

INTRODUCTION

This booklet was designed to introduce you to the Behavioral Skills Program at McDonald Elementary.

First, we would like to introduce the staff that works with our program at McDonald. The BD consultants on staff are **Angie Bay** and **Jean Culey**. **Kim Cooper** and **DeAnn Smith** are the Program Facilitators, **Robyn Henke** and **Tonya Townsend** are the School Psychologists working with the staff and students. We will have a paraeducator in the classroom for support. The administrator overseeing the program is Principal **Mary Derby**. Our students will benefit from our low student-adult ratio by receiving more opportunities for much needed one-on-one assistance.

Class sizes vary throughout the year. The number of students is typically kept between 6 and 10. With smaller class sizes, there are fewer distractions for the students and increased opportunity for one-on-one help and intensive work on each student's behavioral needs.

In this booklet, we hope to give you information about the set up of our program, as well as behavioral management and modification procedures in place in our classrooms. We will address our point card system, reinforcements and rewards given, time out procedures, inclusionary guidelines, social skills instruction and other services provided through our program.

We encourage any team member (staff, parent, or guardian) considering our program to visit, observe and ask the staff questions. Our phone number at McDonald is: **308-535-7140**.

PHILOSOPHY OF THE NPPS BEHAVIORAL SKILLS PROGRAM

The North Platte Behavioral Skills Program is an intensive program for students whose behavior is the primary disruption to their learning. It is an option used only when exhaustive interventions have been implemented without success in the student's general education/resource program. If a student is returning from an out of district placement, such as Epworth Village, he/she will be transitioned into the BSP prior to placement in his/her home school.

The program provides a positive environment with clear expectations and immediate and consistent feedback. Strong emphasis is placed on a social skills curriculum, which is taught daily and reinforced in spontaneous interactions throughout the day. Behavioral management techniques are based on behavioral and cognitive theories of intervention. Academic needs are met through instruction planned to fit the student's individual instructional needs.

Occasionally, consequences may be used to help students shape behavior. We will make sure to use a positive approach and our main emphasis will be on making good behavioral choices.

It is important for each student to maintain a connection with their home school. Therefore the student's morning will be spent in the Behavioral Skills Program classroom. The afternoon will be spent in the student's neighborhood school to the extent they are capable. The primary goal of the program is to assist the student in managing their behavior so that they can get eventually return to their neighborhood school.

Parent involvement is a crucial component of the Behavioral Skills Program. Communication with parents is promoted through the daily home/school journal, phone calls and conferences. With parent permission, communications with private therapists and outside agencies involved with the child will supplement the program.

POINT CARD SYSTEM

Target Skills

Students are given two target skills that have been taken from their IEP or individual needs. This will give us a channel through which we can focus on areas of need. The target skills will be on their point cards for two weeks or until mastery. If students are having difficulty with a target skill, there will be opportunities throughout the school day to discuss or role-play these skills.

TOKEN ECONOMY

Bonus Points

Students can earn a bonus point for returning their point card signed by their parent or for outstanding behavior in an area on which they have been focusing. Each bonus point contributes to a class reward.

Turn-Around Points

Students will receive turn-around points for successfully “turning their behavior around”. When a student is upset or making inappropriate choices, it is easy to get on a negative track. By giving the student an opportunity to earn points for appropriate behavioral choices, the student is more likely to continue making positive choices and move on with the day. The turn-around points will be treated as extra credit at the end of the day. This will help the student to earn a higher level reward time.

Comments

On the back of the point card is the “Comments” section where teachers and students can document specific behaviors as they occur throughout the day.

Parent Signature

Parents will be asked to sign the point card and review any comments. The card is to be returned with the student the following day.

REWARD TIME

Students will earn reward time each day. A level system will be used for rewarding students. Students earning 90% of their points each day will be at Level I. 80-89% earns Level II, and anything under 80 % earns Level III. With this system everyone earns reward time, but their performance of the day determines the menu from which they can choose.

Reward time will be 20 minutes of each day. During reward time, students will be able to choose an activity or privilege from a menu of reinforcers designed by the class. The Level I menu will include activities like computer time, desirable games and other reinforcing activities. They may play with their other classmates who also earned

Level I for the day. Level II is made up of activities that are still enjoyable, but not the most sought after items chosen in free time. For Level III, the students have only the limited choices of reading or drawing independently at their desks.

All the adults in the classroom will be available to spend this time with the students when at all possible. This will provide the students with a time to interact positively with the adults. It also provides a supervised time to practice on the social skills involved in interacting with their peers.

“FIX-IT” PLAN

Each student will have two options marked on their card. The first option is the student option. If the student “fixes” the behavior and returns to expected on-task behavior, no further intervention is needed. The second is the teacher-option. If the student is unable to independently regain control of the situation, the teacher-option will be implemented. The teacher will use his/her knowledge of what has worked for each student in the past to guide the student to choosing appropriate classroom behavior. If the student continues with the behavior, further teacher intervention is needed. All options will be followed up by a problem solving activity between the teacher and the student.

TIME OUT

TIME OUT –WASTED TIME

The consequence of a student wasting time is addressed in the following ways:

- A student refusing to work, but is not being disruptive. The student is told, “I can understand that you are unable to work right now. I am keeping track of your time so that we can schedule your work at a better time for you.” Since they are not being disruptive, the student can remain in their classroom seat. Students are directed to let an adult know when they are ready to start the timer. The time will be made up during a time such as the next recess, computer time, PE, library time, or after school, at the teacher’s discretion.
- A student taking longer than 15 minutes in Time Out will receive wasted time for any time beyond the allowed 15 minutes to think and process. For example, if a student takes a Time Out for 20 minutes, they will have five minutes of wasted time. If the student is taking a long Time Out, they are helped by receiving a staff update about how much time they will need to schedule later.

All wasted time needs to be made up before the student goes home for the day.

TIME OUT – QUIET TIME

From time to time isolation may be required when a student makes poor behavioral choices. Time Out is a designated area within the room that will be used to isolate students until they are able to make better behavioral choices.

When a student earns a Time Out, they will be given a reasonable amount of time to walk to the Time Out area. After this time has elapsed, if the child is refusing to go or is continuing to escalate, the adult will say, “You have chosen a Time Out. Please go to the Time Out Room.”

If the student walks cooperatively and sits down in the Time Out room, the door will remain partially open. As soon as the student has regained instructional control the timer will be started. Time will vary depending on what is appropriate for the student. A general rule of thumb is one minute for every year of age.

TIME OUT – RESTRICTION

Time Out-Restriction is used for a student who temporarily needs an environment even more structured than what is provided in the main BSP classroom. It is used as an alternative to out of school suspension. This is used when a student continues to work against the system rather than using the system to get their behavior under control. Behaviors that may result in Time Out- Restriction placement are:

1. Physical aggression toward any staff member or peer
2. A Time Out longer than 30 min.
3. More than three bus behavior problem solving sessions in one week
4. Three or more Time Outs in one day for the same behavior (shows the student is not trying to fix a negative pattern of behavior)
5. Leaving school grounds without permission
6. Other behaviors that would warrant suspension.
7. The appropriate outside agency (i.e. police, Health and Human Services, therapists, probation) may be called if the severity of the behavior warrants it.

The student will not be touched unless they are refusing to walk to the Time Out room or their behavior is dangerous to themselves or others. At this time, at least two adults will escort the student to the Time Out area. If the student is aggressive or refuses to stay in the Time Out room, the door will be secured. When that is not possible, the adults will enter into a physical restraint process. During the process, the adult will limit any verbal interaction with the student to allow the student to deescalate. There should be no verbal interaction or discussion until the student is calm. Again, problem solving will occur between the student and adult as soon as possible after the incident.

TRANSITION PLAN

As a general guideline, when a child has earned 90% or above on his or her point card for 20 consecutive days, and has consistently completed assignments, transition may begin. When the student completes the requirements for transition, the BSP staff will consult with the student, parent and home school staff. The behavioral continuum of services (see attached) will be used to determine transition placement. For example, if the student was in Resource for an extended period of time prior to his/her placement with BSP, he would return to that placement for the first step of his transition. If a student is returning from an out of district placement, such as Epworth Village, he/she will be transitioned into the BSP prior to placement in his/her home school.

Prior to initiating a transition, a conference is scheduled to provide the parents and student with comprehensive view of the student's performance in school. Teachers are also directly involved in developing the student's IEP by giving input before the IEP is written and by attending the IEP conference.

Before the student leaves the BSP program, the BSP staff will take the student to observe their assigned classroom. They will be given a list of things to look for (students raising their hands, paying attention in class, etc). This gives the student a concrete picture of what it will be like during transition and reminds them of the expectations for behavior in the general education classroom.

During transition, communication between the home school staff and the BSP staff is crucial. Teachers will be asked to fill out a tracker that monitors behavior on a daily basis as well as report any academics with which they may need additional assistance. If the student demonstrates inappropriate behavior or is disrupting the classroom, the teacher and the BSP staff will schedule a problem solving session with the student as soon as possible. This helps the student realize that the BSP staff and teachers are working as a team and gives the child the consistency he/she needs. If the student continues to cause problems in class, the team meets again to reevaluate the student's readiness to participate in the general education classroom.

When the student is behaving appropriately in the classroom, the time in the general education classroom will be increased.

We will continue to follow the BD continuum of services during this transition to ensure success at each level.

CURRICULUM

All students in the program will be instructed with the North Platte Public Schools curriculum in the areas of Reading, Math, Language Arts, Science and Social Studies unless a different curriculum is specified in a student's IEP. Students are required to take district-wide assessments with modifications as allowed per the testing company. Supplemental materials and strategies will be used to meet the individual needs and learning styles of each student.

SOCIAL SKILLS INSTRUCTION

A specific social skills program will be utilized with structured social skills lessons scheduled daily. Preventive teaching and individual problem solving sessions will be used as behavioral needs arise.

The following is a list of some of the social skills addressed in instruction and problem solving sessions:

Anger Control	Sharing
Attitude	Sportsmanship
Being an Effective Listener	Following Directions
Citizenship	Problem Solving
Coping Strategies	Accepting "NO"
Effort	Dealing with Teasing
Decision Making	Fairness
Friendliness	Feelings
Handling Frustration	Honesty
Positive Thinking	Manners
Tattling vs. Reporting	Name Calling and Fighting
Respect	Responsibility
Being Your Best	Rights of Others
Decision Making	Rules
Choices	Self-image
Effort	

Social skills instruction and behavior management are both major components in the behavior classroom. Students may be videotaped individually or in small groups. Instructionally, the videotape helps the teacher identify specific skills and provides feedback to students about appropriate and inappropriate behaviors. Teachers may share the tapes with students for individual or class discussion during social skills lessons.

HOME SCHOOL JOURNALS

The students will use a “Home-School Journal” daily. The teacher or staff will write important events of the day, reminders, homework assignments, and other information for the parents

The parents will be asked to write in the journal. The entries could include events at home, reminders, concerns, and questions they would like addressed by the BSP staff.

The Home-School Journal is a critical component of the BSP program. It will provide a consistent tool for parent-school communication and gives the parent an active role in the student’s programming.

In addition, parents are welcome to call and discuss questions or concerns. Calls will be taken between 8:00 -8:20 a.m. and between 1:00 and 4:00 p.m.

SCHOOL VISITS

Parent/guardians are encouraged to visit the Behavioral Skills Program; however a 24 hr notice is required. Parents are not permitted to visit during the first two weeks or the last two weeks of school. All parents and visitors must enter and exit McDonald Elementary through the main doors during school hours. Before visiting the classroom, permission must be given through the McDonald Elementary school office. Visitors will receive an identification badge which they are required to wear throughout their time in the school building.

TRANSPORTATION

Any student who is participating in the BSP classroom from a school other than McDonald Elementary will be transported by the district. Each student’s transportation needs will be determined by the team. Time for pick up will be given to the parents prior to the first pick up date.