Improving Teacher and Student Behavior using CW-FIT in a Middle School Special Education Classroom

Introduction
- Coercive responses to misbehavior are ineffective and can do more damage than good.
- Many middle school general and special education teachers do not know how to promote positive behavior.
- Positive Behavior Support (PBS) promotes the use of teaching and explaining behavior, positive reinforcement, and extinguishing problem behavior.
- Class-wide Function-related Intervention Teams (CW-FIT) is a PBS package that is implemented at the universal level. It includes social skills training, teacher praise, and contingent points that are exchanged for group rewards.
- The present study sought to examine the effects of CW-FIT on a middle school self-contained classroom using a single-subject reversal design.

Methods

Participants and Setting
- 1 self-contained classroom
- 1 Title I school
- 12 students with Intellectual Disability
- 11 typically-developing peer tutors

Procedures
- As part of CW-FIT, the teacher teaches social skills and then pre-corrects on the skills at the beginning of the class period
- The students and teachers decide on the group reward and how many points are needed
- Students are organized into teams
- A timer beeps every 3-5 minutes and the teacher gives points to teams in which all students are following classroom expectations
- If the teacher gives the predetermined reward
- Teacher praise to reprimand ratios should be approximately 4:1

Question 1: What impact does CW-FIT have on students’ on-task behavior?

Group On-Task Means
- Baseline Average: 67.8%
- When CW-FIT was introduced this increased to 77.1%
- Reversal average decreased to 68.4%
- When CW-FIT was reintroduced, the on-task average increased to 88.4%
- Statistically significant differences in on-task rates between baseline and intervention phases (\(\tau_u = .81, p < .001\))

Question 2: What impact does CW-FIT have on teacher praise and reprimand ratios?

- The teacher was taught to praise and give points whenever the timer went off throughout the CW-FIT session.
- The timer was audible during the first intervention and silent during the second, due to the teacher’s observation that students were primarily on-task only when the timer sounded.
- Praise was significantly higher during intervention (\(\tau_u = .6, p < .05\))
- Praise to reprimand ratios during baseline phases were between 1:1
- 1.5:1, during intervention phases these increased to 3:1 and 6:1

Question 3: Can a middle school special education teacher implement CW-FIT with fidelity?

- Overall fidelity was 94.9%
- Highest fidelity (100%)
  - Pre-corrects on skills at beginning of session
  - Timer used & set at appropriate intervals
  - Giving frequent praise and points
- Lower fidelity (91%)
  - Corrections are instructive and refer to skills
  - Points are announced before the reward is given

Question 4: Do teachers and students find CW-FIT to be socially valid?

Teacher | Students
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Likes | Likes
- Explicitly teaching reviews
- Reminders to give praise and points
dislikes | Dislikes
- Audible timer
- Different social skills than she would have chosen

Implications
- CW-FIT is an effective easy-to-implement, class-wide behavior management system.
- CW-FIT can be implemented with an audible or silenced timer to remind the teacher to give points and praise.
- This study indicated promising results for middle school special education self-contained classrooms, though replications are needed in other special education classrooms.

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