Working with Teachers on CW-PBIS Implementation: Lessons Learned

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Classroom management is hard.

- Around half of all teachers leave within their first five years of teaching.

- Of course, there are other factors – but managing and responding to student behavioral issues is an area where we have some empirically-support solutions that can be implemented by educators.

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Ingersoll, 2011; Riggs, 2013

Why is classroom management hard?

- Training is often insufficient and inefficient.
  - EPPs provide limited focused instruction and are not drawing from research.
  - PD often "train and hope" with limited follow up.

- We do not follow the same instructional best practices for teachers that we do with students.

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National Council on Teacher Quality, 2014

Why is classroom management hard?

- The more a learner practices a behavior, the more efficient and effective the behavior becomes at meeting the learner's needs.
  - Applies to teachers and students.

- Behavior change can be slow.
  - Applies to all behaviors (academic and social).
  - Errors will be made when learning new behaviors.

- We sometimes give mixed messages about the behaviors we expect.

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SWPBIS: Foundations

- Schools traditionally provide behavior support only to those students who demonstrate problem behaviors.

- SWPBIS is based on the public health model of preventive, multi-tier intervention:
  - Tier 1 (universal): Delivered to everyone
  - Tier 2 (targeted): Received by at-risk groups
  - Tier 3 (individualized): More intensive

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Bambara & Kern, 2005

Talking to teachers about behavior

- Traditional classroom management training shortchanges teachers on foundational knowledge of behavior mechanisms.

- Understanding how behavior works is critical to planning CWPBIS systems and responding appropriately to behavior errors.

- Applied examples clarify concepts.

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Talking to teachers about behavior

- Teachers need to understand the following concepts in order to be effective classroom managers:
  - How antecedents increase or decrease the likelihood of certain behaviors;
  - How consequences impact the future rate of behavior;
  - How setting events impact the value of consequences;
  - Extinction; and
  - Function.

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Just a little more

- Remind teachers that **social behavior change is not different from academic change**.
  - It may be slow.
  - There may be many errors.
  - Teachers need to prompt, provide feedback, and reteach as necessary.

- Behavior is predictable and lawful.

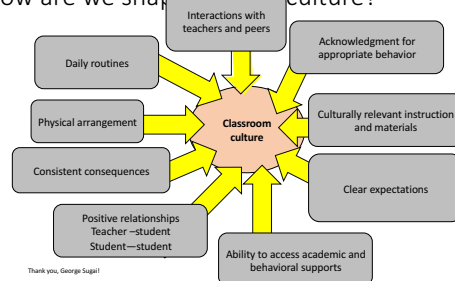- Behavior followed by pleasant consequences **will be repeated**.

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Talking to teachers about culture.

- This can be challenging.

- You will hear broad generalities.

- You will hear "I don't see color."

- Be brave. Difficult conversations may be unpleasant, but if they don't happen, we will never move forward.

Be mindful of your audience.
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How are we shaping the culture?

- Interactions with teachers and peers
- Daily routines
- Acknowledgment for appropriate behavior
- Physical arrangement
- Culturally relevant instruction and materials
- Consistent consequences
- Classroom culture
- Clear expectations
- Positive relationships Teacher –student Student—student
- Ability to access academic and behavioral supports

Thank you, George Sugai!

Just a little more

- Culture and relationship-building are inextricably linked; consider presenting together.

- Remember, cultural relevance is in the eye of the beholder.

- Be patient and kind, but capitalize on "teachable moments" during training.

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EBP in classroom management:
What all instructors should be doing in the classroom

1. Maximize structure

2. Identify, define, and teach expectations

3. Increase academic engagement

4. Establish a continuum of supports to encourage appropriate behavior

5. Establish a continuum of supports to discourage inappropriate behavior

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Simonsen et al., 2008

Talking to teachers about structure and expectations.

- These topics are pretty comfortable for teachers.

- Make connections to behavior basics: these are **antecedent strategies**.

- These strategies will increase the likelihood of appropriate behavior (but won't **reinforce** the behavior).

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Talking to teachers about structure and expectations, continued.

- Coming out of CWPBIS training with a matrix is critical.

- Identifying expectations (and how those expectations look within routines) leads to operational definitions of the behaviors
  - Can be measured
  - Students (**and teachers**) know what's expected.

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Talking to teachers about actively engaging students

- Teachers are also comfortable with this topic.

- Good chance to have increased participation.

- Ensure that teachers see connection between **their behavior** and their students' behaviors.
  - How do aspects of instruction impact behavior?
  - Changing our behavior = easiest way to impact student behavior.

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Talking to teachers about actively engaging students

- Take every opportunity to remind teachers that **academic behaviors** and **social behaviors** are both behaviors.

- Teachers are skilled at introducing, teaching, and helping students build fluency and master with academic skills.

- This same skill set applies to behavior.

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Why give rewards?

- Seriously, why are we rewarding kids just for doing what they're supposed to do?

- Need to make connection between **reinforcement** and **appropriate behavior**.
  - Then, we can shift toward *natural reinforcement*.
  - Right now, the natural reinforcers aren't enough to maintain the behaviors we want!

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Talking to teachers about reinforcement

- Consider using the three-tiered response.
  - Everyone likes being told he or she is doing a good job. Don't you?
  - Learning occurs as a process of reinforcement.
  - Sometimes, extrinsic motivation is necessary.

- Also, be prepared to address the "red, yellow, green" system and response cost.

- Finally, be sure to address what to do with those who perceive Sr+ as unfair.

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Talking to teachers about responding to inappropriate behavior

- Remind teachers that academic behaviors and social behaviors are both behaviors.
  - Learners will make mistakes.
  - Teachers will need to provide feedback and check for understanding.
  - Some students will continue to struggle despite our best efforts.
  - Behavior errors are errors. Treat accordingly.

- Emphasize attention for what is done correctly.

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Considerations when responding to problem behavior

- Punishment cannot be used in isolation; we must also teach and reinforce the appropriate behaviors that we expect from our students.

- We cannot assume that traditional punishments will reduce problem behaviors.

- Frequent use of punishment can lead to a hostile learning environment.

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Simonsen & Myers, 2015

Considerations when responding to problem behavior

- Spend most of your time preventing problem behavior from occurring.

- Always think about what you can change to decrease the likelihood of inappropriate behaviors.

- Be predictable and consistent.

- Look for opportunities for reinforcement.

- Always consider the **function** of the problem behavior.

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Last words of advice

- Model the practices you're teaching whenever possible.

- Remind teachers that "**those kids**" will benefit from Tier 1 (i.e., CWPBIS interventions).
  - Tier 2 and Tier 3 apply same behavioral principles.
  - Similar interventions (e.g., antecedent manipulation, token economies), but implemented more frequently, individually, intensively.

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Last words of advice.

- Frame "bullying" as a behavior.

- Be sure teachers understand that any PBIS system is about changing the environment and changing adult behavior.

- Remind teachers that generalization is the goal of all teaching.
  - Students behaving well in your classroom is good.
  - Students exhibiting appropriate behaviors in all settings is the goal of CWPBIS.

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Thank you!

- I would love to hear about any experiences you have when training (or receiving training!) on CWPBIS or related content.

- Please email with questions, comments, or feedback:
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