

Encouraging Expected Behavior

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“Teacher praise has been supported as among one of the most empirically sound teacher competencies.”

John Maag

Adult Attention

Two types of adult attention:

1. **Non-contingent** – attention provided regardless of performance
 - Greetings, proximity, smiles, conversations, jobs, etc.
2. **Contingent** – provided based upon student performance of an identified expectation or behavior
 - Praise, Specific Positive Feedback, reinforcement, tangible item.

Non-Contingent Attention

- Provides time and attention that is *not tied to performance*.
- Helps fulfill students' needs to be noticed and valued.
- Sufficient non-contingent attention may decrease frequency of attention-seeking misbehavior.
- Provides role-model of positive social interactions.
- Antecedents that help establish positive relationships between staff and students and set the stage for students to display desired academic and behavioral expectations and receive correction when needed.

Non-Contingent Attention

- **Proximity** – *Communicate privately at 20" with individual students; communication across the room reserved for information intended for entire group only*
- **Listening** – *Pause, attend thoughtfully to the student*
- **Pleasant Voice** – *Use calm voice when talking with, praising, and correcting students*
- **Smiles** – *Pleasant facial expression and frequent smiles*
- **Use Student's Name** – *Begin interactions with student name and use frequently during interactions*

Contingent Attention

- The student *must perform the expected behavior* before the teacher responds with attention
- Increases academic performance (Good, et al. 1981)
- Increases on-task behavior (Sutherland, Wehby, & Copeland, 2000)
- Increases likelihood students will continue to use the desired behavior in the future
- Helps students to discern correct or “right” responses from incorrect or “wrong”

Low Rates of Contingent Attention on Social Behavior

- Average teacher fails to take advantage of the power of attention.
- Approval statements for academic responses far outweigh those for social behavior.
- Highest rates of attention for social behavior occur in 2nd grade and decrease dramatically after that.
- Teachers respond more frequently to inappropriate social behavior than to appropriate social behavior.
- This attention inadvertently maintains or increases the misbehavior.

Comparison:

Academic Attention vs. Social Attention

	Approval Statements	Disapproval Statements	Ratio of Positive to Negative
Academic	20.36 per hour	7.56 per hour	2.7:1
Social	1.52 per hour	19.20 per hour	1:12.6

Contingent Attention = Encouraging Expected Behavior

- Similar to encouraging academic behavior.
- Motivates students as they are *initially learning* expected behavior, and *maintains* them as students become more fluent with use.
- Essential to changing student behavior and creating a positive school environment.

Benefits of Specific Positive Feedback



- Helps adults and students focus on positive social behaviors and actions.
- The most powerful behavior change tool teachers have in their repertoire.
- Increases likelihood students will use the recognized behaviors and skills in the future.
- Decreases inappropriate behavior, and reduces the need for correction.
- Enhances self-esteem and helps build internal locus of control.

Characteristics of Effective Specific Positive Feedback

- Contingent
- Immediate
- Frequent
(then Intermittent)



Effective Specific Positive Feedback

1. State the expectation

“Thank you for being responsible by following directions and getting started right away.”



Effective Specific Positive Feedback

2. Specifically describe the behavior:

- Explicitly describe the behavior you want to continue.
- Describe like a videotape replay.
- Use the words of your expectations.

“When I said it was time to begin, you cleared off your desk, got your materials out immediately, and began working quickly.”



Effective Specific Positive Feedback

3. *Can* include a positive consequence:

- Specific Positive Feedback alone may not be sufficiently reinforcing.
- When behavior requires a great deal of effort, pairing verbal feedback with tangible or activity reinforcement may be helpful.
- When using a positive consequence, always pair with Specific Positive Feedback.
- Promote ownership; student “earns,” teachers do not “give.”

“Because you got started so quickly, you have earned a Cardinal Card.”



Putting It All Together

“When I said it was time to begin, you were responsible and followed directions by clearing off your desk, getting out your materials and starting work. Because you followed directions you have earned a Cardinal Card.”

Encouraging Expected Behavior

4:1 Ratio

- Teachers should interact with students 4 times more often when they are behaving appropriately than when they are behaving inappropriately (4:1 ratio)
- Interactions with students are considered positive or negative based on the behavior in which the student is engaged at the time attention is given
- Negative interactions are not wrong and are sometimes necessary; the key is the ratio

“The purpose of school-wide recognition is to acknowledge and show appreciation to students who have provided positive demonstrations of the school-wide behavior expectations.”

Geoff Colvin, 2007

Why a *Variety* of Ways to Encourage?

- Not all students are reinforced by the same things or in the same ways.
- Some students desire or *seek social attention*.
- Others do not like or *avoid social attention*.
- Include social attention, activities, and tangible items to appeal to all student needs.





“Using a reward system is not the same as bribing a student to behave appropriately.

*A **bribe** is something offered or given a person in a position of trust to **influence or corrupt that person’s views or conduct.***

SW-PBS acknowledges and rewards students for following school-wide expectations and rules.

*Appropriate behavior is acknowledged **after** it occurs. Rewards are **earned, not offered** as payoff in exchange for good behavior.”*



Tiger R.O.A.R Ticket	
	___ RESPECTFUL
	___ ON TASK
	___ ALWAYS SAFE
	___ RESPONSIBLE
Student _____	

Florida PBS

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 reinforcement.
- Give staff a tool to engage in positive interactions with *any* student in school.
- Are a universal sign to students—both those receiving and those watching.

Tangible Reinforcers—*Continued*

- Build a sense of community through joint class, grade, or school goals.
- Enhance staff-student relationships.
- Offer a gross measure of the frequency of Specific Positive Feedback being provided; can help guide staff to increase use of Specific Positive Feedback.

Staff Incentives

"This is definitely working! We talk a lot about students needing recognition and positive reinforcement but too many times we forget about the teachers needing it, also. When a teacher's morale goes south, we need to find some way to change the direction.

By recognizing the teachers we see a lot more student recognition so we try to do everything we can to have teachers recognize the students. We're not perfect and it's not always 100% upbeat, but those down times are few and far between.

During our back to school night/open house we did rotations for the parents every 20 minutes. One of those rotations was SW-PBS.

Teachers had a presentation/flipchart, gave out handbooks, discussed SW-PBS and let the parents see an actual lesson.

It was great!!"

