

Course: Discouraging Inappropriate Behavior

Lesson: Continuum of Responses Part I: Office-Managed Behaviors

Transcript

This lesson describes the process for defining what constitutes an office-managed behavior that warrants an office referral. The essential data fields necessary for an effective office discipline referral (ODR) form will also be discussed along with the importance of clarifying procedures surrounding its use. Staff agreement on office-managed behaviors and data collection will create consistency for all stakeholders.

There are 6 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:

- Define for your school what constitutes a “major” or office-managed behavior that warrants an office referral.
- Develop an office referral form with all essential data fields and clarify procedures surrounding the use of office referrals.

One of the most confusing and often frustrating issues in school discipline is the use of office referrals. Teachers and administrators sometimes differ on what constitutes an appropriate referral and what should happen during and after the referral. Administrators often state that students are sent to the office for a wide range of misbehaviors from “minor” ones such as not having a pencil to those that are more “major” such as physical aggression. If a school’s goal is for staff to be more consistent in upholding their expectations, the staff must determine what behavior is typically staff-managed and what is office-managed.

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

Office-managed behavior: Behaviors that include potentially illegal activities, serious disruptions to learning, or unsafe acts that pose a danger to the student or others. The administration is directly involved with office-managed behaviors. These behaviors are often referred to as ‘majors’.

Staff-managed behavior: All inappropriate behaviors that are not listed as office-managed. Staff are responsible for managing and intervening with these behaviors. These behaviors are often referred to as ‘minors’.

SWIS - Schoolwide Information System: SWIS is a reliable, confidential, web-based information system to collect, summarize, and use student behavior data for decision making.

ODR - Office Discipline Referral: Usually the result of a “major” discipline violation, the ODR refers to the paperwork associated with sending a student to the office to receive a consequence as the result of problem behavior.

School district policy often dictates a list of behaviors warranting an office referral. Office-managed behaviors typically include potentially illegal behavior, serious disruptions to learning, or unsafe behavior that poses danger to the student or others. These behaviors require administrative support and/or action. It is important to determine the list of behaviors in your building that are an automatic referral to the office. All staff should be involved in this discussion as they are the ones that will enforce, or implement, the decisions made.

Once you have agreed upon the office-managed behaviors for your school, written definitions should be developed for each. These definitions will ensure that all staff interpret the behaviors in exactly the same way.

With your team, read through the example definitions of office-managed behaviors provided in the handouts titled, *Missouri Middle School Office Managed Behaviors* and *SWIS Office Referral Definitions*, and determine the behaviors that should be office-managed for your school using the *Office-Managed Behaviors* handout provided. Then practice defining one or two of the major behaviors you have listed to ensure thorough understanding by all staff and consistency in using office referrals.

Once you have an idea about what office-managed behavior may look like, discuss how you will work with your staff to complete the process of identifying and defining office-managed behavior.

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

Once you have clearly defined what behaviors are to be office-managed, you will want to consider your office discipline referral, or ODR, form. Data from ODR forms provide a count of the number of behavior incidents, the types of inappropriate behaviors that take place, the time of day incidents happen, the location or where incidents occur, the possible motivation of the behavior, and the students who are involved. They allow you to calculate the time that students are out of instruction. An average per day per month for ODRs can indicate trends throughout the year and across years, and provide great information to guide your discipline efforts.

The ODR form needs to include some important factors that will ensure that you can answer the key questions: “Who is involved?” “What happened?” “Where and when did it happen?” “How often does it happen?” and “Why did it happen?”

There are many versions of functional office discipline referrals. There are nine essential items you will want to include on your ODR form. They are:

- Student name
- Referring staff name
- Date of incident
- Time of incident
- Inappropriate behavior with designation of office-managed or staff-managed
- Location of incident
- Others involved
- Possible motivation
- Administrative decision

A comprehensive discussion regarding the importance and use of this data for ongoing monitoring of your discipline efforts is included in the *Ongoing Monitoring* course.

With your team, review your current office discipline referral form. Does it include these essential items?

1. Student name
2. Referring staff name
3. Date of incident
4. Time of incident
5. Inappropriate behavior with designation of office-managed or staff-managed
6. Location of incident
7. Others involved
8. Possible motivation
9. Administrative decision

How does it need to be revised? Who will be responsible for completing the revisions?

Preschool, elementary, and high school ODR form examples are provided in the handouts section. Access the ODR form applicable for your setting to assist you in your team discussion.

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

Once your office-managed behaviors are defined, the office referral form is aligned with those definitions and includes the nine essential items; you will want to prepare staff for using ODRs consistently. This will include a thorough understanding of the form, the staff’s role in making a referral, and what they can expect will happen in the office during and after the referral.

Possible roles of the teacher or staff in making an office referral are as follows:

- Work consistently to address staff-managed behaviors and refer students appropriately, according to definitions for office-managed behaviors.
- Thoroughly complete the ODR form; be prepared to visit with an administrator if necessary.
- Send the student to the office; use an escort or call for help if safety is an issue.
- Notify the office when a student has been sent.
- Be prepared to visit with an administrator to determine restitution, make up work, additional interventions, etc.
- Accept the student back into class when the administrator determines readiness and ensure a smooth transition for the student.

Of course, carefully thinking through what constitutes an appropriate referral, preparing a functional ODR form, and preparing staff is only useful when aligned with what transpires in the office during the referral process. For the majority of routine problems referred to the office, the administrator or designee will meet with the student, review the referring problem, teach and remind about acceptable behaviors for handling the situation in the future, deliver consequences, and help prepare the student for a successful return to their school activities. To adequately plan how to address more serious issues a clear system of operation should be in place. The system should include comprehensive planning, practicing of strategies, problem-solving and communication among stakeholders, including how law enforcement officers or crisis teams will work within the school system.

- How will you train staff on office-managed behaviors and their role in discipline referral?

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

During this lesson, you learned the process for defining what constitutes an office-managed behavior that warrants an office referral and the essential data fields necessary for an effective office discipline referral (ODR) form along with the importance of clarifying procedures surrounding its use.

How will you engage all staff in determining what behaviors will be office-managed? What will be the process for updating your office discipline referral form?

Next steps include updating your Tier 1 Action Plan. Develop action steps and a timeline of completion for identifying and defining your office-managed behaviors and updating your office discipline referral form.

When you have completed identifying and defining your office-managed behaviors and updating your office discipline referral form, please submit these documents to your MO SW-PBS Tier 1 Consultant.

Additional information about *Office-Managed Behaviors* can be found in Chapter 6 of the *Missouri SW-PBS Tier 1 Team Workbook* which can be found at www.pbissmissouri.org.

When you are ready, continue to the next lesson, *Continuum of Responses Part II: Staff-Managed Behaviors*, where you will learn indirect and direct strategies for responding to staff-managed behaviors, which are those inappropriate behaviors that do not reach the level of office-managed.

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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