

# CHAPTER 8: ADDITIONAL TIER 2 INTERVENTIONS

MO SW-PBS guides participating schools in the planning for and implementation of evidence based Tier 2 interventions. In earlier chapters, your leadership team learned about Check-In, Check-Out (CICO - Chapter 5), Social Skills Intervention Groups (SSIG - Chapter 6), and Self-Monitoring (Chapter 7). All three of these have a substantial research base, are of sufficient rigor, and go through a process of peer review to be considered evidence based. All three of these interventions are available within the public domain, meaning the essential components and documents and artifacts needed to implement the interventions are open access. In addition, MO SW-PBS encourages Tier 2 leadership teams to implement Positive Peer Review (PPR) and Tootling, (which are both research based), and Classwide Function-related Intervention Team (CW-FIT), which has now met the criteria to be considered evidence based. Classroom use of these three strategies leads to improved implementation of Effective Classroom Practices, as well as to assist in generalization and maintenance (Chapter 4) of newly acquired or enhanced student skills.

Two additional interventions are also recommended by MO SW-PBS for our participating Tier 2 leadership teams to consider adding to their tool-kit of evidence based interventions. Both of these interventions have copyrighted content, documentation and/or artifacts that cannot be reproduced within our workbook. On the following pages, your Tier 2 leadership team will briefly learn about Check & Connect and FIRST STEP *Next* through an introduction, intervention overview, discussion of students most likely to benefit from the intervention and a brief synopsis of research supporting the intervention.

If after reading the intervention synopsis and having successfully implemented one of the other Tier 2 interventions, your leadership team decides that either Check & Connect or FIRST STEP *Next* are the intervention of best fit to match the function of problem behavior in students identified as needing more targeted supports, reach out to your SW-PBS Consultant for information on a training in your area.

# Check & Connect Intervention Synopsis

## INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

This intervention synopsis provides SW-PBS teams with a description of the Check & Connect intervention, a brief description of the intervention and which students the intervention is most effective for, as well as a short review of the research base for this intervention.

The information in this workbook does not replace the published manual, Check & Connect: A Comprehensive Student Engagement Intervention: Implementing with Fidelity (Christenson, Stout, & Pohl, 2012). Instead, this synopsis was developed as an awareness resource to be used to inform SW-PBS participating teams. The information contained herein, along with understanding of multi-tiered systems of support may help a participating team in deciding in Check & Connect is an intervention of best fit for identified student needs.

It is highly recommended that participants access the published manual, which can be obtained from the Institute on Community Integration, University of Minnesota ([ici.umn.edu](http://ici.umn.edu)).

## Check & Connect is a project of the Institute on Community Integration, University of Minnesota

*For more information about the Check & Connect intervention:*

Christenson, S.L., Thurlow, M.L., Sinclair, M.F., Lehr, C.A., Kibel, C.M., Reschly, A.L., et al. (2008). Check & Connect: A comprehensive student engagement intervention manual. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota, Institute on Community Integration.

Manuals can be ordered from:  
Publications Office Institute on Community Integration  
University of Minnesota  
109 Pattee Hall  
150 Pillsbury Dr. SE  
Minneapolis, MN 55455

<http://ici.umn.edu/checkandconnect/>

## INTERVENTION OVERVIEW

Check & Connect can enhance student engagement with school and learning, promote student competence and provide persistent support for academic and behavioral standards and expectations.

**Essential Features of Check & Connect include:**

- ▶ A mentor who keeps education salient for students
- ▶ Systematic monitoring (the “check” component)
- ▶ Timely and individualized intervention (the “connect” component)
- ▶ Enhanced home-school communication and home support for learning

Check & Connect includes a Basic Approach, but also includes structures for intensification and individualization based upon student data. As such, Check & Connect can serve as a tier 2 or a Tier 3 support. The Basic Approach includes the following components:

1. Meet daily to a minimum of weekly with student to review risk factors and check in with the student.
2. Record progress on “Check” section of the monitoring sheet.
3. Record focus of contact with student in the “Connect Basic” section of the monitoring sheet.
4. Record any actions taken based on contact in the “Connect Intensive” section of the monitoring sheet.
5. Refer to Check & Connect Intervention List for intervention suggestions.

Check & Connect has four **Descriptive Characteristics** including being a 1) targeted or intensive intervention, 2) structured mentoring program, 3) empirically supported intervention, and with 4) clearly delineated core elements. The **Core Elements** include 1) relationships, 2) problem solving and capacity building and 3) persistence plus. If your leadership team chooses to participate in Check & Connect training, details of each of these will be explained and demonstrated during training with your SW-PBS Consultant.

## STUDENTS WHO MOST LIKELY BENEFIT

Check & Connect is one of the few research based interventions for Tier 2 that can address all functions of student misbehavior. Refer to the MO SW-PBS Student Identification Process Guide in Chapter 4 to compare this intervention to the others included in this workbook. Below find descriptions of elementary and secondary students for whom Check & Connect has proven to be beneficial.

Elementary Indicators	Secondary Indicators
<p><b>BEHAVIORAL:</b> Late to school, absenteeism including excessive excused absences, history of educational neglect, behavior referrals to office, suspension or expulsion, frequent school moves.</p>	<p><b>BEHAVIORAL:</b> Skipping classes, absenteeism, truancy, in-school suspension, out-of-school suspensions, office referrals, detention, expulsion, history of dropping in and out of school, frequent number of school moves, limited extracurricular participation.</p>
<p><b>ACADEMIC:</b> Not completing assignments, failing classes, reading below grade level, below proficiency on state standardized tests.</p>	<p><b>ACADEMIC:</b> Credit deficiency, failing classes, below proficiency on state standardized tests, poor task completion rates, low success rates, incomplete homework assignments.</p>
<p><b>COGNITIVE:</b> Minimal interest in school, resistance to learning, low academic self-efficacy and perceived competence.</p>	<p><b>COGNITIVE:</b> Minimal interest in school, resistance to learning, low academic self-efficacy and perceived competence.</p>
<p><b>AFFECTIVE:</b> Social isolation, feelings of not belonging to school.</p>	<p><b>AFFECTIVE:</b> Low expectation to graduate, social isolation, feelings of not belonging to the school community.</p>

## RESEARCH BASE

### Synthesis of Results from Check & Connect Research Studies

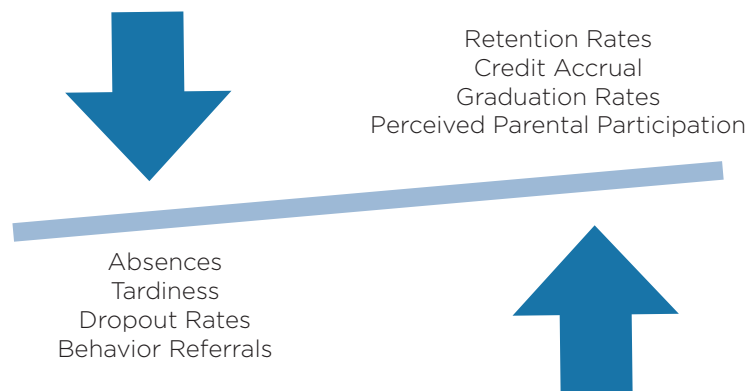


Figure 8.1  
Christenson, Stout & Pohl (2012)

Check & Connect Studies have been conducted:

**In various settings:**

Schoolwide  
District-wide  
Elementary, Middle and/or High School  
County-wide

**To Address:**

Attendance/Truancy Behavior  
Literacy  
Students with Disabilities  
Students without Disabilities

Figure 8.2  
Christenson, Stout & Pohl (2012)

DISCUSSION



- Think about students you know or have worked with who meet criteria as appropriate candidates for Check & Connect.
- Think about students you know or have worked with who are not appropriate candidates for Check & Connect.

For more information on Check & Connect please contact your SW-PBS Consultant for training dates and location.

# FIRST STEP *Next* Intervention Synopsis

## INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

This intervention synopsis provides SW-PBS teams with a description of the FIRST STEP *Next* intervention, a brief description of the intervention and which students the intervention is most effective for, as well as a short review of the research base for this intervention.

The information in this workbook does not replace the published manual. Instead, this synopsis was developed as an awareness resource to be used to inform SW-PBS participating teams. The information contained herein, along with understanding of multi-tiered systems of support, may help a participating team in deciding that FIRST STEP *Next* is an intervention of best fit for identified student needs.

It is highly recommended that participants access the FIRST STEP *Next* published materials which can be obtained from Pacific Northwest Publishing. The complete kit includes a Coach's Guide, Teacher Workbook, Parent Workbook, an organized set of student records for use by the coach, child-friendly materials, and training and demonstration videos.

For more information about the FIRST STEP *Next* intervention from the coaches guide: Walker, H., Stiller, B., Coughlin, C., Golly, A., Sprick, M., & Feil, E. (2015). *First steps next*. Eugene, Oregon: Pacific Northwest Publishing.

Manuals can be ordered from:

<https://pacificnwpublish.com/products/FIRST-STEP-Next.html>

## INTERVENTION OVERVIEW

FIRST STEP *Next* is a classroom Tier 2 intervention for students in Pre-K through second grade who are at risk of failure due to exhibiting externalizing, attention-seeking behaviors such as tantrums, physical aggression, disturbing and disrupting peers, and property damage. The intervention requires 30 program days for successful completion. Each program day has a performance criterion that must be met before moving on to the next program day. If the criterion isn't met, the day is recycled to the last successful program day. Implementation of the intervention usually requires about two months, not including the Pre-Implementation Phase and the Maintenance Phase.

With coaching and support, young students with these behavior patterns can learn more socially acceptable replacement behaviors to improve their social adjustment and school performance. FIRST STEP *Next* is a partnership between families, teachers and peers, with each group having an integral role in the intervention. A "coach" (e.g., school counselor, behavior specialist, SPED teacher) coordinates the process, working collaboratively with a classroom teacher and the focus student's parents, teacher and classmates.

## FIRST STEP *Next* Phases

Once a student has been identified through the building's existing system as needing additional supports, and the decision is made to place the student into the FIRST STEP *Next* intervention, the process begins with a **Pre-Implementation Phase**. The Pre-Implementation Phase consists of meetings between the coach, the teacher, and the parent to introduce the FIRST STEP *Next* intervention and to gather more information about the student. The coach will also meet with the student and with the student's class to

introduce the intervention and to assure cooperation from all parties.

The next phase in the intervention is the **Coach Phase** (Days 1-7). During this phase, the coach provides one-on-one instruction of the desired behaviors with the student, followed by a CLASS (Contingencies for Learning Academic and Social Skills) Session where the student is given the opportunity to practice the new skill in the classroom. During the CLASS Session, the coach uses a green/red card to provide continuous behavioral feedback to the student, who can then earn points for demonstrating the desired behaviors. A reward for the whole class is earned if the student meets his or her point goal.

During the **Teacher Phase** (Days 8-30), the teacher gradually takes over all CLASS Session responsibilities, although the coach continues to provide support for the process.

After the Teacher Phase is complete, follow-up is provided for the student during the **Maintenance Phase** which will last for the rest of the school year and into the next school year.

### **Family Responsibilities**

Parents are partners in the FIRST STEP *Next* intervention process. A Daily Connections Note is sent home each day that the student is in the intervention. The Daily Connections Note lists the student's goals, the skills that the student is working on, and prompts the parent to provide specific positive feedback and recognition at home. The parent completes and signs the Daily Connections Note and sends it back to school with their child the next day. Handouts and activities are provided to the parents so that they can work on and reinforce the skills with their child at home. Parents communicate regularly with the coach and the teacher, and have input in the development of the maintenance plan.

### **STUDENTS WHO MOST LIKELY BENEFIT**

FIRST STEP *Next* is designed to address the needs of Pre-K through second grade students who demonstrate consistent patterns of problem behavior across multiple settings and have difficulties adjusting to a structured school environment. Students with attention-seeking, externalizing behaviors such as tantruming, physical aggression toward others, defiance, severe disruption of class activities, and destruction of property are most likely to benefit from participation in the FIRST STEP *Next* intervention. Students with intellectual disabilities or severe learning and language deficits often do not respond well to the FIRST STEP *Next* intervention, and the FIRST STEP *Next* alone is unlikely to benefit students with dangerous or violent behaviors. In these cases, use of the FIRST STEP *Next* intervention along with additional supports will likely be required.

### **RESEARCH BASE**

The major goal of the program is to divert at-risk kindergartners from an antisocial path in their subsequent school careers (Walker, Kavanagh, Stiller, Golly, Severson, & Feil, 1998). Evidence indicates positive effects on externalizing behaviors and potentially positive effects on internalizing behavior, social outcomes, and academic performance behaviors (e.g., academic engaged time) (Walker, et. al., 2009).

Recognized nationally as an evidence-based program, First Step has been included in several listings of early intervention programs recommended for young children with disruptive behavior patterns. These include The What Works Clearinghouse of the U.S. Department of Education, The National Council for Special Education, and The American Psychological Association among many others.

#### DISCUSSION



- ▶ Think about students you know or have worked with who meet criteria as appropriate candidates for FIRST STEP *Next*.
- ▶ Think about students you know or have worked with who are not appropriate candidates for FIRST STEP *Next*.

For more information on FIRST STEP *Next*, please contact your SW-PBS Consultant for training dates and location.

