    - Social time with friends
    - Being able to talk during lunch
- Appropriate touch
    - High five
    - Pat on the back
    - Hug – if appropriate
- Materials/Tangible items
    - Stickers
    - Toys
    - Books
    - Pencils
    - Notebooks
- Edibles (e.g., food)
- Activities
    - Computer time
    - Assist with morning announcements
    - Extra 5 minutes of recess
- Privileges
    - Line leader
    - Visit a teacher or school personnel
    - Run office errands
    - "No homework pass"
- Positive referrals*
- School-wide recognition*
- Leadership roles/Responsibility

REINFORCEMENT PROCEDURES

- Behavior contracts*
- Academic contracts*
- Chaining*
- Positive Reinforcement*
    - Differential Reinforcement of Appropriate Behavior*
    - Differential Reinforcement of Other behavior*
    - Differential Reinforcement of Low rates of behavior*
    - Differential Reinforcement of High rates of behavior*
    - Differential Reinforcement of Incompatible behavior*
    - Differential Reinforcement of Communicative behavior*
- Goal setting*
- Home-school reinforcement system*
- Mystery motivator*
- Group reinforcement contingency*
- Observational learning*
- Individualized reward system*
- Token economy*
- Premack Principle*

Decreasing Inappropriate Behavior

PROMPTS/REDIRECTION

- Redirection*
- Verbal prompt*
- Visual reminder (sign or picture)
- Gestural prompt (pointing or using a hand signal)*
- Physical prompt (slight touch on the shoulder, gentle guidance)
- Corrective feedback*
- Teacher restates expectations to the student
- Verbal rehearsal*
- Rules Review*
- Contingent observation*

WITHHOLDING ACCESS TO CONSEQUENCES THAT MAY PROVIDE THE "PAY-OFF" FOR THE BEHAVIOR

- Extinction*
  - Planned Ignoring*
  - Eliminate Audience*
  - Peer Ignoring*
  - In-class time-out*
- Follow through*

ENVIRONMENTAL ARRANGEMENTS

- Change seating arrangements
- Rearranging the room or furniture
- Moving the student closer to the teacher
- Move the student away from instigating peers
- Provide a barrier between students
- Eliminating distracting items in the classroom
- Provide organized places for materials and assignments

THE PROBLEM BEHAVIOR PERSISTS DESPITE LEAST RESTRICTIVE INTERVENTIONS

- Conference with student
- Parent contact (e.g., phone, e-mail, notes)
- Parent conference
- Offering the student choices
- Reflection center*
- Response cost*
- Detention
- In-school suspension
- Restitution*
- Positive Practice*
- Peer consequences*
- Reflective essay*
- Required relaxation*

Descriptions of Behavioral Interventions (Alphabetical Order)

5-10 second compliance-time window
> After a request is made, allow the student a 5-10 second time window to follow through with compliance.

Academic contracts
> This involves establishing a written contract for grades between adult (teacher) and student. Example: The teacher and student agree that for each reading test grade above a "C", the student will receive 10 additional minutes of computer lab time. The agreement is written in contract form prior to the test and signed by both teacher and student.

Accepting consequences
> The student tolerates or accepts the natural and/or artificial consequences given to the student for positive or negative behavior.

Allow "do-overs"
> This intervention will help to reduce stress induced behaviors of students who do not believe in their ability to do assignments. If they are allowed to "re-do something' when they have attempted an assignment the inappropriate and anxious behaviors may be eliminated. Example: A female student gets nervous each time there is a math quiz and during the third math quiz of the semester she refuses to do it and "shuts down" by putting her head down and disengaging with those around her. The teacher can inform her that if she attempts to do this quiz and then finds out she did not pass it, she can attempt to take it again the next day or later on that week.

Alternative behaviors for sensory feedback
> Attempt to find a less distracting behavior that serves the same sensory purpose. Examples: A student who taps their pencil can squeeze a ball or a student who rocks on their chair can use an exercise ball to sit on instead of a chair.

Anger management
> Helping the student recognize when they are being "pushed to the limit" and/or getting frustrated. It is possible to use a set curriculum to teach these skills (access school guidance counselor).

Appropriate and motivating curriculum
> This refers to a curriculum which challenges students while enabling them to achieve success. A curriculum too difficult or easy is likely to increase inappropriate behavior. To use the appropriate curriculum, the teacher must know the level at which their students are functioning. Make adjustments to the curriculum to better fit the student's abilities, while still maintaining the integrity of the curriculum. Examples:
> - **Pre-K»** Mr. Peabody makes the concepts being taught relevant to young children's interests by using colorful and engaging pictures to supplement his verbal explanations.
> - **Elementary»** Maria is given independent reading materials at the reading level identified by her teacher as "instructional" or "easy" for her, never at her "difficult" level. She successfully reads these, improving her fluency.
> - **Secondary»** Mr. Practical structures skill building in his ninth grade math classes around real life events such as balancing a checkbook and saving for a car. This provides his students with the opportunity to relate the skills they are learning to their own lives.

Appropriate rejection/ignoring

This refers to a socially acceptable behavior to avoid contact with an undesired person, object, or activity. Example: The student ignores another peer who is teasing him.

Assistive technology devices and services

This refers to any item, piece of equipment, or product system used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of students with disabilities. Consider the need for assistive equipment that elicits success and motivation, such as large print material, laptop computer, or augmentative communication devices required by the student to make progress on IEP goals. Examples:

- Mr. Taylor teaches Emily to use a communication board. By pointing to the letters to spell "I need some water," she gets a drink without having a tantrum.
- Mr. Rapidity leaves material on the overhead projector for an extended period of time for students who have a difficult time keeping up with the pace of lecture presentations.

Avoiding power struggles

Power struggles typically involve arguments or negative interactions between the teacher and student. In a power struggle, neither the teacher nor the student wins. The teacher often loses valuable teaching time due to the confrontation and the student's behavior usually worsens. Avoid power struggles by following these guidelines:

1. Obtain students attention.
2. Make eye contact.
3. Offer choices or state clearly what you need the student to do.
4. Walk away from situation.
5. Ignore attempts by student to further engage you.

Behavior contracts

This is a written contract agreed upon by the teacher and student or possibly the parent and student, specifying an appropriate behavior and a motivating reinforcer that the student may earn when he/she displays the behavior. The contract is signed by all parties who are participating in the contract (student, teacher, parents, etc.). For preschool, an informal verbal contract is appropriate. Remember, contracting involves a delay or interval before a primary reward is given, which can result in decreased responding if the interval is too long. Positive consequences should be included in a well-balanced contract. Examples:

- **Pre-K»** The teacher says to Kelly, "If you pick up the toys, then you get to pass out the snack today."
- **Elementary»** Gavin and his teacher have developed a behavioral contract that states: If Gavin completes all of his classroom assignments throughout the day, he will be allowed to choose two items from the treasure box.
- **Secondary»** Kevin is failing his Algebra class and his teacher puts him on a behavior contract. If he completes and turns in four consecutive assignments with 80% accuracy, he only has to do half of the assigned problems on the fifth day for full credit.

Behavioral learning games

Learning behavior can be made into a classroom wide game. For individual student behavior, there are board games that help to promote and teach certain target behaviors.

Behavioral momentum
>This refers to increasing compliance by identifying and then making a minimum of three requests with which the student has a high probability of compliance before making a low-probability request. Be sure to reinforce compliance with the low-probability requests. Examples:
>- **Pre-K»** At lunch time, Ann is often reluctant to eat her lunch. In order to increase the likelihood that she will try her lunch, her teacher uses the following sequence of requests: "Ann, please sit down next to Shauna today! Ann, pass the napkins, please! Ann, look at the pretty shoes Shauna is wearing! Ann, have a bite of your sandwich!"
>- **Elementary»** Mr. Cleaver is working with nine-year-old Alison on compliance. After identifying high- and low-probability behaviors for Alison, he uses the following sequence: "Alison, tell me your name. Alison, give me five. Alison, point to the dog. Alison, put your puzzle back on the shelf." If she puts the puzzle away, she receives a token.

Behavioral Self-Control (BSC)
>This involves creating a highly structured plan for students who lack self control on a consistent basis. When a student is engaged in inappropriate behavior, the following teacher prompts and student responses should take place:
>- Self-evaluation
>   - Teacher asks: What are you doing?
>   - Student responds: I am.....
>- Self-management
>   - Teacher asks: What do you need to be doing?
>   - Student responds: I need to....
>- Self-instruction
>   - Teacher asks: What are you going to do now?
>   - Student responds: I have to.....
>- Self-reinforcement
>   - Teacher asks: Let me know when you finish.
>   - Student responds: I did......

Break student tasks into manageable sections
>Students may misbehave to escape activities that they find too hard or tedious. Consider breaking a larger task into smaller or easier 'chunks' that the student will more willingly undertake. If the student must complete a large number of subtasks, include an occasional 'fun break'.

Calm down break
>The student must first identify when they are getting too tense, excited, or angry, and then take a short break away from the setting or situation until they have calmed down sufficiently.

Chaining
>This involves reinforcing responses in sequence to form more complex behaviors. Chaining can involve both forward and backward steps. As each new behavioral step is added, only the most recent step needs to be reinforced. *Note*: In conjunction with chaining and other behavior management techniques, a strategy known as task analysis must first be used. In task analysis, skills are broken down into concrete, specific component tasks, which in some cases may be very minute. If a child doesn't make progress on a task, it may be that it needs to be task analyzed further (broken into even smaller steps).
>Example:
>- Al can't put on his coat. First he is reinforced for taking his coat off the hook. Once he masters that task, he is then reinforced for putting the coat on the floor in the prescribed manner and then for putting both arms in the sleeves. Last, he receives praise for flipping the coat over his head and having it on properly.

Contingent observation

    This involves telling a student who is doing something inappropriate to step away from the activity, sit, and watch the appropriate behavior of other students while the teacher intentionally reinforces them. After a brief period of observation, the teacher prompts the student to rejoin the activity, and reinforces the desired behavior.

Coping skills

    When students do not have a repertoire of appropriate strategies to deal with adverse situations, problem behavior can often be the result. This intervention involves teaching a student appropriate ways to cope/deal with frustration, anger, embarrassment, etc.

Corrective feedback

    This involves providing information which points out areas in need of attention. Giving corrective feedback does not have to be a negative punishing experience but one that will give needed information. Feedback should be specific, simple, and immediate. Avoid correcting the student publicly or when angry. Examples:
- Types of corrective feedback:
  - Explicit correction: The teacher supplies the correct form of the behavior or skill to the student and clearly indicates what was incorrect or inappropriate. This is common corrective feedback in large groups of students where the teacher's time is limited.
    - Explicit correction has a very low rate of effectiveness since the student doesn't have to self-correct and the mistake could be easily forgotten.
  - Elicitation: Teacher asks for a replacement skill, 'How would you do that appropriately? And then pausing to allow student to complete teacher's request.
  - Clarification: Teacher uses phrases such as, 'I don't understand what you are trying to do', or 'What do want from choosing to do that?'

Curricular integration

    A technique known as curricular integration is useful in teaching skills to students, as the technique integrates positive strategies for modifying problem behavior into the existing classroom curriculum, and is based upon the premise that a skill is more likely to be learned when taught in the context in which it is used. Teachers who incorporate behavioral interventions into daily instruction generally state that this technique has proven to be particularly effective for teaching replacement behaviors.

Delay to reinforcement

    The student tolerates and accepts having to stay engaged in the task or activity or wait for a desired object/item for longer periods of time.

Differential reinforcement

    This involves the reinforcement of one form of behavior, but not another; or the reinforcement of a response under one (stimulus) condition but not under another. All of the differential reinforcement procedures take a substantial amount of time to be effective. If an inappropriate behavior is very disruptive or dangerous, use of a more intrusive procedure may be warranted to protect the student or other students in the classroom or work environment. Because an inappropriate behavior is ignored or not reinforced, there may be a dramatic increase or burst of the behavior before it decreases.

Differential reinforcement of alternative behavior (DRA)

This involves the reinforcement of a replacement behavior while ignoring the inappropriate behavior. This procedure is commonly called differential attention and proximity praise.
One way is to ignore the misbehavior, wait, and then praise any appropriate behavior. A second approach is to ignore the misbehavior of a student and praise a student nearby for the appropriate behavior.
Examples:

- **Primary»** Kit does not follow the teacher's directions. He is verbally reinforced each time he does comply and is ignored when he does not.
- **Elementary»** When Sam is out of his seat, he is ignored. But when he is in his seat, the teacher goes to Sam and praises him for being in his chair.
- **Secondary»** Tammy writes and passes notes during class. Whenever Tammy is taking notes from the lecture or paying attention and listening, the teacher stands near her desk and praises her for being on task. Whenever she writes notes, her behavior is ignored.

Differential reinforcement of functional communicative behavior (DRC)

This involves the reinforcement of a functional communication skill leading to a needed reward, activity, or alternative, while ignoring inappropriate behavior.

- **Pre-K»** Sandra receives her snack each day as she displays successive approximations of an appropriate verbal request to the teacher.
- **Elementary»** Cade is having a tantrum and is ignored by the teacher. The teacher determines that the function of the tantrum is to obtain a glass of water. He is then taught the sign for water. When Cade signs "water," he is given a glass of water and praised.
- **Secondary»** Paul starts carving on his desk with his pen whenever he gets bored or distracted. The teacher teaches him to raise his left hand whenever he begins to feel restless. When and if the teacher acknowledges him with a nod, he is allowed to go and get a drink of water. Paul is allowed this privilege two times at most in a given period, and a time limit is established for his drink breaks.

Differential reinforcement of high rates (DRH)

This involves reinforcement given after performing some behavior at a predetermined higher rate.
Examples:

- **Pre-K»** Kate does not interact with her peers. She is reinforced for spending increasing amounts of time in appropriate interaction with her peers.
- **Elementary»** Diane receives a star for finishing three problems in five minutes. The next time she has to finish four problems in five minutes to earn a star.
- **Secondary»** Lyle has a habit of being tardy to class. The staff decides to reinforce him with extra computer time each day he makes it to six of his ten periods on time.

Differential reinforcement of incompatible behavior (DRI)

This involves reinforcement of an appropriate behavior that is physically or functionally incompatible with the target behavior, while ignoring the inappropriate behavior. Examples:

- **Pre-K»** Denise pokes students who sit next to her on the rug during opening time. She is reinforced for sitting with her hands folded together on her lap.
- **Elementary»** Jose, a first grader who is often lying on the floor, is reinforced when he sits on a chair.
- **Secondary»** Emily draws on her notebook and books during lectures. The teacher reinforces her for writing notes about the lesson in her notebook.

Differential reinforcement of low rates (DRL)

This involves reinforcement given after performing the target/problem behavior at a predetermined low rate. This procedure is usually used for behaviors that occur at such a high rate, or are so ingrained into the student's behavior patterns, that a large immediate drop in occurrences is unrealistic.
Example:

- Dale has a habit of swearing an average of six times during class. The teacher sets a limit of three swear words each day during the first week. If Dale swears three or fewer times during the class period, he is reinforced. The following week the criterion is set at two swear words in a given class, and the program continues until the criterion is zero.

Differential reinforcement of other behavior (DRO)

This involves providing reinforcement following any appropriate behavior while ignoring the inappropriate behavior in a defined period of time. DRO always contains a predetermined length of time or interval. After each interval, the student is reinforced for *any* appropriate behavior, but never reinforced after the target/inappropriate behavior. Examples:

- **Pre-K»** Nadia has a tantrum whenever she is asked to put her toys, supplies, and/or belongings away. Her teacher praises her and gives her a sticker each time she goes ten minutes without a tantrum, while ignoring her each time she has a tantrum.
- **Elementary»** John is a student who scratches his arms all the times. The staff decides to smile, compliment, and give him points every two minutes when he is not scratching. They ignore him and do not reinforce him at the two minute interval if he is scratching.
- **Secondary»** Tom likes to call attention to him by talking out in class. His teacher ignores him each time he speaks out. The teacher verbally reinforces Tom each time he is not talking out at the end of a five-minute interval.

Direct instruction

This refers to active teaching or explicit instruction, including explaining to students exactly what they are expected to learn, demonstrating the steps needed to accomplish a task, providing opportunities for practice, and giving feedback based on performance. Examples:

- **Elementary»** The teacher explains to Dennis that the lesson is about long division. Then she demonstrates the steps on the chalkboard and watches while he tries to do a problem. Feedback is given to correct any errors and to reinforce him for following procedures correctly.
- **Secondary»** In English class, Ms. Paulos teaches her freshman students how to diagram sentences involving subject, predicate, articles, adjectives, and adverbs. She demonstrates the procedure with a sample sentence and writes each step on the board. Then she puts a sentence on the board and asks the students to diagram the sentence in their seats while she walks around and gives assistance and corrective feedback. Finally, one student goes to the board and illustrates how to correctly diagram the sentence.

Effective commands

Teachers can reduce problems with student compliance by following research-based guidelines (Walker & Walker, 1992). See the section, *Delivering Effective Commands*, for specific strategies on how to give commands and increase compliance.

Eliminate audience

This intervention involves removing the attention given to a student for a behavior. It is appropriate for students who behave inappropriately to gain attention from others around them.
- Examples:
    - Have the students in the class physically move away from student.
    - Redirect the class to a different activity away from the student.

Environmental engineering

This refers to the process of arranging the physical environment of the classroom to enhance student learning and behavior. The physical environment serves as a set of stimuli which influence appropriate and inappropriate behavior. Teachers can pay attention to such factors as basic layout of classroom space, wall displays, traffic patterns, and other aspects of the classroom. Examples:

- **Pre-K»** Mrs. Adams arranges her class so that she has visual contact with all parts of the room. For example, she uses low bookcases so students are in her line of sight.
- **Elementary»** Mr. Red (1) divides the classroom into areas for quiet reading, seat work, and small group work; (2) arranges the room so students cannot easily look out windows or doorways into halls, and (3) places himself between the students and open areas if there are runners in the class.

Errorless learning

This involves creating teaching routines that guarantee success. This is most effective for students who frequently make mistakes, who lack confidence (or may be anxious), and/or who do not remember their learning experiences and the feedback that they receive.

The following are procedures that facilitate errorless learning:

- Adjust expectations appropriately (be reasonable)
- Make sure that the student is completely clear about what is expected of them
- Complete the task collaboratively with the student
- Make the task doable by 1) breaking the task into separate parts or 2) giving the student responsibility for only one or two components of a larger task
- Anticipate problems and "pre-correct" (e.g., "I see a tricky word in the next sentence – the word is _____-let me know if you need help when you get to that word.")
- Provide adequate cues
- Ensure large numbers of successful repetitions to ensure learning

Extinction

This refers to a behavior reduction procedure that is used to decrease problem behaviors that have a history of being reinforced, by removing the source of reinforcement. This is typically used with attention seeking behaviors, but can also be used with behaviors that are maintained by escape from demands or access to a preferred item or activity.

- Because an inappropriate behavior is ignored or not reinforced, the student may exert greater effort to obtain the reinforcer and there may be a dramatic increase or burst of the inappropriate behavior initially. It is very important to keep this phenomenon in mind when utilizing extinction, and to refrain from giving in and providing reinforcement. Inadvertently "giving in" and reinforcing the behavior will serve to make the behavior worse.
- Also, when eliminating a problem behavior using extinction, it is always necessary that you teach the individual a new behavior to replace the inappropriate behavior.
- Extinction is not appropriate when the behavior is dangerous to the student or others. In such an instance, extinction should be combined with other procedures. Extinction is a technical procedure that requires staff training.
- See examples of *planned ignoring, eliminate audience, peer ignoring, time-out, and follow through.*

Fading

This refers to the gradual elimination of cues, prompts, reminders, or suggestions that control a specific response. However, if cues are removed too quickly, student's response will deteriorate. Examples:

- **Pre-K»** John is learning to feed himself. He, receives less and less physical guidance, and eventually eats independently using a spoon and fork.
- **Elementary»** Fewer and fewer dashes or dots are placed on the page on which Sarah is learning to print, so that she completes more and more of the task independently.

Follow through

When a consequence is set to occur for a behavior or if the instructor states that a certain consequence will occur, then it is important to follow through with the consequence if the particular behavior occurred. This should be done for both positive consequences (e.g., delivering a reward contingent on appropriate behavior) and negative consequences (e.g., losing a privilege contingent on inappropriate behavior). It should also be done to ensure that the student does not receive the "pay-off" for a behavior (e.g., continue to present the work demands even though the student's behavior is occurring to escape). Follow through with what we say will communicate to the student that we are consistent and that they can expect that we will always do what we say we are going to do. Example:

- **Pre-K»** Allison starts crying when she is asked to clean up the puzzle pieces. The teacher continues to prompt Allison to clean up, providing more intensive prompts (i.e., gestures, gentle guidance) until the puzzle is complete.
- **Elementary»**Mary earned enough stickers today to receive a reward. The teacher makes sure to let her grab her reward at the end of the day.
- **Secondary»** Billy used inappropriate language during football practice today. His football coach told him to sit out for the first 5 minutes of the practice game.

Functional communication skills

Students who do not have appropriate communication and social skills will often vent their school related frustrations in disruptive and inappropriate ways. Example: A student experiencing difficulty in mathematics may attempt to avoid such work by acting out in the classroom. An appropriate functional communication skill may be to signal the teacher either verbally or with a predetermined nonverbal sign (i.e., hand raise) whenever the student feels frustrated. The teacher will then respond to the student to find out if he/she needs extra instruction, assistance with the assignment, or a brief break from work.

Functional Communication Training (FCT)

Appropriate forms of communication can serve to replace problem behavior that has become a means of communication for a student. Communicative responses to serve as alternatives to the inappropriate behavior are developed, such as asking for a break instead of trying to escape a difficult task. When the student uses the alternative communication, the behavior is reinforced by the teacher.

Gestural prompting

This involves prompting a student with the use of body language such as pointing, touching, looking, or placing something in front of a student to enforce an already discussed and specific expectation.

> Example: Juan comes into the classroom and is sitting on top of his desk. The teacher can simply walk over to him, make eye contact, and point or drag his eye to the chair in a request to have the student sit in his seat.

Goal setting

This involves breaking the task down into small sections and setting rewards for completing each section. Initially, goals should be set at an attainable level. As the student meets the goal, the level should increase.

Group reinforcement response contingency

This involves reinforcement of the entire group dependent upon the performance of individual members. Group-oriented contingencies may be of three types:

(1) Dependent: the performance of one or more particular group members determines the consequence received by the entire group.

(2) Independent: each group member receives a consequence if they individually meet the contingency.

(3) Interdependent: each student must reach a prescribed level of behavior before the entire group receives a consequence. However, a student may sabotage or ruin the reinforcement for the group to gain negative attention. Extreme peer pressure may be placed on the individual who does not meet the group contingency criteria.

Examples:

- **Pre-K»** Mrs. Bailey gave each child who put away the art materials correctly a smile and a thank you. (independent)
- **Elementary»** If Demetrius earns a score of 75% or better on each math test during the third quarter, the fourth grade class will all take a trip to the dinosaur museum in April. (dependent)
- **Secondary»** Mr. Miller's sophomore history class is allowed to watch a movie on Friday if all of the students bring in their homework for the entire week. (interdependent)

High rates of positive responses

This refers to the frequent use of positive comments or actions to students who demonstrate appropriate behavior. Teachers create a positive environment by frequently praising the student for appropriate behavior and correct academic responses. Positive responses should be specific, so students can repeat the desired behaviors. If too general, students may not know which behaviors to repeat. The recommended ratio of positive to negative responses is at least 4:1.

Examples:

- **Elementary»** Mrs. Garcia tells the students "thanks for listening" and "nice effort" frequently as she monitors their creative writing behavior during second grade.
- **Secondary»** Mr. Skinner continuously makes a point to verbally praise those students who are on task and ready to work, while engaging in planned ignoring of mild off-task behaviors of other students.

Home-school reinforcement system

This involves establishing a relationship between the behaviors exhibited at school and the reinforcement received at home. Specifically, the parents at home would provide reinforcers contingent upon the appropriate behaviors demonstrated at school. These systems can be very successful if the parent and teacher are implementing the same strategies and tie rewards to appropriate behaviors exhibited in the target environment. Example:

- Abbie refuses let other children stand next to her line during transitions and she will push the children away. Abbie's teacher and mother implement a system to help increase her tolerance of peers. Abbie loves to watch "Hannah Montana" when she comes home. The agreement is that Abbie can watch her favorite TV show when she comes home only if she stands next to her peers in line without pushing during 3 out 4 transitions. If she does not, she does not get to watch the TV show when she comes home.

Identify appropriate settings for behavior

This intervention suggests that inappropriate behaviors can be appropriate if demonstrated in a suitable setting. Example: If a student is constantly singing out loud during class time and causing a disruption, identify or create more appropriate settings for such behavior (i.e. music class, join the chorus, or provide a specific time during class for student's to show off their "talent").

In-class time out

A procedure used to remove students from situations or environments in which they are receiving reinforcement for inappropriate behavior. When time out is used, the instance must be documented. The criteria for time out should be a brief period of time without problem behavior (e.g., 3 minutes of quiet, 2 minutes calm). The student should not receive any attention (negative or positive) while in time out. If the time out cannot be implemented correctly and the student constantly tries to leave, then the student is still being provided with reinforcement and the procedure is not effective. Types of in-class time out:

o Removal of a student from reinforcing activities in the instructional setting
  o **Pre-K»** Jordy's truck is taken away after he repeatedly runs it over the fingers of his playmates. The truck is placed on the shelf and the timer is set for four minutes.
  o **Elementary»** While the other third grade students continue to earn points toward a Friday activity, Sam's opportunity for reinforcement is removed for five minutes when he shouts out in class.
  o **Secondary»** Glen is removed from the P.E. soccer game for sixteen minutes after yelling obscenities at the goalie. He has to watch from the sidelines.
o Removal of student from a reinforcing setting into a setting with a lower reinforcing value.
  o **Pre-K»** Torie continually bothers her classmates while sitting on the mat during story time. She is put in a chair away from the group for three minutes with calm behavior. During this time, she cannot see the storybook pictures as well as before.
  o **Elementary»** During morning circle, Timmy touches other students and makes inappropriate noises. The students respond by fussing at Timmy and laughing at him. The teacher's assistant removes Timmy from circle and places him in a time out chair away from the group and facing away from his peers. She tells him that his 3 minute time out will begin when he is quiet. The assistant turns her back and refrains from giving Timmy any attention. When 3 minutes has elapsed, Timmy is allowed to return to circle time.

Incidental teaching

This involves providing structured learning opportunities in the natural environment by using the child's interests and natural motivation. Incidental teaching is unique in its focus on child directed teaching, in other words, following the child's lead regarding interests within naturally occurring daily activities. It involves being intentional and planning for those "teachable moments" that are initiated by the child. There are four levels of prompts that can be utilized:

• **Level 1:** This prompt involves instituting a 30 second delay when a child displays and interest in a specific object or material. This delay is designed to encourage a verbal initiation for the object or material.
• **Level 2:** After 30 seconds, if the child has not verbally requested the item, then you prompt the appropriate verbalization (i.e., "What do you want?")
• **Level 3:** If the child does not respond to level 2 prompt, then provide a more specific prompt while showing the desired object (i.e., "What is this?")
• **Level 4:** At this level, the most intense, the child is prompted to imitate the correct response as modeled by the caregiver (i.e., "car")
• **Example:** When Mrs. Perkins opened the toy cabinet, Kyle tried to grab a toy car from the cabinet. Mrs. Perkins put her hand over Kyle's on top of the toy and waited, looking expectantly at Kyle. Kyle did not respond, so Mrs. Perkins said, "What do you want?" Kyle says "car." Mrs. Perkins said, "That's right, car," and allows Kyle to take the car to the play area.

Incompatible behavior
> This refers to a behavior that interferes with the ability of the student to engage in the problem behavior. In other words, it is unlikely that the problem behavior will occur if the student is engaged in this behavior at the same time.

Increase frequency of task related recognition
> Provide consistent and specific feedback and reinforcement for a student's on task behavior. In lieu of simply expecting that a student engage in task related behavior, the teacher will provide reinforcement (verbal, nonverbal, tangible) for a student that is properly engaged in the classroom task.

Increase reinforcement quality of classroom
> If a student is acting out to be ejected from a classroom, it may be that the student does not find the classroom setting and/or routine to be very rewarding. The teacher can make the classroom environment more attractive in a number of ways, including by posting interesting instructional materials (e.g., bulletin board displays), boosting the pace of (and degree of student interaction in) class lecture or discussion, and including additional instructional activities of high interest to students.

Increased academic learning time
> The amount of time the student is actually engaged in and experiencing success is increased. The time must be spent on learning essential skills and not on meaningless tasks. Teachers should try to achieve a level of academic learning time of no less than 70 %. Variables that can be addressed are beginning on time, minimizing housekeeping tasks, and minimizing transition times.

Individualized Reward System
> The use of an individualized reward system helps to promote appropriate behaviors and also helps students self-monitor their own behavior. Ideas for rewards systems are dependent on the individual student. Such examples can include a sticker chart, checklist, star chart, or any type of monitoring system that the student will "buy into" and see as motivating. The target behavior must be specific and each time a student earns a sticker or check it must be paired with specific verbal praise.

Instructional pacing
> This refers to the speed or rate at which the teacher presents instructional material and tasks to the learner. Understanding your students' academic ability and keeping pace with it can be a behavior intervention for both those students that complete assignments, get bored, and act inappropriately and also for students who act inappropriate due to their frustration of not understanding. Often times, a brisk pace of instruction enhances attention and increases the number of response opportunities. Individualizing and differentiating the pace of instruction plays a major role in student behavior. Examples:
> - **Pre-K»** Mrs. White moves from one preschool child to the next in quick succession, maintaining engagement with the activities during circle time.
> - **Elementary»** Miss Young delivers direct instruction to the students at the rate of about nine learning tasks per minute, and asks for group responses from students frequently to check understanding.
> - **Secondary»** Mr. Dynamic asks his twelfth grade students frequent questions to assess their understanding of the science material. Their responses serve as an indicator as to the possible need to repeat or review particular subject matter.

Integrate curriculum into music
> Use music to teach expectations. Example: Reword songs that students listen to on a daily basis to teach rules, appropriate behavior, or other lessons.

Meaningful work projects
>Students participate in a "jobs program" within the school in which they are viewed as valuable, contributing employees of the school.

Minimize down time
>This intervention is for students who seem to display inappropriate behaviors while they are waiting for other students to finish or they may be waiting to transition to the next activity. Don't leave the child with a lot of down time. If the child is between activities give them something to do. Example: A child is waiting for the other student's to finish work. Allow the child to read a book or do an activity on the computer until the other kids are done.

Minimize or eliminate distracting materials
>Extra materials on a student's desk or around the room can be the cause of distraction.

Modeling
>A student learns behavior by observing a modeled response. Students are watching how the teacher interacts with not only other students but other adults and by modeling a positive and appropriate behavior we can increase appropriate behaviors in students.

Modify task length
>Present brief tasks instead of a longer task. This will provide more breaks for the child, and give them a sense of progress. A student who works slowly/methodically may become frustrated with lengthy assignments so the teacher may want to shorten tasks.

Momentum training with relaxation strategies
>Teachers use a series of requests related to relaxation. Requests to use deep breathing, muscle tension-relaxation cycles, or stretching can be incorporated into direct instruction and a momentum routine.

Monitoring
>This involves systematically monitoring a student during a task. Example: Checking on a student at 10 minute intervals and/or providing verbal or non verbal redirection when needed. Non-verbal monitoring can include eye contact and proximity.

Monitoring checklist
>Create a checklist for appropriate behaviors, which is reviewed by both teacher and student. The checklist may be as simple as identifying 3-5 appropriate behaviors, the five days of the school week, and spaces to check-off when those behaviors are demonstrated. The checklist must be consistently monitored by both teacher and student so that progress can be followed.

Mystery motivator
>This intervention is an incentive system that is designed to promote appropriate behavior by delivering random rewards. The teacher specifically defines the target behavior and the need to increase or decrease it. Then, the teacher creates a motivating environment by covering up the reward and building some motivation for the student by referring to it often and giving vague clues about it that will spark the student's interest.

Natural opportunities
>The instructor provides a verbal prompt to the student as a reminder to do the appropriate behavior when the teacher notices that the student's behavior is starting to escalate.

Non-verbal reminders
Written lists of expectations: Teacher provides the student with a list written out in front of them of the behavior expected.
Picture cards: Teacher can use picture cards to teach/remind students of various rules/expectations.
Signals: The teacher uses a signal to communicate when to use the appropriate behavior or when to stop engaging in the inappropriate behavior.

Observational learning
While the target child is observing, the teacher gives specific public praise to children other than the target student when they show appropriate behaviors. When praising these behaviors, the teacher clearly describes the praiseworthy behaviors. When the target child 'imitates' the same or similar appropriate behaviors, the teacher immediately praises him or her.

Offer choices
Giving the student a choice of tasks (even if they are not preferred tasks) will often reduce inappropriate behavior from occurring by allowing them to have some degree of control. Only give choices when you are willing to allow the student to experience the natural consequences based upon their choice. Examples:
- o Permitting students to select who they work with on a project
- o Choose what book to read for an assignment
- o Complete ½ of the assignment with a partner
- o What assignment to do first

Parent-Teacher communication system
This refers to an informational system between school and home that provides clear, concise communication about a student's academic and behavioral performance. This communication should occur on a regular basis. It should emphasize positive information and also include information about areas of concern. Methods for communication might include phone contact, face to face meetings, email, or notes/letter correspondence. Examples:
- **Pre-K»** Johnny takes home his sticker chart at the end of the day and Mom praises him.
- **Elementary»** Ms. Wheeler sends home notes with 4 different students each day rating their academic work, study habits, and effort. By this method, each student in the class receives a note home once a week.
- **Secondary»** The student takes home a note indicating class performance, assignments completed, and upcoming test dates. The note must then be signed by one of the parents and returned to the teacher.

Participation in extracurricular activities
Identify and encourage student to become involved in an activity that matches the abilities and skills of the student.

Peer consequences
If the teacher finds that the student's peers play an important role in influencing the inappropriate behavior, the teacher may try to influence the student's inappropriate behaviors indirectly by providing consequences for selected peer behaviors. Examples:
- If classmates encourage the student to make inappropriate comments by giving positive social attention (e.g., laughing), the teacher may start a group response-cost program and deduct points from the class total whenever a peer laughs at inappropriate comments.
- A teacher who wants to increase the social interactions that a socially isolated child has with her peers may reward selected peers with praise each time that they approach the isolated child in a positive manner.

Peer ignoring
>This intervention involves teaching the peers or entire class to ignore another student's inappropriate behavior. Typically, this involves the student's turning away from the student when inappropriate behavior occurs or not responding to the student. It can also include providing attention when the student starts to behave more appropriately. The teacher must rehearse and practice with the students and then reinforce the group when they participate.

Peer involvement and influence
>The use of same-age and/or cross-age peers for structured social engagements, and as "buddies." Examples:
>- **Pre-K»** Debbie has difficulty sitting on the rug during circle time in her preschool class. The teacher assigns Kathy to sit next to Debbie on the rug so that Kathy can model appropriate behavior.
>- **Elementary»** Beth and Jean are struggling to remember to take their homework home in fifth grade. The school psychologist assigns them to check each other's backpacks at the end of the day to make sure they have the homework they need.
>- **Secondary»** Kimberly walks next to Kyle in his wheel chair to the lunch room and carries his tray to a table of friends in the lunch area.

Peer mentor/tutor opportunity
>This involves allowing another student to aide/mentor/tutor the student or allowing the student to be a mentor of a younger student in a lower grade. The latter option can be a great way to improve self confidence and also helps to reinforce foundational skills.

Personal connection with student
>Establishing set times and methods for providing special attention for a student. A teacher makes it a point to check in with a student each morning in order to find out how his/her homework was the evening before.

Personal interests used for motivation
>Incorporating student interest in to a given task or activity. Example: A reading assignment can cover a topic that the student likes (i.e. sports, fishing, and any related items). Many students are motivated by music and integrating music into lessons can be motivating for students.

Planned activities for transition time
>Provide the structure for a student to close one activity and to do what is necessary before initiating the next one. Allowing students to assist in everyday housekeeping tasks that are necessary can be helpful.

Planned ignoring
>This is an extinction procedure that involves withdrawing attention when an inappropriate behavior is occurring. This is most effective for behaviors that are primarily occurring to gain attention. Over time, the person learns that they do not get your attention for engaging in that behavior. Planned ignoring should never be used alone. It should always be paired with a reinforcement procedure for appropriate behaviors.
>- When an inappropriate attention seeking behavior occurs, you can either:
>   - Ignore the behavior but continue to reinforce appropriate behaviors
>   - Ignore the behavior and the person until they engage in the desired appropriate behavior, then reinforce that behavior when it occurs.

Planned ignoring (continued)
- Common mistakes when implementing this procedure are:
  - Giving feedback "Johnny that was not nice to say"
  - Praising the student for not engaging in the target behavior "John, you did great by not interrupting me"
  - Engaging in a teaching interaction "Johnny, do you know how that makes me feel when you interrupt me?"
  - Non-verbal responses (big sigh, eye contact, change of facial expressions, change of voice tone, etc.)
- Examples:
  - **P»** Sue often cries to get attention at preschool. Her teacher stops giving her attention when she cries. At first Sue cries harder and longer. The teacher still ignores her. As the behavior is not being reinforced, the crying gradually tapers off. Sue periodically reverts back to crying to see if the teacher has "changed the rules." As the teacher ignores it consistently, the crying disappears completely.
  - **E»** Mike continually puts his hands in his pants. He receives attention from the teacher and the aide when they ask him to take his hands out of his pants. The teacher and aide begin to compliment Mike when he is sitting appropriately and do not attend to him when his hands are in his pants.
  - **S»** Barbara is a high school student who makes inappropriate remarks to her teacher. The teacher decides to withdraw his attention when Barbara makes inappropriate remarks by breaking eye contact, making no facial expression, and walking away. When Barbara is appropriate in her remarks to the teacher, he responds briefly and redirects her attention back to the classroom activity.

Play music

Music can be used as an intervention for students who are distracted easily and display what many teachers call, "off task behaviors", (not engaged with assignment, looking around the room, talking with a peer). Music can help to reduce distractions and promote appropriate classroom behaviors.

Positive peer reporting

This involves teaching the student's peers the appropriate behaviors to observe. Whenever the students observe the behavior, they provide positive praise to the student and report the appropriate behavior to an adult. This not only encourages the appropriate behavior of the student but also facilitates positive peer relationships.

Positive peer role models

Provide opportunities for the student to be in contact with positive peer role models. Pair the student with a peer who is able to display appropriate behaviors. It is important that the peer the student is paired with displays respect and they are able to create a positive rapport with each other. The student can be seated in close proximity and/or placed in work groups with peer role models. Such positive peer connections should be reinforced by the teacher and/or any other adult involved with the student.

Positive practice

This refers to the intense practice of an appropriate behavior for a specified number of repetitions or a specified period of time. Examples:

- **Elementary»** Sylvia runs down the hall. The teacher then requires her to walk down the hall appropriately three times.
- **Secondary»** A student who wanders the halls without permission when taking an unsupervised bathroom break may have to stay after school one afternoon and take multiple 'practice' trips to the school bathroom. In this example, the instructor might accompany the student to monitor how promptly the student walked to, and returned from, the bathroom and to give the student feedback about how much this target behavior has improved.

Positive reinforcement

This involves delivering a reinforcer after behavior to increase the likelihood of a behavior occurring in the future. To be most effective, reinforcement should be delivered immediately and consistently (delivered each time it is planned). Reinforcement should be delivered continuously (every time it occurs) if building a new behavior. It should be delivered intermittently (every so often) if maintaining an existing behavior. Examples:

- Attention, preferred items and/ or activities provided contingent upon on-task behavior and work completion
- Access to items/activities provided only after desired behavior has occurred (or absence of undesired behavior)
- Delivery of items that provide similar sensory consequences contingent upon periods when the problem behavior is absent.

Positive self-talk

Increase student's belief in self and their own capabilities in various situations by positive self prompts. The student can be taught a repertoire of positive statements, such as "I am capable of doing my work" or "If I study my spelling words every day, I will get a good grade on my test." The student is taught to repeat such statements as frustrations increase in adverse situations. Teachers and/or counselors may have to implement verbal or nonverbal prompts in order for the student to initiate the self-talk process.

Post all classroom rules and daily schedules in prominent locations

Involving students in creating classroom rules and expectations, as well as develop posters and activities about the rules, helps them to take ownership of the environment. It is a proactive way of teaching and increasing appropriate classroom behaviors.

Practice opportunities

This involves providing specific opportunities for the student to demonstrate taught skills in the classroom. The teacher may need to establish a verbal or nonverbal prompt with the student (i.e. "now is a good time to use your skills" or tap the student on the shoulder).

Precision requests

Make a clear, concise statement to a student to prompt appropriate behaviors or to stop inappropriate behaviors. This should be done without additional verbalizations or lectures. When a request is followed, a social reinforcer is used. When the request is not followed, a mild pre-planned negative consequence is used. If a negative consequence is delivered, repeat the request cycle until the student follows the request.

Predictability

When children can predict upcoming events they show less resistance. Example: If a trip is cancelled, write in on the student's calendar or planner.

Preferential seating

Changing the seating arrangement for a student in order to address his/her specific needs. Examples:
- o The student sits in close proximity to the teacher for hearing, vision, and/or attention concerns.
- o The student is moved away from negative peer influences and near more positive peer influences.
- o Arrange seating so as to prevent congestion
- o Strategically arrange student seating so that individuals prone to misbehave are adequately separated from one another.

Premack Principle (If this, then that…)

This principle states that people are more likely to complete an undesirable task if they know that upon completing the task they will have immediate access to something they highly desire. This intervention is used quite often in both educational and home settings. The teacher states a non-preferred behavior or activity must take place before a preferred behavior or activity can be accessed. Examples:
- Jeremy's teacher told him that when he completes his geometry worksheet, she will allow him to read his book for 10 minutes.
- Isabella wanted to go to circle time, but she had not cleaned up her work area. The teacher stated, "If you clean up your work, then you can go to circle time."

Preview rules/behavioral expectations

Some students misbehave because they are impulsive and do not always think through the consequences of their misbehavior before they act. These students can benefit from having the teacher briefly review rules and/or behavioral expectations just before the students go into a potentially challenging situation or setting (e.g., passing through the halls; going to an assembly). If the instructor has a classroom reward system in place, he or she can strengthen the rules preview by reminding students that the class can win points for good behavior.

Preview schedule

Having the teacher preview a student's schedule daily (or even more frequently) can help those children who seem to misbehave because they do not respond well to unexpected changes in schedule or cannot remember what their schedule is.

Private approach to student

The instructor quietly approaches the student, points out the problem behavior and how it is interfering with class work or interrupting instruction. The instructor reminds the student of the academic task in which he or she should be engaged. The student is politely offered the choice to improve behavior or accept a negative consequence. Privately approaching a student can help him or her to save face and reduce the likelihood that the student will become defensive or defiant.

Problem solving skills

Problem solving involves 1) identifying the problem, 2) determining why the problem is occurring, 3) developing solutions, and 4) making a choice.

Progress reports

Using a daily or weekly system to document and communicate student's behavioral progress. Subjectively, the teacher may write a brief note at the end of the day or week to describe the student's overall behavior. Objectively, the teacher collects data daily to determine the progress of interventions.

Prompting

A visual, auditory, or physical cue is presented to a student to facilitate a given response. However, overuse of prompting may result in a high level of dependency on prompts. Be conscious of students for whom a physical cue is aversive. Examples:

- **Pre-K»** When it is time to clean up at pre-school, Mrs. Kindly turns the cleanup music on.
- **Elementary»** While Sarah is learning to print in kindergarten, she is given papers on which there is a dot where each letter should start.

Proximity control

Teacher proximity or adult proximity depending on the resources available is essential in changing student behavior (discouraging off-task behavior). Examples:

- o Randomly walking around the room to stand near a student with problem behavior actually prevents the inappropriate behavior from occurring.
- o A student that is tapping a pencil and has been redirected verbally in the past could use a non-verbal reminder from the teacher. As the teacher is teaching he/she could walk over to the student and without saying anything, touch the pencil that the student is tapping.
- o A student may need extra support and supervision during transition times or the less structured time such as lunch or recess, pairing them with an adult and having them help the adult is a positive way to increase supervision.

Quiet areas

The student is given a specific time and/or space (established prior to displaying behavior) for quiet or "cool down" purposes when overwhelmed, over-stimulated, or upset. Example: If a student becomes easily frustrated during certain academic tasks, then a quiet area of the classroom can be established as a personal space for that student to go if necessary.

Quiet start requests

Make a quiet request to start a task or change a behavior, so the rest of the class is not disturbed. A low voice, a written note, or visual prompts can be effective in gaining compliance.

Redirection

Redirection is re-focusing someone's attention on to another task or topic. This usually is done with little to no attention being paid to the inappropriate behavior which may be occurring. Redirection requires that you give minimal acknowledgement to the issues at hand but focus on something that is more appropriate to the moment. The teacher may interrupt the problem behavior by calling on the student to answer a question, assigning him/her a task to carry out, or otherwise refocusing the child's attention. Once the person is engaged in the other task or topic, it will be important to give a lot of praise and/or attention to them at this point.
Example: Veronica is running up the slides during recess. Mrs. Black approaches her, points to the swings, and says, "Look, there's an empty swing for you."

Reflection center

If the student is agitated, anxious, or mad, the student is redirected to an area of the room called the "Reflection Center." This area is where the student can express how they are feeling appropriately, such as writing it down or drawing a picture.

Reflective essay

The student is required to write and submit to the teacher a brief composition after displaying behaviors. At a minimum, the composition would state: (1) what problem behavior the student displayed, (2) how the student could have acted in an alternative, more acceptable manner, and (3) a statement from the student to show appropriate behaviors in similar situations in the future. NOTE: Some teachers use a pre-printed structured questionnaire containing these 3 items for the student to complete.

Required relaxation

This intervention requires the student to spend a fixed period of time in relaxation following each occurrence of an upsetting behavior. The student should not be forced to do this. The student should be taught the relaxation techniques during non-stressful circumstances, not during the stressful event.

- **Pre-K»** Julian occasionally has angry outbursts. When this occurs, an aide takes him to a quiet corner and they practice breathing slowly for four minutes.
- **Elementary»** Nancy, who acts out by hitting other children, learns to identify when she is feeling frustrated. She is taught two relaxation techniques. When she lets the classroom teacher know she is frustrated, she is excused from the room to a designated place for a 10-minute period of relaxation.
- **Secondary»** Alice periodically has panic attacks. She learns a progressive muscle relaxation technique that effectively calms her. When Alice feels highly agitated, she goes into the nurse's room and practices relaxation for fifteen minutes.

Response cost

Contingent withdrawal of a specific amount of available reinforcers (e.g., points, privileges, etc.) following an inappropriate response. Response cost must be less than the total amount or number of reinforcers available (i.e., never go in the hole). Remember, all students have civil rights to water, food, clothes and use of the bathroom which cannot be withheld. As a drawback, this type of system can often lead to aggression directed at the teacher, other students, or property. A student may also cry, whine, or pout when reinforcement is withdrawn. It is recommended to initially implement a system that involves delivering reinforcers, not taking them away. This will establish value to the system and it will also eliminate aggression or tantrums that can occur when the reinforcers are removed. Examples:

- **Pre-K»** If Cathy finishes the table time activity without kicking the table, she gets a large ball of play dough. Each time she kicks the table, a portion of the play dough is removed. When the activity is completed, she gets to play with the remaining dough.
- **Elementary»** Steve is awarded ten points at the start of recess. Each time he breaks one of the playground rules, he loses a point. At the end of the recess period, Steve may bank all the points he has retained and exchange them after the last recess of the day for items listed on a menu of reinforcers.
- **Secondary»** Bart's preferred activity is computer time. He starts each class with ten minutes of computer time to use at the end of the period. Each time he spits on the floor, he loses one minute of his computer time.
- **Lottery system»** The teacher gives each student five or more tickets with his or her name on it. If a student breaks a rule or does not follow a request, a ticket is taken away. At the end of the day, the tickets are collected from all students and three or four names are drawn to receive a reward.

Restitution

Restoring the environment to a state vastly improved to that of what existed prior to the disruption (destruction of materials or property). Example:

- **Elementary»** Fred spits on the desk. He is required to clean the desk he soiled, plus three others.
- **Secondary»** Jeff writes inappropriate names on some lockers at school. The principal has Jeff clean the lockers he defaced as well as all the lockers in the Senior Hall.

Role-play

A student learns behavior by practicing the desired behavior. The teacher develops scenarios and the student role-plays how they would respond in that situation.

Rules review

> The teacher approaches the student and (a) has him or her read off the posted class rules, (b) asks the student which of those rules his or her current behavior is violating, and (c) has the student state what positive behavior he or she will engage in instead.

Schedule adjustment

> Modify or adjust the daily schedule or routine of the student to reduce the chance that inappropriate behavior will occur. Examples:
> - A student may tend to focus best in the early morning and needs to have academic classes scheduled before lunch or just the opposite they may need a schedule in which their academic classes may need to be scheduled in the afternoon.
> - There may be a personality/work style "mismatch" between a teacher and student and changing a student's teacher schedule could make a significant difference.
> - Schedule recess after quiet reading time, instead of quiet reading time after recess.

School-wide recognition

> Use school wide vehicles for recognition of appropriate behavior: Use programs such as "student of the week," school wide awards, or recognition on the school announcements. The recognition should be paired with praise concerning a specific appropriate behavior in order to impact a target behavior.

Scripts

> The teacher develops a script with the student that addresses his/her specific needs. In order to ensure optimal effectiveness of this intervention, the teacher should provide the script in written form to the student and possibly attach it to his/her desk.

Self-management

> Student is taught how to monitor and manage his or her own behavior.

Self-monitoring

> The student systematically monitors (or tracks) his or her own behavior in order to help the student become more aware of their behavior. Example: Ms. Pate has asked Michael to self-monitor his off-task behavior while in her classroom for second period Language Arts. Ms. Pete provides Michael with a data sheet containing 12 square boxes. Ms. Pate has set her computer to emit a tone every 5 minutes. When Michael hears the tone, he is to place an X in the box if he was on-task, or leave the box blank if he was off-task. Ms. Pate takes data as well to compare with Michael's.

Setting clear expectations and rules

> A way of letting the student know what is clearly expected of them and what will happen when the student meets or does not meet the expectation. The expectation should be reasonable and something the student can achieve. Set the expectation by stating the expectation and letting the student know what he or she can earn and not earn for meeting or not meeting the expectation. This puts the responsibility of earning that privilege in their hands. When the student meets or does not meet the expectation, the teacher must follow through with the pre-determined consequences. Emphasize that they are making the decision by how they act. It is not you choosing for them on what will happen.

Shaping

Shaping behavior is a technique that is used to reward behaviors which approximate the behavior you are targeting. Successive approximations means to reinforce any behavior which will lead up to the behavior you wish to occur. Too often we tend to expect an all or none level of performance to occur. All too often this creates unrealistic expectations. The tendency is to not recognize the little efforts which will lead up to the bigger successes. Shaping requires knowing what you want to happen and breaking it down into various steps or levels of achievement. Examples:

- **Pre-K»** Sharon is learning to request her favorite toy. She is first taught the sign which the teacher pairs with the word. If Sharon makes the sign for baby, she receives the doll. Next, she has to make a "b" sound to get the doll. Shaping continues until she says "Baby."
- **Elementary»** Jackie always sits by herself at lunch and does not interact with her fifth grade peers. She is first reinforced for sitting at the table where other peers are, then for sitting next to a peer and, finally, for engaging in conversation with a peer.

Social skills

These include skills such as social problem solving, cooperative play and work, turn-taking, and conversational skills. Increasing the appropriate use of these skills will help facilitate positive and appropriate interactions with peers and adults.

Social skills training

Individual or group instruction designed to teach appropriate interaction with adults and peers. Modeling and practice of social skills to mastery is highly important. Teachers should take the time to teach them and review them until students can perform them consistently and independently. Using examples and non-examples are encouraged to clarify the desired behavior.

Social stories/Comic book conversations

A social story or comic book conversation is written specifically for the student and the situation (i.e. Joe waits for his turn) and must be visually provided for the student. This teaching method involves prompting understanding of the social context of various social situations. The social story is a tool to help lessen the stress of social situations.

Specific, or modified, instructions

Prior to the assignment, the teacher gives the student more specific or modified instructions in order to assist in overall comprehension of information. The teacher may provide additional or individual verbal instructions, written instructions, pictorial instructions, visual guides, completed model of task, etc.

Specific verbal praise

When the student engages in a positive behavior that the teacher has selected to increase, the teacher praises the student for that behavior. Along with positive comments (e.g., "Great job!"), the praise statement should give specifics about the behavior the child demonstrated that is being singled out for praise (e.g., "You really kept your attention focused on me during that last question, even when kids around you were talking!"). The praise should be a simple and concise statement given immediately after the behavior. Specific verbal praise should always be paired with other types of reinforcers in order to communicate to the student why they are receiving the other type of reinforcer.

Example:

- A student who is usually loud and disruptive comes into the classroom quietly and sits in his/her desk, (which the teacher has been asking for and redirecting the students to do for two weeks). The teacher then walks over to the student and uses specific verbal praise such as, "You did a fantastic job coming in quietly and going straight to your desk" or "I appreciate the way you came into the room quietly and went directly to your desk. You are making this classroom a great place to learn."

Stimulus cueing

This refers to the use of a random auditory or visual cue to prompt appropriate behavior.

- **Elementary»** Colby seems to be constantly out of his seat. His teacher begins using a timer set randomly from one- to five-minute intervals during seat-work time. The goal is for everyone to be in his or her seat when the timer rings.
- **Secondary»** Christopher is having trouble staying on task during class. When the teacher makes the statement, "Check what you're doing right now and mark your card if you're on task," he adds a point to his card. At the end of the hour, he is reinforced for having five or more points.

Structured daily schedule

This refers to a daily outline of classroom activities designed to maximize student learning. Structuring time through a planned daily schedule of specific activities and transitions maximizes "on-task" behavior and minimizes students' inappropriate behavior. Create a daily schedule in written or visual format. Display the schedule in a prominent location in classroom. Discuss the schedule each day/class period. Examples:

- **Pre-K»** During circle time, Josh's teacher previews the daily events using a picture schedule.
- **Elementary»** Ms. Adams, a second grade teacher, writes the daily schedule paired with visual aids on the board and highlights the weekly events and homework with colored chalk. She reviews the schedule with her students at the beginning of each day.
- **Secondary»** Mr. Bryant, who teaches math in seventh grade, writes both the daily schedule and the weekly homework on the board. Students know what to start on when the bell rings each day, and they know the order of activities for teacher directed instruction, guided practice, and independent practice.

Structuring non-instructional periods, including recess

This refers to a systematic intervention program for a student who requires a high level of structure during non-instructional periods. The student is taught specific game rules, as well as appropriate hall, lunchroom, bathroom, and playground behavior. Then they are reinforced for appropriate behavior during these activities. Examples:

- **Pre-K**» The preschool teacher notices that most of Johnny's conflicts with other children occur during free play. She decides that instead of free play, she will have Johnny pick between two activities.
- **Elementary**» The other students are constantly complaining that Alex interrupts and interferes with their games at recess. A classroom aide teaches Alex the rules for kick ball. The classroom aide then goes to recess with Alex and prompts him to join the game. The aide monitors his play and interaction with other students. Alex is rewarded for playing by the rules and for getting along with the other children.

Student follow-up

Establish a systematic "check in" time during an assignment to ensure that the student fully understands a specific task or request. Example: The teacher and student may have an agreement specifying that 10 minutes after the start of a given assignment/test or request the teacher will verbally confirm the student understands. If the student is in need of further instruction, the teacher will provide it.

Systematic prompting

Systematic prompting is a 3-step prompting sequence to ensure compliance with demands. A student's noncompliance is often a function of avoiding the setting or activity in that setting. Tell the student in a very clear, concise language what you want him to do. Then, use a gestural prompt, and then use gentle guidance. The instructor should always praise any compliance observed. When implementing this procedure, the instructor should not engage in any verbal discussions or debates. The only words spoken to the student other than demands should be praise when the task is completed. Step three of this procedure is not appropriate for older students.

Step 1: Tell the student what he is to do. "Sasha, put the truck in the box." Wait 5 seconds to give him a chance to comply. If he does, praise him. If he does not comply, go to step 2.

Step 2: Tell the student what to do as you **demonstrate the appropriate response**. "Sasha, put the truck in the box) as you are showing him where to put the truck. Give him 5 seconds to comply. If he complies, praise him. If he does not comply, go to step 3 or repeat steps 1 and 2 (if older student).

Step 3: Help the student complete the task by using as little physical guidance as necessary (hand-over-hand).

Task analysis

Breaking down a task into steps and making the tasks concrete to ensure more success. Teaching a student how to break down task into more simplistic parts can also help reduce problem behaviors.
Example:
- A student who has difficulty compiling a three sentence paragraph may perform better when the task is broken down into small steps. First, teach him/her to identify and write down the theme of the paragraph, then create three categories (introduction, main idea, and conclusion), Next brainstorm what ideas should go under each category, and finally the student can compile the paragraph based on the information gather during previous steps.

Teaching interaction

A short social skills teaching sequence: 1) expression of affection, 2) initial praise, 3) description of inappropriate behavior, 4) description of appropriate behavior, 5) rationale, 6) acknowledgement, 7) practice, 8) feedback, 9) consequences, and 10) general praise. Examples:
- **P»** When the teacher observes Susie grabbing a doll from Natalie, the teacher takes Susie aside and tells Susie how much she enjoys having her in the class. She rehearses with Susie how to ask Natalie if she can play with the doll. The teacher tells Susie what a good job she did and then sends her back to play.
- **E»** Russell was teasing Jane about her new haircut. The teacher asks Russell to stay in and help her pass out art supplies at recess. During recess, she congratulates Russell accomplishing his reading goal. She then describes how she saw him teasing Jane and how that can really hurt somebody's feelings. She asks Russell to apologize to Jane and give her two compliments during the day. He promises to do that. The teacher pats him on the back and says she is proud of him.

Technology device instruction

The student is trained on how to use certain technology devices (e.g., computer software, alternative communicative devices, and other assistive technology devices and supports.

Token economy

A token economy is a system in which a token is administered to students when appropriate behaviors are displayed and the tokens can be exchanged later for reinforcers. Idea for tokens can include:

- Plastic or metal chips
- Marks on a blackboard
- Points marked on a paper point card
- Stars
- Holes punched in a card

- Stickers
- Paper clips
- Beans in a jar
- Happy faces
- Play money

Tolerance skills

Students who frequently become angry at peers or who may be set off by certain triggers may be taught to tolerate or accept certain situations by using coping skills to keep them from reacting inappropriately.

Transitions supports

Transitioning from one environment to another or one activity to another can be a difficult process for many students. If supportive tools are built into the transition process, appropriate behaviors may increase during this time. Examples: Hallway peer buddy, close adult proximity, and pictorial signs with transition expectations posted in the hallway.

Use of manipulatives

This involves the use of classroom or academic manipulatives to teach a skill. Examples: Behavior charts, math blocks, positive word charts, and message boards.

Use of positive referrals

This intervention is the use of a form that recognizes a student for displaying the appropriate target behavior(s) by filling it out and making a specific comment about the behavior, when it happened, and possibly reporting it to someone the student sees as a powerful adult within the school setting.

Verbal prompting

This involves prompting a student with a verbal remark that states the expected behavior. Example: A student comes into the room and sits backwards in their chair to talk to another student. The teacher verbally prompts the student by saying, "Joe, face forward."

Verbal rehearsal

Establish a system which the student verbally, or in a written form, repeats rules or expectations. Example: Teacher and student have an agreement specifying that before each class change and student verbally reviews the rules and expectations.

Verbal reminders

The instructor review rules and expectations prior to an assignment or problem times.

Visual schedule

This involves the utilization of an organized schedule that could be pictorial or written. A schedule can help a student progress through the day but it can also break down specific tasks throughout the daily progression.

Visual strategies

The instructor places visual prompts on the student's desk, in the student's planner, on a nearby wall, or any other area that will prompt the student to engage in the appropriate behavior.

Strategies for Effective Behavior Management

DO'S AND DON'TS OF BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

➢ **Do** remember who is in charge—you! Don't get into any power struggles with students.

➢ **Don't** yell or lose your temper. To achieve a calm, orderly, and controlled environment, you must remain calm and controlled.

➢ **Don't** make threats, especially those that students know you will not or cannot carry out. Example: "If you don't behave like third graders, I'm going to send you back to second grade."

➢ **Do** give students strong, direct statements rather than making your commands questions. Example: Rather than saying, "Will you please stay in your seats?" make it a directive by saying, "Stay in your seats."

➢ **Don't** use the word try. The word try gives permission to fail. You want your students to comply not to try. Example: "Try to be on time." versus "Be on time."

➢ **Do** use a "get ready to listen" signal to alert students that you are about to give important information. Then speak in a normal voice. **Don't** speak over the students even if some are not ready to listen. When they miss the direction, they will be ready to listen next time. When you give the signal, students who are ready to listen will pressure those who are not.

➢ **Do** give a directive only once. Tell students exactly what you expect and, whenever possible, also tell students the consequences (and make sure you carry them out). Then, do not repeat the directive. Example: "If you have a question, raise your hand. I will only call on students who quietly raise their hand and wait to be called on."

➢ **Don't** use sarcasm, ridicule, or labels. Students will learn respect by being respected.

➢ **Do** use students' names to praise positive behavior as well as to discipline. Examples: "Ned, I noticed that you picked up the trash around your desk and I appreciate your showing responsibility." and "Ann, I expect everyone to stop and listen when I give the freeze signal."

COMMON PROBLEMS AND HELPFUL HINTS

Common Problems	Helpful Hints
We sometimes tend to ignore good behavior because we feel that it should occur because that is what is expected of us.	Recognize the little things that are going right. Look for opportunities to praise the small successes.
We tend to tolerate the small annoying behaviors, but they often lead into more frequent and greater behaviors.	Address the little issues when appropriate. It is easier to turn around small problems than to try to deal with big ones. Try setting clear limits early on.
We often wait for major problems to occur before we do anything about it. The longer you wait, the harder it gets!	Don't wait to respond. Set clear limits early on. Waiting until the last minute to deal with a problem usually leads to a very frustrating experience.
We often use warnings, threats, or ultimatums to gain compliance. This often sets up authority control issues.	Avoid using warning, threats, or ultimatums. Set clear limits. Remind them that it is how they act that determines the consequence.
We might sometimes take the student's behavior personally. Emotionally responding will often encourage more behavior.	Keep your delivery firm and even. Avoid responding to personal attacks. This is often used to side step an issue.
Argumentative behaviors from students are really good at getting you pulled in. Do you find yourself spending a lot of time trying to convince them to act right? If so, you got pulled in.	If you find yourself getting pulled in, then back up a step and set the limits. Do not get into any power struggles with the student.
One person may not allow a behavior to occur while another does not really see anything wrong with it. Mixed messages like this are the best bet in keeping a negative behavior alive and well.	Have a simple plan that everyone can understand and consistently carry through.
We have a tendency to focus on the problem behavior rather than focusing on the positive behaviors that are occurring.	Focus on what the student is doing right. This is especially important when you are letting Johnny know how he is doing.
We have a tendency to punish bad behaviors versus rewarding positive ones.	When possible, reinforce an alternative behavior. Example: Johnny interrupts all the time. Reinforce Johnny when he waits his turn.
Often times, we reinforce negative behavior without even knowing it. The belief is that the behavior will either go away or if nobody makes a big deal about it then it won't be so bad. Example: Johnny makes an inappropriate statement and a family member laughs and makes an excuse for Johnny.	Attention is one of the biggest reinforcers we have. Be careful how you give it out. Address issues appropriately and consistently.
Sometimes we over respond and make mountains out of mole hills. The little things get a lot of attention when it probably would be better to just ignore it and let it drop.	Neutral and non-emotional responses to problem behavior can be the hardest thing to do. Use self-coaching, coping skills, or anything that works for you to stay cool, calm, and collected.
We sometimes deliver reinforcers for no reason at all. We will just give them to the student non-contingently.	Let Johnny earn his reinforcers through good performance.

DELIVERING EFFECTIVE COMMANDS

The following recommendations comprise a wide body of research on student compliance, classroom management, and effective teaching and offer a response to behaviors of your student. If implemented properly, these strategies can do much to help you manage your student's behavior and guide you in the educative process. As a result, the relationship which exists between you and the student will improve, while protecting dignity and self-esteem.

1. **Present demands as directives and avoid "question demands."**
   A question demand asks the student whether or not he would like to do something, rather than directing him to do so. Question demands give the student the option to refuse. When a student says "no" to a question demand, many adults become upset with the student for being defiant. However, it is ultimately the adult's responsibility to issue demands that do not give the student the option to refuse. For example, "Pick up the papers," is a directive. If you say, "Will you pick up the papers," the student may actually say, "No" which could lead to a verbal confrontation. By issuing directives, you make it clear that the student has no choice whether to comply or not comply.

2. **Keep the demands short and simple.**
   Students can process only so much information. Students tend to comply best with brief commands because they are easy to understand and hard to misinterpret.

3. **Deliver demands within 3 feet of the student**.
   By delivering demands close to the student, you not only increase the chances the student will hear you, but you also increase your ability to immediately "follow-through" with gentle guidance, if needed.

4. **Deliver demands in a <u>quiet tone of voice</u>**.
   There is no current research demonstrating that yelling or loud talking is necessary to gain student compliance. In fact, recent research suggests that loud tones of voice may be the first step in a chain of behaviors that lead to more serious student problem behavior. A firm, but quiet voice is sufficient. Do not be loud or gruff.

5. **Deliver demands in a matter-of-fact, businesslike tone.**
   Students may feel coerced when given a command in an authoritarian, sarcastic, or angry tone of voice. For that reason alone, they may resist the teacher's directive. Teachers will often see greater student compliance simply by giving commands in a neutral or positive manner.

6. **Gain the student's eye contact before presenting a demand**.
   There is no way to guarantee that a student will listen to your directions, but the chances are much better if he/she is looking at you when you present a demand.

7. **Give the student at least 5-seconds to start responding**.
   Perhaps one of the biggest mistakes we make on a day-to-day basis is not allowing a student ample time to *start* complying. Research indicates that 5 seconds is an appropriate length of time for a student to start complying with a demand.

8. **Break down tasks before you give a demand**.
   It is vital to make sure that what we think is a single demand is not in fact comprised of multiple smaller demands. For example, "Get ready to work," may actually include sitting down, taking out a pencil, taking out a notebook, etc. Give the student one demand at a time. This also applies to "chain directions" in which the multiple demand is broken down, but presented all at once (e.g., "you need to get out your book, pencil, check to see if the pencil needs sharpening…) The student may not possess the cognitive ability to process too much information and remember all the parts of a multiple demand.

9. **Tell the student <u>exactly</u> what you want them to do and how they should do it.**
   In other words, avoid giving vague demands. Use descriptive wording so demands can be delivered as clearly and unambiguously as possible. For example, the demand, "Clean up that mess," would be better issued as separate, distinct, descriptively worded demands, such as, "Pick up the paper," (wait for compliance) "Put the paper in the trash can," (wait for compliance) "Put the red car in the toy box," etc. If the directions are vague, then the student has no way of knowing exactly what you want him to do. What you mean and the student believes you mean may be drastically different things.

10. **Avoid rationalizing with the student**.
    Do not give demands followed by a reason. Giving reasons may actually distract the student and cause him to forget the original demand. If you feel that giving a reason is necessary for certain demands, make sure to give the reason <u>before</u> issuing the demand.

11. **Use <u>start</u> commands rather than stop commands.**
    Stop commands may indeed prompt the student to stop engaging in an inappropriate behavior, but it does not give them an appropriate behavior to start doing. Start commands not only require the student to stop engaging in inappropriate behavior, but also tell them the expected appropriate behavior you would like to see.

12. **Use descriptive praise when the student complies with demands**.
    Don't simply tell the student, "good job." Enthusiastically and descriptively praise the student for compliance (e.g., "Great job putting the paper in the trash can!")

13. **Pick your battles.**
    Before giving a demand, ask yourself if you are willing to gain compliance regardless of the amount of time, energy, or effort required. Do not issue a demand unless you are 100% committed to gaining compliance to the demand. If you give demands, only to eventually back off just because it is taking a long time or is difficult, the student will simply learn that you do not mean what you say. When this happens, expect more noncompliance and/or more problem behavior.