

---

# Introduction

**B**ehavior impacts academic success, and academic success or the lack of it impacts behavior. If students are successful in the classroom academically, there often can be a reduction in behavior problems. Acting out and work refusal impact academic success. Students may exhibit behavior problems because they require less effort or less embarrassment than to complete academic tasks.

Inappropriate behavior management and disruptions that result from inappropriate student behavior historically have contributed to school-related issues including reduced academic achievement (Alter, Walker, & Sanders, 2013).

This book focuses on evidence-based behavioral strategies that can be used to increase academic success. The relationship between problem behaviors and academic problems exhibited by students can be complex. Some students first exhibit academic difficulties with behavioral challenges such as aggression. They then receive little positive reinforcement, and the behavior problems increase. They don't progress in academics.

Others exhibit the aggression first, making them difficult to teach, and they fall behind. Students who exhibit aggressive behaviors are likely to develop negative relationships with teachers, and when problematic relationships exist between student and teacher, there is a likelihood of continued behavior and academic problems (Sutherland, Alder, & Gunter, 2003).

Approaches that work to improve classroom environments can enhance the likelihood that effective teaching and learning can occur, both for the students exhibiting problem behaviors and for the other students in the classroom (Epstein, Atkins, Cullinan, Kutash, & Weaver, 2008).

All teachers want to set their students up for academic success in positive ways. Behavior management strategies that are proactive and positive can make a difference in whether the student completes assignments, achieves at his or her level, and feels a sense of achievement every day in the classroom.

Educators want to know what behavior strategies actually work with specific students with challenging behaviors and how to implement those strategies so that students complete assignments and meet with academic success.

This book is designed for all educators as they strive to work with an increasing population of students who exhibit challenging behaviors and work to ensure that their students are academically successful at a time when academic performance is foremost in the public eye. Drawing upon research and my many years of experience in working with students with significant behavioral challenges, this book focuses on 15 evidence-based behavior management strategies and how to implement those strategies in the academic tasks that are expected of students.

Many times if we reframe how academic tasks are presented, students are more likely to complete the task successfully. We know there is a relationship between academic tasks and behavior and we need to utilize what we know about behavior to provide academic tasks that result in achievement.

There are 15 different short chapters with each one focusing on a specific positive behavior management strategy and how that strategy or set of strategies can be used in academic tasks. Some examples are provided for applying the strategies to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS).

Each chapter opens with the definition of the strategy and then provides two case scenarios that depict the actual strategy in action—live action from the classroom. One case shows how the strategy is used at the elementary level, and one shows how the strategy is used at the secondary level. Some of the examples incorporate how the strategies can be implemented with the CCSS.

With the focus on the use of evidence-based interventions, the research that supports the use of each technique is provided so that you can delve more into any chosen topic.

Each strategy provides key points to remember in implementation and how to implement with fidelity. Helpful suggestions for involving parents in the interventions are provided, too.

We want our parents to be our allies, and parents know their children best, so we must seek their input before we utilize interventions. We need to explain those interventions to parents and why we are utilizing them. We can also build a number of these interventions into homework assignments.

The importance of collaboration with other educators is stressed. In today's schools, our students see multiple individuals throughout the day, and we need to work together with those individuals to create a coordinated plan. We never have all the answers and need to work with others when we are determining which of these strategies will work with specific students.

In this era of accountability, we must show that what we are doing is effective with our students, so it is critical that we keep data. Recognizing the challenge of having time to get everything done during the day, this book provides simple ways to collect data to show whether an intervention is successful with a student.

There are also sections that focus on troubleshooting when an intervention isn't working. We may attempt to use an intervention because we have heard that it is effective only to find that the intervention didn't work. The troubleshooting advice assists you in determining what may have gone wrong.

The last section in each chapter is a quick checklist to assist the reader in remembering the key components of the intervention.

Throughout the chapters, there are charts and sample activities that you can utilize.

The book provides a tool kit that you can use when determining what to do when you are faced with students with challenging behaviors who are not achieving successfully. As you become familiar with the strategies, you can match the needs of the individual student or students with the strategy that might be most effective. One intervention will not work with all students, but among the 15, you will be able to get a better picture of what might work best. You will also note that some interventions can be used together with other interventions.

Read on to become familiar with a variety of behavior management strategies that will help your students achieve academically.