Evidence Based Strategies for students with Emotional Disabilities

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Learning Objectives:

1. Refresh your understanding of the “Science of Behavior”.
2. Review classroom strategies that support all students.
3. Discuss, define, and determine how to use self-regulation strategies with students with Emotional Disabilities.
4. Remind ourselves to be aware of our own reactions to the challenging behavior of students and the importance of having a plan.
What is the most persistent and difficult behavior in your room?

Who is the student?

What do you know about the student (personally, educationally, etc)?

What does the student do that impacts you, instruction, or other students?

What interventions are in place?
Keep in mind

● Behaviors are Functional and Communicative
● Both desirable and undesirable behaviors have a purpose or function
● Behavior problems are likely a result of skill deficits
● Behaviors in context
● Behavior change takes time and requires feedback, modeled examples of desired behavior and reinforcement.
● Interventions are most effective when implemented early-on and with consistency.

This is the Science of Behavior
What is an Emotional Disability?

IDEA Definition:

...a condition exhibiting one or more of the following characteristics over a long period of time and to a marked degree that adversely affects a child’s educational performance:

(A) An inability to learn that cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors.

(B) An inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers.

(C) Inappropriate types of behavior or feelings under normal circumstances.

(D) A general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression.

(E) A tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems.”
• In order to be eligible for services under IDEA, the student, by reason of their disability, must require special education and related services.

• The definition of Emotional Disability is not a diagnosis or medical term, but rather a term used in the federal education law to designate eligibility for special education. Under IDEA, if a child is found eligible, the student is guaranteed an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) that is designed to meet their unique needs.

As defined by IDEA, emotional disability includes schizophrenia but does NOT apply to children who are **socially maladjusted**, unless it is determined that they have an emotional disturbance.

[Code of Federal Regulations, Title 34 C.F.R., Section 300.8(c)(4)] [Code of Maryland Annotated Regulations, Section 13A.05.01.03]
What is Social Maladjustment?

● Though not defined by Federal regulations, in order to make a diagnosis of social maladjustment, professionals consult the criteria for conduct disorder and oppositional defiant disorder from the DSM.

● Typical symptoms include:
  ○ a persistent pattern of willful refusal to meet even minimum standards of conduct.
  ○ behavior and values often in conflict with society’s standards.
  ○ a consistent pattern of antisocial behavior without genuine signs of guilt, remorse, or concern for the feelings of others.

● Behaviors typically occur in response to consequences. (ex: told no, loss of privileges).
Types most commonly seen in schools

- Mood Disorders
  - Bipolar, Depression, DMDD
- Anxiety Disorders
  - GAD, OCD, PTSD
- Psychotic Disorders
  - Schizophrenia, Schizoaffective
Where does an emotional Disability come from?

Physiological factors

- Genetic history
- Brain chemistry (clinical diagnosis of any number of disorders)

Environmental Factors

- Neglect
  - Malnutrition, personal care, hygiene, lack in parenting skills
- Trauma- (i.e. physical, emotional, sexual abuse)
- Life circumstances
Impact on a student’s daily life

- An emotional disability is a condition that may disrupt a person's ability to relate to others, while impacting their feelings, mood, and daily functioning.

- Children with an emotional disability may exhibit distorted thinking, excessive anxiety, or abnormal mood swings. (i.e. self-regulation)

- Disability interferes with student’s ability to function in an educational program using traditional instructional materials and techniques.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CN_Zfgxg0Aw
### What can Emotional Disability look like?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Externalizing Behaviors</th>
<th>Internalizing Behaviors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Verbal/physical aggression</td>
<td>Anxious behaviors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hyperactivity</td>
<td>Withdrawal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psycho-motor movements</td>
<td>Depressed behaviors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rule-breaking behavior</td>
<td>Inattention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oppositional behavior</td>
<td>Perfectionistic tendencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sudden mood changes</td>
<td>Shutting down/unresponsive</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Under-reactive behaviors</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6 Evidence based strategies to support All students
Evidence Based Classroom Management Strategies:

1. **Establish** routines early and maximize **structure** in your classroom.

2. **Establish** a **relationship** with your students (i.e. Greet them everyday, learn about who they are)

3. **Post**, teach, review, monitor, and **reinforce** a small number of **positively stated expectations** (rules).

4. **Actively engage** students in observable ways and make sure to decrease down time.

5. **Establish** a continuum of strategies to **acknowledge appropriate behavior** and provide positive praise and reinforcement EVERYDAY (5:1 ratio).

6. **Establish** a continuum of strategies to **respond to inappropriate behavior**.
Whose Problem is it?

• http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=eRijTGgOvlY
When responding to inappropriate behavior:

- Remain calm and be aware of your body language when addressing behavior.
- Enforce the rules with predictability in a calm and confident manner.
- Even when a student is in crisis always respond with respect and unconditional positive regard.
- Use redirection with activities, conversation or location when a challenging behavior is beginning to occur.
- Show displeasure with behaviors NOT the student.
- Refer to established visual or verbal cues as reminders for inappropriate behaviors.
- Reinforce the opposite behavior when it is observable in other students ("I'm looking for students who are ___." "I see ___ who is listening").
- Use proximity control. Be aware of your physical location (in the room, in relation to the student).
- Deliver unhappy feedback quietly and move quickly and calmly to control misconduct.
What do students with an Emotional Disability need?

Self Regulation

Physical
Emotional
Cognitive
What is physical regulation?

When the physical response is triggered:

- The Lower brain is engaged
- Body is ready for action
- Performance requiring thought is compromised
  - Problem Solving
  - Learning
- What types of behaviors may be observed?
**Activity**

How does physical regulation relate to?

- Relationships (peer or student-teacher)
- Academic engagement
- Work completion
- Access to the school environment
Physical regulation

Learning Goals-
- Physical signs and symptoms (i.e. warning signs, “the alarm”)
- Calming techniques

Outcome-
- Learn to Moderate the Fight/Flight/Freeze Response
- Restore to body baseline

Strategies Include-
- Patterned/Rhythmic movements
- Stretching
- Breathing & relaxation
- Create Predictability
- Distraction
Physical Strategies

- Recognize physical signs and interrupt it
- Drill like safety drills

Examples:
- My warning signs
- Animal stretches
- Melting freeze
- Safe place
- Qi Gong, Yoga, Tai Chi  [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uMctuDEvCOY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uMctuDEvCOY)
What is emotion regulation?

Emotional regulation is a term used to describe a person’s ability to effectively manage and respond to an emotional experience. People unconsciously use regulation strategies to cope with difficult situations. (Ex. talking with friends, therapy, taking a break, exercising, meditating)

When an emotional response is triggered in students that have poor regulation, often times the strategies they use to attempt to regulate are unhealthy.

- Self-Injury
- Physical Aggression
- Verbal Aggression
- Avoidance or withdrawing
Activity

How does emotional regulation relate to?

- Relationships (peer or student-teacher)
- Academic engagement
- Work completion
- Access to the school environment
**Emotional Regulation**

**Learning Goals**-
- Identify and label feelings
- Developing expressive outlets
- Ownership and control of emotions

**Outcome**-
- Accurately identify emotional states in self and others
- Accept responsibility for feelings
- Express feelings in healthy and appropriate ways

**Strategies**-
- Feelings Playlist
- Emotional Safe
- Emotional Bingo
- Emotion Charades

This video would be helpful in teaching students to pair facial expressions with emotions, as well as, labeling. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UjZzdo2-LKE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UjZzdo2-LKE)
Emotional Strategies

- Reflect the feelings you see and provide a language of emotions.
- Talk about emotional experiences and support accurate labeling of feelings.
- Anticipate and plan for self-regulation by providing a healthy outlet for expression.
- Listen without judgement and teach ownership of feelings. (You can’t make me laugh)
- Praise successful self-regulation.
- Mirroring

Videos like this one could be a great introduction to helping students identify a difficult feeling like embarrassment. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=Yr1wc4khkGM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=Yr1wc4khkGM)
What is Cognitive regulation?

The goals of cognitive regulation are:
- Problem-solving
- Planning and organization
- Insight and understanding
- Forming healthy beliefs about ourselves and the world around us

When a cognitive response is triggered you may hear things such as:
- “I can’t control myself.”
- “It’s just my Bi-Polar.”
- Rigid, inflexible thinking.
How does Cognitive Regulation relate to:

- Relationships (peer or student-teacher)
- Academic engagement
- Work completion
- Access to the school environment
Cognitive Regulation

**Learning Goals-**
- Develop insight into motives for behavior (function)
- Plan and organize reinforcement schedule
- Healthy vs. Unhealthy thinking
- Healthy beliefs about ourselves and the world

**Outcome-**
- Increase Problem Solving Skills
- Develop Planning and Organization Skills
- Gain insight and understanding
- Enhance Goal directed behaviors

**Strategies-**
- Specific training to problem areas
- Learning about patterns of behaviors
- Healthy vs. unhealthy thinking
Cognitive Strategies

- Organizational Tools
- Teach a concrete problem solving model
- Consequence Mapping/Decision Making Visual
- Use of daily schedules or task checklists
- Use of a timer
- Planning specific thoughts
- Visualizing a desired outcomes
- Positive self talk

positive thoughts generate positive feelings and attract positive life experiences
Teaching the problem-solving process to children

Children who are old enough to think abstractly (from around 12) can be taught the problem solving process directly, using real-life examples and 'live applications' to illustrate the process.

Younger children will learn best by having the process demonstrated repeatedly by adults to help them solve their day-to-day social and other problems.
Refer back to the student you identified earlier. Reflect on and discuss how you will support the student, keeping in mind the Six Evidence Based Strategies, and Self-Regulation.
**Conclusion**

**Physical**
- Learn Warning Signs
- Get Safe
- Calming strategy

**Emotional**
- Label
- Own
- Express healthily

**Cognitive**
- Identify and Challenge unhealthy thinking
- Plan to change unhealthy patterns
- Learn problem solving steps
Feedback survey

By the end of the week, you will receive an email containing a link to a survey on this professional learning session. Please take a few minutes to fill it out and let us know how you felt about the training.

Thank you!

Sincerely,

The Behavior Intervention and Supports Team


1) Establish routines early and maximize structure

- Build predictability within the daily routine when possible; “prime” students ahead of time for changes in routine and/or expectations.
- Apply county, school and classroom rules fairly, consistently and immediately.
- Refer to established classroom rules and consequences, de-personalize the problem.
- Be familiar with individual behavior plans and contracts and be prepared to implement them.
- Use specific praise-feedback; address the work not the person.

- When verbally addressing challenging behavior state specifically what the student should be doing.
- Provide an adequate level of support and supervision across all settings.
- Understand the cycle of a behavior crisis.
- When possible provide student with a structured, pre-planned way out of an escalating situation.
- If at all possible, avoid confronting students in front of a group. A private conversation communicates respect and helps to avoid embarrassment to prevent a power struggle.
- Avoid power struggles, they are not productive and they undermine your ability to set limits and gain compliance.
2) Establish a relationship with your students

How?

- Show your pleasure and enjoyment of students.
- Greet them by name each day at the door or in the hallway.
- Interact with students in a responsive and respectful manner.
- Offer students help (e.g., answering questions in timely manner, offering support that matches students' needs) in achieving academic and social objectives.
- Help students reflect on their thinking and learning skills.
- Know and demonstrate knowledge about individual students' backgrounds, interests, emotional strengths and academic levels.
- Avoid showing irritability or aggravation toward students- QTIPP
- Acknowledge the importance of peers in schools by encouraging students to be caring and respectful to one another.
- Model a professional and respectful atmosphere
3) Post, Teach, Review, Monitor, and Reinforce Expectations

- Actively teach students socially and behaviorally appropriate skills while providing opportunities for the students to exhibit the appropriate behaviors. Identified expectations are posted and are explicitly and systematically taught and reinforced.
4) Actively Engage Students in Observable Ways

- Utilizing a variety strategies occurring on a continuum ranging from least to most restrictive in response to the inappropriate behavior is related to increased student productivity and improved student self-control.
5) Use a continuum of strategies to acknowledge appropriate behavior

- Utilizing a variety of strategies occurring on a continuum ranging from the least to the most intensive in order to acknowledge appropriate behavior are related to increased student productivity and improved student self-control.
6) Use a Continuum of Strategies to Respond to Inappropriate Behavior

- Utilizing a variety strategies occurring on a continuum ranging from least to most restrictive in response to the inappropriate behavior is related to increased student productivity and improved student self-control.