

## **Course: Encouraging Expected Behavior**

### **Lesson: Introduction to Encouraging Expected Behavior**

## **Transcript**

This lesson describes the process of developing a tangible reinforcement system to enhance the use of specific positive feedback and the development of a menu, or continuum, of positive reinforcement that serves to motivate all students. Reinforcement for staff implementing SW-PBS components will also be covered.

There are 5 handouts that will be referenced during this lesson. If you have not downloaded them from the lesson website, please pause the video while you access these documents.

By the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

- Develop a tangible reinforcement system to enhance use of specific positive feedback.
- Develop and implement an effective menu or continuum of positive reinforcement that serves to motivate all students across settings.

Specific positive feedback is essential to change and sustain expected behavior. Tangible reinforcers help staff be accountable for recognizing student behavior and providing specific positive feedback. In addition, they provide all staff with an efficient and always-available system for providing reinforcement and a tool to engage in positive interactions with *any* student in school. Tangible reinforcers also offer a gross measure of the frequency of specific positive feedback being provided and can help guide staff to increase use of specific positive feedback.

The development of a menu, or continuum of positive reinforcement ensures that all students are provided activities or items that they find reinforcing.

Here are key terms and acronyms that will be used in this lesson.

**REINFORCEMENT**—the overarching term for a contingently delivered consequence associated with an increased likelihood of future behavior. Reinforcement can take many forms, most commonly praise or specific positive feedback but also tangible reinforcement and activity reinforcers. The consequence is only a reinforcer when it serves to strengthen or increase the use of the desired behavior; it is always based on the perspective of the learner, not the intentions of the adult delivering the reinforcement.

**SPECIFIC POSITIVE FEEDBACK**—verbal reinforcement; a form of social reinforcement that provides information on successful behavior while reinforcing or increasing the likelihood that behavior will be repeated; combines social attention, instruction, and reinforcement.

One of the hallmarks of Schoolwide Positive Behavior Support is the development and implementation of a

menu of consequences that includes tangible reinforcers. The tangible is typically in the form of a ticket or coupon. Example names that schools have given to their tickets or coupons include: Compliment Cards, Bulldog Bucks, Braggin' Dragon Cards, or Bee Tickets.

The benefits to students may be obvious, but another reason schools choose to use a tangible along with specific positive feedback is to ensure teachers' use of high rates of praise. Tangibles serve as a visual reminder for staff to watch and deliver specific positive feedback. Some schools replenish the teachers' supply of tickets daily, thus reminding them to catch students being good. In addition, the proximity required to deliver the ticket helps to ensure the effectiveness of the teacher's feedback. Looking a student in the eye, saying "You followed directions; that helped you complete your assignment quickly and accurately. Because you followed directions you have earned a Tiger Ticket," enhances the relationship between the student and teacher.

In addition, tangibles create a ready signal to all students, both to the ones who earn them as well as others nearby who witness it. When the tangible item is used to count toward a classroom, grade level or schoolwide goal, they provide immediate reinforcement as the student earns the ticket, and then again as the ticket goes into the class bucket toward the class goal. When all students contribute to a class, grade or schoolwide goal, it builds a sense of community. Once the goal is achieved everyone celebrates together. Once a ticket or other recognition has been earned, it should not be taken away. Rather, another one should not be awarded until the student next earns it.

Some staff may be concerned that using a tangible item might be bribing students to behave or that the use of a tangible will diminish intrinsic motivation.

Of course, our ultimate goal is for students to be intrinsically motivated. The reality is that schools award students with many tangible items for success in academics, sports, music, theater, etc. in the form of grades, trophies, or medals. Yet we continue to struggle with the idea of awarding tangible items or specific positive feedback for success in social behavior skills. Indeed, providing students with feedback to help them discriminate the difference between what behavior is desired and undesired helps students learn the difference between the two. Additionally, the power of using the desired behavior, will foster intrinsic motivation to master social behavior skills. The bottom line is that students need recognition and encouragement and they respond positively, as all of us do, to acts of appreciation.

Overall, tangible reinforcers...

- Help staff be accountable for recognizing student behavior and providing specific positive feedback.
- Provide all staff with an efficient and always available system for providing feedback and a reinforcer to any and all students.
- Give faculty and support staff a tool to positively engage with any students in the school.
- Can create a more positive culture in school where we are "all in this together."
- Can give us a gross measure of the frequency of specific positive feedback statements given.
- Are a universal sign to students that they have performed the expected behaviors.

There are some practical things to consider when developing your schoolwide tangible system.

First, make them easy to distribute to students. Consider creating them so that minimal writing is required at the time they are awarded. The easier it is to award tickets to students displaying the expected behavior, the better.

Next, you will want to build a clearly defined *system* to sustain your use of the tangible. The system should include: who will reproduce the tickets and supply teachers, who will be in charge of raffle items or other items of exchange, and if tickets are to be counted for awards or data collection, who will handle the counting. Be sure to think through all details to sustain your tangible system.

Missouri Middle School utilizes 'Cardinal Cards' for their tangible system. Review the handout, *Missouri Middle School Cardinal Card Procedures*, and discuss the following:

- What are some ideas for a creative schoolwide tangible system in your school?
- How might you incorporate your school mascot or other school themes or slogans?
- How can you use the work group process to engage all staff in the development of a schoolwide tangible system for your school?

Pause the video, and when you are ready, continue watching.

While a "ticket" or tangible schoolwide system for encouraging expected behavior will cover many of your reinforcement needs, it is important to remember that not all students are reinforced by the same thing or in the same ways. For this reason, it is essential to develop and implement an effective menu or continuum of positive reinforcement that serves to motivate all students across settings.

Some students desire or try to get or seek social attention, activities or tangible items, while others try to *avoid or escape* social attention. For these '*avoiders*' who do not like social attention, they may be reinforced by activities, privileges or tangibles.

Missouri Middle School developed this *Menu of Reinforcers* to ensure that they are able to meet the needs of all students.

The list of reinforcers includes those that can be used immediately in response to student appropriate behavior as well as some that are used periodically or are more long-term in nature. Staff are encouraged to select the reinforcer that best matches the effort required by the student and his or her individual interests.

Review the example, *Missouri Middle School Menu of Reinforcers*, provided within the handouts section.

Brainstorm a list of reinforcers that could be provided to students in your building. How will you communicate these options to staff? How will you gather staff input and feedback while developing your menu of reinforcers?

Pause the video, and when you are ready, continue watching.

Another consideration is that as students are learning new skills they need immediate and frequent reinforcement. Then, as they demonstrate mastery they respond to intermittent to occasional reinforcement to maintain their social behavioral efforts. Having a Schoolwide Recognition System Plan that includes frequent, intermittent and occasional reinforcement will be important.

When providing frequent reinforcement, instances of appropriate behavior are reinforced at a high rate to quickly build new behaviors.

Intermittent reinforcement is when the timing of the reinforcement is unplanned and is delivered less frequently to maintain an established appropriate behavior.

Occasional reinforcement is delivered following a predetermined amount of time that the appropriate target behavior is exhibited.

The *Blank Continuum of Schoolwide Procedures for Encouraging Social Behavior* Template provides a way for your team to systematically document your plan for providing frequent, intermittent and occasional reinforcement. For each schedule of reinforcement, you will determine the name of the reinforcer, resources needed, a brief description and criteria for delivering, when and where it will be presented, information needed by staff to implement, any goals related to the reinforcer, celebrations that can be earned, and the person responsible for coordination of the reinforcer.

Review *Missouri Middle School's Schoolwide Recognition System Plan*, available in the handouts section.

Begin brainstorming a menu or continuum of reinforcers for your school using the *Blank Continuum of Schoolwide Procedures for Encouraging Social Behavior* provided in the handouts section. Be sure to include short-term immediate reinforcers, as well as those that require more sustained effort.

Pause the video, and when you are ready, continue watching.

When creating your menu or continuum of reinforcers to encourage expected behavior, it is important that you have a range of options to meet all students' needs. Make sure there are ways to encourage improved behavior for all students, from those who struggle to behave to those who regularly demonstrate desired behavior. Be cautious if your system:

**Is so difficult or cumbersome that staff will not use consistently.** Keep the system simple, doable and yet effective.

**Is based on an "all or nothing" criteria.** A "No Tardy Party" reinforces only a certain portion of your school and may be demotivating to others. If I am tardy the first day of the month, why try? While you may want to keep this reinforcer for the few it serves (it is a bit like the Honor Roll), you could also celebrate improved on time behavior, thus encouraging all to improve or strive to meet the expectation.

**Requires students to prolong their efforts for long extended periods of time.** Again, some occasional or long-term reinforcement is okay if other immediate and frequent reinforcers are also available. With long-term reinforcers, there will be some students who see them as unobtainable.

**Fails to motivate at-risk students or consistently recognizes those student who need it the least.** What activities are interesting and motivating to the at-risk students whose behavior you most desire to improve? Involving students in the planning of the schoolwide reinforcement system may be a very effective way to hear their voice.

**Becomes boring and predictable.** A schoolwide system to encourage will need to be 'tweaked' and kept fresh for students and staff.

As schools create exciting ways to encourage students, they also should consider a menu of reinforcers to encourage the staff who are actively teaching and encouraging students. The same Blank *Continuum of Schoolwide Procedures for Encouraging Social Behavior* template can be used to document your staff recognition system.

Review *Missouri Middle School's Staff Recognition System Plan*, available in the handouts section.

Begin brainstorming a menu or continuum of reinforcers for staff in your building that are implementing the essential components of Schoolwide Positive Behavior Support.

Pause the video, and when you are ready, continue watching.

During this lesson, you learned the process for developing a tangible reinforcement system to enhance the use of specific positive feedback in your school. A menu, or continuum, of positive reinforcement that serves to motivate all students was also discussed. The same continuum can be used to reinforce staff implementing SW-PBS components.

How will you involve your staff in the development of your *Continuum of Schoolwide Procedures for Encouraging Social Behavior*?

Next steps include updating your Tier 1 Action Plan. Develop action steps and a timeline of completion for developing your *Continuum of Schoolwide Procedures for Encouraging Social Behavior* matrix for both students and staff.

When you have completed your *Continuum of Schoolwide Procedures for Encouraging Social Behavior* matrix, please submit it to your MO SW-PBS Tier 1 Consultant.

Additional information about encouraging expected behavior with tangible reinforcers can be found in Chapter 5 of the *Missouri SW-PBS Tier 1 Team Workbook* which can be found at [www.pbissmissouri.org](http://www.pbissmissouri.org).

When you are ready, continue to the next lesson, *Monitoring the Use of Specific Positive Feedback*, where you will learn methods to monitor the ratio of feedback provided to students displaying appropriate, expected behaviors.

Here are the references for this lesson. If more references are needed, you can refer to the Reference section in the *Missouri SW-PBS Tier 1 Team Workbook* available on the Missouri SW-PBS website.

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