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ABSTRACT

This action research project describes an intervention to increase attending and on-task behaviors in first- and second-grade students. The problem of inattentive behaviors was documented by means of teacher, student, and parent surveys and teacher observations. The intervention used behavioral management, organizational strategies, role playing, and cooperative grouping to increase attending and on-task behaviors. Post-intervention data indicated that targeted students demonstrated an improvement in their attending and on-task behaviors. (Six appendices contain surveys and checklists. Contains 26 references.)

A STUDY OF INTERVENTIONS AND STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE ATTENDING BEHAVIORS IN FIRST AND SECOND GRADE STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

This report describes a program to increase attending and on task behaviors in students. The targeted population consisted of first and second grade students in a regular education and resource setting. The school was located in a suburban community outside of a major metropolitan center. The problem of inattentive behaviors was documented with teacher, student and parent surveys and teacher observations.

Analysis of probable cause data indicated that factors such as neurological, psychological and genetic issues, environmental influences, family dynamics, social relationships and the learning environment influenced and contributed to the problem.

A review of solution strategies suggested in the research, combined with the need evidenced in the setting, resulted in the development of behavioral and organizational plans as well as activities that model and monitor attending behaviors. In addition, there was implementation of communication with parents to facilitate student organization.

Post-data indicated that targeted students demonstrated an improvement in their attending and on task behaviors as a result of the interventions and strategies implemented throughout the project.

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CHAPTER 1

PROBLEM STATEMENT AND CONTEXT

General Statement of the Problem

The targeted students of the first and second grade multiage classroom and the first and second grade learning disability and behavior disorder resource program exhibit inattentive behaviors that interfere with the ability to remain on task. These students include both formally identified and unidentified inattentive behaviors. The evidence of the existence of the problem includes teacher surveys, parent surveys, student surveys and teacher checklists.

Immediate Problem Context

The school used in the following research is a kindergarten-second grade building. The following information is taken from the 1998 school report card.

This district serves 1,716 students, 349 of which are housed in the school. The students in this district are predominately white. Table 1 shows the racial background and total enrollment of the school.

Table 1

Racial/Ethnic Background and Total Enrollment

	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian	Native American	Total Enrollment
School	78.8%	2.0%	8.6%	10.6%	0.0%	349
District	84.3%	1.6%	5.7%	8.2%	0.2%	1716

There are few students from a limited English proficient setting and fewer from low-income families. Table 2 indicates these percentages. The school's enrollment of low-income and limited English proficient students is slightly higher than the district percentages.

Table 2

Low-Income and Limited English Proficient

	Low-Income	Limited English Proficient
School	6.6%	10.9%
District	5.5%	5.9%

The district has a high attendance rate with little student mobility. The school also has a high attendance rate, however the student mobility rate is slightly higher than the district. The district and school have no chronic truancy. Table 3 reflects these percentages.

Table 3

Attendance, Mobility and Chronic Truancy

	Attendance	Student Mobility	Chronic Truancy
School	95.3%	10.6%	0.0%
District	96.0%	6.2%	0.0%

There are 15 single teacher classrooms in the school: 1 early childhood, 3 kindergarten, 4 first grades, 3 second grades, and 4 first and second grade multiage rooms. There is a resource center with a computer lab which serves 25 students. All specialists and resource teachers have their own individual rooms. The school building itself is approximately 30 years old and was refurbished eight years ago

which resulted in a new gym and resource center expansion.

The kindergarten and the first and second grade programs differ. Kindergarten students receive 25 minutes of gym per week. Music and art are taught by the classroom teacher. First and second grade students receive 90 minutes of gym, 40 minutes of art and 50 minutes of music per week. Identified students are served by full time teachers specializing in Title 1, Learning Disabled/Behavior Disordered resource, speech and language, English as a Second Language, and a part-time social worker. In order to ensure that all programs continue to provide an optimum level of service, the administrative board is moving to enlist the support of community members, through referendums and improving community involvement in the schools.

The Surrounding Community

The school is part of a small Midwest suburban school district, 20 miles outside of a major metropolitan center. As of the 1990 census, the population of the school community is 15,239. Housing ranges in price from $40,000 for the less expensive condominiums to $450,000 for the higher price single-family homes. The district serves four local communities, which are comprised of light industry, single-family homes, townhomes, and apartments. Various racial and ethnic backgrounds make up this community of professionals and blue-collar workers. Average per household income for the surrounding communities is $43,101. The district is made up of one middle school, one K-5 building, one K-2 building and one 3-5 building. The teaching staff employed by this district consists of 87.3% female, and 12.7% male teachers, all of white ethnic background. The average teaching experience of a teacher in the district is 12.9 years. There is evidence of teachers' commitment to advance themselves educationally, as shown in Table 4. Approximately one half of the teachers have a masters degree or above.

The administrative staff is made up of eight individuals: a superintendent, an

assistant superintendent, a business administrator, four principals, and one assistant principal. There are seven elected board members who serve for four years. The average administrators salary is $85,896, while teachers' average is $44,348. Expenditure per pupil is $4,042.

Table 4

Teacher/Administrator Characteristics

Average	Teaching Experience	Teachers with BA	Teachers with MA and above
District	12.9 years	50.6%	49.4%

Parent interest in the district and their children's education is extremely strong. The same can be said about community support and involvement in the school. It is now important to examine the scope and impact of classroom attentional issues on a national level.

National Context of the Problem

The prevalence of attentional issues, including but not limited to, Attention Deficit Disorder, has been documented to have a negative impact on a child's behavior and interferes with effective and successful learning in the classroom (Burcham & Carlson, 1993). It is estimated that five percent of the school-age population is affected by this disorder and that, within this group, only one of every three is a female (Gregg, 1995). ADD is currently considered "the most common neurobehavioral disorder of children" (Gregg, 1995, p. 2).

Educators are well aware of the classroom impact of a child who demonstrates inattention and impulsivity, characteristics of Attention Deficit Disorder, with or without hyperactivity. Traditional classroom management and instructional techniques are not as effective with children with ADD (Burcham & Carlson, 1993). Unless new management strategies are introduced, the child is at risk for academic and social

failure. Teachers need to be provided with new strategies for instruction and the child needs to be given new methods to successfully function within the school environment (Burcham & Carlson, 1993).

Many characteristics of ADD can be disruptive, not only to the affected child's learning process, but to the remainder of the class, as well. Recognition of some or all of the following symptoms is an important part of the identification process: difficulty with organization, impulsivity, lack of sustained attention, failure to complete tasks, and distractibility. In addition, these behavioral patterns of inattention may be accompanied by a hyperactivity component which includes excessive talking or activity, inappropriate activity or responses, lack of social sensitivity and restlessness (Pierangelo, 1995). Parents and educators need to be aware of the indicators and search for accommodations to assist the child since issues of inattention and impulsivity can be a major classroom challenge (Lifson, 1996).

There has been, not only increased awareness at the national level, but national efforts to investigate the effectiveness of current practices and programs serving students with ADD (Burcham & Carlson, 1993). In 1991, Congress directed the Department of Education to gather and disseminate information to support educators, researchers and parents in their efforts to identify and accommodate students with ADD (Burcham & Carlson, 1993). Four centers throughout the United States were identified, funded and charged with researching the effectiveness of medication on inattentive behaviors. In addition, a fifth center was charged with looking at programs that appeared to be successful in meeting the needs of students with ADD. All of the centers relied upon parents, medical professionals, researchers and school staff to be part of the information gathering process. The information was gathered and synthesized resulting in six critical issues: statistical representation of ADD students within the general population, assessment, interventions, medication,

resources, and collaboration.

It is evident that ADD has recently received attention not only within the school community, but the public at large. Although indications of the disorder have been around for some time, it has only been in this past decade that ADD has received recognition as a medical condition. Certainly greater public awareness has contributed to increased interest in serving students with ADD. More importantly since 1991, the U.S. Department of Education has required schools to identify, evaluate and provide services for children who fall within this category. It could also be said that through school reform efforts, higher standards have been created for all students and those formerly at-risk for school failure are now provided with new opportunities for success (Gregg, 1995).

The ability to make careful decisions and attend for significant periods is a necessary requirement in the work or business world. Without skills in these areas, individuals may have problems processing the information necessary to make sound decisions (Hartmann, 1993). This study seeks to find ways to help children develop the skills needed to function not only in the classroom, but also as they take their place in today's society. The project begins by providing evidence of the extent of this problem at the targeted site.

CHAPTER 2

PROBLEM DOCUMENTATION

Problem Evidence

In order to document the evidence of inattentiveness in students at the site, teachers surveys, parent surveys, student surveys, teacher observations checklists were utilized.

Teachers Surveys

During the first week of school, 14 teachers at the site were given surveys (Appendix A) in which they were asked to identify attentional issues among their students. Eleven surveys were returned. The teachers were asked to rate how many of their students, in an average year, demonstrate any of the six characteristics of inattentive behaviors using the following criteria representing number of students: zero to five, six to ten, more than ten. The behaviors that the teachers were asked to specifically consider were: restlessness/excessive activity, talkativeness, impulsivity, disorganization, interrupting others, and conflicts with others. The categories of behavior were drawn from research articles that described the major indicators of inattentive behavior. Table 5 shows that the teacher survey results indicated evidence of the existence of the problems based on frequency of occurrence.

Table 5

Percentages of Behaviors Observed by Teachers at Site

Behaviors	Number of Students		
	0-5	6-10	more than 10
Restlessness, excessive activity	63.6	27.3	9.1
Talkative	27.3	45.4	27.3
Impulsive	81.8	9.1	9.1
Disorganized	54.5	36.4	9.1
Interrupts Others	54.5	36.4	9.1
Conflicts with Others	63.6	36.4	0.0

Results indicate that one-third of teachers have six or more students that display each of the inattentive behaviors with the exception of impulsivity. Conflicts with others was less frequently observed than the other five behaviors with only 36.4% of the teachers reporting that behavior in six or more of their students. In contrast, the behavior reported most frequently was talkativeness with 72.7% reporting that behavior in six or more of their students. These results indicate that there was a predominance of inattentive behaviors in most classrooms. Further evidence of the existence of the problem was documented in the parent survey.

Parent Survey

The same behavior descriptions used in the teacher survey were also used in the parent survey (Appendix B). These surveys were sent home to the parents during the third week of school. Parents were asked to rate the frequency of occurrence of the behaviors seen at home using the following criteria: (A) representing always, (S)

representing sometimes, and (N) representing never. At classroom A, surveys were sent to 21 parents, 17 agreed to participate in the data collection and returned their surveys. In classroom B, surveys were sent to 20 parents, 17 agreed to participate in the data collection and returned their surveys. These results, from classrooms A and B, were compiled and presented in Table 6.

Table 6

Percentages of Behaviors Observed by Parents at Home in Classrooms A and B

Behaviors	Frequency					
	Classroom A			Classroom B		
	A	S	N	A	S	N
Restlessness excessive activity	23.5	64.7	11.8	5.9	70.6	23.5
Talkative	47.1	52.9	0.0	35.3	52.9	11.8
Impulsive	17.6	64.8	17.6	11.8	70.6	17.6
Disorganized	0.0	88.2	11.8	17.6	64.8	17.6
Interrupts Others	11.8	88.2	0.0	5.9	88.2	5.9
Conflicts with Others	0.0	88.2	11.8	0.0	88.2	11.8

Survey results indicated that at least 75% of parents always or sometimes observed these six behaviors in their children at home. In both classrooms A and B, the behavior reported least frequently was conflicts with others, with 100% of parents reporting that they sometimes or never observed this behavior. In classroom A, the most frequently reported behavior was talkativeness with 100% of parents reporting

they always or sometimes observed this in their child. This parallels the findings of the teacher survey in which talkativeness was the most predominant behavior. In classroom B, the most frequently reported behavior was interrupts others with 94.1% observing this behavior always or sometimes. In conclusion, in both classrooms A and B, between 52% and 88% of parents reported sometimes observing all six behaviors in their child. This data provided further evidence of the existence of the problem of inattentiveness. Another means of determining a problem evidence was the student survey.

Student Survey

The student survey (Appendix C) was administered the third week of school. In both classrooms A and B, 41 students completed the survey, but only 34 students' families gave permission for their child to be used in the data collection process. The categories of behaviors were the same that were used in the teacher and parent surveys, but the language used was more appropriate to the students' level of understanding. For instance, students were asked, "Do you sit and work quietly when you need to?" which corresponded to the category of restlessness on the teacher and parent survey. Another survey question, "Do you listen when your teacher and others are talking?" corresponded to the category of talkativeness on the adult surveys. Students were asked to rate the frequency of occurrence of these six behaviors in themselves by responding to three faces, which showed a sad, neutral, and happy expression. This was meant to correspond to the always, sometimes, and never categories given to parents. The results of the student surveys are shown in Table 7.

Table 7

Percentages of Students Self Observing Behaviors in Classrooms A and B

Behaviors	Frequency					
	Classroom A			Classroom B		
	A	S	N	A	S	N
Work quietly	88.2	11.8	0.0	76.5	23.5	0.0
Listen to others	64.7	23.5	11.8	76.5	23.5	0.0
Know what to do	58.8	29.4	11.8	70.6	29.4	0.0
Organized	76.5	17.6	5.9	76.5	17.6	5.9
Wait turn	70.6	17.6	11.8	70.6	23.5	5.9
Get along with others	88.2	11.8	0.0	82.4	17.6	0.0

Most of the student responses fell in the always category. Over 58% percent of the students in classroom A responded positively, indicating that they did observe these behaviors in themselves, while over 70% of the students in classroom B had the same responses. The remaining 12% to 42% in classroom A, and 18% to 30% in classroom B, responded less positively, indicating that they never or only sometimes observed these desirable behaviors in themselves. This demonstrates that the students' observations of their own behaviors did not closely parallel parents' and teachers' observations. However, there are still a significant number of students indicating that they do not consistently observe these behaviors in themselves, thereby providing evidence that the problem exists.

To summarize, the results from the teacher, parent, and student surveys indicate the existence of inattentiveness in the research students. This evidence provided the

rationale necessary to investigate the probable causes which will be explored in the following segment.

Probable Causes

The targeted first and second grade students, their teachers and parents indicated that inattentiveness, impulsivity and off task behavior were significant interruptions to their school and home lives. This subject has received national attention and most educators and researchers agree that there are a number of possible causes for the predominance and increasing frequency of inattention in children (Rief, 1993). The major causes generally agreed upon are: neurological and genetic factors, environmental influences, family dynamics, and other factors which may include: social relationships, the learning environment, and psychological factors present in the inattentive child.

Neurological Factors

For a number of years, researchers have subscribed to the theory that ADD has a neurological basis, "It seems that all children with ADD need some form of neurological reorganization" (Gold,1997, p. 6). Recent research, particularly in the area of brain research would seem to support that. Recent evidence has considered the "pathways between structures in the brain as a possible model for the neurological basis of ADD" (Riccio, Hynd, Cohen, & Gonzalez 1993, p. 122). Supporting this is the idea that the transmission of brain messages through neurotransmitters seems to be lacking in individuals with ADD. When individuals are using their brains to concentrate, extra neurotransmitters are released which allow them to focus and block out extraneous stimuli. It is also commonly thought that the lack of impulsivity control, inability to focus attention, and difficulty with sensory input are a result of an inefficient brain function (Rief, 1993). Although this neurological basis is widely accepted and drug therapy is generally the suggested solution, it is nearly impossible to provide

clear evidence to support this and as a result, anyone diagnosing attentional issues in children will have to base their diagnosis on behavioral observations from a variety of sources (Riccio, Hynd, Cohen, & Gonzalez 1993). Genetic factors should also be considered when looking at children with attentional issues.

Genetic Factors

Genetic factors are another common cause for attentional issues. "ADHD is certainly a familial disorder and likely to have a genetic component" (Waslick & Greenhill, 1997, p. 397). It is thought that individuals with ADHD will often have another family member that had similar school experiences and demonstrated the same kind of behavior in childhood (Waslick & Greenhill, 1997). It is common at the site for parents of students with attentional issues to relate their own similar childhood behaviors to those of their child during the course of conferencing with the teacher or child study team. In addition, several families have had several children (siblings A and B, and siblings C and D) diagnosed as ADHD and subsequently medicated after continued concerns about attention and hyperactivity were brought to the attention of the parents and the child study team. Just as many other disorders or behaviors have a strong genetic component, there is the same belief that environmental influences play a strong role in attentional issues in children.

Environmental Influences

According to Waslick & Greenhill (1997), the possibility of environmental influences may account for the increased inattentiveness seen in children. Within this category are factors that would be part of the child's general environment and/or factors that would be unique to the individual child such as a prenatal exposure to alcohol, drugs, and toxins (Waslick & Greenhill, 1997). The affect of these influences further complicates the task of identifying attentional issues in students, since symptoms resulting from environmental exposure can manifest themselves in the

same way as symptoms of Attention Deficit Disorder "a child may be hyperactive or inattentive because of being...allergic to milk" (Armstrong, 1996, p. 42). The possibility of food or environmental allergies as an explanation for attentional issues continues to be explored and debated.

"The role of exposure to toxins...or prenatal alcohol use by mothers can manifest many symptoms of hyperactivity and attention problems" (Waslick & Greenhill, 1997, p. 398). Much information has come out in recent years about the long term effect of prenatal exposure to alcohol, drugs, and toxins on a child's future emotional and physical health. Evidence at the site is shown in a family of two brothers (siblings E and F) who were born with a cocaine addiction due to the mother's use during pregnancy. Both boys demonstrated above average intelligence but extremely poor impulse control and oppositional and defiant behavior. After testing by the school child study team, special placements were determined to be necessary, with one boy remaining in the school and the other placed in an all day behavior education center. The importance of a child's family dynamics needs to be considered as well.

Family Dynamics

There are many current issues affecting the structure of the family today and this needs to be considered when looking at reasons a child may have attentional, organizational, or focusing issues in the academic setting. Frieman (1997) believes that a student's emotional state and academic performance will be greatly affected by the structure of the family. Divorce is prevalent within our society and less than half of the children in United States schools live in a traditional family setting which is defined as a biological father, mother and children living in a single family dwelling. Children with these influences may become attention seekers, distracted or withdrawn. "Many of these children learn to 'save face" by becoming class clowns or using noncompliance

to mask their disabilities" (Fouse & Morrison, 1997, p. 442). Again, as with other causes that may manifest themselves as inattentive, impulsive or distractibility behaviors, it is important to look closely at the effect of other factors upon a child's ability to learn.

Other Factors

A child's background, experiences, and personal characteristics can greatly affect his/her ability to attend in the classroom. It is often difficult to differentiate a diagnosis of ADHD from other conditions because the symptoms often overlap, according to Armstrong (1996). For example, a child that exhibits difficulty sustaining attention may do so because s/he has ADHD for a number of other reasons such as: sensory integration dysfunction, visual problems, nutrition allergies, or simply because the child is exhibiting normal behavior for his/her age. Armstrong (1996) goes on to say that a child may exhibit inattentiveness because of boredom, anxiety, temperament, or many other factors. At the site there is evidence of this with several students. Two in particular, have been brought to the attention of the child study team. Both exhibit attentional issues that have not been formally attributed to ADHD, but have greatly interfered with their learning. The staff, and in one case, the family doctor, have reviewed his learning issues and are not yet ready to label him ADHD. It is thought that his inattentiveness may be due to other factors. This is an area of great importance in the school life of an inattentive student, but is also very complex because of the possible relationship between inattentiveness and other causes.

It is wise to be aware of these possible causes in order to address the needs of the inattentive child. These elements need to be considered when searching for solution strategies to accommodate these students and help them to learn to control their inattentive behaviors.

CHAPTER 3

THE SOLUTION STRATEGIES

Literature Review

A review of the literature reveals several solution options for improving inattentive behaviors and students remaining on task. The solutions are: pharmacological interventions, classroom environment/accommodations and instructional practices, training in organizational skills, providing parents with outside resources, and use of the resource team.

Pharmacological Interventions

Psychostimulants are the most widely used medication for the management of ADHD related symptoms. "When needed, medication makes the student neurologically available for learning and functioning in the home, school and social environment." (Dornbush & Pruitt, 1995, p. 24). These medications decrease impulsivity and hyperactivity, increase attention and, in some children, decrease aggression. It is also estimated that 10% of children with ADHD respond very positively to this intervention and that inappropriate behaviors have reached the normative range (Pierangelo, 1994). The most common include psychostimulants such as Ritalin (methylphenidate) which is the most widely prescribed medication, Cylert (pemoline), and Dexedrine (dextroamphetamine) (Pierangelo, 1994). These drugs alter brain chemistry and thus affect an individual's behavior and mental

functioning, but it is important to understand that they are not considered a cure for ADHD (Hartmann, 1995).

Some researchers feel that Ritalin is the most popular first choice because it is a short-acting agent and can be given when a child needs to be focused, where demands are placed on behavioral control and the ability to pay attention, which, for most children is during the school day (Waslick & Greenhill, 1997). The duration of symptom suppression can range from one to four hours, with an average of two to three hours (Waslick & Greenhill, 1997).

"Many children with ADHD take medication, especially the stimulants Ritalin, Dexedrine, and Cyclert. Two to six percent of the entire elementary school population are treated with stimulant medication" (Gregg, 1995, p. 5). Common side effects need to be considered when medicating. These side effects can include: stomachaches, headaches, irritability, insomnia, and loss of appetite (Rief, 1993). The effectiveness of medication however, is dependent upon how the family chooses to handle the child's behaviors associated with ADHD. Some families will use medical intervention during school hours only, when a child needs to be the most attentive and behaviors need to be in control for learning. Others choose to use the drug intervention consistently while assisting the child with behavior management techniques. These techniques are designed to help the child adapt to his/her disability and succeed in school, at home and with his/her peers. Scientific American (1998) stated:

> Such compounds (which, despite their inhibitory effects, are known as psychostimulants) have been found to improve the behavior of between 70 and 90 percent of children with ADHD older than five years. Children with ADHD who take such medication not only are less impulsive, restless and distractible but are also better able to hold important information in mind, to be more productive academically, and to have

more internalized speech and better self-control. As a result, they tend to be liked better by other children and to experience less punishment for their actions, which improves their self-image. (p. 6)

While the above are important solutions and deserving of continued study, the decision to medicate is not made by the teacher and staff; their role is simply to recommend that the family consult with their physician. However, there is an enormous amount of information and strategies to assist parents and educators with solutions in supporting children with inattentive behaviors. Some strategies and methods that may be useful are classroom environment and accommodations, which would be linked to instructional practices.

Classroom Environment/Accommodations and Instructional Practices

There are some researchers, including Hogan (1997), who feel that it is necessary to guide students to success by providing "concrete visual materials and manipulatives to ensure interaction and improve attention. Preferential seating is also vital" (p. 160). Many children with ADHD experience difficulties in many or all of the skills needed for academic success. Students need cues to help them to start tasks, complete tasks, make transitions, process directions, and organize multi-step tasks (Hogan, 1997). As experienced professionals, the researchers suggest cues such as: teacher use of finger on lips, ear, or chin to indicate the need for quiet, listening, or attention to her. Additional cues might include: individual checklists on students' desks, use of a timer, color coded materials, and posted routines in the classroom.

Teachers may report the child is usually looking about the classroom instead of at the teacher or chalkboard, and is easily distracted by stimuli. Hogan (1997) states:

Teachers must help children with ADHD to develop on-task behaviors. Make eye contact, speak clearly and provide brief, uncomplicated directions. Ask children to repeat directions to clarify their understanding. Use predicable non-

verbal cues such as blinking the lights, ringing a bell, or raising a hand. (p.160)

It is also important to avoid visual clutter as this can be a distraction to their learning (Rief, 1993). Some examples of visual clutter would be: Tightly spaced text, lack of labeling and color coding information, inadequate storage space, and lack of segmenting tasks and assignments. "Children with ADHD need extra space when working on assignments and they tend to need more space for organizing their materials" (Heimburge, 1996, p. 177). Rief (1993) suggests to avoid visual clutter teachers should incorporate: double- or tripled-spaced handouts on dark paper, color on whiteboards, clutter free desk tops, and adequate storage space with labeled bins.

Most ADHD students need "special accommodations to help them learn" (National Institute of Mental Health, 1999, p. 11). There have been many findings that "support the theory that children with ADHD might be helped with a more structured environment" (Scientific American, 1998, p. 6). For example, the teacher may seat the child in an area with few distractions, provide an area where the student can move around and release excess energy, or establish a clearly posted system of rules and reward appropriate behavior. Sometimes just keeping a card or a picture on the desk can serve as a visual reminder to use the right school behavior, like raising a hand instead of shouting out or staying in a seat instead of wandering around the room. Giving students extra time on tests can make the difference between passing and failing, and gives the student a fairer chance to show what they have learned. Reviewing instructions or writing assignments on the board, and even listing the books and materials they will need for the task, may make it possible for disorganized, inattentive children to complete the work.

Researchers have identified classroom characteristics which promote success for many children who have ADHD: predictability, structure, shorter work periods, small teacher to pupil ratio, more individualized instruction, interesting curriculum and

use of positive reinforcement (Hogan, 1997). It is essential to establish consistent routines, adjust the length of work periods, provide the opportunity for small group work, provide high-interest tasks and offer opportunities for students to excel. Lerner (1993) suggests the use of learning aids such as computers, calculators, and tape recorders. These learning tools help in structured learning, maintain interest, and allow a student to demonstrate his/her learning in a different mode. Other interventions that are available in assisting students with ADHD and aiding them in becoming successful with their academics are organizational skills.

Organization

One of the "most common characteristics of students with ADHD is their poor organizational abilities" (Stormont-Spurgin, 1997, p. 270). According to Rief, (1993) organizational and study skills are one of the key characteristics of the disorder. Students need "direct assistance, structuring, and training in how to: organize their materials and their work space, know what to take home and leave home, what to take home and return to school, know when and where to turn in assignments, know what to do specifically during seat work, and what materials are needed and expected" (p. 45).

For the students who are weak in their "internal organizational skills," it is important that teachers and parents provide "more external structure" to help students improve in their organizational skills and help them to become successful in the classroom and at home (Heimburge, 1996, p. 147). Strategies for teaching organizational skills may include providing a notebook or organizer/calendar for students to record important information and assisting with frequent house cleaning of students' desks and notebooks (Fowler, 1992). Teachers must also exercise control over the distractions in the classroom and provide quiet work areas, study carrels, or earphones/ear plugs to block out extraneous noise (Rief, 1993). The following are

some additional suggestions/strategies that Heimburge, (1996) had provided in helping students become organized:

- Attach a "things to do" list on students desks, and help students get in the practice of crossing off items as they are completed.
- Prepare important notices and handouts on colored paper for certain categories. For example weekly/monthly newsletters all in blue, spelling lists in pink, etc.
- Provide schedules and checklists.
- Break down long-term assignments into shorter, manageable increments with teacher feedback to student along the way.
- Allow time for cleaning out desks, notebooks, and folders. Have periodic desk and folder checks. Positively reinforce for organization of work space and materials (e.g. prizes, certificates, privileges such as "no homework tonight passes").
- For some students it is necessary to periodically have another person (adult or student) help them sort through their desks, backpacks, and notebooks.
- Provide certain places (trays, shelves, color-coded file folders) in the room where students know consistently to place completed or incomplete work, and turn in assignments.
- Assign study buddies to help each other. These partners can be responsible for checking each other to make sure assignments are recorded on calendars, and, when absent, to have the buddy collect all handouts, notices, and assignments. Buddies exchange phone numbers to call each other when the other is absent and communicate about what was missed that day in class. (p.150)

Another intervention that researcher McEwan (1998) presented was "The

ADHD Intervention Checklist" to help teachers and other support personnel adapt to the needs of students with ADHD and students not identified with ADHD. The ADHD intervention checklist is used by the resource team to identify modifications for individual students and then provide support for the classroom teacher who will implement the modifications. Adaptations are prioritized, a beginning date is established, and an evaluation date is set to measure the effectiveness of the interventions. "The purpose of using any intervention is to maximize learning opportunities for the student. Organizational Interventions (strategies to assist the student toward independent self-organization)" (p. 4) are one of seven methods designed to support the student with ADHD (Appendix D). Although organizational skills are one of many interventions to help a student in becoming successful, parenting and parent training can be one of the most important and effective interventions for a child with ADHD.

Parenting

In schools, guidance counselors and social workers are another source of providing students and families with help (Lerner, 1993). According to Lavin (1997), it is extremely important that the parents communicate with the schools regarding their child's performance so that there is a unified effort to help the child modify and control his/her behavior. This communication can be done in the form of a checklist, which can provide feedback related to behavior and/or academic performance. This can be tied to a home-based point system which would serve to reinforce what the teacher is doing in the classroom. The advantage to a checklist is that it can be completed quickly and easily.

It is important for the school staff to "show a positive effect for the child with attention deficit (ADD) and/or the family" (Burcham & Carlson, 1993, p. 175). Parenting a child who has ADHD can be an exhausting and, at times, a frustrating

experience. Parents play a key role in managing the disability, "children with ADHD may require more specialized parenting skills than do non affected children" (Waslick & Greenhill, 1997, p. 403). Through parent training, parents are taught behavior therapy techniques to be used that are effective with children with ADHD. In addition, they may meet with a therapist in a group or individual situation and be responsible for readings, homework and the use of reinforcement plans with their child. Effective training will teach parents how to apply strategies to manage their child's behavior and improve their relationship with their child (Waslick & Greenhill,1997). Children who have ADHD need consistent structure and well defined expectations and limits, as these children can become confused about behaviors that are expected of them. (CHADD, 1997)

The CHADD organization has suggestions for parents, on how to parent, and techniques to use. The first technique is "called 'charting' and is often the first step in any behavior modification program" (CHADD, 1997, p. 2). This helps the parent to concentrate on a specific behavior observed and become more aware of their behavior and their child's behavior. "Parents are encouraged to spend 10 to 15 minutes of each day as 'very special time' to help parents focus on being with their child, attending to what the child is doing, listening to the child, and providing occasional positive feedback" (CHADD, 1997, p. 2). Another technique that is taught to parents is how to effectively reinforce the positive behaviors and ignore the negative behaviors.

> Parents are taught how to decrease inappropriate behavior through a series of progressively more active responses-- ignoring behavior; natural consequences, such as not replacing a toy left out in the rain; logical consequences, such as loss of television time if the child leaves the room without turning the television off; and time-out. Time-out is a place where the

child sits quietly in a designated place for a specific amount of time after he/she has misbehaved. (CHADD, 1997, p.2)

Parent support groups give the opportunity to parents to meet other parents whose children are experiencing similar problems and help prevent parents from feeling isolated. Family counseling offers help in accepting the problem, supporting the child, and provide a beneficial home environment. According to Lerner (1993), the family is supported in the following ways:

> Parent support groups and family counseling offer the following benefits: Parent groups help parents to understand and accept their child's problem. Parents experience many anxieties stemming from apprehension about the psychological and educational development of their children. Parents should realize that they are an integral part of their child's learning, development, and behavior. Topics that are popular at parent education sessions include discipline, communication skills, behavioral management, parent advocacy, social skills development, helping one's child make friends, home management, and college and vocational opportunities. (p. 169)

Parent skills are an important intervention but another consideration is the use of various resources and specialists available to the classroom teacher.

Resource Team

Children with attentional issues have a disability that is not physically evident and it may seem that they need to simply behave more appropriately. "Teachers in mainstream classrooms may have little experience with ADD and, therefore, have unrealistic expectations for these students" (Fouse & Morrison, 1997, p. 442). Before the child begins to experience a sense of failure, the classroom teacher needs to consider other possible sources of help in coping with the inattentive child.

The timing of the teacher's request for assistance or additional help is important. "Early collaboration by professionals. . . will help develop a precise learning strategy for the student with ADHD" (British Columbia Dept. of Education, 1995, p. 21).

There are several possible ways that the teacher can pursue help from district sources. For instance, a teacher may know well ahead of the start of school that he/she will have a student with significant attentional issues, formally identified or otherwise. It will be important to meet with the parents, the child's previous teachers, and appropriate resource team specialists before the start of school (Hogan, 1997). By being proactive, a teacher can prepare for the special needs of the student by making modifications ahead of time and establishing an early relationship with the parents. Another possible approach maybe for the teacher to seek assistance as she becomes aware that a current student has significant attentional issues. Some schools offer a Student Study Team, which is a general education function and is designed to support the general classroom teacher as she/he attempts to meet a student's needs (Harwell, 1989). Often these recommendations are based upon documentation related to a student's performance and work samples as well as observations conducted by the specialists. At this point recommendations may or may not be made (Harwell, 1989).

Summary

To summarize, a review of the literature provided a variety of solutions to aid the inattentive child in improving inattentive behaviors and remaining on task. The use of medication has been shown to have a positive effect on children who have been diagnosed with ADHD. It is important, however, that medication be used in combination with other strategies. Classroom environment adaptations and instructional strategies include: the use of visual cues, established routines, modifications in assignments and pacing, alternative teaching tools, and rewarding

appropriate behaviors have all been shown to improve attending behaviors. Organizational skills tie closely to instructional practices. These skills include; the use of schedules, checklists, calendars, work space housekeeping, study partners, color coding, and quiet work space. Parents also play a key role in assisting the inattentive child in his/her school day. Frequent communication, effective training, structure, defined expectations and limits, and natural consequences are all proven techniques to assist parents. Finally, the school resource team is an important source of help for the inattentive child as well as the classroom teacher. It is important for school collaboration to take place before the child experiences a sense of school failure.

The researchers have chosen to focus on organizational skills, environmental and instructional adaptations, and a clear definition of expectations and limits. All of these lend themselves to implementation to a whole classroom group. There is merit to the use of medication, parent involvement and the use of the school resource team, however, these are strategies that apply only to the formally diagnosed ADHD child.

The following segment will explain the project objectives and processes. It will also contain the action plan implemented by the researchers to improve attending behaviors in the targeted classrooms.

Project Objective

As a result of teaching students attentional strategies through behavioral management, organizational strategies, role-playing and cooperative grouping during the period of September, 1999, to December, 1999, the first and second grade students will increase attending and time on task behaviors. This will be measured by teacher, parent, and student surveys and teacher anecdotal notes.

Process Statements

In order to accomplish the targeted objective, the following processes are necessary:

1. Development and implementation of behavioral and organizational plans that promote attending skills.

2. Creation of activities that model and monitor on task behaviors.

3. Implement routine communication with parents to improve responsibility and organization.

Project Action Plan

I. Classroom organizational routines.

- Who — Student, regular education and resource teacher
- What — Introduction of daily classroom routines which will be ongoing
- When — The first week of school (August 1999)
- Why — To help students be aware of daily classroom routine expectations
- How — A checklist on the students desk as a quick reference

II. Work space organization

- Who — The regular education and resource teacher will role model expectations and students will follow
- What — Organization of supplies and writing space
- When — The first two weeks of school (Daily then less frequently as children become more organized. Can be from 10 to 30 minutes)
- Why — To help students be aware of uncluttered work space and an organized desk
- How — Modeling as a whole group and then actually organizing desks individually followed by a partner check

III. School-Home Communications

- Who — Teacher, student, and parent
- What — A weekly communication letter regarding weekly tasks
- When — Every Friday beginning the first month of school
- Why — To involve parents in supporting the child's efforts in school
- How — Using a typed form, child will complete a short paragraph responding to weekly assignments.

IV. Creating awareness for parents of classroom expectations

- Who — Regular education teacher, student, and parent
- What — A student and teacher created list of classroom behavioral responsibilities and consequences
- When — The first month of school (September 1999, 3 times a week - 30 to 45 minutes each meeting)
- Why — To provide a structured framework of expectations and involving parents
- How — Teacher will create a list with students of school rights responsibilities and consequences, to be posted, copied, and sent home

V. Classroom environment accommodations

- Who — Regular education and resource teacher
- What — To provide space for students who need to work apart
- When — The first day
- Why — To provide a learning environment conducive to individual needs
- How — Provide various parts of the room that allow children to work without clutter, distraction, and proximity to others

VI. Visual representation of schedules, routines, vocabulary, number lines, and expectations.

- Who — Regular education and resource teacher

- What Visual for students as references
- When The fall of 1999
- Why To provide a quick reference for students
- How Student created charts, commercial charts, teacher charts, and individual word cards

VII. Instructional practices

- Who Resource teacher
- What Behavior modification program
- When The fall of 1999 - daily about 5 minutes a day
- Why To use as an incentive or motivation for students to complete their assignments, homework, and be responsible for returning their folders with completed homework
- How Using a sticker chart and treasure box

VIII. Cuing students to attend

- Who Regular education teacher
- What Repeating clapping patterns and verbal cues
- When The fall of 1999 (Initially, 3 - 20 minute time periods until a routine is established)
- Why To help children transition from activity to another in organized manner
- How Practicing, what does it look it, what does it sound like, defining being ready

Methods of Assessment

In order to assess the effects of these interventions, students as a class will complete a survey. In addition, research teachers will keep anecdotal records of intervention results and implement the teacher observation checklist.

CHAPTER 4

PROJECT RESULTS

Historical Description of the Intervention

The objective of this project was to increase attending and time on task behavior in targeted students. To bring about the desired changes, the following modifications were made: classroom organizational routines were refined, parent communication related to classroom expectations was initiated and new classroom environment and instructional practices were established.

During the first week of school daily organizational routines were established. Students were introduced to a new routine expectation daily. These routines included beginning and end of the day responsibilities such as: unpacking backpacks, sharpening pencils, getting supplies ready, checking in homework, checking specials schedule for needed supplies, indicating lunch preference and getting their snack out. End of the day routines consisted of: completing their room jobs, packing their folders and backpacks, putting up their chairs and lining up in correct dismissal order. The researchers felt that each individual routine should be introduced, discussed, modeled and posted so that students had a quick reference when they were expected to follow their routines independently. In addition, a desk size duplicate list was placed on each student's desk as an additional reminder.

During the first two weeks of school, time and attention were given to the

organization of individual supplies and work space. The researchers modeled desk cleaning and organization skills. Students were then expected to do this independently and be checked by a partner. This routine was established early and was ongoing through the remainder of the research project. In addition, attention was given at the start of every instructional period to an uncluttered work space with verbal cues and reminders from the teacher.

A deviation occurred during the first month of the action plan. This related to the school-home communication component, which was thought by the researchers to be an inconsistent method of data collection. The researchers preferred to have the interventions be limited to the school setting, so the weekly communication letter to parents was eliminated.

An important component of the action plan was the establishment of behavioral responsibilities and consequences and the subsequent communication to parents of this framework. It was felt by the researchers that the design of this framework should be done by the students in order for them to feel a sense of ownership. The process took place over a week's time and resulted in establishing a "Rights, Responsibilities and Consequences Plan" of expectations. This step was a key component of the action plan and served as a basis for dealing with inappropriate, off task and inattentive behaviors. There was agreement among the students and all contact teachers that everyone had a "right to...learn, be safe and be respected." In turn, responsibilities were defined that supported these rights. These responsibilities consisted of such things as being safe, controlling their bodies, etc. Consequences that were established by the students included: being excused from the activity, missed recess or choice time, a note home explaining the behavior and finally, a meeting with the parents, teacher and child. After the expectations were agreed upon each student and teacher signed his/her name and this was posted as a visual

reminder to be referred to throughout the project and continued throughout the year. Additionally, it was felt that parents needed to be made aware of classroom expectations, therefore a copy of Rights and Responsibilities (see Appendix E) was sent to them. An extension of this framework was the development of a class meeting agenda, which gave students a format for handling issues that couldn't be dealt with through the "Rights and Responsibilities" contract. The agenda was posted with three separate spaces for three separate issues that arose. Students submitted their issues and when the agenda was full a meeting was called. Students were to have tried to solve the problem independently before it became a part of the agenda. When the class meeting was held, the issues were respectfully discussed and the class was part of the problem solving effort.

A classroom environment accommodation was implemented during the first week of school. Space was provided for students who needed individual quiet space in which to work. A desk was provided and students were made aware of this accommodation for them to use as needed.

Visual representation of schedules, routines, vocabulary, number lines, and expectations was a key component of the action plan. This was implemented to provide students with a quick reference to support classroom organization and expectations and to promote independent functioning. The researchers posted daily routines, beginning and end of the day responsibilities, calendar information, daily morning messages, rights and responsibilities, and information that supports the curriculum.

An instructional practice that was used exclusively with resource students by Researcher A, was the use of an incentive plan for completing and returning homework. The motivation consisted of stickers to be put on a chart. When the chart was filled the student then had access to the treasure box. Each student that returned

his/her folder with completed homework assignments earned a sticker.

During the first month of school, the instructional practice of cuing signals was introduced and established by Researcher B, to help students transition from one activity to another or to redirect their attention. These signals consisted of: varied, repeated, clapping patterns, and verbal cues consisting of a "Good morning!" greeting or an "Are you ready?" cue. A new signal was introduced, modeled and practiced every few days during the first month of school.

An assessment deviation that was implemented was the elimination of anecdotal records related to observed behaviors. It was thought that measurable changes would have been difficult to track with the use of narrative notes.

Another deviation from the methods of assessment was the addition of the teacher survey, which was given the first week of school. Six characteristics of inattentive behaviors were presented based on research articles that described the major indicators. It was felt by the researchers, in the pre-data collection, that it was necessary to establish the prevalence of the problem and evidence of inattentive behaviors in all classrooms. In the post-data collection, the researchers were measuring the effectiveness of the interventions in the researchers' classrooms only. The data collected from assessments will be analyzed and presented in the following section.

Presentation and Analysis of Results

In order to asses the effects of the intervention, the following assessment tools were used: teacher observation checklists, teacher surveys and student surveys.

Teacher Observation Checklist

Researchers completed three separate observation checklists (Appendix F) for classroom A and B. These checklists recorded six observed targeted behaviors which had been identified as being major indicators of inappropriate behaviors that would

have interfered with classroom functioning. Behaviors were recorded on three separate dates: September 8, 1999, November 17, 1999, and January 19, 2000. The September checklist was completed before the routines and expectations had been well established and provided baseline information. Two additional checklists were completed in approximately eight week intervals and tracked the changes in 17 students from classroom A and 17 students from classroom B. The results of these three checklists are presented in Table 8.

Table 8

Number of Students in Classrooms A and B Demonstrating Inattentive Behaviors as Observed by Researchers

Behavior	Sept. 08		Nov. 17		Jan. 19	
	Classroom		Classroom		Classroom	
	A	B	A	B	A	B
Restlessness	5	7	4	5	3	4
Talkativeness	8	3	6	2	4	2
Impulsive	9	2	9	2	7	1
Disorganized	10	7	8	5	6	2
Interrupts others	8	5	7	4	5	3
Conflicts with others	2	3	2	3	1	2

Data from the teacher checklist indicates a decrease in the number of students demonstrating observable inattentive behaviors from September to January. In September, the three most significant behaviors in Classroom A: talkativeness, impulsivity, and disorganization were observed in more than half of the students. At the January observation, less than half of these same students were demonstrating

those three behaviors. In a broader sense, all six behaviors showed substantial improvement. The most notable areas of improvement were: talkativeness, disorganization, and interrupts others. From September until January, four of eight students were less talkative, four of ten students became more organized and three of eight students interrupted less. The remaining three behaviors showed less improvement. From September until January, two students out of five were less restless, two of nine students were less impulsive, and one of two had fewer conflicts with others.

The three most significant behaviors in Classroom B: restlessness, disorganization, and interrupts others were observed in a little less than half of the students in September. At the January observation students demonstrated notable improvement in these three areas: restlessness went from seven students to four, disorganization went from seven to two students, and interrupts others went from five to three students. The remaining three behaviors: talkativeness, impulsivity, and conflicts with others improved by only one student in each category. In both classrooms the most substantial improvements were demonstrated at the last observation in January, after the interventions had been in place for approximately four-and-a-half months. Further evidence of the effect of the interventions was documented in the teacher survey.

Teacher Survey

The original teacher survey (Appendix A) was given to 14 teachers at the site for the purpose of establishing evidence of inattentiveness in students. It is important to make the distinction between that purpose and the purpose here, which is to measure the effectiveness of the interventions in the researchers' classrooms only. To that end, we will be drawing a comparison between pre-data collection and post-data collection in the researchers' classrooms. only. Along with that, the information that we gained

from the teacher survey is broader in scope since it provides information about inattentive behaviors for the classrooms as a whole as opposed to individual students. To preserve the consistency among all the data, it was necessary to use the same six categories of behaviors with all of the surveys and the teacher observation checklist. The results of researchers' surveys of Classrooms A and B are in Table 9.

Table 9

Number of Students Exhibiting Behaviors as Observed by Teachers in Classrooms A and B

Behaviors	September 1999		February 2000	
	Classroom		Classroom	
	A	B	A	B
Restlessness, excessive activity	6-10	6-10	0-05	0-05
Talkative	6-10	0-05	0-05	0-05
Impulsive	6-10	0-05	6-10	0-05
Disorganized	6-10	6-10	6-10	0-05
Interrupts Others	6-10	0-05	0-05	0-05
Conflicts With Others	0-05	0-05	0-05	0-05

In looking at Classroom A, three of the behaviors improved substantially. In September, it was reported that between 6 and 10 students were restless, talkative, and interrupted others. In January, it was reported that only 0 to 5 students exhibited these characteristics. The other three behaviors: implusivity, disorganization, and conflicts with others, remained within the same range from September until January.

Substantial differences could not be noted because the survey does not require individual numbers, just a report of a range of students. In Classroom B, there were substantial improvements in two of the six behaviors. The two behaviors consisted of restlessness and disorganization. They went from a September report of 6 to 10 students to a January report of 0 to 5 students. Although the remaining four behaviors fell within the same range from September until January, again notable differences cannot be observed from the survey because individual student numbers are not reported. Another means of determining the effect of the interventions was the student survey.

Student Survey

In the student survey (Appendix C) 41 students completed the survey but only 34 students' families gave permission for their child to participate in the data collection process. Again, the researchers' provided consistency by using the same six categories of inattentive behaviors. Using language that was appropriate to the level of students' understanding, students were asked to rate the frequency of occurrence of these behaviors in themselves translating to A (Always), S (Sometimes), and N (Never). The purpose of the students' surveys in the pre-data collection process was to support evidence of the problem of inattentive behaviors. In the post-data collection students' surveys, the purpose is to compare pre- and post-data to measure the effectiveness of the interventions. The results are seen in Tables 10 and 11.

In classroom A, in September the greatest number of students placed themselves in the always category indicating that they always demonstrated these six desirable behaviors. More specifically, a low of 10 out of 17, to a high of 15 out of 17, responded always to these behaviors.

Table 10

Numbers of Students Self Observing Behaviors in Classroom A

Behaviors	Frequency					
	September 1999			February 2000		
	A	S	N	A	S	N
Work quietly	15	2	0	7	10	0
Listen to others	11	4	2	7	9	1
Know what to do	10	5	2	8	7	2
Organized	13	3	1	8	6	3
Waits turn	12	3	2	3	13	1
Gets along with others	15	2	0	8	8	1

Table 11

Numbers of Students Self Observing Behaviors in Classroom B

Behaviors	Frequency					
	September 1999			February 2000		
	A	S	N	A	S	N
Work quietly	13	4	0	15	2	0
Listen to Others	13	4	0	15	2	0
Know what to do	12	5	0	11	6	0
Organized	13	3	1	11	6	0
Wait turn	12	4	1	12	5	0
Get along with others	14	3	0	15	2	0

In contrast, in February the always responses were reduced substantially indicating that fewer students always observed these behaviors in themselves. The most substantial change was 12 students reporting in September and only three reporting in February that they always waited their turn.

In classroom B, again the highest number of responses fell into the always category with the September survey. The range was a low of 12 out of 17, to a high of 14 out of 17, reporting always to their self-observations of these six desirable behaviors. The improvements in the February survey were less significant in that only one to two students changed their observation of themselves in the always category. In the following section conclusions and recommendations for the interventions will be discussed. In addition, the implications of this research in other classrooms will be addressed.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The research showed that inattentive and off task behaviors can be improved by using a variety of strategies. Based on the teacher observation checklist and the teacher survey, there was a substantial improvement in the targeted students' attending behaviors. All six behavior indicators were reduced from the September observation to the January observation as reflected by the teacher observation checklist data. Additional positive improvement was indicated in the results of the researchers' classroom surveys. Students in both classrooms A and B showed substantial improvement in most of the six behaviors. The student survey data did not parallel the results seen in the teacher observation checklist and the teacher survey data, in that students observed more attentive behaviors in themselves at the start of the project than they did at the conclusion of the interventions. The researchers felt that there were two substantial reasons for this. One was that quite possibly the students were new to the classroom and teacher and were uncomfortable with the

survey process. The other was that there was greater awareness of attentive behaviors and classroom courtesy after the conclusion of the project and that students had a far greater awareness of their individual behaviors, and were thereby, less likely to see themselves as attentive when they weren't. The researchers felt that the interventions were successful and substantially reduced inattentive behaviors. Suggestions for future success will be found in the following recommendations.

The establishment of classroom organizational routines was an important intervention in that it provided predictability and consistency for all students. This organization should be done within the first two to three weeks of the school year before inappropriate patterns of behaviors have a chance to be established. This helped the students to be aware of daily routine expectations and develop responsibility and independence. There was always a visual reference for the students to rely upon after the routine had been discussed and modeled. It was important that there was understanding on the students' part, as well as, practice and consistency. This intervention placed responsibility on the students.

Another intervention was the attention routinely given to students work space organization. This was a two-part intervention. Students were expected to clean and organize their desks weekly after a modeling lesson was done by the teacher. The second part related to ensuring that the work space was uncluttered at the beginning of every instructional or listening period. It cannot be assumed that students have the skill to organize themselves, so the modeling lesson is an important part of the intervention. Again, the consistency of the expectations was the key to the success of the intervention.

The next intervention was one that researchers felt had the greatest impact upon their project. A framework for expectations, behavior, and consequences was developed by the students and teachers. It became the basis for responding to and

handling any issues that arose. It was named, "Rights, Responsibilities, and Consequences," a copy of which was posted, signed, and subsequently sent home to the parents. The advantage to this was that it provided consistency for dealing with issues and the students were invested in it because they were a part of creating it. Eventually the expectations were internalized by the students and gave them a system for handling issues. Often students used this system for problem solving independently with their peer groups. An extension of this framework was the development of a class meeting agenda, which gave students a format for handling issues that couldn't be dealt through the "Rights and Responsibilities" contract. When the class meeting was held, the issues were respectfully discussed and the class was part of the problem solving effort. Parents were made aware of the "Rights and Responsibilities" contract in a copy that was sent home. This again provided consistency of expectations and made parents aware of how behavioral issues would be handled. This framework became ingrained in the whole operation of the classroom and was positively received and used by the students throughout out the project. This part of the intervention plan proved to be the most time consuming initially, but the most beneficial over the course of the project. It gave students a secure, predictable system for dealing with issues and eventually required little assistance or interference from the teacher.

A classroom environment accommodation that was used was the establishing of a quiet space within the classroom for students to use as needed. This supported information in the research that said, that children with attentional issues have a high degree of distractibility. The researchers' discovered that this is an accommodation that benefits many students whose style of learning requires a quiet environment and is not necessarily limited to children with attentional issues.

As mentioned earlier, students were provided with a visual representation of all

schedules and routines. In addition, the researchers provided a reference for curriculum related information such as: vocabulary word lists, number lines and grids, reading strategies, etc. This was done to support students who rely upon visual references to get information and process tasks as needed. Once again, this promoted independence in students and removed the teacher from her role as information provider.

The next intervention was used by Teacher A exclusively with her students. This was the establishment of routine incentives and rewards for returning and completing homework. It reinforced the sense of responsibility in the students, with the intention of having this eventually be positively internalized and not requiring reinforcement. It is believed by the researcher that many students with attention and responsibility issues need to be made aware of the positive response they get when being responsible, before it can become a permanent part of their behavior. Before a teacher would consider this, s/he would need to examine his or her personal view of the use of extrinsic motivators.

Transitioning and redirecting students are always a challenge for the classroom teacher. The cuing strategies implemented such as hand clapping patterns and verbal cuing were helpful in signaling students to get ready or redirect themselves. Again, the importance of modeling, practice, and consistency must be considered when looking at the success of the intervention. It was felt that this was a successful strategy that benefited not only inattentive students, but the rest of the class as well. The researchers felt that non-verbal signals were the most effective in that they varied the sound and stimulus in the classroom environment. There are several recommendations that the researchers can now make in relation to the interventions and data considerations for possible implications for use in other classrooms.

In regard to the interventions themselves, it would be important for any teacher

to consider the time commitment that is required to establish good communication, routines, and expectations. Not only should this be done early in the year, but a significant amount of time must be given, often making it necessary to put aside regular curriculum. This needs to be viewed as a commitment that, although time consuming, will result in a climate that creates a strong learning environment and community for all students, not simply those with attentional issues. Creating a system with predictability, positive communication, and security for students has tremendous benefits, results in less teacher control, and is more student centered.

Another recommendation that has implications for future data organization would relate to the method of collection within the surveys. The researchers chose to use a range in the teacher survey, for example, 0-5, 6-10, and 10 or more. Although this was helpful in determining general evidence of the problem, it would have been desirable to have more specific numbers. This was too broad a range to support specific evidence of specific behaviors.

A data consideration that proved to be a positive benefit for the researchers was the consistency of indicators in the surveys and checklists. This allowed the researchers to compare survey results between parents, teachers and students.

In larger national context, inattentiveness has been established as a significant problem in today's classrooms. Considering the fact that close to five percent of students within any classroom exhibit characteristics of ADD/ADHD (Gregg, 1995), this issue has a substantial impact upon teachers and learners. This research study was conducted to help students and teachers develop lasting strategies to reduce inattention. It was felt by the researchers that the interventions implemented were varied, manageable, and accommodated the major behavior indicators of inattentiveness. It is important that teachers gain the knowledge, training, and understanding critical to the management of the inattentive child.

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APPENDIX A

TEACHER SURVEY

Teacher Survey

Teachers,

In our effort to gather information for our masters' project, we would like to ask for your help in identifying the predominance of attentional issues among your students. Please think about your class as a whole and how inattentive behaviors affect your classroom. This will likely be the first of several surveys as we continue to work through our project. Thanks!

Robin LeNoac'h
Linda Adams

Please check the appropriate box:

Behaviors	**Number of Students**		
	0-5	6-10	11+
restlessness, excessive activity	_____	_____	_____
talkative	_____	_____	_____
impulsive	_____	_____	_____
disorganized	_____	_____	_____
interrupts others	_____	_____	_____
conflicts with others	_____	_____	_____

Please put this in our mailboxes by_____.

APPENDIX B

PARENT SURVEY

August, 1999

Dear Parents,

We are currently enrolled in a Masters in Teaching and Leadership through St. Xavier University. During the course of our study, we will be examining the issue of inattentive and off task behaviors in the primary classroom. The project will be implemented throughout this school year and will be composed of several components including individual and class incentive plans. All children will be included in these activities which are a regular part of the curriculum however, we will be documenting their effect on inattentive behavior. Data collection will consist of teacher and student surveys, teacher observations, anecdotal notes, and behavior checklists. Photos and student work may be used but students' names will not be used at any time. The information collected will remain confidential. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact either of us at school at 870-3868. Please complete the bottom of this form and return to your child's teacher. Your child will not be penalized if you object.

The first step in this process, is our request to you to complete a parent survey related to behaviors observed by you of your child. Please return the attached survey by September 10, 1999.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Ms. Robin LeNoac'h
Mrs. Linda Adams

_____ Yes, my child may participate in the data collection.

_____ No, my child may not participate in the data collection.

Parent signature_____

Date_____

APPENDIX C

STUDENT SURVEY

Name_____

Student Survey

1. Do you sit and work quietly when you need to?

  

2. Do you listen when your teacher and others are talking?

  

3. Do you know what to do before you begin your work?

  

4. Are you able to find the supplies in your desk when you need them?

  

5. When your teacher, mom and dad, and friends are talking, do you wait for them to finish before you talk?

  

6. Are you kind and respectful to others even though they are not your friends?

  

APPENDIX D

ADHD INTERVENTION CHECKLIST

FORM 5.1

ADHD Intervention Checklist

Name _____ School Year _____ Grade _____

Begin Date	End Date		Degree of Success
		Environmental Interventions	
____	____	1. Assign student to classroom that is structured, consistent, and predictable.	_____
____	____	2. Seat student where most visual distractions are behind him ar her (e.g., in front row with back ta rest of class).[1]	_____
____	____	3. Seat student away fram potential distractions (e.g., heaters, air conditioners, high traffic areas, pencil sharpeners, windows, water coolers, noisy classmates, etc.).	_____
____	____	4. Seat student near teacher as well as appropriate role models. Avoid isolating the student.	_____
____	____	5. Post a few simple rules in highly visible places in the classroom.	_____
____	____	6. Create a stimuli-reduced area that all students may use (e.g., study carrel in corner af room). Encaurage student to self-select this environment when necessary.	_____
____	____	7. Permit student to stand, move between two desks, or sit at a round table and move from chair to chair while warking.	_____
____	____	8. Provide brief breaks (e.g., to run errands, water plants, distribute materials) or exercise breaks ta relieve the "wiggles."[2]	_____
____	____	9. Permit student to use earplugs ar headphanes ta block auditary distractions during tests ar independent seat work.	_____
____	____	10. Allow for a higher level of restlessness and movement on the part of the student during teacher presentation than would normally be acceptable.[3]	_____
____	____	11. Other _____	_____
____	____	12. Other _____	_____
____	____	13. Other _____	_____

Begin Date	End Date	Academic Interventions	
____	____	14. Experiment with a variety of testing formats to find the one best suited to the student's learning style (e.g., true-false, fill-in, multiple choice, or oral).	____
____	____	15. Provide lined answer spaces for responses on short answer or essay tests.	____
____	____	16. Permit student to take tests in less distracting environment (e.g., resource room, study carrel).	____
____	____	17. Permit short breaks during tests.	____
____	____	18. Teach student test-taking strategies (e.g., eliminating all incorrect responses on a multiple-choice test rather than rushing to choose a correct answer).[4]	____
____	____	19. Give student as much time as needed to complete a test. Avoid timed tests whenever possible.	____
____	____	20. Provide student with cloze notes to use during lesson presentations. The cloze technique provides student with an outline or set of notes with key words missing. The student is expected to fill in missing key words during direct instruction.	____
____	____	21. Provide photocopied text or outline that student can underline or highlight key concepts during direct instruction.	____
____	____	22. Provide ample "wait time" (i.e., the amount of time you wait for an answer during classroom discussions). Allow at least 5 seconds. Return to student if he or she needs more time to organize a verbal response.	____
____	____	23. Show student examples of completed assignments that demonstrate the teacher's expectations (e.g., research projects, book reports, essays, dioramas, or stories).	____
____	____	24. Provide student with audiotape of important text material.	____
____	____	25. Permit student to highlight main ideas in textbooks and jot notes in margins.	____
____	____	26. Encourage the use of a word processor for preparation of assignments.	____
____	____	27. Permit alternate methods for mortaring (e.g., photocopy the notes of a more organized student, permit the student to compare his or her notes with those of another student, or allow student to copy the notes of the teacher).	____
____	____	28. Schedule more demanding classes or subjects when student is at peak performance.	____

Begin Date	End Date		Degree of Success
____	____	29. Emphasize quality of assignment rather than quantity (e.g., three well-constructed sentences are preferable to not handing in the assignment at all).	____
____	____	30. Make eye contact with student before giving instructions. Ask student to restate instructions before beginning independent practice.	____
____	____	31. Teach, model, and frequently reinforce one specific previewing or comprehensian strategy and encourage the student to practice and use it consistently (e.g., SQ3R).[5]	____
____	____	32. Give a concrete reinforcement, such as a star or token, for the completion of each in-class assignment.	____
____	____	33. Enlist the help of an aide or volunteer to read important material aloud to the student.	____
____	____	34. Allow the student to dictate thoughts and ideas to someone else before copying his or her dictated information.	____
____	____	35. Give student several options for both obtaining and reporting information (e.g., audio- or videotapes, interviews, reading, experiences, projects, displays, oral presentations, photographic essays, conference with teacher, field trips, etc.).	____
____	____	36. Permit the use of calculator to check accuracy of math computation.	____
____	____	37. Other _____	____
		_____	
____	____	38. Other _____	____
		_____	
____	____	39. Other _____	____
		_____	

Instructional Interventions

____	____	40. Vary lesson presentations between those requiring student to sit still and listen with those that are more visual or participatory.	____
____	____	41. Modify curriculum (e.g., choose an easier reading level or require fewer or easier spelling words).	____
____	____	42. Use an interactive teaching approach that introduces the same information to the student through each of the senses.	____

Begin Date	End Date		Degree of Success
____	____	43. Use strategies that cue student as to the expected learning outcomes (e.g., maps, charts, outlines, preview questions, study guides, or vocabulary lists to focus student's attention on key information).	_____
____	____	44. Devote some instructional time each day to the teaching or reviewing (or both) of memory, reading, organizational, or behavioral strategies.	_____
____	____	45. Structure lessons in a logical and sequential fashion. Minimize instructional "bird walks," which lose or confuse the student.	_____
____	____	46. Keep directions brief, logical, and sequential.	_____
____	____	47. Summarize key information more frequently and check for understanding by asking student(s) to respond physically (e.g., thumbs up, thumbs down).	_____
____	____	48. Provide periodic breaks in longer lesson presentations.	_____
____	____	49. Use the overhead projector to focus student's attention (e.g., frame important information, reveal a step-by-step process, use different colors and shapes, or involve the student in writing on the transparency).	_____
____	____	50. Give student verbal and visual clues in anticipation of introducing important information or key concepts.	_____
____	____	51. Use computer-based drills and instruction to provide practice and to reinforce basic skills.	_____
____	____	52. Use proximity to the student during a lesson presentation to increase interaction and to hold his or her attention.[6]	_____
____	____	53. Develop private signals with student to focus his or her attention (e.g., wink, point to ears or eyes, touch top of head).	_____
____	____	54. Use the unison response method for increased student attention and participation (e.g., individual chalkboards or magic slates, or yes-no class responses, such as thumbs up or down or open hand, closed hand).	_____
____	____	55. Make frequent direct eye contact to gain and hold student's attention during lesson presentation.	_____
____	____	56. Present more difficult subjects or tasks to the student when performance is at peak (e.g., first thing in the morning, 2 hours after medication has been given).	_____
____	____	57. Teach memory strategies, such as mnemonics, frequent written or spoken repetitions, visualization, or oral rehearsal.	_____

Begin Date	End Date		Degree of Success
____	____	58. Use the "turn to your partner" technique during the lesson presentation to help the student summarize what he or she has learned or to refocus attention.	____
____	____	59. Teach student specific information-locating strategies (e.g., how to use textbooks, reference books, skimming and scanning, and card catalog).	____
____	____	60. Develop a classroom or subject matter reference book that contains frequently used vocabulary or spelling words, rules, procedures, checklists, and mathematical formulas.	____
____	____	61. Keep a folder containing the student's best work as a comparative standard against which to evaluate future performance.	____
____	____	62. Evaluate all instructional handouts to make sure they are well-designed and clearly written. Avoid any material that is poorly photocopied, handwritten, or in tiny type.	____
____	____	63. Develop specific and consistent classroom routines to facilitate learning and organization (e.g., how to get help when student has questions, where to turn in completed assignments, what to do when free time is available, etc.).	____
____	____	64. Make sure student comprehends task before permitting him or her to begin independent work (e.g., repeat the directions to the teacher or another student, write down the steps, or highlight the directions on a handout as they are read aloud).	____
____	____	65. Teach mathematical processes using manipulatives and real-world examples.	____
____	____	66. Visually display commonly used mathematical formulas. Show examples in a step-by-step format or develop a checklist.	____
____	____	67. Use daily oral activities (e.g., one math problem-solving activity; one language activity, one memory technique per day) to reinforce skills.	____
____	____	68. Visually display the most commonly used problem-solving strategies in mathematics.[7]	____
____	____	69. Use graph paper for math computation to keep numbers in columns.	____
____	____	70. When working story problems, have the student underline key words and phrases.	____
____	____	71. Other _____	____
____	____	72. Other _____	____

Begin Date	End Date		Degree of Success
____	____	73. Other _____	____

Organizational Interventions

____	____	74. List all special classroom events for the week or month on a large calendar and periodically refer to them to assist student with long-term planning.	____
____	____	75. Give student a few minutes at the end of each subject or class to organize books, papers, and so on, before beginning next instructional sequence.	____
____	____	76. Give student extra set of books to increase the likelihood that texts will always be available when needed. Keep one at school and one at home.	____
____	____	77. Use color-coded materials to help student keep organized (e.g., folders, sticky notes, xeroxing on different colors of paper).	____
____	____	78. Require that the student have individual notebook or folders for each subject. Help the student index them.	____
____	____	79. Notify parent(s) immediately of missing or incomplete assignments.	____
____	____	80. Develop a reward-and-consequence system for both in-school work as well as homework completion.	____
____	____	81. Assist student to develop a system to keep track of completed, partially completed, and corrected work (e.g., folders, notebook, baskets, etc.).	____
____	____	82. Provide frequent reminders (both written and verbal) of due dates for assignments.	____
____	____	83. Divide lengthy, long-range assignments into steps, and provide intermediate deadlines for the completion of each step.	____
____	____	84. Develop checklists for common classroom assignments (e.g., writing a book report, composing an essay, doing a long-division problem). Tape these lists to the desk or keep them in a notebook where they are easily accessible.	____
____	____	85. Develop checklists for common classroom procedures (e.g., arriving at school, getting ready to go home).	____
____	____	86. Establish, display, and maintain a daily classroom routine and schedule. Explain changes to the schedule well in advance.	____
____	____	87. Monitor clutter on the student's desk. Make sure the desktop is free from all material except that on which he or she is working.	____

Begin Date	End Date		Degree of Success
____	____	88. Have the student clean out and reorganize his or her desk or locker at regular intervals. Ask the student to purchase a desk or locker organizer to assist.	____
____	____	89. Check notebooks and folders weekly to make sure completed work has been turned in and graded assignments have been taken home.	____
____	____	90. Write all assignments for the day on a chalkboard or flip chart. Use color, graphics, and humor to keep this area interesting.	____
____	____	91. Provide a time at the end of each day for the student to reorganize his or her desk and homework materials. Designate a "coach" or "buddy" to help with this organizational checkpoint.	____
____	____	92. Have student cross items off a list when completed to promote a sense of accomplishment.	____
____	____	93. Systematically teach organizational skills to student, focusing on the skills before the subject matter.[8]	____
____	____	94. Teach student to monitor and record his or her own work productivity and behavior.	____
____	____	95. Other _____	____
		_____	
____	____	96. Other _____	____
		_____	
____	____	97. Other _____	____
		_____	

Homework Interventions

____	____	98. Go over assignments that will be going home using both auditory and visual presentations whenever possible (e.g., chalkboard, overhead, or handouts).	____
____	____	99. Ask student to restate homework expectations or read them aloud from his or her assignment notebook before leaving classroom.	____
____	____	100. Allow extra time for student to copy assignments.	____
____	____	101. Develop a homework buddy system in which the buddies monitor each other to make sure the assignments are understood and all necessary materials are taken home. Encourage buddies to exchange telephone numbers.	____

Begin Date	End Date		Degree of Success
____	____	102. Require the regular use of an assignment notebook. Include columns for assignment, date due, and date handed in. Inspect and initial each day. As student learns routine and becomes more consistent, sign once per week.	____
____	____	103. Require periodic status reports on long-term assignments.	____
____	____	104. Provide a step-by-step sequence of intermediate steps when giving the student a complex assignment.	____
____	____	105. Frequently review and reinforce successful homework strategies in cooperative groups.[9]	____
____	____	106. Monitor the writing down of homework assignments.	____
____	____	107. Send daily or weekly progress reports home.	____
____	____	108. Eliminate all "busywork" homework assignments; include only material that is absolutely necessary to practice or learn.	____
____	____	109. Use highlighter markers or "neon" sticky tabs to indicate to the student where to start or stop an assignment or where important information can be found.	____
	____	110. Reduce the amount of homework initially to achieve small increments of success, and then gradually increase expectations as confidence increases.	____
		111. Permit the student to submit work as soon as it is completed.	____
		112. Give feedback on all completed homework assignments.	____
		113. Have frequent, even if short, one-to-one homework conferences with student to assess completion rate, quality of work, and problems he or she may be having.	____
____	____	114. Assign a peer to help the student with homework.	____
____	____	115. Allow the student additional time to turn in homework assignments.	____
____	____	116. Send homework assignments and materials home with someone other than the student (e.g., sibling or neighbor).	____
____	____	117. Provide ample guided practice for the student prior to giving homework assignment(s).	____
____	____	118. Other _____	____
		_____	
____	____	119. Other _____	____
		_____	

Begin Date	End Date		
____	____	120. Other _____	____
		_____	

Behavioral Interventions

____	____	121. Design an individual behavior management plan suited to the student's unique needs.[10]	____
____	____	122. Use a timer to help student stay on task. He or she can be rewarded when he or she beats the timer.	____
____	____	123. Structure positive ways student can receive attention from teacher (e.g., classroom or leadership responsibilities).	____
____	____	124. Establish a secret signal to remind the student to return to task. Praise the student when he or she is on task.	____
____	____	125. Implement a cognitive behavioral modification or therapy program to encourage a self-monitoring approach on the part of the student.[11]	____
____	____	126. Have student chart his or her own instances of appropriate or inappropriate target behavior (e.g., hand raising, on-target conversation or interruptions, swearing).[12]	____
____	____	127. Give the student choices when possible (e.g., to decide whether to work on math or reading assignment).	____
____	____	128. Give specific praise for desired behavior, taking care to give more praise than reprimands.	____
____	____	129. Keep reprimands brief and directed at unwanted behavior rather than at the student.	____
____	____	130. Develop classroom rules with student discussion and input.	____
____	____	131. Teach classroom rules as if they were subject matter. Role-play examples of excellent behavior. Give student(s) opportunities for practice. Test knowledge of rules. Review rules regularly.	____
____	____	132. Set hourly, daily, weekly, or monthly goals with the student, and provide frequent feedback on the student's progress.	____
____	____	133. Develop a hierarchy of consequences.[13]	____
____	____	134. Teach "stop, listen, think, soy, do" strategy to reduce impulsivity.	____

Begin Date	End Date		Degree of Success

Social Skills Interventions

____	____	135. Use positive practice to reinforce desired skills.	_____
____	____	136. Praise appropriate social behavior more frequently than reprimanding inappropriate behavior. Tally the incidence of each.	_____
____	____	137. Set up social behavior goals with student, and implement a reward program.	_____
____	____	138. Prompt appropriate social behavior either verbally or with a private signal.	_____
____	____	139. Teach prerequisite skills for cooperative learning (listening, accepting feedback, praising, giving feedback), and use this technique in classroom when appropriate.[14]	_____
____	____	140. Implement a social skills program either with the individual student or with the entire class.[15]	_____
____	____	141. Reinforce social skills training in natural settings (e.g., playground, lunchroom).	_____
____	____	142. Assign special responsibilities to student in presence of peer group so others observe the student in a positive light.	_____
____	____	143. Use group rewards as an incentive (e.g., use "hero" technique in which one student earns a reward for the entire class).	_____
____	____	144. Change reinforcers frequently to maintain interest and motivation. Consult with student regarding choice of reinforcers.	_____
____	____	145. Other _____	_____
____	____	146. Other _____	_____
____	____	147. Other _____	_____

APPENDIX E

RIGHTS, RESPONSIBILITIES AND CONSEQUENCES

Rights and Responsibilities

We have the right...
...to learn.
...to be safe.
...to be respected.

We have the responsibility...

... to control our bodies.
...to act responsibly.
... to respect others.

Consequences

1. excused from the activity
2. missed recess or choice time
3. note home
4. meeting with family

APPENDIX F

TEACHER OBSERVATION CHECKLIST

OBSERVATION CHECKLIST

Teacher________________________________Time__________________________

Activity________________________________Date__________________________

Student	Restless	Talkative	Impulsive	Disorganized	Interrupts	Conflicts

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