A Treatment Package for Improving Playground Behavior Among Elementary Students
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ABSTRACT

Referrals of elementary students who engaged in aggressive behavior on the playground prompted the implementation of a school-wide treatment package as a non-classroom intervention in conjunction with a PBS program. The package consisted of (a) teaching students new playground rules during Physical Education class, (b) providing reminders of the rules, (c) modeling by the playground supervisor of expected appropriate play, (d) encouraging playground monitors to take a more active supervisory role, and (e) training a self-management program for students who consistently engaged in aggression. The effects of the program were evaluated by including these student's levels of aggression and appropriate play and by asking the playground supervisor to rate the recess behavior of all students during baseline and treatment.

PARTICIPANTS/SETTING

Children
3 Boys
2 First Graders
1 Third Grader
Age: 6-9
Referred by P.E. Teachers and Principal
Two P.E. Teachers
Eight Playground Supervisors

School-Gym
Playground (Lunch Recess)
Two grassy fields
Playground equipment

DATA COLLECTION

Observers:

Two primary observers
One on the North (grades 1-2)
An undergraduate at Brigham Young University studying Psychology
One on the South (grades 3-6)
An undergraduate at Brigham Young University studying Spanish and with a certification in Special Education

Interobserver agreement for both North and South ends of the playground
Mean = 96% for all sessions
Range = 83% to 100% for all sessions

RESULTS

Dependent Variables

Physical Aggression
Kicking, kneading, hitting, poking, pushing, showing, tripping, and throwing objects

Verbal Aggression
Name calling, taunting, or criticizing another individual while in their presence

Appropriate Play
Following the five playground rules while participating in an organized activity or while using playground equipment

INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

School-wide Positive Behavioral Support Plan
New playground rules
Teacher reminder of rules
Modification of playground
Playground supervisors trained, prompted, and reinforced

EXPERIMENTAL DESIGN

Multiple baseline across students
Baseline consisted of normal playground behavior and supervision without any modifications
Intervention consisted of social playground rules, playground rules taught in PE, playground supervisor training, playground modification and self-management programs

DISCUSSION

Strengths:

- Functional relationship between independent and dependent variables to reduce aggressive behavior and increase appropriate play behavior on the playground
- Alignment of IEPs and the designed BIP for targeted students
- Systematic replication of Walker et al.'s (1981) and Doughtery et al.'s (1985) research incorporating self-monitoring and a point system
- Ancillary evidence that the program was acceptable and feasible to school personnel

Implications for Further Research

- Participants limited to students with externalizing behavior problems, internalizing behavior problems
- Participants limited to identified students v. all students in the school
- Independent variable was a “package” - component analysis needed
- No systematic evaluation of social validity

REFERENCES


"Walk the peaceable walk"