

Good Behavior Game

WHAT IS IT? The Good Behavior Game (GBG) is a user-friendly, preventative intervention that is applied class-wide. The purpose of the game is to reduce disruptive behaviors during academic periods while increasing on-task behavior. The components of the GBG are based on sound behavioral principles (i.e., differential reinforcement of low rates of behavior, clear expectations, monitoring of behavior, and frequent feedback) that are not age limited (Mitchell, Tingstrom, Dufrene, Ford, & Sterling, 2015).

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?



- Easy-to-implement intervention with demonstrated effectiveness in decreasing problem behavior (Lannie & McCurdy, 2007).
- Increase in instructional time as the teacher can focus on teaching and less time on addressing problem behavior.
- High acceptability for the intervention among teachers and students.

- It is typically implemented during a 30-minute academic period such as reading, math, group instruction, silent reading, etc.
- This intervention is proven to be effective from pre-school age through adulthood.



WHEN CAN IT BE USED?

HOW TO IMPLEMENT?

1. Identify and define what behaviors are disruptive (e.g., call outs, talking to other students, name calling, out-of-seat, throwing objects). Choose 2-3 behaviors that are most problematic. Identify and define what on-task behaviors you want to occur (e.g., looking at the teacher during lecture, writing answer to math worksheet).
2. Identify reinforcers that will be valuable to the students. Have the students fill out a reinforcer survey by rank ordering their preferences (e.g., free time, school supplies, edibles, five extra minutes at recess, homework passes, extra credit/bonus points). This may increase buy-in to the game.
3. Determine when the game will be played. The teacher has flexibility of choosing what activities and how often the game will be played.
4. Determine the criterion for earning a reward. Gather baseline data to make your decision. For example, when students are divided into groups, if you count on average five disruptive behaviors, set your criterion slightly below the current average (e.g., 4 or less).
5. Prior to implementing the Good Behavior Game, explain the rules of the game to the class. For example, raise your hand and wait to be called on; keep hands, feet, and objects to self; remain in seat. Tell the students the criterion for earning a reward.

6. Divide the class into equal teams (e.g., 2 or more). Balance the teams to ensure each team has a chance to succeed. If a team breaks a rule, the teacher reminds the team the behavior he/she would like to see instead. For example, if a student on Team 2 calls out an answer instead of raising his hand, the teacher could respond by saying, "Team 2, I am looking for hand's raised when answering questions."
7. Start the game, set a timer, record data, and REWARD: Set a timer or clearly state when the game will start and end. For secondary learners, it may be more age respective to call the game a "competition". Record data by adding a tick mark next to the team's name when a rule is broken. We want low scores! The teams that meet criterion earn a reward.
8. It is important not to single out one student's behavior when playing the Good Behavior Game. Focus on what behaviors you want the students to engage in instead, and remain neutral when giving a team a mark for breaking a rule.
9. Keep record of the teams that earn rewards. If you observe that a team doesn't often earn rewards, investigate the barriers. Team members may need to be split up and changed to a different team or a particular student that may need an individualized reinforcement program that doesn't penalize the rest of the group.
10. Have fun and praise, praise, praise! This game is meant to be fun for all involved, including the teacher. Be enthusiastic and provide behavior specific praise by telling students what behaviors they are doing well. For example, "Wow! You are sitting there so quietly." This will increase the probability of those behaviors increasing in the future.

References

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