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RIVERSIDE

Student and Teacher Responses to a Behavior Specific Praise Intervention for At-Risk  
Kindergartners

A Thesis submitted in partial satisfaction  
of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

in

Education

by

Theresa Marie Stewart

June 2020

Dissertation Committee:

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2020

The Thesis of Theresa Marie Stewart is approved:

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## ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

Student and Teacher Responses to a Behavior Specific Praise Intervention for At-Risk Kindergartners

by

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Master of Arts, Graduate Program in Education

University of California, Riverside, June 2020

Dr. Kathleen King and Dr. Wesley Sims, Co-Chairpersons

Children with emotional and behavioral disorders (EBD) are at a greater risk for negative social, academic, and post-school outcomes than students with other disabilities. These children with EBD often develop behavior problems early on which escalate and place them on a trajectory that is hard to alter once their behaviors become more severe, frequent, and chronic. Results of behavior specific praise (BSP) interventions for students with EBD have shown reductions in some of these maladaptive behaviors such as aggression, off-task behavior, and disruptive behavior. The present study will use a multiple baseline design to examine the effects of a BSP intervention for Kindergartners at-risk of developing EBD. Using performance feedback on rates of BSP, teachers will be trained to give BSP at a 3:1, praise to behavior-correction, ratio. Positive (BSP & general praise) and negative (reprimands & pre-corrections) teacher interactions will be recorded during direct observation to calculate this ratio. Student variables that will be examined in this study include student disruptive and aggressive behavior.

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## **Introduction**

Students with emotional and behavioral disorders (EBD) have some of the most negative outcomes of any disability category (Bradley, Doolittle, & Bartolotta, 2008; Hollo, 2012). Students who have or are at-risk of developing EBD are at a greater risk of dropping out of school, experiencing academic failure, delinquency, and poor social and post-school outcomes (Bradley et al., 2008; Eklund et al., 2009). Coupled with the challenges that are an inherent part of EBD, these students often receive inadequate educational services compared with students in other disability categories, which exacerbates the negative outcomes they experience (Bradley et al., 2008). These negative outcomes for children with EBD are cause for concern and call for research into early identification and effective interventions for these students.

There is a plethora of research surrounding services and intervention for students with EBD. Students with EBD often have negative experiences in the classroom and are not receiving appropriate services and interventions that meet their needs (Walker et al., 2000). Teacher behavior heavily influences student behavior in the classroom and, unfortunately, many teachers feel inadequately prepared to effectively manage their classrooms (Reinke et al., 2008). In many classrooms, teachers employ punishment strategies that focus on correcting negative behaviors rather than reinforcing or teaching positive behaviors. Research recommends that teachers give attention to and reinforce positive behaviors at a rate three times higher than negative behaviors (Gunter et al., 1994). Positive reinforcement, like praise, for appropriate behaviors can be a powerful and effective strategy for all students, but especially for those with EBD (Bradley et al.,



2008; Sutherland et al., 2000; Walker et al., 2000). The present study will focus on a behavior specific praise intervention and the effects on student behavior in the classroom.

### **Defining Emotional and Behavioral Disorders**

Emotional and behavioral disorders (EBD) is a broad term used to label students who display consistent and serious maladaptive behaviors (Hollo, 2012). Children with EBD engage in behaviors that are severe, frequent, and chronic (Kavale, Forness, & Mostert, 2005). The label of EBD can be used to describe both students who are already identified as having emotional and behavioral disorders and students who are at-risk of developing these chronic maladaptive behaviors (Hollo, 2012).

Defining EBD can be difficult because EBD is often used to mean different things in different contexts. In a school setting, criteria for EBD are outlined by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). According to IDEA (2004), Emotional and behavioral disorders are present when the behavioral or emotional responses of a child are so disparate from the generally accepted norms for that child's age, ethnicity, or cultural background that it results in significant impairments in the child's social relationships, self-care, and educational progress.

A child meets criteria for EBD if they exhibit one or more of the following over an extended period of time and to a marked degree: (a) an inability to learn and make satisfactory progress; (b) an inability to build or maintain relationships with teachers and peers; (c) inappropriate behaviors or feelings under normal circumstances; (d) persistent unhappiness or depression; or (e) a tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems (IDEA, 2004). Importantly, these challenges

are not a result of intellectual, sensory, or health factors and criteria exclude children who are socially maladjusted unless they are determined to have an emotional disturbance (IDEA, 2004).

Clinical settings and school settings each use separate criteria when diagnosing or qualifying a child for services. In a school setting, there are 13 disability categories (EBD being one of these 13) under which children can qualify for special education services. Each disability category has its own set of criteria, defined in IDEA, that are used to determine eligibility for special education. In a clinical setting, the Diagnostic Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders 5th Edition (DSM-5) is a tool used to diagnose any number of psychological disorders (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). Having a clinical diagnosis does not guarantee a child's eligibility for special education nor does meeting eligibility criteria mean that students have a clinical diagnosis. For example, if a child has a clinical diagnosis that does not interfere with their school performance they will most likely not meet eligibility criteria for special education.

School and clinical settings also have different purposes for evaluating a child's disability status. The criteria outlined in IDEA are meant to ensure that only students who are eligible for services are able to qualify and secondly to provide a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) to students with disabilities. In a clinical setting, the purpose of a diagnosis is to help inform treatment and intervention for a particular client. The present study will take place in a school setting so EBD will be used in this context.

## **Outcomes for Children with EBD**

The label of EBD is historically associated with negative outcomes. In fact, students identified as having, or being at-risk of developing, EBD have some of the most negative outcomes of any other disability category (Bradley, Doolittle, & Bartolotta, 2008; Hollo, 2012). Students with EBD often experience poor academic, social, and post-school outcomes (Bradley et al., 2008). Siperstein, Wiley, and Forness (2011) found that students with EBD and those at-risk for EBD showed minimal academic and behavioral progress in schools compared to students in other eligibility categories. Over half of students with EBD drop out of school, 74% achieve below grade level in reading, and 97% achieve below grade level in math (Eklund et al., 2009). Children with EBD are also at a greater risk for substance abuse and delinquency (Eklund et al., 2009). These negative outcomes for children with EBD are cause for concern and call for research into early identification and effective interventions for these students.

Students with EBD often have academic, social, emotional, and behavioral deficits as a result of their disability. Persistent challenging behaviors such as aggression, off-task behavior, and noncompliance make it difficult for these students to make adequate academic progress (Sutherland, Wehby, & Copeland, 2001). When the classroom environment is characterized by frequent disruptions and inappropriate behavior, students cannot learn and teachers cannot teach (Everston & Weinstein, 2006). These emotional and behavioral deficits also put students with EBD at an increased risk for negative peer relationships, academic underachievement, increased internalizing and externalizing behaviors, and difficulty upon entry to school (Domitrovich et al., 2007).

Negative outcomes associated with behavioral difficulties are not reserved for students with an official label of EBD. Behavior problems in general also predict low academic achievement, school dropout, and drug abuse in adolescence and are associated with learning problems (Walker et al., 2000). Students with behavioral problems and poor school readiness skills are at greater risk of school failure, delinquency, and other risky adolescent behaviors like heavy drinking, risky sexual practices, and violent delinquent acts (Walker et al., 2000).

Many of these negative outcomes for students with EBD can be traced to the quality of the educational services they receive (Bradley et al., 2008). For example, teachers of students with EBD usually receive less training, preparation, and credentialing than teachers of students in other disability categories (Bradley et al., 2008). When compared, teachers of students with EBD and other special education teachers received equal training in behavior support and intervention even though this is a primary area of need for students with EBD and should warrant additional training (Bradley et al., 2008). As a whole, teachers of students with EBD had less teaching experience, and were less credentialed than general education teachers and teachers of students in other disability categories (Bradley et al., 2008). This lack of adequate training is problematic because it results in a lack of evidence-based practice being implemented in programs for children with EBD (Bradley et al., 2008). Additionally, despite the fact that the majority of children with behavioral problems also experience academic deficits, accommodations for students with EBD are unlikely to include any academic support services (Bradley et al., 2008; Wagner et al., 2006).

These inadequate educational services are problematic because student learning is a direct result of the amount and quality of the education students receive (Everston & Weinstein, 2006). The negative outcomes and poor educational practices of students with EBD highlight the importance of researching evidence-based practices aimed to improve outcomes for these students (Bradley et al., 2008).

### **Current Practices**

Current practices for students with EBD are often inadequate. Students who have or are or at-risk for EBD are often subject to poor educational practices, negative school experiences, and are under referred for services (Walker et al., 2000). There are also issues surrounding the identification of students with EBD which inhibits early and appropriate intervention (Bradley et al., 2008).

Students with EBD often go unidentified due to a lack of universal screening, a fear of mislabeling students, and the biased process of referring students for services. The percentage of students that meet criteria for EBD versus the percentage of students that are actually receiving services for EBD is quite discrepant (Bradley et al., 2008).

Research by Walker and colleagues (2000), found that only about 1% of students were receiving services under EBD, although approximately 20% of students met eligibility criteria and were in need of services (Walker et al., 2000). Unfortunately, teachers do not refer students for evaluation based on behavioral concerns as often as they refer them for academic concerns. This teacher referral process contributes not only to the discrepancy between number of students receiving services and number of students eligible for services but to the discrepancy between the onset of symptoms of EBD and the time of

referral (Eklund et al., 2009). A lack of universal screening for behavioral concerns in schools also contributes to these discrepancies (Eklund et al., 2009).

Students are referred to be assessed for EBD primarily by teachers (Eklund et al., 2009; Severson et al., 2007). Teachers' differing behavior and performance expectations for students can explain some of the bias that exists in the referral process for students with EBD (Severson et al., 2007). Additionally, the decision to refer a student for special education is often more related to factors like gender, socioeconomic status, and race than to student performance (Raines et al., 2012). Due to this lack of performance-based decision making, there are several groups that are disproportionately referred and placed in special education including males, minority students, and students with disruptive behaviors (Eklund et al., 2009). Because the teacher referral process can be subjective and inconsistent, universal screening for emotional and behavioral issues is considered a more objective and unbiased option for identifying students that may need intervention. Despite this fact, many schools unfortunately still rely on the teacher referral process (Eklund et al., 2009; Bruhn, Woods-Groves, & Huddle, 2014).

Gunter and colleagues (1994) found that most teacher interactions with students who have EBD are negative. Many teachers of students with EBD employ punishment strategies that focus on addressing negative instances of behaviors and ignoring socially appropriate behaviors (Gunter et al., 1994). As a result, students with EBD often have negative associations with the classroom environment due to the large number of aversive consequences and interactions they experience (Gunter et al., 1994).

School disciplinary actions such as in-school suspension (ISS), office discipline referrals (ODR), and other practices that cause students to be sent out of class are largely ineffective (Kennedy & Jolivette, 2008). These punitive methods cause students to miss out on valuable academic instruction they need to be successful in and out of school (Kennedy & Jolivette, 2008). Teachers often unintentionally reinforce the function of a student's behavior when they send the student out of class because they are allowing the student to escape an undesired task or gain teacher attention (Kennedy & Jolivette, 2008). These poor classroom management practices result in an escalating cycle of social and academic failure; the student continues to be removed from class, they miss out on more instruction which leads to increased frustration with academic tasks, more inappropriate behavior, and continued exclusion from the classroom (Kennedy & Jolivette, 2008). Despite evidence against these practices, sending students out of class for acting inappropriately is used by approximately 70% of teachers of students with EBD (Kennedy & Jolivette, 2008).

Gunter and colleagues (1994) found that negative interactions between teachers and students comprised 22% of class time and positive teacher student interactions made up only 3% of the time. This finding is problematic because praise and positive attention for appropriate behaviors has shown to be more effective than giving attention to negative behaviors (Kamps et al., 1999). Giving attention to negative behaviors is especially ineffective when the function of the student's behavior is to gain teacher attention. As students learn that they cannot get attention for displaying appropriate behaviors, they resort to acting out (Kennedy & Jolivette, 2008). Additionally, punishing

inappropriate behaviors does not provide students with an alternative appropriate behavior to engage in, which is why reinforcing these appropriate behaviors is so important (Ingram, Lewis-Palmer, & Sugai, 2005; Kamps et al., 1999).

Early intervention and identification for children with EBD play an important role in combating many of the negative outcomes and experiences these students often face (Hester et al., 2004). The earlier students are identified and receive intervention, the greater their chances for social and academic success.

### **Early Intervention & Identification**

The majority of behavioral problems are established in early childhood (Hester et al. 2004). Behavior problems are also relatively stable, so issues that surface in early childhood usually continue into middle childhood and adolescence in the absence of intervention (Domitrovich et al., 2007). For example, young children that show significant problem behaviors have a 50% chance of experiencing problems in the future (Hester et al., 2004). Students who are not identified early on as being at-risk for emotional and behavioral problems start on a trajectory that often leads to more serious and chronic issues later in life (Lewis et al., 2010; Severson et al. 2007; Walker et al., 2000;). Without early detection and intervention, students' behaviors often escalate and could ultimately lead to them being pushed out of school because of the seriousness of their behaviors (Walker et al., 2000).

Early detection and intervention are the most powerful tools for preventing problems from escalating to those behaviors associated with EBD (Hester et al., 2004). However, current practices for identifying students who have or are at-risk of developing



emotional and behavioral difficulties rely heavily on teacher referrals (Eklund et al., 2009; Bruhn et al., 2014). Relying on teacher referrals can be problematic for a variety of reasons, but universal screening can address many of these issues.

Universal screening is a systematic approach to early identification that uses research validated assessments to identify students that may require extra support (Bruhn et al., 2014). Universal screening measures are administered to all students in a school, regardless of risk factors, to identify students at-risk of academic or behavioral difficulty (Eklund et al., 2009). Using universal screening for social, emotional, and behavioral problems identifies students earlier than current teacher referral practices, decreases the likelihood of missing students in need of intervention, and eliminates possible bias in the referral process (Eklund et al., 2009). Early identification through screening also improves trajectories for students with EBD and increases positive outcomes such as high school completion, increased well-being, and enhanced resilience (Eklund et al., 2009; Raines et al., 2012).

Universal screening measures help identify those in need of support early on so they can receive the necessary services. Children are the most responsive to intervention and more likely to maintain outcomes of the intervention during early childhood than later in life (Hester et al., 2004). Unfortunately, due to a variety of reasons (e.g., fear of misidentifying children as being at-risk, lack of universal screening, a bias referral process, etc.) many children who have or are at-risk of developing EBD do not receive services until mid-late elementary school (Forness et al., 2000; Hester et al. 2004). Forness and colleagues (2000) argue that to maximize effectiveness, screening and

primary prevention should be implemented before 1st grade. Domitrovich and colleagues (2007) found that the expulsion rate for preschoolers who experience serious emotional and behavior difficulties is 3.2 times higher than for elementary students. This finding further highlights the need for early detection and intervention beginning in the early grades.

Despite the benefits of using social emotional and behavioral screeners in schools (SEBS), Bruhn and colleagues (2014) found that SEBS was the 2nd least used type of screening in schools after tuberculosis screening. Even lice screening, a practice not supported by research, was used more frequently than SEBS (Bruhn et al., 2014). Furthermore, the authors found that only about 13% of schools used SEBS, while about 81% of schools indicated that they used some type of academic screener. Two of the most cited reasons for why schools were not implementing universal screening for social, emotional, and behavioral issues were a lack of access and awareness about SEBS (Bruhn et al., 2014). However, there are several research validated screeners available, many of which are non-proprietary.

### **Social, Emotional, and Behavioral Screeners**

Several universal behavior screening instruments are available for use in schools, both as part of broader universal screening programming and as stand-alone measures. There are two prevalent assessment systems that are often purchased by schools: AIMSweb and FastBridge. Each system is costly and comes with a variety of evidence-based assessments and screeners that can be used to monitor student progress and assess risk in various areas of concern. Both of these systems have measures that can be used to

screen for social, emotional, and behavior risks. AIMSweb uses the Behavioral and Emotional Screening System (BESS; Kamphaus & Reynolds, 2007) and FastBridge uses the Social, Academic, Emotional Behavior Risk Screener (SAEBRS; Kilgus & von der Embse, 2014).

The BESS, which was reported to be the most commonly used SEBS in a study of universal screening practices by Bruhn and colleagues (2014), has parent, teacher, and student report forms that are used to identify behavioral and emotional strengths and weaknesses of students in grades K-12 (Eklund et al., 2009). Respondents rate each item using a frequency scale (ranging from “never” to “almost always”) to indicate how often a student is observed engaging in the behaviors being described. The BESS is meant to be completed in about 5 minutes. The SAEBRS is a 19-item teacher rating scale that is broken into three subscales: social behavior, academic behavior, and emotional behavior (Kilgus et al., 2016; Kilgus et al., 2017), and uses a similar Likert-type rating system as the BESS. Both screeners have extensive research supporting their validity and reliability (Eklund et al., 2009; King & Reschly, 2014).

Though the BESS and the SAEBRS are both widely used and accepted screeners, there are a variety of other screeners that also have a strong-evidence base but are without the cost associated with these commercial measures. One such screener, the Behavior Screening Checklist (BSC-III; Muyskens, Marston, & Reschly, 2007), will be used in the present study. King and colleagues (2014) compared the psychometric properties of the BESS and the BSC and found the two screeners to be comparable. In addition, both screeners were significantly correlated with behavioral and academic outcome variables

(King et al., 2014). Time and cost were also important variables to consider when choosing a universal screening measure for this study. The BSC is both free and quicker to use than most other screeners, which makes it an attractive universal screening option for schools.

### **Research on Praise**

Universal screening is vitally important in the early identification of at-risk students as it allows these students to receive early intervention. Though there are a variety of early interventions available for students with EBD, there is a vast body of supporting literature that details the uses and benefits of different positive reinforcement procedures, like praise, for students with EBD and their typically developing peers (Landrum et al., 2003). The relationship between teacher praise and disruptive behavior has long been established with research beginning in the 1960s (Sutherland et al. 2000). Numerous studies have researched types of praise, rates of praise, types of teacher training to increase praise, and the affects these factors can have on students with EBD.

Musser and colleagues (2001) saw a decrease in instances of noncompliance in children with EBD when teachers increased their use of verbal praise and positive reinforcement in the classroom. In a study by Kennedy and colleagues (2008), verbal praise was found to be an effective strategy for reducing the amount of time students with EBD spent outside of the classroom for disciplinary reasons. While verbal praise can be an effective tool for teachers, the type of praise teachers give students is also a factor in the effectiveness of the strategy.

Praise has shown to be most effective when teachers specify the behavior they are reinforcing in their praise statement. These specific statements of praise are called behavior specific praise (BSP). Sutherland and colleagues (2000) measured students' on-task behavior and teachers' use of behavior specific praise (BSP) after they were instructed to increase their typical amount of BSP. Sutherland and colleagues (2000) found that student disruptive behavior decreased, and on-task behavior increased when teachers' rates of BSP increased. Myers and colleagues (2011) also found that student on-task and disruptive behavior decreased and academic engagement time increased when teachers' rates of BSP increased.

Chalk & Bizo (2004) compared teachers' use of general praise and specific praise in a 4th grade general education classroom and found that specific praise was better at improving student behavior. Teachers' use of specific praise could also contribute to the development of different learning strategies required for success (e.g., note taking, planning, checking work, and finishing assignments) and increase self-regulated learning (Chalk & Bizo, 2004).

In addition to the type of praise, the rate of praise is also an important factor in its effectiveness. There is no consensus on the number of praise statements per minute or per correction, as researchers have had success with varying rates of teacher praise. Sprick (1981) recommended a 3:1 positive-to-negative interaction ratio at a minimum, meaning that teachers should give attention to positive behavior at a rate three times greater than attention to negative behaviors (Gunter et al., 1994). Pisacreta and colleagues (2011) trained teachers to deliver BSP to students using a 1:1 ratio of praise-to-behavior

corrections (Pisacreta et al., 2011). Results indicated that when teachers maintained a 1:1 praise-to-behavior correction ratio there was a decrease in disruptive behavior. Myers and colleagues (2011) successfully trained teachers to deliver BSP at a 4:1 rate and give 6 praise statements per 15 minutes which resulted in a decrease in student problem behavior. Sutherland and colleagues (2001) also calculated the number of BSP's per 15 minutes during observation with a goal of 6 per observation. Thompson and colleagues (2012) encouraged teachers to increase their use of BSP by 50% compared to their baseline levels which resulted in an increase in on-task behavior and a decrease in disruptive behavior.

Literature on the use of praise in schools concludes that praise is most effective when it is behavior specific and that varying rates of behavior specific praise have shown to be effective in managing a variety of classroom behaviors. Equally important to research on frequency and type of praise, are the methods of teacher training that are effective in BSP interventions.

### **Teacher Training on BSP**

Just as there are a variety of ways to successfully use praise in the classroom, there are various methods for training teachers to use this intervention successfully. In the absence of specific training, teachers generally spend more time correcting negative behaviors than reinforcing appropriate ones (Gunter 1994; Pisacreta et al., 2011; Sutherland & Wehby, 2001). Historically, the literature has recommended that teachers should reinforce appropriate behaviors at a rate at least three times higher than they correct inappropriate behavior (though others have had some success with lower rates)

(Pisacreta et al., 2011; Sprouls et al., 2015). However, for many classroom environments the opposite is true (Gunter et al., 1994). In classrooms for students with EBD and other disabilities, rates of praise are even lower (Sutherland et al., 2000). Due to extensive research on the subject, there are a variety of approaches to teacher training that have been used successfully to increase teachers' rates of praise.

Sutherland and colleagues (2000) found that teachers of students with EBD were able to increase their rates of BSP when provided with only verbal feedback about their rate of BSP. In another study by Duchaine and colleagues (2011), teachers received verbal performance feedback on their rate of BSP after every third observation session and written performance feedback after every session. As a result of this verbal and written performance feedback, teachers' rates of BSP increased (Duchaine, Jolivette, & Frederick et al., 2011). Thompson and colleagues (2012) used video self-monitoring to successfully improve teachers' rates of BSP. Teachers video recorded a brief (15-25 minute) segment of themselves teaching and then watched it back while counting the total number of BSP's they used. Two studies that are of particular interest are Pisacreta and colleagues (2011) and Myers and colleagues (2011) because both used performance feedback to increase teachers' ratios of positive-to-negative interactions.

Pisacreta and colleagues (2011) used modeling and performance feedback to train teachers to implement a 1:1 ratio of praise-to-behavior correction during instructional time. This ratio was chosen based on the author's assumption that higher ratios often recommended in literature are not feasible for struggling teachers who use little praise (Pisacreta et al., 2011). In this study, the experimenter first met with each

teacher to define BSP and discuss the teachers' baseline levels of praise-to-behavior correction and student disruptive behavior (Pisacreta et al. 2011). Next, the experimenter modeled how and when they wanted the teacher to praise students' appropriate behaviors. After modeling, teachers were observed during implementation and then received brief, verbal, performance feedback after each observation session. Once per week, performance feedback was presented to teachers in the form of a graph showing their ratio of praise-to-behavior correction. Results indicated that after training, teachers who initially gave little verbal praise were able to maintain a 1:1 praise-to-behavior correction ratio throughout the intervention. Pisacreta and colleagues (2011) found that despite recommended ratios ranging from 3:1 to 8:1, a 1:1 ratio was sufficient to decrease student disruptive behavior in the classroom for the duration of the intervention. However, a limitation of this study was the lack of maintenance data making the long term success of using a 1:1 ratio unknown.

In contrast to Pisacreta and colleagues (2011), Myers and colleagues (2011) trained teachers to maintain a 4:1 positive-to-negative interactions ratio using three tiers of increasingly intensive teacher training. The first tier consisted of school-wide training on using praise to alter the positive-to-negative interaction ratio in the classroom. During tier two training, the researcher held a brief consultation session with the teacher, presented the teacher with weekly data of their ratio over time, and gave the teacher weekly praise when BSP was given appropriately. In tier three, the most intensive tier of training, teachers received daily feedback after each observation session in person and



over email. Even teachers with the lowest ratios at baseline were able to maintain a 4:1 ratio after receiving this performance feedback.

These findings are important as they illustrate that a range of praise to correction ratios can have a positive effect on student behavior. The present study will combine aspects from both Myers and colleagues (2011) and Pisacreta and colleagues (2011) to deliver performance feedback to teachers. Teachers will receive performance feedback after each session that includes their current ratio and number of BSP statements.

### **Efficacy of Single Case Design**

Single case designs have long been established as effective methodological tools that can be used to evaluate various research questions involving groups or individuals (Kazdin, 1982). The emergence of single case design as an appropriate methodology solved several issues presented by traditional between-group designs (Kazdin, 1982). In many applied settings, intervention focuses on individual subjects and many of the requirements of between-groups experimental designs (e.g., randomly assigning subjects to a treatment group, standardizing treatments among subjects, etc.) are not feasible (Kazdin, 1982). Thus, single-case designs provide a solution that allows researchers to conduct experimental investigations to evaluate a treatment or intervention with only a small number of subjects, as is common in a school setting (Kazdin, 1982). The field of applied behavior analysis has extensively investigated the utility of single-case designs and has expanded the number of design options available.

Single-case designs still meet criteria for an experimental design and are able to determine a causal relationship between an independent variable and a dependent

variable (Kratochwill et al., 2010). Experimental control is achieved by replicating the intervention in the experiment (Kratochwill et al., 2010). For multiple baseline design, experimental control is achieved by staggering the introduction of the independent variable across different points in time (Kratochwill et al., 2010). Multiple baseline designs can be utilized across participants, settings, or behaviors and involve the introduction of the independent variable at different time points for each phase repetition (Kratochwill et al., 2010). The minimum number of baseline or phase repetitions for a multiple baseline design to meet evidence standards is three, but four is considered more accepted and desirable (Kratochwill et al., 2010).

The present study will be utilizing a multiple-baseline design across participants where intervention is delivered to different subjects at different time points. The rationale behind this method is that there are multiple-baselines to compare when looking for effects of the intervention (Kazdin, 1982). For this design, observations of baseline performance of the same behavior for each person are conducted until the behavior stabilizes (Kazdin, 1982). After a stable rate of baseline behavior is reached for each participant, one participant moves into the intervention phase while others continue in baseline. This process is repeated until eventually all participants are receiving the intervention. The behavior of the person receiving the intervention is expected to start changing from baseline at the time point when the intervention is implemented. Because each person is exposed to the intervention at a different point in time, there are multiple opportunities to observe this change during the intervention phase, while controlling for maturation effects.

As previously mentioned, multiple-baseline designs have been heavily explored in the field of applied behavior analysis to investigate behavior modification techniques. The goal of the present study is to modify teacher behavior using training and performance feedback. Changes in student behavior as a result of teachers increased use of BSP during intervention are also variables of interest in this study. Many similar studies have employed a multiple-baseline design across participants with positive results (Duchaine & Jolivet, 2011; Kennedy et al., 2008; Lewis et al., 2000; Myers et al., 2011; Pisacreta et al., 2011) which contributed to the decision to use this design in the present study.

### **Gaps in the Research**

There is a plethora of studies that have researched the use of praise on students with EBD (Chalk & Bizo, 2004; Kennedy et al., 2008; Landrum et al., 2003; Musser et al., 2001; Myers et al., 2011; Pisacreta et al., 2011; Sutherland et al., 2000). A majority of these studies involve students that are in late elementary to high school leaving early elementary grades underrepresented in research. Part of the reason for this could be that students with EBD often do not receive services and intervention until they are in late elementary school (Forness et al., 2000; Hester et al. 2004). Additionally, many of these studies focus on students that already qualify under EBD or another disability category. While research on students with EBD is important, research involving students in the at-risk category is arguably just as important. The earlier students receive intervention the more effective and long-lasting the effects of the intervention are likely to be (Hester et al., 2004). Early screening for social, emotional, and behavioral issues is seldom used to

identify students at-risk, which creates a lack of access to preventative services for these students (Bruhn et al., 2014). Many students who are left without support and intervention early on, develop more severe and chronic behaviors that qualify them under EBD later on in life (Bradley et al., 2008; Hester et al., 2004).

The present study is designed to address some of these gaps in research, including the lack of screening in early grades, research with at-risk students, and preventative interventions that target these students.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to train teachers to maintain a positive-to-negative interaction ratio of 3:1 by increasing their use of behavior specific praise through the use of regular performance feedback. There are five primary research questions that will be explored using a multiple-baseline design across participants:

1. Does teacher training on BSP and regular performance feedback improve teachers' ratios of positive-to-negative interactions?
2. Do students disruptive and aggressive behaviors decrease in response to teachers' increased ratios of positive-to-negative interactions?
3. Does student risk status decrease as a result of teacher use of improved positive-to-negative interaction ratios?
4. Do teachers rate performance feedback as effective in creating change in their use of BSP?
5. Do teachers rate the use of BSP as feasible and effective in creating change in student behavior?

## **Methods**

### **Participants**

The setting of this study will be in four general education kindergarten classrooms located in a school district in southern California. Participants for this study will be recruited from kindergarten classrooms at an elementary school in Southern California. After consent is obtained, all kindergarten teachers at the elementary school will be observed using real-time, direct observations with the Brief Classroom Interaction Observation (BCIO-R; Reinke & Newcomer, 2010). The four kindergarten teachers with the most exaggerated negative to positive classroom practices ratio (e.g., punishment to praise ratio) and their students will be the primary participants in this study. Demographic information will be provided on teacher and student participants after they are selected.

### **Measures**

#### ***Brief Classroom Interaction Observation-Revised (BCIO-R)***

Screening, baseline, and intervention data will be collected on a variety of student and teacher behaviors using the BCIO-R (Reinke et al., 2015). This measurement system can be used to simultaneously record the frequency of teacher use of behavior-specific praise (BSP), general praise, pre-corrections, opportunities to respond, explicit reprimands, and harsh reprimands. Positive (BSP & general praise) and negative (reprimands & pre-corrections) teacher interactions recorded with the BCIO-R will be used to calculate a ratio of positive-to-negative interactions for each teacher. The BCIO-R can also be used to record the frequencies of student disruptive and aggressive behavior during a 20-minute observation period (Reinke et al., 2015).

### ***Behavior Screening Checklist III (BSC-III)***

The BSC (Muyskens, Marston, & Reschly, 2007) is a universal behavior screening tool meant to identify students who are at-risk of experiencing emotional and behavioral difficulties. The BSC is a 12-item rating scale that is comprised of three different subscales: Classroom Behaviors, Externalizing Behaviors, and Socialization. The Classroom Behaviors subscale asks teachers to rate student attention, following directions, completing work, and class involvement. The Externalizing subscale asks teachers to rate student physical behavior toward others, verbal behavior, physical behavior toward materials or property, and out of place behavior. The Socialization subscale asks teachers to rate students' adult interactions, peer interactions, projected self-image, and how they cope with change. Teachers rate each item on a Likert-type scale with 1 representing more appropriate behavior and 5 representing more challenging or maladaptive behavior.

A raw score for the BSC is generated by adding the rating of each of the 12 items, with a higher score indicating higher risk status. A cut-score of 36 is recommended for identifying students at-risk, which corresponds to the top 5% of scores obtained in the original study for the BSC (Muyskens, Marston, & Reschly, 2007). However, as noted in research by King & Reschly (2014), the cut score of the BSC is only meant to identify students needing Tier 3 support, the most intensive level of intervention within an RTI model, which is an underrepresentation of the students needing Tier 2 support. King and colleagues (2014) proposed a more comprehensive option which adjusts the cut-score to include the top 20% of children thereby identifying the number of students needing Tier 2

and Tier 3 behavioral supports. For the present study, both Tier 2 (top 20%) and Tier 3 (top 5%) categories will be used to assess risk status.

### ***Social Validity Questionnaire***

To assess social validity and usability of the present intervention, the User Rating Profile-Intervention Revised (URP-IR; Chafouleas et al., 2011) will be given to teachers at the conclusion of the intervention. The URP-IR is a 29-item rating scale comprised of six subscales: acceptability, understanding, family-school collaboration, feasibility, system climate, and system support (Briesch et al., 2013). This measure is meant to provide information about facilitators and barriers to usage of an intervention that exist at different levels (i.e., individual, intervention, and environment).

### **Design**

A multiple baseline design will be implemented across teachers to examine the effect of the intervention on teacher behavior and the relationship between teacher behavior and student behavior. Following the baseline period, the intervention will first be implemented with teacher 1, followed by teacher 2, teacher 3, and teacher 4, beginning with the teacher that shows the most stable baseline. Once a teacher moves into the intervention phase, they will remain in the intervention phase until the conclusion of the study. The intervention phase will conclude when the last teacher has been in the intervention phase for at least five data points. Maintenance data collection will occur one month and two months after the end of the intervention phase.

After the last maintenance observation, teachers will again be asked to complete the BSC for the students in their classroom. Pre-test and post-test scores on the BSC will

be compared using a paired sample one-tailed  $t$ -test. In addition to comparing scores on the BSC, change in students risk status will also be reported.

### ***Dependent Variables***

***Teacher Variables.*** Frequency and rate of all teacher variables will be measured using the BCIO-R. As defined by the BCIO-R codebook, BSP is verbal praise, given by the teacher and directed to one or multiple students, that specifies the desired behavior that the student(s) is being praised for. General praise is defined as verbal praise given by the teacher and directed to one or multiple students that does not name the specific behavior being praised. Pre-corrections are statements made by the teacher that are meant to prompt students to display an expected behavior before a problem behavior occurs. Opportunities to respond are defined as statements, gestures, or visual cues that require the students to give an immediate academically related response. Explicit reprimands are verbal comments (concise and in a normal speaking tone) or gestures made by the teacher to indicate disapproval of a behavior. Harsh reprimands have the same purpose, but are delivered in a loud voice or harsh, critical, or sarcastic tone (Reinke et al., 2015). Positive implementation ratio will be calculated by adding all praise and dividing by praise plus reprimands times 100, resulting in a percentage of total interactions that are positive.

***Student Variables.*** General student variables to be measured will include disruptions and aggression. Student disruptive behavior, as measured by the BCIO-R, was defined as a statement or action by a student (or group) that interferes with instruction/activities for the teacher and/or students. Aggressive behavior, as measured by the BCIO-R is defined as a student being physically or verbally aggressive toward peers,



the teacher, or the environment. These data are gathered at the classroom level, meaning that disruptions and aggression are not linked to individual students, but tallied for the class as a whole. Student risk level for emotional and/or behavioral difficulties will be measured by the BSC both before and after the implementation of the intervention.

### **Procedures**

Researchers will first meet with all potential teacher participants to broadly discuss the purpose and goals of the intervention. Then, passive consent forms will be sent home to each student in those classrooms. After 10 days (allowing time for parents to decline student participation), direct observation of all classrooms, using the BCIO-R will occur. Upon reviewing the data, target classrooms will be identified, and those teachers will be given consent forms to participate. A separate consent form will be sent home with all students in the target classrooms requiring the consent of a parent or guardian to participate in the study. Students and teachers will have two weeks to return consent forms before the study begins. As an incentive for students to return consent forms, a party will be thrown for each classroom that returns at least 90% of their forms (regardless of agreement to participate). The specific type of party (e.g., cupcake party, dance party, etc.) will be determined based on teacher/class preference and school policies. After all consent forms are received, teachers will be given the BSC to fill out for each of the students in their classrooms that returned a signed consent form. Teachers will have one week to fill out and return the screener for these students.

### ***Baseline***

During the baseline phase, teachers will be instructed not to alter their usual teaching or classroom management practices. Observation sessions during the baseline phase of the study will ideally occur during a mix of direct instruction and independent work. Direct observation will be collected three times per week for two weeks or until at least five data points have been recorded.

### ***Intervention***

Before the intervention phase has started, researchers will go over baseline data individually with each teacher to set a goal for increased rates of BSP based on their current rates and what the teacher believes to be possible. The ideal goal for the intervention is a 3:1 ratio of positive-to-negative interactions with students. During the intervention phase, teachers will be instructed to give more attention to positive behaviors in the classroom than negative behaviors by increasing the number of BSP's they use. Teachers will be reminded of their goal (3:1 positive-to-negative interactions) before the start of the first session. After each observation session during the intervention phase, the data collected will be presented to each teacher both visually and verbally as a form of performance feedback. Teachers will be given a sheet that shows their current rates of BSP and their ratio of positive to negative interactions for each session. Teachers will be praised for their efforts to increase BSP and reminded of their goals after each session.

### ***Maintenance***

Maintenance data will be collected one month and two months after the conclusion of the intervention phase. Teachers will no longer be receiving instruction or

performance feedback about their rates of BSP during the maintenance phase. At the conclusion of the study (after the last maintenance observation), teachers will be asked to fill out the BSC again for their students.

### ***Data Collection***

***Baseline.*** To collect baseline data, direct observation will take place twice per week for two weeks before the start of the intervention using the BCIO-R. Student researchers from the University of California Riverside (UCR) will receive training on how to use the BCIO-R prior to the start of data collection. After training, two student researchers will be placed in each of the kindergarten classrooms to collect observational data of baseline levels of positive implementation practices. This baseline data will be used to determine which classrooms would most benefit from the implementation of the intervention and to compare with data collected during the intervention period.

***Intervention.*** Data collection during the intervention period will occur an average of three times weekly for the entire duration of the intervention. One student researcher will collect data in each classroom, except on days when interobserver agreement will be calculated. Approximately 20% of the observations will consist of two student researchers, who will simultaneously collect data in each classroom. During each session, data will be collected for all student and teacher variables listed in the “dependent variables” section above. Positive implementation practices (positive interaction / positive interaction + negative interaction x 100) will be calculated for each classroom for each observation, and frequency of student disruptions and aggression will be graphed.

***Interobserver Agreement.*** During the intervention and baseline period, interobserver agreement will be calculated for 20% of observation sessions. For the BCIO-R, an agreement is when observers select the same code within a 5 second window. If the observers do not select a code within this window, the variable is counted as a disagreement. Agreements and disagreements will be tallied and reported as a ratio of agreements divided by the sum of agreements plus disagreements. If interobserver agreement is found to be below 80% for any of the sessions, observers will receive a refresher training for data collection.

### **Proposed Analyses**

To analyze the results of the multiple baseline design, data will be presented in tables and graphs for visual analysis. Classroom level student behaviors (e.g., aggression and disruption) and teacher behaviors (e.g., praise, reprimands, percent positive implementation) will be graphed and analyzed. A paired sample, one-tailed, t-test will be conducted to analyze students' scores on the BSC from pre-test to post-test. The *t*-test will be used to determine whether there is a difference in the mean scores of the pre- and post-tests on the BSC. A power analysis was conducted to estimate the sample size needed to report an effect on risk-status. Power analysis was calculated for a one-tailed paired t-test at significance level  $\alpha = 0.05$ , effect size of 0.5, and a power of 0.9. The result of this analysis was approximately 37, meaning a sample size of at least 37 is necessary to report significant results. The sample size in this study will likely be about 80 (4 teachers x 20 students) which exceeds the minimum sample size required. The change in risk status for each student from pretest to posttest will also be reported.

## **Anticipated Results**

The present study was modeled after several similar studies that also train teachers to use behavior specific praise as an intervention in their classrooms. Though the results from other studies will not perfectly predict the outcomes in the present study, they can give insight into some of the possible outcomes. There are five main research questions being investigated in this study. We want to measure the changes in teachers' use of BSP as a result of regular performance feedback. We also want to measure the changes in student behavior and risk status due to an increase in teacher use of BSP. Finally, there are two research questions related to the social validity of the study to determine whether the teachers thought the intervention was effective and feasible.

There are several studies that can be referenced to provide expected results for the teacher and student behavior components of the present study. Pisacreta and colleagues (2011) and Myers and colleagues (2011) have the most similar training methods to the present study and so will be the primary sources of information used to form the hypotheses for this study. Both Pisacreta and colleagues (2011) and Myers and colleagues (2011) trained teachers to maintain a specific ratio of positive-to-negative interactions (1:1 and 4:1, respectively). In the present study, teachers will be given a goal of maintaining a 3:1 ratio as an ambitious but attainable goal. These two studies also implemented performance feedback on teachers' ratio and use of BSP similar to that which will be used in the present study. Finally, both studies measured similar student outcome variables such as student disruptive and on-task behavior. Another study by Moffat (2011) found that when teachers increased their level of BSP, there was an

increase in appropriate student behavior and a decrease in aggression. Based on the findings of these and other studies that used BSP interventions (Duchaine et al., 2011; Myers et al., 2011; Pisacreta et al., 2011; Sutherland et al., 2000), teachers are expected to increase their use of BSP and maintain a 3:1 ratio during the intervention phase and inappropriate student behavior is expected to decrease during the intervention phase. Specifically, student disruptive behavior is expected to decrease as it did in the study by Pisacreta and colleagues (2011) and student aggressive behavior is expected to decrease as in the study by Moffat (2011).

After reviewing the current literature, there is an apparent shortage of studies that measure students' risk status for EBD both before and after an intervention. However, one related study implemented small group social behavioral intervention with students at-risk of developing EBD (Cheney et al., 2008). Risk status for EBD was measured both before and after the intervention and Cheney and colleagues (2008) concluded that over 50% of students reduced their risk status and the intervention helped prevent the development of emotional and behavioral disorders.

Anticipated results for the social validity component of this intervention can be based on a study by Thompson and colleagues (2012). Thompson and colleagues (2012) used a social validity questionnaire to measure teacher's perceptions of the effectiveness and feasibility of the intervention. All participants in the study indicated that BSP is an effective, feasible intervention and can be used to increase appropriate student behavior. Based on these results, it is reasonable to assume that teachers in the present study will have similar attitudes about the social validity of this study.

## **Discussion**

Research on early intervention for students who are at-risk of developing EBD is much less prevalent than research on students who already have the label. The present study is meant to extend research on early BSP interventions for students at-risk of developing EBD and on performance feedback as an intervention. Research in this area is an important step in combating the negative outcomes that students who have, or are at-risk of developing, EBD. Most serious behavior problems develop in early childhood and can persist throughout the lifetime without appropriate early intervention. Young children are more responsive to intervention than older students, and the effects of early intervention are more likely to be long lasting than intervention that begins later.

The results of this study are expected to support the idea that performance feedback can be used to increase teachers' use of BSP in the classroom and that this increase in BSP will result in a reduction of inappropriate student behavior (i.e., aggressive and disruptive behavior). Previous studies have found similar results, but mostly included students who already had EBD and often took place in late elementary to high school. The present study will provide valuable information about BSP interventions for at-risk Kindergartners. Additionally, students' risk status on the BSC will be measured both before and after the intervention and the change in scores and risk status will be reported.

Though they are an under researched group, general education students that are in the at-risk category for EBD could greatly benefit from early preventative interventions like BSP. Future research can aim to extend the limited research that exists on early

intervention for students who are in this at-risk category by conducting risk assessments both before and after implementing the intervention. Because of the trajectory that students with severe behavior problems often follow, finding early preventative interventions (like BSP) that could potentially reduce the risk status of those students at-risk would be extremely beneficial.

Finally, the present study collected data on student behavior, but not academics. Effective classroom management practices should improve academic outcomes by decreasing behavioral disruptions (Everston & Weinstein, 2006). Future research could consider adding an academic outcome variable to determine whether this is the case for BSP interventions. The present study aimed to address many of the current gaps in the literature, but there is still cause for future research to expand on these important topics in early intervention for students at-risk.



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## Appendix A

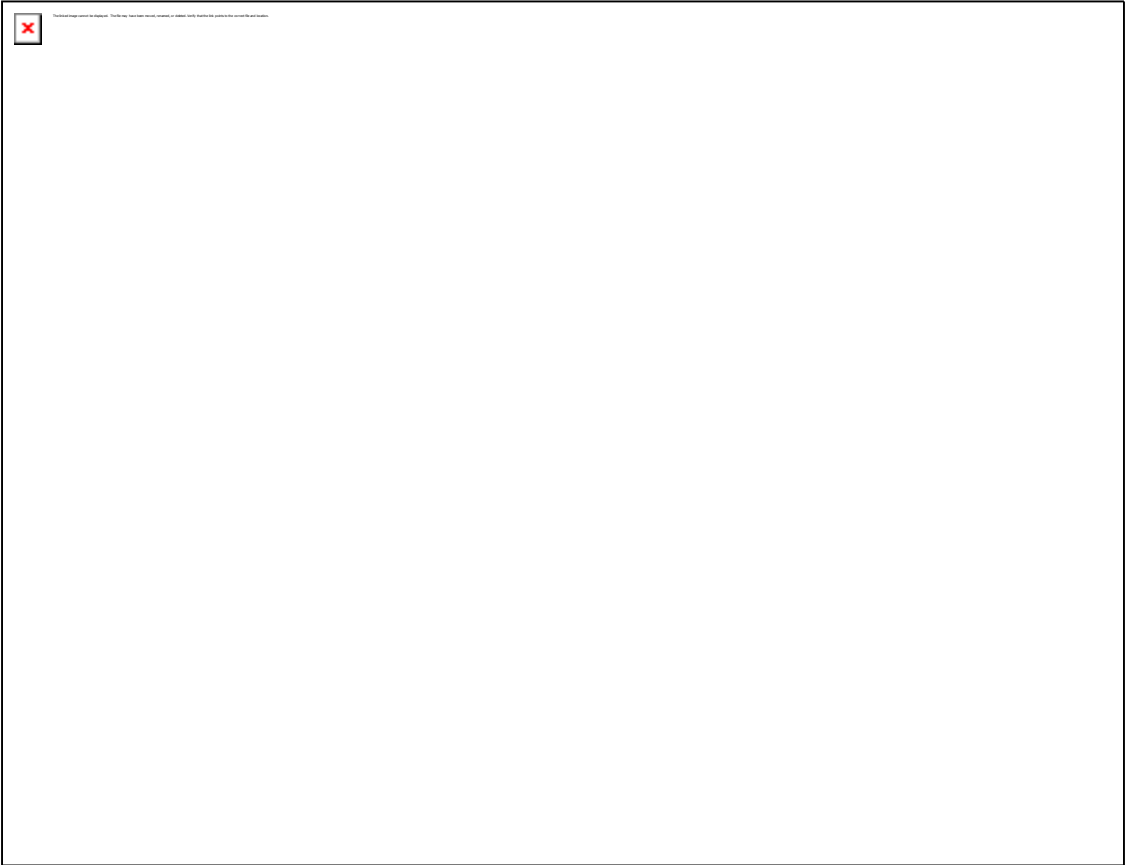
### URP-IR

Usage Rating Profile-Intervention Revised (URP-IR)						
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. This intervention is an effective choice for addressing a variety of problems.	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. I would need additional resources to carry out this intervention.	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. I would be able to allocate my time to implement this intervention.	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. I understand how to use this intervention.	1	2	3	4	5	6
5. A positive home-school relationship is needed to implement this intervention.	1	2	3	4	5	6
6. I am knowledgeable about the intervention procedures.	1	2	3	4	5	6
7. The intervention is a fair way to handle the child's behavior problem.	1	2	3	4	5	6
8. The total time required to implement the intervention procedures would be manageable.	1	2	3	4	5	6
9. I would not be interested in implementing this intervention.	1	2	3	4	5	6
10. My administrator would be supportive of my use of this intervention.	1	2	3	4	5	6
11. I would have positive attitudes about implementing this intervention.	1	2	3	4	5	6
12. This intervention is a good way to handle the child's behavior problem.	1	2	3	4	5	6
13. Preparation of materials needed for this intervention would be minimal.	1	2	3	4	5	6
14. Use of this intervention would be consistent with the mission of my school.	1	2	3	4	5	6
15. Parental collaboration is required in order to use this intervention.	1	2	3	4	5	6

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## Appendix B

### BSC-III



## Appendix C

### BCIO-R Student Code

### **MOOSES Observations System Code Description**

Frequency Codes – Student Behavior	
STUDENT BEHAVIOR VARIABLES	
	<b>Disruptive</b>
<b>disrp</b>	<p>Student displays a behavior that violated the classroom expectations which interferes with instruction that elicits a reaction from the classroom teacher. Typically the teacher must reprimand the behavior for it to be considered disruptive.</p> <p>EXAMPLE: student talks to a peer when not supposed to and peer talks back= disrp without a reprimand</p> <p><b><u>Not considered disruptive:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Academic “call-outs”</b> (e.g., saying the answer before prompted) <b>disruption <i>unless</i></b> there is a <u>reprimand</u>.</li> <li>• Teacher reprimands aggressive behavior. Code as aggressive/ reprimand</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Disruption (no reprimand) &amp; Specific Praise</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Disruption</b> = teacher provides <b>proximal praise related to disruptive behavior</b> of another student [e.g., I see that students are seated in their desk ready to do their work (when a student is out of seat) (code: Spef P, Disrt)].</li> <li>• <b>Specific Praise + disruption</b> = <u>clear</u> teacher is <b>using praise to get</b> students back <b>on track</b>. However, <b>code only once for each behavior specified</b>. EXAMPLE Student is up walking around the room. Teacher: “I like how Kennedy is sitting and ready to work. (Sp)(Disrt). I see Lori sitting and ready to learn (Sp- same behavior). Kim has her pencil and books out (Spef P)(Disrt—student still not at desk ready to work.)</li> <li>• <i>Ex: “I appreciate how patiently you are waiting for others to put their things away (code: Disrt T, Spef P) (student has not put materials away.)</i></li> </ul>
	<b>Aggressive</b>
<b>aggr</b>	<p>Student is <u>physically or verbally aggressive toward objects, peer(s) or teacher</u>. If physical and verbal aggression occur simultaneously code for both (2 aggressive behaviors). You must observe the behavior to code it (do not rely on peer reporting aggression to teacher).</p> <p>Ex: Student makes poking movement to peer with scissors or pencil. Student says “I don’t like you.” “You are mean.” Student hits, kicks, pokes or bites peer or adult. Student throws object in an angry way (not playful). Cursing, name calling. “Student says “shut up.” Student says to peer or adult, “Get away from me.” “You are not my friend.” Any negative words directed toward person.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aggression can <b>occur without a reprimand</b>. It often occurs when the teacher is not looking. If wondering if it is aggression, then it is not aggression.</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>If aggression followed by a reprimand</u> code: Agg and Rep. Do <u>not also code disruption</u> because aggression is a form of disruptive behavior.</li> <li>• Aggression other occurs when <b>obviously aggressive</b> (e.g., hitting a peer, swearing at a peer, flipping off the teacher). Includes <b>relational aggression</b> (e.g., you are not my friend, excluding from groups).</li> <li>• <u>Do not code</u> aggression when another student states that another student hit them or said something aggressive <u>unless you actually observed the behavior</u>.</li> <li>• EXAMPLE Walking back to her chair, student sticks her pencil point into the back of a peers head. (code Agg).</li> <li>• EXAMPLE One student telling another to “shut up” or “you’re stupid”(Agg)</li> <li>• EXAMPLE A student grabbing materials away from another student. (Agg)</li> <li>• EXAMPLE Name-calling between two students. (2 Agg= one for each student). [stupid (Agg), stupid (Apg)]</li> <li>• EXAMPLE A group of students at a listening center wearing headphones, one student keeps turning the sound down, the other turns it back up and they start slapping at each other’s hands and arms to push the other away. (Agg for each child slapping).</li> <li>• EXAMPLE Group of student slapping each other (Agg for each involved) stop for <u>at least 30 seconds</u>. Then, begin calling each other names (Agg for each) <u>and</u> slap each other (Agg for each involved). Code verbal (1Agg) and physical (2<sup>nd</sup> Agg) for each student involved.</li> <li>• EXAMPLE Students arguing during cooperative work, making “angry” faces (Agg for each child involved)</li> </ul>
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<b>Frequency Codes – Student Behavior</b>	
<b>PRAISE VARIABLES</b>	
<p><u>Praise</u> [coders notes: When a praise statement occurs wait until the end of the statement and then quickly code. A praise statement ends when teacher moves on to another group or another topic. For instance, “Keith, good job. (end Gp); Lindsay, your eyes are on me. Good Job. (end Sp)]. String of praise = 1 for each student</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Not Praise</u> = Correct, Right, Correct answer, Right answer, exactly [ indications that got answer right]</li> <li>• <u>Not Praise</u> = Teacher says “I am feeling excited about this.” As collecting papers.</li> </ul> <p><u>Praise</u> = <b>praise</b> is directed to the <b>whole group or small group</b>.</p>	
	<b>General Praise</b>
<b>GenPr</b>	<p>Verbal statement or gestures that <b>indicate approval</b> <u>and do not name a specific behavior</u>. e.g. “Kiss your brain”; “Give me a bam”. Good job. Rings bell to show approval, high five to student, clapping, thumbs up.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>General</u> praise = Thank you; <u>Specific</u> praise = Thank you for raising your hand</li> <li>• <u>General</u>= variations on “good job” Good answer, good question, good remark, excellent answer, excellent question, perfect answer, well read</li> </ul>
	<b>Specific Praise</b>
<b>Spf P</b>	<p>Verbal statement that <b>indicates approval</b> and <i>names a specific behavior</i>. This includes descriptors related to emotional regulation or social skills (friendly, kind, respectful, honest, responsible). Includes behaviors that are referred to that students have learned (body basics).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Specific</u> = Good job using your head. Good thinking, Excellent thinking, Good answering, Thank you for answering</li> <li>• <u>Specific</u> praise is coded when the statement includes <b>descriptors related to emotional regulation and social</b> skills (e.g., friendly, kind, honest, helpful, etc). Ex: “Thanks for being so friendly.”; “That was so friendly”</li> <li>• <u>Specific</u> praise is coded <b>when previously stating behavior want to see, then acknowledge those who are doing that behavior</b>. = <i>I am looking for tables with body basics. I see table 1 has it. (Spf P) Jamie has it (Spf P). Jamie’s group has it (Spf P). This class is really good at body basics (Spf P). Thank you (GenO). I need everyone attention. I can see Yolanda is ready (Spf P). Maggie’s eyes are on me (Spf P). Jonah is focused (Spf P).</i></li> </ul> <p><u>Examples</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bubba has his eyes on me (Sp).</li> <li>• I appreciate the way you raised your hand (Sp.)</li> <li>• I’m looking for Assembly Basics. Bubba has assembly basics (Sp), so does Wendy (Sp), and Keith (Sp), and Heather (Sp). Lindsay has Assembly basics (Sp).</li> <li>• Guys on task = SPEF P</li> <li>• Table 3 is working quietly (Sp).</li> <li>• You all did a good job moving quietly through the hall (Spf P).</li> <li>• Kara is showing me she is ready (Sp).</li> <li>• George has his eyes on me (Sp).</li> <li>• You guys listened and worked hard on this. Give yourselves a roller-coaster cheer (Sp).</li> <li>• Lindsay, Keith, Heather, you guys are on task. = 3 Sp</li> </ul>
<b>ENGAGEMENT VARIABLES</b>	
<p>OTR [coders note]: When students are in small groups or individual student work <b>do code OTRs</b> that are not directed to the target students or students within the group.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>OTR=</b> If a teacher provides OTRs in a small group or individually with any student, <b>code all OTRs to the target and others in the group.</b></li> </ul> <p><u>Addition:</u> if during small group or independent work peers are asked to go to front of room to demonstrate their work (go to board, type up on screen all can see) then this is counted as an OTR regardless if involved target or not.</p> <p>If 4 students are at board working on problems individually then code (OTR, OTR, OTR, OTR); 1 for each student. If 4 students working together as a group on problem at board then code (OTR); just 1 for group.</p>	

Opportunity to Respond	
<b>oppResp</b>	<p><b>Instructional prompt</b> (statement gesture, or visual cue) that requires immediate <b>academic response</b> to teacher. No OTR= opportunities that are <u>written and not displayed</u> (spelling test, workbook completion). OTR= Writing on a white board and holding up to teacher</p> <p>Ex: “Who can tell me what 4x4 equals?” “Raise your hand if you hear the letter ‘a’ in cat.” “Turn to your partner and tell them the answer.” “Roland, read the next question.” Teacher tells students to copy a problem from the board onto their white board and solve it (NOT an OTR). She then signals the students to show their boards (1st OTR).</p> <p><u>Opportunities to Respond</u> [coders notes: When an <b>OTR occurs wait until the end of the statement</b> and then quickly code. <b>Code when student name is called, <u>or</u> at the end of the question when the name is used at the start</b> (e.g., “Keith, tell me the answer for number 2 (end OTR). If <b>no name = wait for response</b> from students (e.g., Tell me the answer to number 2 (pause). Student: “4” (end OTR)].</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wait until student’s name is called for an OTR. Code when teacher provides name.</li> <li>• If <u>OTR does not include name, does not point to a student, or is not clearly asking for choral group responding, wait until a student actually replies following a pause</u> (code at start of student response) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ If <u>teacher asks rhetorical question, but student answers anyway</u>, code as OTR.</li> <li>○ If teacher <u>rephrases question when no student responds</u>, then code the first question when the teacher asks the second question.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• No OTR = Singing / dancing / stretching</li> <li>• No OTR = Spelling test because all written [Code if have to show it to teachers]</li> <li>• No OTR = Singing because just singing; mimicking</li> <li>• No OTR = Videos (not teacher) giving OTRs</li> <li>• No OTR = Do you understand?</li> <li>• No OTR = We are going to do line basics. What do I want to see with line basics? [This is focusing on behaviors]</li> <li>• OTR = Do you understand what 2 + 4 is?</li> <li>• Code an <b>OTR each time</b> a student <b>reads</b> his <b>part</b> from a play or reads from a story. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Reading = Code at the beginning of reading</li> </ul> </li> <li>• OTR= 1 OTR/sentence in a poem ; Reading sentence = 1 OTR</li> <li>• <u>Several OTRs can occur quickly with the same student</u> [e.g., Lexi, read question number 2 (OTR). Lexi: 4+4. Teacher: “What’s the answer?” Lexi: “8” (OTR). Teacher: “That’s right. Good Job (Gp)].</li> </ul>
BEHAVIOR CORRECTION VARIABLES	
	<b>Precorrect</b>
<b>preCorr</b>	<p>Teacher provides <b>specific statement to prompt expected student behavior(s)</b> before the behavior occurs. (e.g. before transition). The teacher must have anticipated potential for problem behavior and make the statement before problem behaviors occur. Direction prompts specific behavior expectation, <u>not academic or content related tasks</u>. [Wait until the end of the statement] Ex: “Remember to push your chairs in before your line up.” “While you’re working, remember to raise your hand when if you have a question.”</p>

	<p><u>EXAMPLE:</u> Teacher is about to transition to teacher led instruction: “Alright we are going to be doing some math problems. Remember to raise your hand to answer. (precorrect).”</p> <p><u>NON-example:</u> Teacher is asking questions and several student call out. Teacher says “Remember to raise your hand to answer. (coded as disruption/ reprimand; the reprimand is the reminder). I like how Lindsay is raising her hand (Spec Praise).</p> <p><u>EXAMPLE:</u> Teacher says “We are about to line up. What am I looking for?” <u>At the start of the first student answer, code Precorrect.</u> Student answers: “hands to self”; Second student replies “space between each other.” = 1 Precorrect.</p> <p>EXAMPLE [Teacher handing out crayons] When you get your crayons, I want to remind you to share your crayons nicely = 1 precorrect.</p> <p><u>NON-example:</u> Teacher: “I am looking for my friends who are ready to learn.” She then sends students who are “ready to learn” to their desk with a worksheet. The reason this is a non-example is because she is not telling them what to do when they go their desk, but is instead looking for individuals ready to transition.</p> <p>NON-example: Here is the math homework. It has addition and subtract. Remember to watch the signs. [Statements about academics do not count as pre-corrects.]</p>
	<b>Explicit Reprimand</b>
<b>exRep</b>	<p>Verbal comments or gestures by teacher to <b>indicate disapproval of behavior</b>; reprimand is <i>concise (brief)</i> in a normal speaking tone. Reprimands always follow a disruption. If you hear a teacher reprimand determine who the reprimand is targeting (target vs other) and code for disruption then reprimand.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Rep</b> = reprimand is <b>directed to the whole group or a small group</b> in which the <b>target belongs</b></li> <li>• <b>One instance in which Explicit Reprimand can occur without disruption.</b> Disruptions always occur before a reprimand with one exception. If the teacher provides a punishment at end of class due to disruptions that occurred earlier during that period of instruction (e.g., makes them sit quietly for 30 seconds before they can leave) this is coded as exRep</li> </ul>
	<b>Harsh Reprimand</b>
<b>haRep</b>	<p>Verbal comments or gestures <b>indicate disapproval of behavior using a voice louder</b> than typical for setting or <i>harsh, critical</i> or <i>sarcastic tone</i>. In addition, any prolong discussion about behavior with students (30 sec or longer) is coded as a Harsh reprimand.</p> <p>Ex: Teacher says in raised voice “I am talking, eyes on me.” (when group is talking). Teacher grabs student using excessive physical control. Teacher says sarcastically, “What a surprise, you haven’t finished your work.” Teacher says “Shut-up.”; “<i>You want my attention. I can give you negative attention, until change behavior</i>”.</p> <p><b>Harsh Reprimands can occur without disruption in instances when a teacher reprimands behavior that did not occur in the classroom, occurred at another time, or are unrelated to current student work .</b></p>

	<p><u>EXAMPLE:</u> Teacher pulls students who are engaged in work to have a <u>prolonged discussion</u> of their behavior during recess (30 seconds or longer) (code HarshRep); While students are working the teacher begins to ask them why no one in the room has ever been able to get a 90% or higher on the reading quiz (code HarshRep), teacher goes over list of misbehaviors from the day the substitute was teaching that last longer than 30 seconds.</p>
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