

Supporting Positive Behaviour in Alberta Schools

A school-wide approach

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The primary audience for this document is:

Teachers	✓
Administrators	✓
Behavioural consultants	✓
Other school staff	✓



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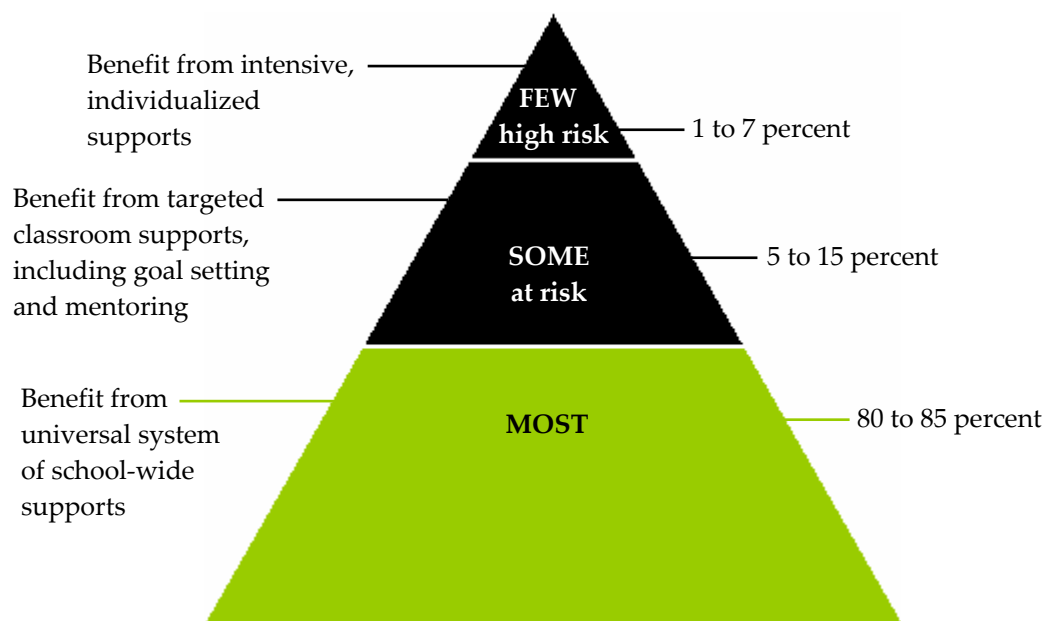
Introduction

Drawing on current research and best practices, this three-part resource, *Supporting Positive Behaviour in Alberta Schools*, provides information, strategies, stories from schools and sample tools for systematically teaching, supporting and reinforcing positive behaviour.

This integrated system of school-wide, classroom management, and individual student support is designed to provide school staff with effective strategies to improve behavioural outcomes in their school. The goal of this approach is to facilitate academic achievement and healthy social development of students in a safe, supportive learning environment.

Behaviour issues in schools can interfere with learning, instruction and positive school climate. Not all students come to school ready to learn. Some students, for a variety of reasons, may not understand acceptable social behaviour and be unable or unwilling to meet the school's behavioural expectations.

The following pyramid model illustrates the behavioural issues in a typical student population. Studies show that 80 to 85 percent of students generally meet the school's behavioural expectations. Another 5 to 15 percent chronically do not meet expectations and are at risk of developing severe behaviour disabilities. One to 7 percent have behaviour disabilities severe enough that they cannot meet behavioural expectations without intensive, individualized interventions.



Three-tiered model of positive behaviour support

The three tiers of this model represent a continuum of increasingly intense interventions that correspond to the responsiveness of students.

- All students will benefit from a **universal system of interventions**, and for 80 to 85 percent these supports are sufficient to maintain positive behaviour.
- More **targeted interventions**, such as social skills instruction and behavioural management, will benefit the 5 to 15 percent of students who are at risk of developing serious behaviour problems.
- **Intensive, individualized supports** will benefit the 1 to 7 percent of students who do not respond to universal and/or targeted interventions.

This three-part resource, *Supporting Positive Behaviour in Alberta Schools* is organized around this model. The three sections deal with:

- a **universal** school-wide approach
- a **targeted** classroom management approach
- an **intensive**, individualized approach.

A school-wide approach to positive behaviour supports

A school-wide approach to positive behaviour supports effectively promotes a safe, orderly and predictable environment for learning and teaching. This approach has significant effects within the school community: it creates a positive school culture that students, parents and staff perceive as safe and caring.

Creating safe and caring schools is a professional obligation of teachers, mandated by the *Alberta School Act* (RSA 2000): “A board shall ensure that each student enrolled in a school operated by the board is provided with a safe and caring environment that fosters and maintains respectful and responsible behaviours” [Section 45(8)].

Creating a safe and caring school requires a team effort and a problem-solving approach. This resource, *Supporting Positive Behaviour in Alberta Schools: A school-wide approach*, describes a comprehensive school-wide approach that involves **all** students, **all** staff and **all** school settings. It is a flexible process for identifying the specific behavioural needs of individual schools and then developing an action plan to meet those needs.

The focus of this approach is on establishing, maintaining and reinforcing the positive behaviour of the majority of students by providing clear expectations, but it also addresses problem behaviour. Although students in the at-risk category (less than 15 percent of the total school population) benefit from clear expectations and other universal supports such as positive reinforcement and active supervision, they often need additional supports such as targeted social skills training and mentoring.

A school-wide approach also helps staff clearly identify the one to seven percent of students who demonstrate high-risk behaviour, and need intensive, individualized interventions and support on an ongoing basis.

Positive behaviour supports create a structure, and they provide tools and strategies for school staff to positively affect how students behave and interact with one another. Students are reinforced for behaving in socially acceptable ways and encouraged to carry this learning and positive behaviour into their homes and the larger community.

These are some of the indicators that might cause school staff to either adopt a school-wide approach to positive behaviour supports, or take steps to improve current school-wide systems.

- Academic goals are not being achieved at the school-wide, classroom and/or individual levels.
- The school has high rates of problem behaviour and office referrals.
- The current school discipline plan is not adequate for consistently managing problem behaviour.
- Parents and community members are dissatisfied with school climate or concerned about frequent public incidents.
- School staff are dissatisfied with the way problem behaviour is being managed.
- Staff satisfaction is low. Teachers report problem behaviour is interfering with their ability to deliver effective instruction.

Provincial history

Since 2001, a number of Alberta schools have used a school-wide approach to positive behaviour supports, often called Effective Behaviour Supports (EBS). These schools report that when they teach students the skills and give them the support necessary to behave positively, a safe and caring learning culture flourishes. Alberta schools implementing school-wide behavioural change systems over a period of one to three years reported:

- a 70 percent reduction in office discipline referrals
- a 40 percent decrease in out-of-school suspensions
- a 40 percent reduction in expulsions.

A positive behaviour support approach helps schools create environments in which all students learn to cooperate and the likelihood of academic success for all students is increased.

Affecting achievement results

At the beginning, the elementary students seemed out of control. Many were fighting, stealing and bullying. The number of students being sent to the office seemed to be growing and growing. Many students were referred for just being downright disrespectful.

I had a basic understanding of the Sugai research (www.pbis.org) and it seemed so practical that I suggested we try it. The question was, how could I facilitate this new approach with staff? I knew that collecting data about behaviour incidents would be a challenge.

The first year we formed a committee that met weekly. Our first focus was to come up with monthly themes by combining the effective behaviour approach with character education. The first theme was respect. We aligned all of the co-curricular activities for the year with effective behaviour supports. This helped staff realize that they didn't have to do more work. They just had to work differently.

At the beginning of the second year, we realized we were trying to do too much at one time, so we scaled down our efforts. Staff then concentrated on fewer goals and continued the focus on respect. In September, when we looked at the Provincial Achievement Test scores for year one, we saw that our results were up. With this tangible evidence, staff commitment really went up. Any last naysayers now came on board. By the end of the second year, students were taking ownership of their own behaviour and talking about how this approach was making their school a better place.

During the third year, students stopped the negative behaviour before it happened. We were thrilled to see how much time that was previously needed to deal with discipline issues was now freed up for learning. It meant an increase in instructional time in the classroom and contributed to 100 percent of our students passing the Provincial Achievement Tests. This all happened within the first two years of implementation. The results of our school survey also showed 100 percent of respondents felt our school was safe and caring!

We asked the staff about the magic secret of our success and they responded, "Effective behaviour supports." That was the first time we realized how an effective discipline system increases time for teaching and for students' on-task behaviour. We regained a lot of instructional time because the students were no longer in the office or suspended; they were in classrooms learning.

– Principal, rural elementary/junior high school

Impact of positive behaviour on school completion

Current research indicates that positive behaviour, successful school performance and social engagement are all factors that contribute to school completion.¹ The decision to drop out of school before graduation is a long-term process of academic and social disengagement from school. It is influenced by a variety of academic, personal and family experiences. Although students may not actually withdraw completely until senior high school, for many of them the process begins at different points in their schooling—even as early as Grade 1.

Studies have identified these risk factors in relation to early school leaving:

- school attendance
- social engagement
- behavioural issues
- school discipline policies.

The school environment and discipline policies and practices can also influence students' decisions to stay in school or drop out.

School attendance

Absenteeism is a primary indicator of a student's level of disengagement from school: the number of days a student is out of school has an impact on his or her chances of dropping out, starting in Grade 1. In a recent survey of students, missing too many days and having difficulty catching up was the second most reported reason for early school leaving. Other behaviours that can signal academic disengagement include truancy, consistently not completing homework and coming to class unprepared.

Social engagement

Students who leave school early are more likely to have limited social skills and difficulty getting along with peers at school. One study found that the students who were most likely to drop out were often not socially isolated but rather had made friends with other students who were also at risk of dropping out. Social disengagement at school also occurs when students are not involved in extracurricular activities such as clubs, sports, science fairs, scouting and the school newspaper. In senior high, social engagement through school or community clubs or activities is an important factor in keeping students in school until graduation. This is particularly true for students with disabilities.

1. Hammond et al. 2007 (www.dropoutprevention.org/resource/major_reports/communities_in_schools.htm).

Behavioural factors

Negative behaviour is a strong indicator that a student is not fully engaged with school. Also, if a student's behaviour results in repeated suspensions or an expulsion, his or her alienation from school is likely to increase.

The following factors have also been consistently linked to early school leaving:

- problem behaviour resulting in suspensions or expulsions in middle school and high school
- getting into conflict with the justice system.

School environment

Negative school climates, which often include high rates of absenteeism and/or high rates of behaviour issues, are linked to increased early school leaving rates. Students also tend to drop out of school when:

- they don't feel safe at school
- large proportions of students view discipline at their school as unfair or not supported by staff
- academic and discipline policies call for involuntary withdrawal.

Supervision and discipline policies

Many schools have zero tolerance discipline policies that require reporting to the police, and suspension or expulsion for any and all violations of school rules. This type of punitive response can lead to situations in which students face inappropriately serious consequences for relatively minor offences. Such policies often give students a double dose of punishment. They may be suspended or expelled and also have to appear in court. Such policies may increase the number of students who are at-risk of not completing school.

School performance

Poor academic performance is one of the most consistent predictors of early school leaving, whether measured through grades, test scores or course failure. Research indicates that the impact can begin as early as Grade 1 and continue throughout a student's years at school. In several major surveys, students said that poor academic performance was a major reason for leaving school before graduation.

Engagement with school

Early school leaving is a long process of progressive disengagement that includes markers or warning signs along the way. In a recent survey, students who left school early reported that they felt increasingly alienated from school for one to three years before they dropped out. Seventy-one percent lost interest in school in Grade 9 or 10,

over a third reported missing class often the year they dropped out, and the majority reported missing class often during the years preceding dropping out. In interviews, students described a pattern of refusing to wake up, missing school, skipping class and taking three-hour lunches. They also said that each absence made them less willing to go back.

Attitudes toward school

Having low educational expectations significantly increases the likelihood that students will leave school before earning a high school diploma. Low expectations may take the form of being uncertain about high school graduation or lacking plans for education beyond high school. Surveys show that students who left school early commonly felt they didn't belong at school, had trouble getting along with their teachers or just had a general dislike of school.

Parents' attitudes toward school are also important, as well as their actions related to education. Parents of students who leave school early tend to have infrequent contacts with the school about their child's academic performance and/or behaviour, and rarely talk to their child about school or get involved in school activities. One study found a link between early school leaving and a lack of study aids such as books and reference material at home. Another study linked a low level of parental monitoring of homework with high dropout rates.

Addressing risk factors

The risk factors that influence early school leaving are interrelated and complex. No single factor causes students to leave school before graduation, and even though a factor is related to early school leaving, it is not necessarily a *cause* of early school leaving.

Information about risk factors can help schools develop universal, targeted and intensive individualized strategies to successfully engage students in learning, and provide the resources and support they need. A school-wide approach to positive behaviour support can provide schools with a context and framework for developing, implementing and monitoring these strategies.

School staff may wish to consider the following kinds of strategies that have both the potential to positively affect school completion rates and that align with a positive behaviour support approach.

Attendance

- Track attendance and take action to improve attendance rates for all students. For example, a school might develop flexible schedules, offer high-interest activities at the beginning of the school day and have school staff mentor targeted students.

Low achievement

- Work as a school team to develop and communicate high learning expectations for all students.
- Use a differentiated instruction approach that considers the individual learning needs of all students.
- Create opportunities for students to set goals for their own learning.
- Create opportunities to reinforce student effort and teach students to recognize, monitor and assess their own efforts.
- Explicitly teach and reinforce work habits and study skills.
- Identify students with learning disabilities and/ or emotional disorders and develop individual plans for supporting these students.
- Consider the negative effects of having students repeat a grade.

Parental involvement

- Work with parents to develop and communicate high expectations for learning.
- Create positive opportunities for parents to be involved in school activities.
- Create and maintain channels of communication with parents through special events, “meet the teacher” sessions and school newsletters.

Social engagement

- Create opportunities for all students to be involved in extracurricular activities.
- Build positive relationships between adults and students.

Behavioural support

- Set clear behavioural expectations and reinforce positive behaviour.
- Teach and reinforce social skills, including managing frustration, anger and social conflict.
- Provide proactive supervision and create effective routines that reduce opportunities for negative behaviour.
- Teach and reinforce resiliency skills such as social problem solving, emotional regulations, and the ability to identify and respect the perspectives and needs of others.
- Provide opportunities for students to develop strong, realistic beliefs in their abilities, gifts and talents.

Understanding key elements

Research identifies ten key elements of universal school-wide behaviour support systems. These elements are interrelated and overlapping, and may have differing degrees of importance, depending on the needs, strengths and priorities of a particular school community.

- 1 Positive relationships:** valuing each individual's contribution to the school community, promoting a sense of belonging for all students and staff, and promoting positive relationships among home and school and community
- 2 Modification of the school environment:** ensuring that the physical environment and school routines are organized proactively to support positive behaviour and reduce problem behaviour
- 3 Differentiated instruction:** responding to student diversity and creating opportunities for all students to learn in a way that responds to their varying abilities, strengths, learning preferences, interests and needs
- 4 School-wide behavioural expectations:** clearly articulating expectations and having all staff consistently reinforce expectations in all areas of the school throughout the school day
- 5 Social skills instruction** that demonstrates and supports the school-wide behavioural expectations
- 6 Positive reinforcement** of individual students and groups who consistently demonstrate positive behaviour
- 7 Fair and predictable consequences** for negative behaviour that adversely affects others and the school community
- 8 Collaborative leadership:** committing to building and maintaining a positive school culture, and providing the resources necessary for developing positive behaviour supports for all students
- 9 Data-driven decision making:** clearly identifying the strengths and needs of the school community, identifying areas where improvement is needed and measuring behaviour change over time
- 10 Action plan for school change:** developing, implementing and monitoring a school-wide approach to positive behaviour supports

Positive relationships

“Children are more likely to be respectful when important adults in their lives respect them. They are more likely to care about others if they know they are cared about.”

– Alfie Kohn, *Beyond Discipline: From Compliance to Community*

Research indicates that one of the most effective interventions for encouraging positive behaviour is to build positive relationships that cross all age boundaries: among adults in the school community, between adults and students, and among students. The relationships between students and adults are particularly important; that is, relationships of students with teachers, bus drivers, agency partners, lunchroom staff and other adult members of the school community. *Positive involvement in school activities and strong relationships with at least one adult at school can significantly change the way a student feels about school.*

Principal's Story

Making contact

We held a session for bus drivers. We encouraged them to make personal contact with every student riding on their bus and offered practical strategies. In many cases it was as simple as making an effort to say hello to each student as he or she got on the bus each day.

– Principal, rural junior high school

Strong relationships between students, including peer mentorships, can also promote a sense of belonging to the school community. In all cases, these relationships must be built on both social skills and core values such as respect—the same kinds of values that are supported through character and citizenship education. By embracing, modelling and teaching core values, school staff can create a climate in which behavioural expectations are a natural extension of a belief in treating each other fairly and respectfully.

Principal's Story

Character education and effective behaviour supports

We are in our fifth year of implementing an effective behaviour support system in our school. In the third year, we started to combine our efforts with a character education initiative, specifically focusing on the seven virtues outlined in Michele Borba's *Building Moral Intelligence: The Seven Essential Virtues that Teach Kids to Do the Right Thing* [for details, see Appendix B of this resource]. Our ongoing focus is on empathy and self-control.

Every two weeks we have assemblies that focus on skill building and then follow up with activities to reinforce the skill. The assemblies, which are presented by cross-graded groups of students and teachers, introduce a skill related to a particular virtue. For example, we might talk about making positive choices related to fairness.

The data we have collected over four years shows a dramatic drop in behaviour incidents and a corresponding increase in students' ability to verbalize what they are feeling. Before we had a behaviour support system, you never knew how a student would react to what you said. Now our students, staff and parents have a common language that helps ensure that everyone is treated fairly. We can turn to students when there is a situation and ask, "Is that hurtful or helpful?"

Effective behaviour supports and character education are congruent approaches because of the common language. The first initiative targets behaviour and teaches a specific skill. The second targets a virtue and teaches a specific skill. Character education is a nice extension that brings in the whole idea of being a good citizen and person: we are all responsible for our own behaviour.

– Principal, urban elementary school



For more information on character education, see Alberta Education's *The Heart of the Matter: Character and Citizenship Education in Alberta Schools*, at www.education.gov.ab.ca/charactered.

Enhancing home–school relationships

Parents are their children’s primary educators, particularly when it comes to social behaviour. Through their behaviour and attitudes, parents play direct and indirect roles in supporting a positive school culture.

Principal’s Story

Gaining parents’ support

When I was appointed new principal of a Kindergarten to Grade 6 school, suspensions were all too common. We organized a staff development day to provide an opportunity to really talk about behavioural expectations, interventions and monitoring. Then we started collecting data. During the first year, we concentrated on monitoring suspensions only. The data we gathered was clear evidence that the frequency of suspension was inappropriate.

Halfway through the school year, I presented this data to parents at a school meeting, along with information from the parent and student satisfaction surveys. Although the satisfaction surveys showed that the students felt safe and cared about, their attitude toward discipline was poor. There was also a perception among staff and the school community that the school had a weak discipline policy.

So we clearly explained the rules about keeping hands to yourself, theft and picking up litter, and all parents and children signed the discipline form. Out of almost 400 families, less than half a dozen responded negatively.

The parents actively supported our approach, and their support helped bring around some of the teachers who were initially skeptical. We kept parents informed through a newsletter. Suspensions dropped from 42 to fewer than 10, and issues of bullying dropped to a single incident that first year. Parents started to talk about what a great school we had!

– Principal, elementary school

Schools can use strategies such as these to support and enhance parental involvement.

- Actively welcome parents into the school and create opportunities for them to become directly involved in student activities in the classroom.

- Use newsletters, school council meetings and other communication channels to ensure parents are informed of the school’s behavioural expectations, as well its successes with positive behaviour supports. School newsletters offer opportunities to:
 - talk about the importance of using the same language to reinforce behaviour at home and in school (e.g., home and school both deliver the message, “We use *words*, not hitting” to solve problems)
 - have parents give feedback, share concerns and ask questions about behavioural expectations and school climate.
- Invite parents to have input and participate in developing, assessing and revising the school’s behaviour goals.
- Encourage parents to communicate with the school if they notice their child having difficulty with social behaviour at home or in the community.
- Post school-wide behavioural expectations for specific settings so parents understand them and can use the same language with their children.

Schools might develop an information sheet for parents similar to the one below.

Parents’ tip sheet for supporting positive behaviour at home

This term’s focus is on helping children develop self-discipline.

You can use the following strategies to reinforce this positive behaviour at home.

- Listen to your child.
- Be firm, consistent and kind.
- Resist arguing over small things.
- Clearly describe your limits and tolerance level.
- Assign chores so your child has real opportunities to contribute.
- Help your child organize his or her belongings.
- Agree on a signal you can use to let your child know his or her behaviour is not acceptable.
- Be sure to reinforce your child when he or she does the right thing.
- Establish a regular family discussion time such as the evening meal, when everyone has a chance to talk about their day.
- Appeal to your child’s sense of fair play.
- Establish a regular homework time and a regular bedtime.
- Make sure your child eats a healthy breakfast.
- Read stories with your child and discuss how the characters solve problems in positive ways.

Modification of the school environment

“A school can create a coherent environment, a climate, more potent than any single influence ... so potent that for at least six hours a day it can override almost everything else in the lives of children”

– Ron Edmonds, former director of the Centre for Urban Studies at Harvard University

To encourage positive behaviour and respond to problem behaviour, consider modifying the environment: schedules, traffic patterns, routines, procedures, and instructional processes and materials. For example, make problem areas off limits at certain times of the day or increase adult supervision in those areas. Or alter class transition time by grade to reduce the number of students in the hallways at any one time.

Identify areas of the school where negative behaviour is most likely to occur and then look for creative and simple ways to restructure the physical environment to make it safer and more orderly for everyone. The solutions can be simple; for example, making name tags and assigning seats in the lunchroom or installing new boot racks nearer an entrance.

The majority of behavioural difficulties happen during less structured times and in large common areas such as the playground or hallways. Schools can eliminate many of these difficulties through strategic adult supervision of targeted activities and areas.

Making supervision active

Increasing adult supervision is important. Supervising adults need to understand and agree with the school-wide rules, and be able to effectively teach, monitor and provide positive feedback about following the rules in all locations. Supervision needs to be a deliberate and active process.

Active supervision involves:

- moving
- scanning
- positive contact
- positive reinforcement

- “on the spot” teaching of social skills
- immediate consequences for negative behaviour.



To help staff develop active supervision skills, consider training them to model and practise these skills, and then use peer observation to provide feedback. **Tool 1: Active Supervision Observation Feedback** in Appendix A provides a framework that staff can use to observe each other and give feedback.

Keep moving²

Supervisors should move constantly, giving students the impression that the adults are everywhere at once. Constant movement also increases opportunities for staff to have positive contacts with more students, and provide behaviour management and support. Movement should be planned, constant and deliberate unless attention or action is required at a specific location. Target known problem areas, activities and individuals at a higher rate.

Staff require a plan to guide their supervision activities. For example, “Complete two figure-eights across the playground within five minutes each.” However, some students may use predictable supervisory routines as opportunities for inappropriate behaviour. Vary the patterns of movement throughout the day and from day to day.

Use scanning as a “long-range” tool²

Common areas such as hallways, cafeterias, playgrounds and gymnasiums are difficult to supervise effectively. Distant, obscure or hidden areas present challenges.

When supervising common areas, staff need to be able to systemically scan more distant parts of an area and recognize signs or sounds that may indicate problem behaviour.

- *Maintain constant visual movement* whether standing, walking or talking. Shift your field of view and pay attention to visual indicators of behaviour issues. This type of scanning increases opportunities for more natural and positive contact such as greeting students, having brief conversations and acknowledging positive behaviour. It also allows you to make eye contact with students outside your immediate physical area, and smile and wave to students who are engaged in positive behaviour.
- *Look at the students’ behaviour*, not just their games or physical appearance. Watch for subtle contextual, physical or behavioural clues that may be signs of distress.

2. Adapted with permission from Sopris West Educational Services. *Best Behavior: Building Positive Behavior Support in Schools* by Jeff Sprague © 2005, pp. 74, 76–78.

- *Look at the big picture*, not just one student or activity but as many as possible. On the sports field, attend to individual behaviours rather than watching the game.
- *Identify and attend to signs that are typically associated with negative behaviour.* Watch for games breaking up for no apparent reason; students frowning and gesturing to others, perhaps angrily; students seemingly shrinking back from a peer or peers; quick, rough movements for no apparent reason; someone running away from a peer or peers outside of an apparent game; frightened looks; or someone making a fist or obscene gesture.
- *Listen.* Verbal cues may also indicate negative behaviour. While scanning, listen for angry or plaintive tones of voice, arguing, and panicked and bossy voices or commands.
- *Recognize potential trouble spots and scan them often.* For example, if tetherball frequently leads to verbal and physical aggression, supervisors need to keep an eye on this game and watch for warning signs. (Has the game stopped? Is someone holding the ball and keeping it away from others?) Staff can analyze the data provided by supervisors to identify problem areas, as they will shift throughout the school year.
- *Recognize situations that may precede problem behaviour.* Problem behaviour such as aggression is typically preceded by arguing, rough play, high states of arousal, unsportsmanlike conduct and over-competitiveness. Supervisors who recognize these precursors and immediately reinforce appropriate behaviour can often prevent the situation from escalating.
- *Set and readjust physical boundaries.* Clearly communicate about the areas that students are free to use. Consider readjusting the boundaries to accommodate adequate supervision. For example, you may not need to, or be able to, supervise several large playing fields. Consider choosing one play area and making remoter areas out of bounds during recess and lunch hour.
- *Identify areas that supervisors typically cannot see and ensure that they are regularly supervised.* These areas might include washrooms, unused hallways and parking lots.
- *Know individual students who have been identified as having particular difficulties.* Informally check in with them to give feedback and prevent problems.
- *Minimize the time spent dealing with problem behaviour.* Supervisors need to maximize their movement and scanning opportunities. If you can't solve a problem or correct a behaviour in two minutes or less, refer the problem to the office (depending on its severity) or to some other prearranged place. If the problem is not severe and the solution can wait, defer lengthy intervention until students are back in class or in other structured activities.

For example, the supervising teacher could give the student (and/or the classroom teacher) a consequence slip listing a time for further discussion. Then the supervisor can finish correcting the student in private and without interfering with supervision activities. When problems are identified, solve or correct them quickly, fairly, consistently and as privately as possible. Then move on.

Keep it positive

School staff should actively pursue and create opportunities for positive contact with students. Positive contact focuses attention on and increases the likelihood of positive behaviour while decreasing the incidence of inappropriate behaviour.

Don't assume that all positive contacts have to be prompted by or related to a specific behaviour. Actively project a friendly, helpful, open demeanour that communicates caring, trust and respect. A positive contact can be as simple as, "Good morning, Lee. It's good to see you."

Increasing positive contacts gives staff more opportunities to provide friendly reminders or "precorrections" that help students "get it right before they get it wrong."

For example, just before lunch is a good time to remind students to pick up garbage. "When you are in the lunchroom today, think about picking up after yourself. The lunchroom and school grounds are looking pretty good these days. Let's work together to keep the school looking green and clean."

Just before dismissing senior high students, a teacher could remind students with vehicles to drive safely. "If you are driving, please be mindful in the parking lot. That means taking your time, looking out for pedestrians and other vehicles, being courteous to other drivers and slowing down. Have a safe trip home."

Reinforce, reinforce, reinforce

In contrast to positive contact, positive reinforcement is contingent upon specific student behaviour. That is, the student must demonstrate a specific behaviour that the school has targeted for reinforcement. For example: "Lee, I saw you helping Susan pick up those books she dropped – that showed thoughtfulness. That's going to make a difference in her day." The statement should clearly describe the behaviour that is being reinforced.

Deliver reinforcement immediately, or as soon as possible after observing the targeted behaviour. A time lag between the behaviour and reinforcement is less effective, and the student might connect the reinforcement to an unrelated behaviour.

Strive to be consistent when providing positive reinforcement and when correcting behaviour.

Have a variety of staff members reinforce specific kinds of behaviour regularly, in different environments throughout the school.

Follow the four-to-one ratio rule. That is, seek to provide four positive comments for every one negative or corrective statement. High rates of positive reinforcement increase the likelihood that students will engage in the targeted positive behaviour.

Respond with instruction

Active supervision creates opportunities to teach positive behaviour to individual students or small groups of students. Supervisors should respond to inappropriate behaviour immediately, without arguing or criticizing, using a step-by-step teaching approach, and basing the intervention on a clear and shared understanding of specific behavioural expectations.

For example, a supervisor might respond as follows when a student runs in the hallway.

- 1. Get the student's attention in a low-key way.**
("Jacob, wait a minute.")
- 2. Tell the student exactly what behaviour is expected.**
("You need to walk in the hallways, on the right side, with your head up so you can see other students.")
- 3. Show the student the expected behaviour, what it looks like and how it's done.**
("Here's what walking in the hallway needs to look like—this is about fast enough, and stay in the right lane.")
- 4. Have the student practise the behaviour.**
("Now show me that you've got it. Please walk to the end of the hallway and back.")
- 5. Acknowledge the student for successfully demonstrating the behaviour.**
("That's it. Much safer and not too fast. Good job.")
- 6. If necessary, reteach the skill.**
("You need to slow down a little, and stay in that right lane so no one gets hurt. Please try again.")
- 7. Test the student's mastery of the skill by watching for the behaviour during natural routines.**
(Next day on the way to the lunchroom, "Good walking in the hallways, Jacob. Looking out for other people makes the hallway safe for everyone.")

Although this type of instruction is informal, supervising teachers may find it helpful to record incidents so they can check back for improvement or provide necessary follow-up as needed.

Deliver negative consequences promptly

A serious negative behaviour requires a negative consequence. Have all staff agree on the definition of a serious behaviour, the type of consequences and the process for enforcing these consequences in advance.

To deliver negative consequences effectively and efficiently:

- Take students aside. As much as possible, avoid reprimanding or potentially embarrassing students in front of others.
- Define the problem behaviour in a calm, businesslike manner and focus on the appropriate behaviour. Avoid being drawn into an argument.
- Ask students to state the appropriate behaviour for the situation. If they can't or won't, state the appropriate behaviour and ask them to repeat it to you.
- If possible, give students an opportunity to demonstrate and practise appropriate behaviour. Consequences offer opportunities to teach better behaviour.
- Tell students what the school-prescribed consequences are, and apply consequences immediately or as soon as practical.

For example, if a junior high student is in the hallway during class time and trying to get the attention of a peer in another classroom, an intervening teacher might say: "Fran, leaving during class when you need to is a privilege. It's disappointing that you are using this privilege to disturb the learning of others. You know the consequence for this behaviour. I will notify all of your subject teachers and you will not be allowed to leave during class for one week."

"Please talk about this incident with your parents. I will send them a letter within a week to let them know about it. I hope you will use this opportunity to talk to your parents about your commitment to learning."

Differentiated instruction

“If academic learning does not engage students, something else will.”

- John Goodlad, Educational researcher and theorist

Students sometimes misbehave in school because they find the instruction too difficult or because the tasks and/or materials are not meaningful or relevant for them. Differentiated instruction offers a flexible and *intentional* approach to better meeting the diverse learning needs of all students. Carol Ann Tomlinson (2001) calls it “shaking up what goes on in the [school] so students have multiple options” (p. 1).

A differentiated approach to instruction considers the individual learning needs of students and creates learning opportunities that match students’ current abilities, interests, learning preferences and specific needs. Differentiated instruction also stretches students’ abilities and encourages new ways of thinking and learning.

Key principles

Before introducing a school-wide approach to differentiated instruction, all teachers in the school need to agree to provide instruction and support that embodies three key principles.

- Students learn at different rates and in different ways.
- Fairness sometimes calls for differences. All students do not need to do the same work in the same way.
- The key to motivation is interest, and all students have different interests.

Effective differentiated instruction:

- addresses varied learning styles so students have opportunities to learn in their preferred style, as well as enlarge their repertoire of skills in their less-preferred styles
- uses ongoing and frequent assessment to inform planning and instruction
- provides opportunities for students to reflect on their own learning and develop self-monitoring and self-assessment skills
- promotes personal responsibility for learning and nurtures skills related to independence and self-directed learning
- builds feelings of personal competence and confidence in learning

- is based on student-centred activities
- encourages exploration of each student's interests, strengths, learning preferences and unique learning needs
- provides opportunities for student choice
- recognizes students' gender-based and cultural differences, and includes a variety of learning opportunities to accommodate those differences
- provides the support needed for all students to succeed
- is an invisible, seamless part of everyday teaching practice, and of learning and teaching resources.

Universal strategies for effective instruction³

These universal strategies will help all students to learn successfully:

- a strong focus on teaching and learning
- clear learning goals and a known purpose
- maximum class time spent on learning and minimum time off-task
- frequent feedback on learning and achievement
- instructional supports for academic deficits or difficulties
- pre-teaching and review of key concepts
- assessment for learning
- differentiated instruction to meet individual students' needs.

To prevent students from developing behaviour problems, teachers need to know, understand and model effective instructional practices. Instructional organization that contributes to successful teaching and learning includes planning, managing, delivering and evaluating instruction.

When instruction is effective:

- clear goals for learning are set and communicated
- expectations are high
- success is demanded.

3. Adapted with permission from Karen Bain and Brenda Sautner, *BOATS: Behaviour, Observation, Assessment, Teaching Strategies*, 2nd edition (Edmonton, AB: Special Education Council, The Alberta Teachers' Association, 2007), pp. 14, 15, 16.

Effective instruction takes into account students' learning strengths and preferences. This goal is achieved by:

- analyzing the demands of classroom tasks and assignments
- grouping students for instructional purposes
- connecting activities to “real life” or student interests
- connecting activities and assignments to instructional goals
- expecting high rates of student success
- frequently checking students' understanding.

To make lessons and instructional procedures efficient:

- include demonstration, prompts and practice in teaching sequences
- ensure that concepts are clear and students know what the learning involves
- consistently reinforce learning through practice, attention, praise and personal acknowledgement.

To provide instructional support:

- monitor and adjust instruction as required
- model and practise thinking strategies
- directly teach learning strategies
- provide sufficient time for learning and for applying what is learned
- guide and reinforce practice.

To effectively allocate sufficient time to academics and instruction:

- actively engage students in learning
- interact with students frequently and positively
- select tasks and activities to match learners' needs and levels of understanding.

To maximize students' opportunities to participate in learning:

- frequently provide opportunities to respond
- use effective questioning techniques
- correct errors immediately
- organize for cooperative group work.

To increase students' progress and understanding, provide feedback that is:

- frequent
- constructive
- diagnostic
- task-specific
- performance-based.

To effectively evaluate student performance, use ongoing assessment for learning that is:

- appropriate
- frequent
- student-specific
- directly related to the program of studies or selected learner outcomes.

Identifying school-wide strategies

When a school commits to differentiated instruction, the teaching staff have to develop a repertoire of research-based strategies for adapting instruction. School-wide use of a common repertoire of strategies ensures that students have access to these adaptations across grade levels and subject areas. Cole et al. describe 12 sample strategies for adapting instruction to increase the academic success of all students.

Sample school-wide strategies for adapting instruction⁴

Change the context	Change the presentation	Change behavioural expectations or consequences
<p>Precorrect errors Directly give extra practice for skills needed, before the skills are required. <i>Ask Mitch to sit down and practise “stay in seat” and “keep hands and feet to self” before the lesson starts.</i></p>	<p>Task difficulty To increase accuracy, adapt the skill level, problem type or rules. <i>Jeff is allowed to use a calculator to solve math problems to decrease difficulty and his motivation to escape difficult tasks.</i></p>	<p>Time to complete Adapt the time allotted for task completion and testing. <i>Stephen can complete his math test with few errors but it takes him longer than other students. His teacher gives him extra time, and he doesn’t lose any credit.</i></p>
<p>Level of participation Adapt how a learner is involved in a task or activity. <i>Pam is very shy about raising her hand in class, so the teacher allows her to write down the answer on a card. This makes Pam less anxious and more willing to participate.</i></p>	<p>Task size Adapt the number of items that a learner is expected to complete or master. <i>Joe has difficulty completing the entire social studies assignment, so his teacher allows him to complete half. This maintains Joe’s motivation to participate.</i></p>	<p>Output method Adapt how the learner can respond to instruction. <i>Leslie’s verbal explanations are often difficult to understand when she is asked to speak in front of the class. Her teacher allows her to write her comments and read them privately to the teacher.</i></p>
<p>Alternate goal Adapt goals or expectations while using the same materials. <i>In social studies, Ceci is expected to locate just the provinces while others locate the capitals as well. When she is successful, she can work well during cooperative group activities.</i></p>	<p>Input method Adapt the way instruction is delivered. <i>Tom has a hard time tolerating morning circle, often getting up and running away. He is allowed to sit at his desk to listen to circle activities or he can choose to review the wall schedule with a peer.</i></p>	<p>Increase rewards for acceptable behaviour Make positive behaviour more valuable than negative behaviour. <i>Kendle dislikes completing math worksheets and often tosses them on the floor. She is allowed to earn extra minutes of recess for math work completion.</i></p>
<p>Alternate materials Provide different instructional materials and methods. <i>John is in high school and at risk of early school leaving. He is introduced to a self-paced online course that allows him to see his accomplishments clearly. He is more motivated to earn high school credits.</i></p>	<p>Level of support Increase the amount of assistance provided. <i>José works with a peer tutor for extra practice in reading grade-level material.</i></p>	<p>Remove or restrict Take away desired objects or activities when problem behaviour is observed. <i>George has difficulty with math but can do the grade-level work if he is motivated. He and his teacher agree that he will lose five minutes of computer time any day he refuses to complete the end-of-class quiz.</i></p>

4. Adapted with permission from Sandi Cole et al., *Adapting Curriculum and Instruction in Inclusive Classrooms: A Teacher’s Desk Reference*, 2nd edition (Bloomington, IN: Indiana Institute on Disability and Community, 2000), p. 39.

Choosing adaptations

When choosing instructional adaptations, consider these types of questions.

- Will this adaptation improve the student's level of participation in class?
- Is this adaptation the least intrusive option (i.e., least interfering or restrictive)?
- Will this adaptation give the student a variety of options, or will the same adaptation be used for all or most activities (e.g., always do fewer number of tasks or work at different level of difficulty)?
- Does the adaptation ensure an appropriate level of difficulty and challenge?
- Can the student use this adaptation in other classes or activities?
- Can the adaptation lead to self-management or future independence?

Developing school-wide supports

School-wide supports and policies assist students who are struggling academically. For example:

- learning centres with assigned staff and flexible hours where students can receive extra teaching as needed
- tutorials and seminars on specific topics such as study skills, managing test anxiety, keyboarding skills
- homework policies and related supports such as after-school homework clubs and homework hotlines or Web sites
- access to assistive technology for learning such as scan-and-read software and video equipment
- peer tutoring programs
- community volunteers and mentors.

Building staff capacity

Teaching staff need to work together to develop and enhance the school's capacity to meet the diverse learning needs of all students. To build their understanding of and skills in differentiated instruction, teachers need access to research, resources, professional development and opportunities for professional dialogue with colleagues.

The Professional Learning Communities (PLC) model offers a framework that schools can use to build the staff's capacity to meet students' diverse needs. PLCs provide a means for staff to collaborate and explore questions such as the following.

- What are our current school-wide goals to improve learning for all students?
- What professional development activities will help us achieve our goals?
- How will we work together to achieve the goals?
- What will we implement in our school's instructional programming?
- When will we meet to plan, share and assess?
- How will we assess our success in enhancing student learning?
- How will we refine, share and celebrate our efforts to meet students' diverse learning needs?

School-wide behavioural expectations

“... the time you spend teaching your discipline plan and your rules of conduct is an investment that pays huge dividends in increased learning, on-task student behaviour and increased job satisfaction ...”

– Mark Boynton and Christine Boynton, *The Educator's Guide to Preventing and Solving Discipline Problems*

A school-wide approach to positive behaviour supports encourages staff to develop, implement and monitor school and classroom behavioural expectations in response to the needs of students, staff and the school community. Carefully chosen and clearly understood school-wide expectations:

- use clear language stated in a positive manner
- are designed to support academic achievement
- are present, visible and understood throughout the school
- include all students
- target specific types of behaviour and areas of the school and times of day
- are known and understood by all students and adults in the school
- ensure consistent reinforcement of positive student behaviour
- create a framework that guides decision making
- create a culture of consistency and encourage staff members to work collaboratively.

Clearly stated expectations communicate to students what school staff want to see. In addition, they guide student behaviour and create a focus that strengthens the effectiveness of staff monitoring.

Schools must develop and secure agreement from all school staff regarding school-wide behavioural expectations before the start of the school year. Ideally, these expectations are taught on the first day of school and positive behaviour is reinforced throughout the school year.

Developing behavioural expectations

In addition to specific behavioural expectations, school staff need to identify overarching expectations that cross over multiple settings. For example, one school used these three statements to summarize the school rules:

- Be safe.
- Respect yourself and others.
- Be responsible.

“Be safe” implies a feeling of social, emotional and physical safety, and creates a feeling of belonging. “Respect yourself” encourages students to consider their own safety and their own learning. “Respect others” promotes cooperation with teacher requests, and positive peer and adult relationships. “Be responsible” addresses goals such as being ready for class, completing work, and keeping the school and classroom clean and orderly.

Many schools make a list of school areas such as hallways, entranceways and playgrounds, and then identify specific behavioural expectations for each. For example:

- Walk, don’t run in the hallways.
- When entering the school, proceed directly to lockers or classrooms in an orderly fashion.
- Play only in safe, designated areas.

Some schools may decide to focus only on the most important expectations.

One elementary school developed these expectations for hallway behaviour.

Setting: Hallways

School-wide expectations

Respect Yourself

Respect Others

Respect Property

Related behaviour

- Walk with your head up to keep safe.
- Keep to the right when walking.
- Keep hands to self.
- Give other students room to move past you safely. Use a quiet voice.
- Put litter in trash basket.
- Look at hallway displays, but don’t touch.

Another elementary school used four school-wide expectations as a framework for outlining appropriate behaviour on the playground.

Setting: Playground

School-wide expectations

1. Be Responsible
2. Cooperate
3. Be Safe
4. Be Respectful

Related behaviour

- Return equipment to supply box.
- Use trash cans.
- Wait your turn in games.
- Share equipment with others.
- Line up when you hear the bell.
- Keep hands and feet to self.
- Walk in the breezeway.
- Use your problem-solving words.

Use positively stated expectations⁵

Research indicates that students are more likely to comply with “Do” requests. “Walk in the hallway” is more likely to promote compliance than “Don’t run in the hallway.” A negatively stated expectation may even prompt the behaviour you are trying to discourage. Also, teachers can give positive feedback when they see behaviour that relates to a positively stated expectation.

Students need to understand what the behaviour looks like. For example, “Students will *walk* in the hallway” is clearer than “Students will *behave* in the hallway.”

When teaching a specific behavioural skill, it may be helpful to identify and describe examples of what the behaviour is *not*. Use negative examples cautiously and always end the session by describing, modelling and practising the positive version of the behaviour.

Communicating and teaching expectations

Once behavioural expectations are identified, the school must consistently and clearly communicate these expectations to students, staff and parents. When asked about rules and expectations, any student or adult in the school should be able to provide a consistent answer. If students can’t quickly state what is expected, they won’t know what to do. If the adults in the school agree upon and can state all specific behavioural expectations, minor inappropriate behaviour will diminish significantly.

5. Adapted with permission from Sopris West Educational Services. *Best Behavior: Building Positive Behavior Support in Schools* by Jeff Sprague © 2005, pp. 46–47.

Staff can communicate behavioural expectations in a number of ways. For example:

- Put up posters listing behavioural expectations in student-friendly language. These positive messages focus the whole school community on targeted goals.
- Plan lessons that all teachers can use to teach and practise the behavioural expectations. Arrange to take classes to the particular area involved and practise the expectations.
- Involve parents through classroom newsletters, frequent positive home-school communications and information evenings. When parents are actively involved, students receive more consistent messages, and there is increased reinforcement when they meet expectations.

Using a step-by-step approach

Following is an example of a step-by-step approach to communicating and teaching a specific hallway behavioural expectation: Maintaining a reasonable noise level.

1. Post school-wide behavioural expectations in the hallways. For example: “Use quiet, ‘inside’ voices.”
2. Discuss the behavioural expectations in the classroom.
3. Demonstrate “loud voices” and “quiet voices” so students learn to identify the difference.
4. Model and practise this behaviour in the hallway.
5. Encourage and reinforce this behaviour in the hallways throughout the school day. Correct students as necessary.
6. Measure the impact of the systematic intervention by comparing baseline data (e.g., noise levels before intervention) with current hallway behaviour.



Consider developing a template that all staff can use to communicate about behavioural expectations. *Tool 2: School Settings Template* in Appendix A describes a way to organize this information. An Alberta school developed a similar organizer (as illustrated on the following page) and included it in its school handbook.

School-wide Behavioural Expectations

	Be organized	Be cooperative	Be kind	Be safe
Playground	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Respond promptly to bells Bring in equipment and belongings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listen to all supervisors Respect others' space, property and feelings Take turns Choose teams fairly Follow game rules 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use encouraging words instead of teasing words Include others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow playground rules Stay in perimeter Think before you act Hands to yourself
Hallway/ Bootroom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eat in assigned areas and at assigned times Keep boot racks, cubbies, hooks and lockers neat Lock up personal property 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enjoy hallway displays, but don't touch 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use positive language Be courteous 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep hands, feet and objects to self Walk Older students yield to younger students Walk to your right
Classroom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be on time and prepared for class Keep desk area tidy Complete assigned tasks in a timely manner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Talk and work quietly Work as a team Ask permission to leave Listen to all supervisors Let others learn without interruption Respect school property and the property of teachers and other students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use positive and encouraging language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wear shoes Walk Keep hands and feet to self
Cafeteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be prepared to place order Have money ready Sit where assigned Keep eating area clean 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use table manners Clean up after yourself Treat cafeteria workers with respect 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use polite language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eat your OWN lunch Use microwaves safely Throw away your garbage Clean up spills
Computer Lab	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only print school-related material Leave your area neat and tidy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use Internet only as directed by supervisor Share equipment as directed Respect equipment and other people's work Keep food and/or drink out of lab Wear headsets when sound is on 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use appropriate language when communicating with others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only visit appropriate Web sites Use lab only when supervised by an adult
Gym	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be ready on time Return equipment to proper location Wear proper gym clothes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include others Show good sportsmanship Wait for directions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be encouraging Be kind about both winning and losing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Play by agreed-upon rules Use equipment properly Follow directions
Library	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Push in chairs Keep food or drink out of library 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Return materials to shelf Use computers properly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use a quiet voice Respect property Return borrowed material/equipment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Walk Use only when supervised

One school that wanted to reduce noise in the hallways used decibel meters to measure baseline noise and then posted intervention results throughout the school and in the school newsletter. At another school, students prompted each other to be quiet in the hallway and staff reported perceptions that hallway noise was significantly reduced.

Team Leader's Story

Communicating behavioural expectations

We made a floor plan of our school and used office referral data and teacher observations to identify problem areas or “hot spots” such as the boot rooms, washrooms, hallways, playground, library and telephone area. The team went to those areas, walked around and noted the types of things that could happen. The team then developed behavioural expectations and tips for teaching these expectations.

We used the acronym STARS as a framework for talking about and teaching the behavioural expectations:

S for Safe and caring

T for Teamwork

A for Accountability

R for Respect

S for Success.

The team also developed sample lesson plans to help classroom teachers share and practise these expectations with the students.

We encourage teachers to review the rules for common areas throughout the year. Now our students will tell you that STARS are the school rules.

– Team leader, urban elementary/junior high school

Striving for consistency

Consistency makes a difference. Students need to know that:

- behavioural expectations are consistent from one class or setting to another
- if a behaviour is unacceptable in one school setting, it is unacceptable throughout the school
- all adults in the school will reinforce similar positive behaviour and correct similar negative behaviour.

Reactive approaches that rely on reprimands and punishment actually make problem behaviour worse, because staff are giving most of their attention to inappropriate behaviour. Communication needs to be clear and all staff need to have the skills and commitment required to consistently and proactively support positive behaviour throughout the school.

Social skills instruction

“Building a safe, caring and inclusive school culture means teaching it minute by minute, day by day, integrating it into discipline practices and curriculum, using instructional models that provide practice in social and relationship skills and, most importantly, modelling it.”

- Vicki Mather, former Executive Director, The Society for Safe and Caring Schools and Communities

Getting along with others is one of the most important life skills. Students with strong social skills can interpret social situations and respond appropriately. They are also better able to manage potential conflict and reach decisions that respect everyone involved.

While many students already have social skills when they come to school, most can still benefit from direct teaching of skills such as:

- listening
- conversation skills
- establishing and maintaining friendships
- dealing with feelings
- accepting consequences
- dealing with peer pressure
- resolving arguments
- dealing with bullying.

Benefits of social skill instruction

Through consistent modelling, teaching and reinforcement of positive social skills, students are more likely to develop:

- enhanced self-confidence
- greater self-control
- greater respect for the rights of others
- a greater sense of responsibility for their own actions, so that meeting behavioural expectations seems natural and easy.

Role modelling by teachers

Social skills can be taught through the interactions teachers have with their students each day. When teachers consistently speak and listen respectfully and demonstrate kindness, they are modelling respectful relationships and positive social skills.

Direct instruction of social skills

Another way to teach positive social behaviour is through direct instruction. Effective teaching of prosocial skills:

- happens early
- is linked to the current environment
- is a hands-on experience (e.g., role-playing)
- is a minds-on experience (e.g., reflecting, discussing and sharing)
- involves, respects and teaches about making good choices
- is paired with managing emotions, making thoughtful decisions and setting realistic and meaningful goals.

Many resources are available for directly teaching positive social skills to students in Kindergarten through Grade 12. Most approaches involve a step-by-step approach. For example:

1. Identify the social skill that you need to teach.
2. Introduce the skill to students through stories, film, poetry or discussion.
3. Identify the components or steps involved in the skill.
4. Model the components or steps of the skill.
5. Give students opportunities to practise and master the skill through other activities. Provide corrective feedback, as necessary.
6. Acknowledge and celebrate independent use of the skill.

Sprague and Golly recommend teaching social behaviour in the same way as academic skills are taught.⁶ For example:

- teach through multiple examples (define, show, tell, describe)
- teach where/when the problems occur

6. Adapted with permission from Sopris West Educational Services. *Best Behavior: Building Positive Behavior Support in Schools* by Jeff Sprague © 2005, Figure 10, page 55.

- give frequent practice opportunities (each skill or expectation requires at least 10 to 20 reviews per year)
- provide useful corrections
- provide positive feedback
- monitor for success.

Integrating social skills across the school day

Intervene with students using the language of social skill instruction. For example, if a student is running in the hall, say, “What is the rule about hallways? ... Please go back and walk to show respect for the safety of yourself and others.”

Use the language of behavioural expectations in content lessons (e.g., social studies or science), or when reading and discussing stories with students. To teach behavioural expectations in content lessons, connect the topics; point out attitudes, outcomes and personality concerns; and discuss information using a positive behaviour framework.

For example, when studying a novel, students can write or talk about how a character’s behaviour and attitudes influence other people. Many students need to have these concepts explained clearly in order to understand them well and apply them to personal situations.

Character education is another opportunity to integrate social skills across the school day. Specific social skills can be targeted in related character education activities across the school setting.

Positive reinforcement

“The most powerful tool for changing behaviour will come from increasing positive interactions for appropriate behaviour.”

- Randall Sprick, *Discipline in the Secondary Classroom*

Reinforcement is a positive or negative consequence of behaviour. When used effectively, reinforcement makes behaviour more appropriate—negative behaviour is reduced or eliminated, and positive behaviour increases and is maintained.

For every correction students receive for doing something wrong, they should receive at least four positive messages about what they are doing right. Positive feelings contribute to an individual’s willingness to change his or her behaviour.

Some school staff do this naturally, but others may need to take a systematic approach to increasing their positive reinforcement of students. Formal systems such as monthly recognition awards or positive office referrals are just as much about changing staff behaviour as they are about changing student behaviour.

A school-wide approach

An effective school-wide approach to positive behaviour support uses increased opportunities for positive reinforcement to encourage students to behave in positive ways. The biggest factor in the success of a positive reinforcement system is consistency among the adults in the school.

The more attention many adults pay to a certain kind of behaviour (whether positive or negative), the more that behaviour is likely to increase. For example, if students are misbehaving and teachers constantly reprimand them, they may actually engage in even more negative behaviour. Noticing and reinforcing students who are behaving safely, responsibly and respectfully increases the frequency of desirable behaviours.

To make a reinforcement system effective, implement it across the entire school community and provide all students with access to positive feedback, especially students who have behaviour disabilities.

Effective school-wide reinforcement systems:

- include all students
- use recognition and rewards that students want and value
- use public recognition to highlight role models for other students
- recognize school staff, including lunchroom supervisors and bus drivers, volunteers and community partners
- increase reinforcement before and during the times that are most difficult for students (e.g., just before holidays, after a traumatic community event).

Positive reinforcement can take many forms. It can be:

- verbal (e.g., statements, descriptive feedback)
- nonverbal (e.g., smile, thumbs up)
- privileges (e.g., seating choice, free time, additional recess time, first in line for school lunch)
- rewards (e.g., stickers or other tangibles)
- incentives (e.g., tokens, tickets for a draw)
- individual preferred activities (e.g., computer use, time in a special area or doing a preferred job).

To determine whether a consequence is positive, observe whether the desired behaviour is maintained or increases. This is the only way to tell.

Something that reinforces the behaviour of one student or group of students may have a neutral or negative effect on others. Always consider the developmental level and personal preferences of the individual student or group of students.

Identifying meaningful reinforcements

Reinforcement can only be measured in terms of changes in behaviour. If students are not excited or fail to respond to a reward, it is not providing true reinforcement and it is likely time to choose a different one. Varying the reinforcements also increases their value.

Many schools hand out “gotcha” slips to students and teachers who are caught demonstrating positive behaviour. Especially during the early stages of implementation, these “gotcha” moments help to create a visible record of the behavioural expectation and provide a model for other students. When the visible effects of positive behaviour become more apparent, these kinds of tangible reinforcements can be phased out.

Tangible reinforcement systems are designed to not only change student behaviour but also provide opportunities to influence and change adult behaviour. When they have a certain number of rewards to deliver each day, adults have increased opportunities to (and a context for) increasing their positive interactions with students. They begin providing specific verbal praise for positive behaviour more often.

Another kind of reinforcement is an activity or privilege; for example, giving students extra free time or more time for a favourite activity. School-wide privileges might include earning extra minutes of recess.

Authentic social praise is an effective natural reinforcer that helps to increase positive behaviour and minimize inappropriate behaviour. For example, adults might nod, smile, laugh, high-five or shake hands; engage in casual conversation; and/or offer assistance.

All reinforcers should include clear descriptions of the behaviour being reinforced. For example, “You finished all your work on time.”



Tool 3: Positive Behaviour Referral Form in Appendix A is a sample template for acknowledging positive behaviour.

Considering the potential of public recognition

Research has shown that public and authentic delivery of positive reinforcement has a powerful modelling effect. When students see their peers being recognized for positive behaviour, they are motivated to display the same behaviour. As students get older, however, public recognition may not work for some students who prefer private feedback.

Involving parents

Many students are powerfully reinforced by positive communication with parents. Look for opportunities to share good news with parents about how their children are demonstrating positive behaviour at school. The most effective positive communication strategies are preplanned and applied systematically and consistently across the school community.

A number of schools set targets, asking school staff to make a specific number of positive parent contacts per week or month—by phone, by e-mail, in writing or face to face. Staff are encouraged to record and track their contacts and tell their colleagues about the strategies they use and responses they receive.

Students should be aware of staff contacts with their parents. Or, if possible, have them present and participating when the contacts are made. Students should be able to state why teachers have called home.

Just as students have individual feedback preferences, parents also have varying comfort levels regarding contact with school staff.

Increasing reinforcement before difficult times

During certain times of the year, for example, just before holidays, students are more likely to be stressed or engage in problem behaviour. To prevent problems during these times, schools can increase the amount of supervision and positive reinforcement, and revisit skills and expectations with “booster lessons.” This is a form of precorrection.

Reinforcing adults

School staff can benefit from reinforcement of their efforts to improve relationships and build a positive school culture. As well, students often enjoy having their teacher win public recognition. The core team and school administrator can look for systemic and meaningful ways to let school staff know that their individual actions and commitment are contributing to positive behaviour in the school.

Increasing positive reinforcement

We took the 4:1 ratio of four positive statements for every one negative statement quite literally. We had green and red cards printed, with 16 green cards and four red ones in each packet.

The green cards were reinforcement for positive student behaviour. When staff members saw a student doing something positive, they gave the student a green card and commented on the behaviour. All of the green cards were put up on a bulletin board called "Doing good." After one month, students could take the cards home to share with their parents.

The red cards were given to students when they demonstrated an inappropriate behaviour. Information about this red card incident was entered into a spreadsheet, which could be sorted by a number of fields. Each month the data was brought back to staff to look at the types of incidents and the number of students involved.

Using the green cards helped staff increase the amount of reinforcement they gave for positive behaviour. The red cards, combined with the spreadsheet, allowed us to more accurately target specific behaviours that needed improvement as well as specific students. For example, the first month of data showed that many students were coming in late from recess. We reduced the problem by asking teachers to walk out to areas where students were most likely to linger and walk back to the school with them.

– Principal, rural junior high school

Addressing concerns about rewards

Many educators are concerned about methods of positive reinforcement and potential unintended consequences. Consider how your school can address the following concerns about positive reinforcement.

What you always wanted to know about praise and rewards⁷

1. *Shouldn't students of this age already know what is expected of them and how to behave?*
Not necessarily. Behavioural expectations vary widely from one family, community or situation to another. So some students may arrive at school without a clear understanding of appropriate behaviour at school. Peers and the media send conflicting messages about behaviour (for example, in music videos and TV shows). As a result, some students are genuinely confused about what positive behaviour in a school setting really is.

2. *Praising feels unnatural. Won't students think it is phony?*
The more a teacher practises giving praise, the more natural it will feel. Praise given for positive behaviour is not phony. Students who receive praise will tend to praise others too, so praise won't seem phony to them.

3. *Isn't praise manipulative and coercive?*
The purpose of praise is to reinforce and increase positive behaviour. This is done with the student's knowledge. Praise helps to clearly describe expectations so that students can successfully meet them. Helping children succeed is a positive thing to do.

Behaviour that is acknowledged is more likely to occur again. Don't take any positive behaviour for granted or it may decline, regardless of the student's age.

4. *Isn't giving a reward like bribing students to do what you want?*
A bribe is often delivered before a behaviour occurs to coerce someone to do something hurtful, immoral or illegal. Positive reinforcement is given after a behaviour occurs.

5. *Won't students come to depend on tangible rewards? Don't extrinsic rewards decrease intrinsic motivation?*

To strengthen internal motivation, accompany tangible rewards with social reinforcement. As positive behaviour becomes more entrenched, you can gradually phase out extrinsic rewards.

7. Adapted with permission from Sopris West Educational Services. *Best Behavior: Building Positive Behavior Support in Schools* by Jeff Sprague © 2005, p. 62. Adapted by J. C. Rusby from Carolyn Webster-Stratton and Martin Herbert, *Troubled Families—Problem Children* (New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons, 1994), pp. 251–261.

6. *Shouldn't rewards be saved for special achievements?*
Handing out rewards sparingly gives students the message that everyday behaviour and effort doesn't count. Recognize and reward small steps on the way to achievement (for example, completing an assignment).
7. *How can schools afford all these rewards?*
You can provide inexpensive tangible rewards and then phase them out gradually as students learn the desired behaviour. Use privileges as rewards as well; for example, going to lunch first or getting extra recess time.
8. *Do students in middle school and high school still need rewards?*
People of all ages, including adults, need recognition, praise and rewards for their efforts. Young people need rewards, particularly during the difficult transition to adolescence.

Fair and predictable consequences

7

“Even the most skilled [school staffs] need to include clearly defined and articulated consequences within [their school] discipline plan. Although necessary, consequences should be the least-used component of the plan.”

– Mark Boynton and Christine Boynton, *The Educator’s Guide to Preventing and Solving Discipline Problems*

Students learn to comply with school-wide expectations and routines through direct and *differential* feedback about the acceptability of their behaviour. School staff employ differential feedback when they provide clear limits, use positive reinforcement and give corrective feedback to make the boundaries of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour obvious to students. Effective feedback is given consistently across school staff, throughout the school day and across school settings.

Simply punishing specific types of behaviour may not result in long-term behaviour change or help students to learn new behaviours and skills. Research shows that punishing problem behaviour without a school-wide positive support system results in increased:

- aggression
- avoidance
- vandalism
- truancy
- early school leaving (Mayer and Sulzer-Azaroff 1991; Skiba, Peterson and Williams 1997).⁸

In addition to rewards and reinforcement, a school-wide system needs a continuum of fair and predictable consequences for negative behaviour. The consequences for minor types of negative behaviour can be natural and easily implemented procedures such as low-key corrective feedback. For more serious negative behaviour, the consequences involve more comprehensive and intensive procedures that require advance planning for individual students.

8. Adapted with permission from Sopris West Educational Services. *Best Behavior: Building Positive Behavior Support in Schools* by Jeff Sprague © 2005, p. 26.

Examples of corrective consequences:

- giving corrective feedback
- completing self-reflection reports
- removing or withdrawing reinforcement
- making restitution
- communicating with parents
- after-class problem-solving sessions
- office referrals
- alternatives to suspension.

Giving corrective feedback

Generally, the continuum of negative consequences begins with corrective feedback, that can include:

1. taking students aside and, as much as possible, avoiding reprimands or embarrassment in front of others
2. describing the problem behaviour in a calm, nonjudgemental way
3. encouraging students to describe positive behaviour that would have been more appropriate
4. (if necessary) prompting them with a specific reminder
5. asking them to commit to that positive behaviour
6. thanking them for their attention.

Encouraging self-reflection

Self-reflection refers to sending a student out of the classroom for a time to reflect on his or her actions and make a written plan for better choices in the future.

Through written self-analysis, students think about:

1. how they feel they contributed to the conflict
2. how they feel others contributed
3. how they believe it should be resolved
4. how they can stop it from happening again
5. their final agreement relative to the incident.

Self-reflection can take place immediately after a negative behaviour occurs, and it is easy to implement. It can serve as a powerful warning, and it gives students a chance to calm down. It often eliminates the need for an office referral.

To make this approach work, have a supervised area where students can go as required, and have a receiving teacher available to:

- accept students as they arrive
- monitor their completion of a self-reflection process
- track referrals.

Staff should work together to set up a self-reflection system, develop behaviour reflection forms and identify which kinds of negative behaviours are best addressed in this way (by analyzing data collected throughout the process).



Tool 4: Behaviour Reflection A and *Tool 5: Behaviour Reflection B* in Appendix A are sample templates of forms for students to complete.

Removing or withholding preferred activities

Removing or withholding preferred activities (sometimes called “response cost”) is a logical consequence that can sometimes be administered quickly and efficiently. For example, students who fight or engage in name calling during a soccer game at recess might receive the following consequences.

- The supervising teacher denies these students access to soccer during the next recess.
- During that recess, a staff member works with the students to identify and practise what good sportsmanship looks and sounds like.
- Other school staff are informed of this event so that follow-through will be reinforced consistently.

Making restitution

Negative behaviour, particularly treating others unkindly, may provide an opportunity to teach students how to repair damage they have done to someone else. Teachers and students can work together to create a list of ways to make up for mistakes that hurt others (sometimes called a “caring menu”).

This approach offers students choices and teaches them how to say “I’m sorry” in an individualistic rather than a prescriptive way. Students may be able to connect saying “sorry” with an action and a change in their behaviour.

One elementary school created this caring menu.

- Write a note.
- Draw a picture.
- Help with a project or chore.
- Share a book.
- Play a game.
- Make a card.

The school displayed these examples on a poster. Then, when students violated the school rule of “Be kind to others,” they chose one of the options on the menu and followed through on it.

Communicating with parents

Communication with parents can be both a positive reinforcement and a negative consequence.

Following are some suggestions about contacting parents.

- Develop a systematic, school-wide system for contacting parents in the event of problem behaviour. Strive for consistent parent contact for rule infractions so the process is perceived to be fair.
- Provide an objective description of the behaviour, not a judgement about the student.
- Suggest that parents discuss the behaviour with their child and communicate an expectation of more positive choices in the future.
- Avoid implying that the parents should punish the child at home, or make him or her behave.
- Communicate the idea that school staff and parents can work as partners to help the student reduce negative behaviour and succeed in school.

After-class problem-solving session

After-school and lunch hour detentions are challenging to manage, and they may have a number of unintended results. However, in some cases individual students will benefit from staying after school or during the lunch hour for a collaborative and solution-focused problem-solving session.

A problem-solving session involves these steps.⁹

1. Focus on the solution.
2. Agree on the goal.
3. Agree on the conditions that contribute to the problem or cause it to continue.
4. Agree on a single task, skill or behaviour that the student can work on.

Office referrals

An effective office referral system is a critical component of a school-wide discipline system. Although schools need to record all discipline issues, office referrals should be reserved for only the most serious and visible incidents. They should be the exception rather than the rule.

Office referrals as a data-gathering system

The main purpose of an office referral system is to provide critical and contextual data for decision making, motivation and evaluation. School-wide, classroom and individual student data on office referrals can be used to support teaching and learning.

Staff can review where, when and how often problem behaviour occurs on a daily, monthly or annual basis. They can then use this information to make their interventions more specific. Armed with information about which students are displaying how many problem behaviours, staff can take action before the problems intensify.

Schools are increasingly adopting practices that decrease the effort and technical complexity involved in data management. Many schools are using software programs that facilitate data input, summaries and displays.

9. Adapted from Patricia Sequeira Belvel and Maya Marcia Jordan, *Rethinking Classroom Management: Strategies for Prevention, Intervention, and Problem Solving*, p. 199, copyright 2003 by Corwin Press, Inc. Adapted by permission of Corwin Press, Inc.

Many schools have adopted guidelines such as the following to help make office-referral data meaningful and user-friendly.

- Regularly ask a limited number of key evaluation questions.
- Collect only data that is linked to these questions.
- Review office-referral data before selecting new interventions or modifying current interventions.
- Communicate regularly with staff on this topic.

A system of collecting and reviewing school-wide, classroom and/or individual student data on office referrals helps to make interventions:

- more contextually relevant
- more aligned with problem behaviours of concern
- more likely to improve students' behaviour and teachers' effectiveness.

Sending students to the office

An effective office-referral process is based on agreed-upon criteria for sending students to the office. The school administrator then monitors all referrals, identifies patterns and looks for ways to support teachers who have a high number of referrals—which may indicate that the teacher is struggling with classroom management.

To maintain a positive atmosphere in the office, establish a system for quickly and effectively dealing with students who are referred and communicating the consequences to the referring teacher. Have a plan for dealing with referred students when the school administrator is out of the building.

Since office referrals are reserved for serious issues, make the consequences appropriately serious. At the least, the consequences should involve contacting the parents.



See *Tool 6: Student Referral Form* in Appendix A for a template for recording and communicating information about office referrals.

Suspensions and expulsions

Under Section 24 of the *School Act*, principals have the right to suspend a student from school for up to five days. Out-of-school suspensions and expulsions are considered extreme forms of timeout from positive reinforcement. Principals may use suspension and expulsion to ensure the safety of students and staff. Suspensions can also:

- provide the school and staff with an opportunity to regroup and retool for the student's return
- provide the student with an opportunity to think about what has led to the suspension.

Disadvantages of suspension

When students are out of school, they miss out on instruction, and often cause inconvenience and stress for their families. Many parents are unavailable or unwilling to supervise a student's suspension and, as a result, the student may spend the time watching television, playing video games or enjoying the community. The student may also have unstructured and unsupervised time that leads to further negative behaviour.

Parents often object to suspensions on the basis of lost instructional time. They also argue that some students do not regard suspension as a negative consequence and that suspensions can inadvertently become positive reinforcement for negative behaviour.

Suspensions can have a number of unintended consequences. Research conducted by the British Columbia Ministry of Education (1999) suggests that suspension:

- does not have the same effect as in years past due to the changing nature and extent of behaviours, and changes in family and community structures
- contributes to a student's alienation from school
- increases dropout rates
- contributes to academic failure
- appears to be a factor in students' involvement in risky or antisocial behaviour
- may precipitate more serious crimes in the community
- may have no effect or even increase the likelihood of the behaviour recurring
- may increase aggressive or avoidance behaviour.

Given that out-of-school suspensions may or may not change student behaviour and may cause hardships for families, a number of schools in Alberta are looking for more effective alternatives.



For more information on alternatives to suspension, see "Rethinking the Effectiveness of Suspensions" by Brenda Sautner in *Reclaiming Children and Youth*, Volume 9, Issue 4 (Winter 2001), pp. 210–214, www.cyc-net.org/journals/rcy.html.

School Act requirements

Schools using suspensions and expulsions must comply with all requirements of the *School Act*, including:

Suspension

- 24 (1)** A teacher or a principal may suspend a student in accordance with subsection (2) or (3) if in the opinion of the teacher or principal
- (a) the student has failed to comply with section 12, or
 - (b) the student's conduct is injurious to the physical or mental well-being of others in the school.
- (2)** A teacher may suspend a student from one class period.
- (3)** A principal may suspend a student
- (a) from school,
 - (b) from one or more class periods, courses or education programs, or
 - (c) from riding in a school bus.
- (4)** A principal may reinstate a student suspended under subsection (2) or (3).
- (5)** When a student is suspended under subsection (3), the principal shall
- (a) forthwith inform the student's parent of the suspension,
 - (b) report in writing to the student's parent all the circumstances respecting the suspension, and
 - (c) if requested, provide an opportunity to meet with the student's parent, and the student if the student is 16 years of age or older, to discuss the reasonableness of the suspension.
- (6)** If the student is not to be reinstated within 5 school days after the date of the suspension, the principal shall
- (a) forthwith inform the board of the suspension, and
 - (b) report in writing to the board all the circumstances respecting the suspension and the principal's recommendations, and the student remains suspended until the board has made a decision under subsection (8).
- (7)** The principal may recommend that the board expel the student if
- (a) the student has displayed an attitude of wilful, blatant and repeated refusal to comply with section 12, or
 - (b) the student's conduct is injurious to the physical or mental well-being of others in the school.
- (8)** The board shall within 10 school days after the date of the suspension
- (a) reinstate the student, or
 - (b) expel the student from school in accordance with section 25.

- (9) Before the board makes a decision under subsection (8), the student and the student's parent may make representations to the board with respect to the principal's recommendation to expel the student.

Expulsion

- 25 (1)** On considering the report provided to it under section 24(6)(b) and any representations made to it under section 24(9), the board may expel the student if
- (a) the principal has recommended that the board expel the student, and
 - (b) the student has been offered another education program by the board.
- (2) An expulsion must be for a period of more than 10 school days.
- (3) When a student is expelled under this section, the board shall forthwith notify, in writing, the student's parent, and the student if the student is 16 years of age or older,
- (a) of the expulsion, and
 - (b) of the right to request a review under section 124.
- (4) The board may re-enrol a student who has been expelled.

Suspension is generally reserved for serious behaviour that compromises the safety and well-being of other students, but schools also have a right to use suspension if a student does not follow the code of conduct outlined in Section 12 of the *School Act*, as described below.

Students

12 A student shall conduct himself or herself so as to reasonably comply with the following code of conduct:

- (a) be diligent in pursuing the student's studies;
- (b) attend school regularly and punctually;
- (c) cooperate fully with everyone authorized by the board to provide education programs and other services;
- (d) comply with the rules of the school;
- (e) account to the student's teachers for the student's conduct;
- (f) respect the rights of others.

Things to consider

Before deciding to use suspension as a consequence, school staff may wish to answer these questions.¹⁰

- What is the purpose of the suspension? Would other alternatives produce better results? Is the suspension effective in improving student behaviour?
- Where are the behaviours occurring? Is there a pattern to the behaviour?
- What steps can we take to ensure that learning is not compromised during the suspension?
- How will a suspension affect the parents? The community?
- Can we manage the suspension within the school? Where and how can we supervise the suspension in the school?
- Have we developed an individual support behaviour plan for students who have repeated difficulties?

If suspensions (in or out of school) are used as a consequence, the school must plan to follow up with a re-entry meeting and a plan for facilitating a positive return to school.

Alternatives to suspension

A number of schools are developing in-school suspension programs that decrease family hardship, ensure students are supervised and provide opportunities for students to engage in learning activities on their own. This approach requires a dedicated physical space away from other students as well as adult supervision throughout the day. Generally, students serving in-school suspensions do not have access to the school grounds, lunchroom or cafeteria, or to other opportunities for social interaction with peers.

Several urban junior and senior high schools have worked out reciprocal agreements with neighbouring schools so that individual students serve their suspension in a supervised setting in another school or in a nearby outreach program. Students lose their access to familiar peers and enjoyable daily activities but still engage in some academic work in a supervised school setting. This approach requires cooperation between schools, strong communication about the expectations of students and staff, and some preparation of learning materials for individual students. The assignments are often a mix of academic assignments and writing assignments that ask students to reflect on their current behaviour and make action plans for improvement.

10. Source: Manitoba Education, Training and Youth. *Towards Inclusion: From Challenges to Possibilities: Planning for Behaviour*. Winnipeg, MB: Manitoba Education, Training and Youth, 2001, p. 6.18. Adapted by permission. All rights reserved.

Collaborative leadership

“When parents, teachers, students and others view one another as partners in education, a caring community forms around students ...”

- Joyce L. Epstein et al., *School, Family and Community Partnerships: Your Handbook for Action* (2nd edition)

School administrator leadership

Working collaboratively with other school staff, administrators can create environments that sustain positive behaviour support. Their involvement and leadership is key to the success of the initiative.

The school administrator is key to the success of any school-wide systems improvement initiative. According to a recent article on advocacy in the *Education Law Journal*:

“... a school principal is at the centre of a complex organizational web. There are strands inside the school to the various points of service delivery. There are strands that extend outward to families, and the community, as well as to local and regional agencies and groups. There are strands that extend upward to the school district and from there to the ministry of education” (Smith 2007, p. 279).

School administrators can and should:

- identify positive behaviour supports as an important school-improvement goal
- be knowledgeable about positive behaviour support practices and systems change
- participate in core team meetings and related training
- model and visibly implement new practices (e.g., active supervision techniques) and reinforce staff who model new practices
- actively and frequently monitor and acknowledge students who meet behavioural expectations
- allocate resources to sustain positive behaviour supports.

Collaboration supports consistency

Consistency is an essential element of a school-wide approach. When all adults in the school community respond in a similar way, students have a better sense of how they are expected to behave.

If a student behaves inappropriately, the first adult to see this behaviour is responsible for addressing it, regardless of who that student's classroom or homeroom teacher is. Similarly, any or all school staff who witness positive behaviour should provide on-the-spot reinforcement for that behaviour.

When the school has an agreed-upon plan for consistency and collaboration, all adults in the school are more willing and able to assume responsibility for all students. Mutual decision making to develop action plans and resolve problems creates opportunities for all members of the school community to make a contribution. The result is a more effective and inclusive positive behaviour support system.

Supervisor's Story

Involving all staff

Two years ago our senior high school began a positive behaviour support approach that used a tracking system to collect data on positive and negative student behaviour.

I participated from the beginning because I work in the lunchroom. There is a computer right in the lunchroom that we use to log incidents. Previously, the school had not kept a record of incidents. Once we started this new tracking system, we had a clearer picture of what was going on.

Having this data and talking about behaviour has helped school staff handle behaviour incidents more consistently. It has also helped students to know there is a procedure if they mess up, and steps to go through. The students sign a code of conduct to show that they understand this.

This approach has really made our school community more responsible. Everyone is more involved in creating a positive learning environment. I'm pleased to be part of the process and to be able to see the positive changes in behaviour, especially in the lunchroom. The students are more aware of the consequences of their behaviour and are more committed to making the school a good place for everyone.

– Lunchroom supervisor, senior high school

Building a team approach

Positive relationships among and between staff members are key to successfully implementing a school-wide approach to support positive behaviour. Research has indicated that the following characteristics promote positive staff relationships and a healthy school culture:¹¹

- collegiality
- experimentation
- high expectations
- trust and confidence
- tangible support
- appreciation and recognition
- caring, celebration and humour
- involvement in decision making
- protection of what's important
- meaningful traditions
- honest, open communication.

To build a team approach, consider using the following strategies.

- Recognize that each staff member has something to offer. Create opportunities for staff to express their opinions, and acknowledge individual members' contributions.
- Ensure that many people share leadership responsibilities. Notice when team members are fatigued, and encourage others to step forward and share the load.
- Build a sense of security and trust through openness and the sharing of ideas and strategies. When a team member is comfortable with coming forward and asking for help with difficulties, other team members have an opportunity to offer the benefit of their experiences.
- Provide inservice training to support and motivate staff, or have one or more staff members attend a session and tell others what they've learned.

Building staff capacity

Michael Fullan (2005) describes capacity building as the development of “collective ability—dispositions, skills, knowledge, motivation and resources—to act together to bring about positive change” (p. 4). Capacity building (e.g., increasing staff rapport and collaborative problem-solving skills) happens when school administrators intentionally create opportunities for teachers to work together.

Staff must agree on which behaviours are inappropriate and how they will respond when those behaviours occur. Having all staff participate in developing the plan increases ownership and support for implementing and maintaining it.

11. Adapted from Saphier, J. & King, M. (1985, March). “Good Seeds Grow in Strong Cultures.” *Educational Leadership*, 42(6), 67. Adapted with permission from the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

School-based support teams

When a school-wide system has been established, small groups of teachers will benefit from regularly scheduled time to solve issues with individual students and/or deal with classroom management in general. Since teachers will need to feel comfortable talking about the challenges they face, they should have opportunities to build their skills through collaborative problem solving and/or peer coaching.

Administrators should ensure that teachers have opportunities to spend time in each other's classrooms to observe and team teach, and then reflect and discuss different practices they might use to enhance their planning and instructional practices.

Mentoring and role models

Community partners can also serve as mentors to students, staff and parents. A number of community agencies such as Big Sisters, Big Brothers, screen and match trained volunteers to work with students.

Experienced teachers and administrators are role models for the entire school community. They can have a major impact on respectful relationships and effective school-wide management. Providing mentoring opportunities for beginning teachers as well as teachers who are new to the school helps them to learn about and understand the strategies and tools that other staff members are using. Creating opportunities for the mentor and mentee to visit each other's classrooms and discuss what they observe fosters the sharing of knowledge and builds capacity.

As well, teachers who have previously taught in other schools can share their successful experiences elsewhere with colleagues.

Onsite community partners

A team approach to providing a school-wide support system for students works best when it is on-site, multidisciplinary and multi-level. Members of an on-site support team could include, but are not limited to:

- public health and psychiatric nurses
- dietitian
- social worker/mental health therapist
- youth worker/family liaison worker
- community police resource officer.

Having a community of caring adults located right in the school on a regularly-scheduled basis (e.g., several hours each week or half-a-day a month) provides rich opportunities for building positive relationships, teaching social skills and problem solving and providing intervention and support on an as-needed basis. With these

kinds of supports in place, students have more opportunities to gain the knowledge and skills to choose healthy behaviours, to make better life choices and, ultimately, to respond to life's changes and challenges with resiliency and emotional maturity.

This collaborative “all for one” approach—in which partners work together to support one school, one classroom and one individual student, will help create a stable, caring environment for learning and teaching.



For more information on the “all for one” approach, visit the Alberta Mental Health Board Web site at www.amhb.ab.ca/Pages/default.aspx.

Professional development opportunities

Student learning and behaviour will be enhanced when school staff have access to effective professional development. Visit the Alberta Initiative for School Improvement (AISI) Web site at



www.education.gov.ab.ca/K_12/special/aisi/pdfs/PDPLanningGuide_Final.pdf and [www.education.gov.ab.ca/k_12/special/aisi/pdfs/Effec PD Research Says 2006.pdf](http://www.education.gov.ab.ca/k_12/special/aisi/pdfs/Effec_PD_Research_Says_2006.pdf) for resources on professional development.

School policies and practices

One way to promote consistency between and among adults in the school community is to infuse positive behaviour support approaches into school policy and practices.

The provincial *School Act* defines behavioural expectations for students and outlines the responsibilities of school boards, administrators and teachers for creating a safe and caring environment that fosters and maintains respectful and responsible behaviour.

Jurisdictions develop student behaviour policies that align with the *School Act*. Each school develops practices that will create a safe and caring environment in that school community. To be effective, school practices need to be intentional and should be monitored and reviewed on a regular basis. Practices could include how staff perform certain tasks such as supervision, reporting problem behaviours (office referrals) and reinforcing positive behaviour. Policies could also plan for specific situations such as lock-downs or emergency evacuations.

A school team might develop a plan for responding to specific types of situations that include a written protocol to share at staff meetings once a year, and review and revise as needed. The following illustrates how a school staff might operationalize a policy about handling student fighting.

1. Assess the situation.

- Is there an audience egging them on? Dismiss the audience.
- Do you have a good relationship with these students? If so, they will be more likely to cooperate with you.
- Who is fighting and how many? Get names and note discriminating physical features.
- Are there any weapons? Ask them to hand over any potential weapons.

2. Call for help.

Teamwork is very important in this situation; work in pairs when called to break up a fight.

- Notify the office that a fight is occurring. Use a cell phone or ask a student to go and get help.
- Let other adults know where you are going and where the fight is occurring.
- If two adults are on the scene, work as a team and stand four to six metres apart from each other. This diverts attention by causing the students who are fighting to focus on more than one staff member. One staff member can give the verbal orders while the other staff member concentrates on visual cues.

3. Dismiss the audience.

- Disrupt the fight by calling out the names of the students who are participating as an audience. This conveys the message that adults are present, will disperse the audience and may distract the students who are fighting.
- If necessary, remove the audience by starting at the perimeter and working your way closer to the fighting. Direct audience members to tasks; e.g., "Go and get another teacher."
- Another effective strategy for dispersing an audience is for a number of school staff to converge on the area. Some schools have an "all code" indication that all school staff should converge on a certain area.

[more →](#)

4. Defuse the situation.

- Identify yourself as a teacher. Make sounds by whistling or shouting exclamations such as, “Stop” or “Calm down” or “Move apart.”
- Act like a peacemaker, keep your hands up and approach the students from the front. Stay out of striking distance.
- Stop any type of taunting interchange. Prefight provocation commonly includes teasing, insults, bumping and staring.
- Deal with one individual at a time. Confront the one who is most likely to comply with your request, either the student you know best or the student who is getting the most hurt.
- Use the student’s name and ask him or her (Student A) to calm down and move away. Offer the student a way out. For example, “You don’t want to get into any more trouble. Let the principal deal with him (or her).”
- Repeat your requests again and again until you have the student’s attention.
- Use specific commands such as pointing and stating, “Walk over to the bench.” When Student A is disengaged from the fight, ask him or her to go to a specific location.
- Don’t ask questions; this can fuel bad feelings.
- Keep the other student (Student B) in your peripheral vision; that student will now be watching your interactions with Student A.
- When you have the attention of Student A, allow the student about five seconds to “save face” by moving away. Remind him or her “You don’t need this.”
- Deal with the remaining student.
- Isolate them to separate rooms.
- If at any time the students decide to stop fighting and leave, do not try to detain them. Allow them to exit and document the incident for formal follow-up.

If the above doesn’t work:

- Remind them of the school rules regarding fighting. “There is no fighting in this school.”
- If the fight continues, immediately inform them that the police will be called and remind them of the consequences if they continue by stating, “Fighting will get both of you suspended.”

more →

5. Resolution

3/3

- Once the students have calmed down and are able to control their anger, help them find a solution. Conflict mediation can be helpful in solving the problem.
- Ensure established school consequences for fighting; e.g., three-day in-school suspension, include steps for the involved students to resolve the issue, make restitution and develop plans for coping with conflict more appropriately.

6. Debriefing

- Be aware of your own emotional state after dealing with a fight. If possible, debrief with another school staff member and give yourself some time for recovery.
- Debrief the class or audience of peers who may be anxious or “hyped-up” about the encounter.

Strengthening school practices

Many schools review how staff are currently supervising, engaging and acknowledging students’ positive behaviour. For example, the following chart illustrates how carefully planned playground supervision supports a school-wide positive behaviour support approach.

Playground Supervision	
Supervise actively	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Interact with as many students as possible.• Scan the playground systematically (like a lifeguard scans a pool).• Systematically walk around the playground (e.g., completing a figure eight in a 10-minute block of time).
Engage successfully	Consider teaching a variety of outdoor games. Put together plastic tubs of play equipment and have individual students make sure materials are returned by matching items to a list of materials on the tub.
Acknowledge positively	Verbally reinforce individual students who demonstrate positive behaviours. Distribute “Caught you cooperating” slips that students can share with classroom teachers and parents.

Linking with other school initiatives

Look for ways to link positive behaviour supports with other school initiatives and approaches such as character education, ongoing school climate activities or the work of school councils.



See *Appendix B* for brief descriptions of these approaches and philosophies, which can complement positive behaviour supports:

- Caring Relationships
- Center for the 4th and 5th Rs
- Circles of Courage
- Community of Caring
- Developmental Assets
- Emotional Intelligence
- Hope Research
- Lions-Quest Canada/Thrive!
- Moral Intelligence
- Professional Learning Communities
- Resiliency Research
- Safe and Caring Schools Initiative
- Skillstreaming: New Strategies and Perspectives for Teaching Prosocial Skills
- Virtues Project.

Data-driven decision making

“Accountability looks forward. Being accountable is not a ledger page or a spreadsheet. It means taking the information and using it to make judgements—about quality, about how good is good enough and, most importantly, about how to make changes that will enhance and extend student learning, for all children.”

– Lorna Earl, “Developing Indicators: The Call for Accountability”

A school-wide approach to positive behaviour support builds on clear indicators, benchmarks and measurable goals. Hard data guides staff as they determine which areas to target, how well efforts at change are working and how to improve success.

Staff can use data to:

- clarify *what* problem behaviours are occurring and with *whom*
- clarify *where* problem behaviours occur
- clarify *when* problem behaviours occur
- prevent problems
- develop supervision schedules
- make rules that are realistic, reasonable and practical
- choose positive reinforcements and negative consequences
- plan environmental modifications by setting physical boundaries related to behaviour
- set priorities (addressing the most important, problematic or unsafe behaviours immediately)
- set school-wide goals for behaviour change.

Initial assessment

Most schools begin by gathering information about the current climate, and the school’s behavioural strengths and needs. Methods of data collection include:

- school-wide audits
- surveys

- analysis of existing data, for example, office referral records, suspension rates and attendance records
- structured discussions or brainstorming sessions with staff, students and parents.

Schools should use at least three different methods of data collection, and use a process that provides information about the perspectives of all members of the school community: administrators, teachers, support staff, students and parents.

School-wide audits

As a starting point, either the core team or all adults in the school can complete a school-wide cultural audit to determine how well the school is currently addressing the key components of a positive behaviour approach.

For example:

1. We have defined a small number (e.g., 3–5) of positively and clearly stated school-wide expectations and related behaviours.
2. We are directly teaching positive student behaviours.
3. Appropriate numbers of students are in the hallways.
4. The physical environment has been modified to limit unsupervised areas, problematic traffic patterns, and access to and exit from school grounds.
5. Staff actively supervise students when they are outside the classroom.
6. Staff regularly and systematically reinforce positive behaviour.
7. We have clearly defined what problem behaviour is.
8. We have clearly defined the consequences for problem behaviour.
9. There are clear distinctions between office- and classroom-managed problem behaviours.
10. We have set up a team to plan a behaviour support system and solve problems in this area.
11. Staff receive regular opportunities to develop and improve their active supervision skills.
12. School administrators are active participants in the positive behaviour support team.
13. Staff receive regular feedback about behaviour patterns in the school.
14. We have procedures for informing parents about the school's behavioural expectations.

15. The school-wide positive behaviour support team has an action plan and the resources to implement it.
16. All staff are directly involved in school-wide behaviour interventions.
17. We have procedures for informing parents about both positive and problem behaviour.



Tool 7: School-wide Audit in Appendix A is a sample template for gathering information about a school's current strengths and needs.

Surveys

Surveys administered to staff, students and parents can provide:

- a snapshot of what is happening at the school (the current school culture)
- specific baseline data to use when measuring the impact of future interventions.



Some schools develop a survey while others use a published one. **Tools 8A, 8B** and **8C** in Appendix A are sample surveys to use with students. These surveys, developed by The Society for Safe and Caring Schools and Communities, are also available at www.sacsc.ca/Resources_Student%20Survey%20Guidebook.htm.

Focused discussion and open-ended survey questions provide opportunities for staff and students to identify specific problem behaviours they see at school, as well as specific problem areas in the school and the times of day when staff need to pay particular attention. This information can be used to develop more detailed questions for data collection.



Tool 9: Survey on Predicting Problem Behaviour in Appendix A is a sample template for gathering information from school staff.

Analyzing and using data

Schools can analyze information gathered in the initial assessment stage to determine where they need to focus their attention. Some schools may find they are doing just fine, and can therefore focus on how to make their school culture even stronger. As schools implement their plans, they will continue to use data collection systems to measure progress over time.

Data from office referrals

Office referral data is useful for identifying:

- student discipline patterns

- the effects of school-wide and classroom interventions
- staff training needs.

In many schools, office discipline referrals are the main method of monitoring disruptive behaviour. Referrals are an index, not only of student behaviour, but also of the consistency and quality of the school discipline system. These types of referral systems help school administrators document whether or not interventions are producing positive changes over time.

Cautions¹²

Be cautious how you use discipline referral data, particularly when comparing one school to another. Keep in mind that:

- each school defines and applies referral procedures differently. A high rate of referrals does not necessarily mean that students at one school are less well-behaved than students at another school with fewer referrals
- the same student may evoke different responses from different teachers
- varying relationships between teachers and administrators may be the reason for one school to have more referrals than another.

Effective use of data¹²

Discipline referral data can provide useful information about individual student performance, and about problems in the whole school or a particular classroom. However, the data will be useful only if:

- school staff have a common understanding of its purpose
- there is an effective and efficient system for collecting, managing and reporting this data.



Tool 6: Student Referral Form in Appendix A is a sample template for collecting and organizing office referral data.

Many schools successfully use referral data for decision making. They use regular cycles of data collection and reporting. For example:

- recording referrals every day
- providing feedback to staff once a month
- creating a school profile summarizing data once a year.

It is important to keep the data-collection system efficient and low-cost in terms of effort, time and actual dollars.

12. Adapted with permission from Sopris West Educational Services. *Best Behavior: Building Positive Behavior Support in Schools* by Jeff Sprague © 2005, p. 94.

Types of data¹³

Schools might collect the following types of office referral data:

- total number of office discipline referrals
- referrals per student
- average referrals per school day or per month
- location of behaviour resulting in referrals (e.g., common areas or classrooms)
- percentage of students with none or one referral
- percentage of students with two to six referrals
- percentage of students with seven or more referrals.

Analyzing data¹³

Following are some guidelines for analyzing office referral data.

- A high number of referrals per year and per student indicate a need for school-wide improvement.
- A high number of referrals from a specific area of the school indicate a need for improvement in that area.
- Improved classroom management is needed when:
 - more referrals are coming from all classrooms
 - specific classrooms have more referrals.
- Individual student improvement is needed when:
 - a high proportion of students have two to six referrals
 - some students have received more than six referrals
 - many students are being suspended and expelled.

Assessing effectiveness of office referrals¹³

To assess the effectiveness of their office referral practices, schools might consider these points.

- How is discipline referral data used in the school?
- Are there concerns about using discipline referrals to make school discipline decisions?
- How often does the administrator provide information about discipline?
- How do we need to improve the current office discipline referral system?

13. Adapted with permission from Sopris West Educational Services. *Best Behavior: Building Positive Behavior Support in Schools* by Jeff Sprague © 2005, pp. 95, 96.

Using data to make decisions

We are in our fourth year of using effective behaviour supports. It is a regular item on our monthly staff meeting agenda. Graphs identify students who have had multiple incidents, the type of difficulty (e.g., swearing, physical altercations, rough play, etc.) and the areas of the school where these behaviours happen most frequently. We use hard data to identify the problem, rather than relying on people's opinions about what might be the problem. This helps us focus our energies more effectively and creates a shared understanding of what behaviour we are aiming for.

At staff meetings, we discuss and share ideas about how to address the problem behaviours and reinforce the positive ones. We review our progress month by month and, when an approach doesn't work, we're always willing to go back to the drawing board and try something new.

To raise awareness and gather input from parents, we conduct surveys on specific topics throughout the year. For example, we find out information about self-control by asking parents, "How does your child demonstrate this skill at home?" We can then use this information to plan lessons and create structured opportunities for practising self-control at school.

– Principal, junior high school

Ongoing assessment and monitoring

Deliberate and thoughtful assessment guides the development, decision making and evaluation of a positive behaviour support initiative. Schools need reliable evidence that the new actions they are taking are truly making a positive difference and are resulting in measurable positive outcomes.

Schools can gather data about:

- types of behaviour
- the settings and location of behaviour
- the time of behaviour.

Schools can also gather data on the types of interventions used as part of the positive behaviour support approach. This data provides information about how effective the interventions are generally, and helps to identify which ones are most successful.

If schools gather and report data regularly, action plans can be adjusted to provide optimal support for interventions. Some schools designate 10–15 minutes during each staff meeting to discuss the school-wide behaviour system.

Streamline the collection process

To make the collection of data a meaningful and manageable task:

- focus on a few key outcomes. Limit the number of measures and collect accurate data on the behaviours that really matter. Do a few things well; specific, measurable targets work best
- design data-collection methods that are simple and easy to use
- summarize the data and report it to the school community. Document, post and celebrate goals achieved. Consider using bar graphs to demonstrate progress and communicate this progress by posting it in the staff room, on bulletin boards in the hallways and/or in the school newsletter.

Develop a collection plan

Developing a data-collection plan ensures that data will be accurate and provide a clear picture of the kinds of behaviour being reported. As much as possible, make the data collection system part of current school practices. For example, many schools are already collecting data about lateness and absenteeism, and can expand that system to include office discipline referrals, incidents of vandalism and/or the results of school satisfaction surveys.

Following is an example of an assessment plan designed to gather and analyze data for future planning for positive behaviour supports.

Goal of evaluation	Evaluation strategy	Time line
Identify positive behaviour goals.	<i>Baseline assessment.</i> Survey all students, staff and parents about strengths, weaknesses and recommendations for addressing positive behaviour in the school.	Sept. 30 Issue baseline survey Oct. 1 Calculate survey results Oct. 15 Report results
Assess current implementation plans and activities.	<i>Process evaluation.</i> Design a checklist of programming components that are observable school-wide. Then assess current implementation activities through interviews and observation.	Nov. 1 Design checklist Nov. 7–21 Observe hallways, classrooms and/or interview teachers Dec. 1 Report results
Evaluate the effectiveness of the plan and activities.	<i>Outcome evaluation.</i> Prioritize goals and designate appropriate assessment measurements. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use a school climate survey to assess students’ perceptions of the school’s strengths and needs. • Collect discipline records to track incidents of negative behaviour. • Review attendance records to estimate correlation between school climate and attendance. 	Feb. 15 Decide on assessment measures in relation to goals March 1 Issue school climate survey to students, staff and parents March 15 Calculate survey results April 1 Collect discipline and attendance records April 21 Report results
Use evaluation results to improve planning and implementation for the next school year.	<i>Action research.</i> Propose planning and implementation improvements based on the results of the needs assessment, process evaluation and outcome evaluation.	May 1 Report findings and propose program adjustments to the school community

Keep the cycle going

Monitoring and evaluating are ongoing processes. Continuously:

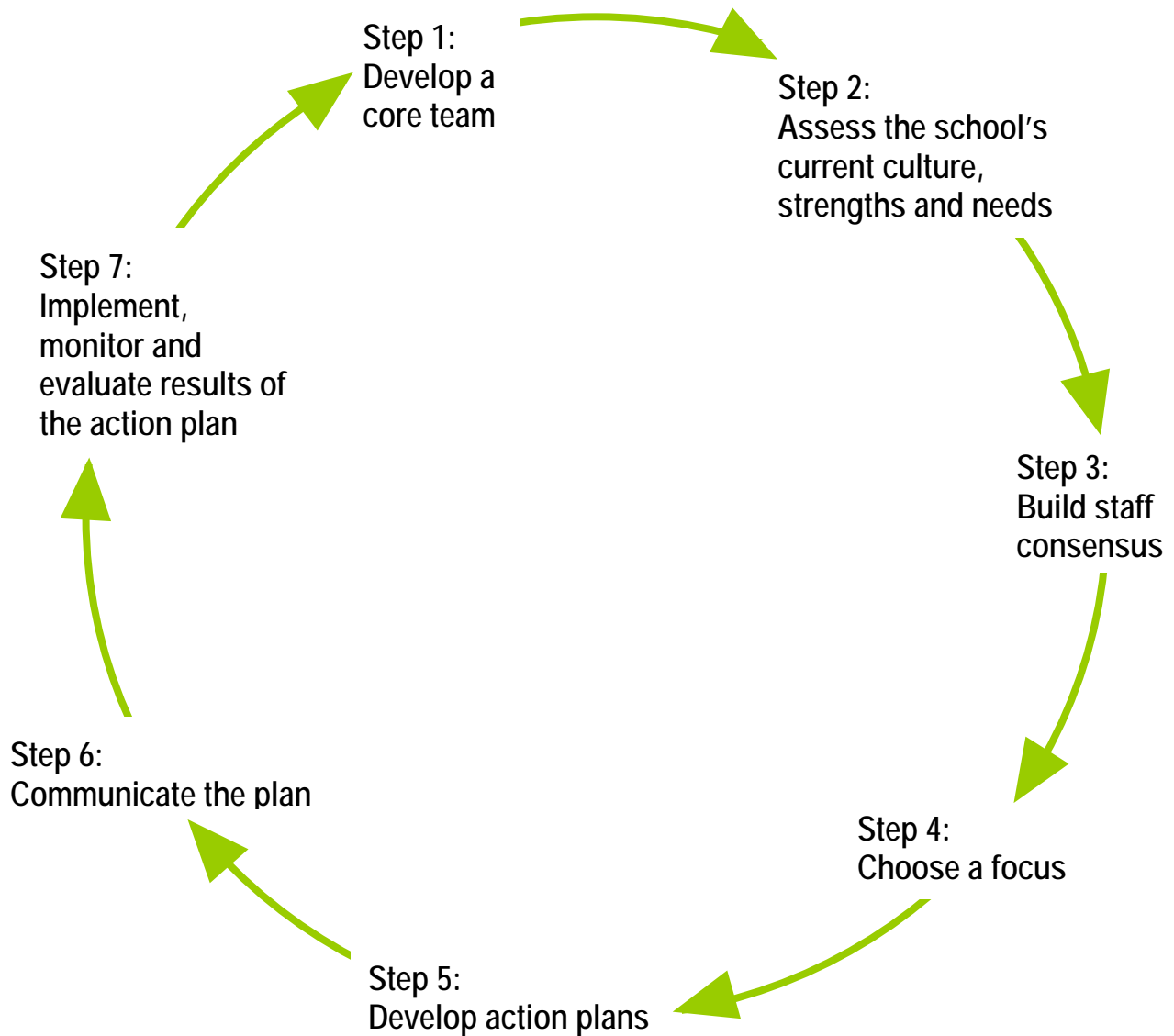
- ask, “How are we doing?”
- compare early measures of behaviour data to current measures
- modify or eliminate what is not working
- celebrate and communicate successes.

Action plan for school change

“Small things done consistently in strategic places make change happen.”

– Cile Chavez, Author

The most effective way to effect change is to use a flexible approach, with overlapping and interrelated steps that promote continuous improvement. The following sample process describes steps that many schools are taking to develop, implement and monitor a school-wide approach to positive behaviour supports.



Step 1: Develop a core team

A positive behaviour support system requires a core team of dedicated staff members who will:

- coordinate data collection (initial and ongoing needs assessments)
- use this data to make decisions about specific interventions (e.g., school rules, social skills instruction)
- develop an action plan for implementing positive behaviour supports
- use student- and staff-level data to refine and evaluate their efforts.

Team members need to have leadership abilities and the respect of colleagues. They also need skills in effective communication, team building and collaborative problem solving.

Team members could include:

- an administrator
- teachers from different grades or departments
- staff with general and special education or counselling expertise
- staff with behavioural expertise
- support staff such as secretaries, lunchroom supervisors, custodians, bus drivers and teacher assistants
- a school council member
- a student.

The core team will require adequate support and resources so that they can meet regularly over a two- to three-year period. Change will happen if school staff are committed to the process for at least 36 months.

Some schools find that half-day or full-day meetings are most productive, and they often separate these longer sessions by at least one month. This allows time for initial planning as well as developing and using various strategies.

The core team will need to help staff and parents develop an understanding of:

- how to develop and implement positive reinforcement systems
- data-based decision making
- effective classroom management strategies

- adapting instruction to increase positive behaviour through differentiated instruction
- functional behavioural assessment and developing individual behaviour support plans.

Step 2: Assess the school's current culture, strengths and needs

Before a school-wide positive behaviour support system is introduced, it is important to systematically assess the school's strengths and needs, and its culture (that is, the underlying set of beliefs, values, traditions and norms that have evolved and that determine how people think and behave). School culture also includes the way teachers and other staff members work together.



Tool 7: School-wide Audit and *Tool 8: Supporting a Safe and Caring School: What Students Say* in Appendix A may be useful in assessing the school culture and identifying current strengths and needs.

A comprehensive school assessment generally involves two or three sources of data. For example:

- surveys of staff, students and parents
- staff observation and discussion
- facilitated sessions with staff
- data that is already available (for example, office referrals, attendance records, suspension and expulsion rates).

Step 3: Build staff consensus

Since the success of a positive behaviour approach depends on the active participation of members of the school community, the majority of staff must support the initiative. All staff will have leadership roles. The literature suggests that an effective school-wide behaviour support system requires that at least 80 percent of the school staff acknowledge the existence of problem behaviour and commit to sustained involvement over the long term.

Principal's Story

Professional learning community (PLC)

When our school began developing an effective behaviour support approach, we realized the importance of staff support. All teachers and teacher assistants on staff have the opportunity to provide input into our behaviour support climate committee. We use a collaborative decision-making process that involves analyzing data on both positive and inappropriate behaviour.

There was some skepticism at first. Staff thought the administration of the process would be too much. However, through our Professional Learning Community work, including professional development presentations by regional behaviour experts, staff became more committed to the approach. We developed data graphs showing the results of the approach so parents were more aware of how well it was working.

We also worked with students to develop an acronym to help them remember behavioural expectations. The school motto became "Be a STAR!" and the letters in STAR stood for "Stop, Think, Act Right!"

We feel that by keeping the staff engaged through professional learning opportunities, and by using the effective behaviour support system, we are helping our students develop strong moral intelligence and act out their beliefs in positive ways.

– Principal, junior/senior high school

Step 4: Choose a focus

Since staff have limited time, schools need to focus on goals and related strategies that are clearly identified by the data and that all staff support. The results of the school survey and other initial assessment measures will help identify a focus. Concentrating on a few big ideas and translating these into measurable goals provides a clear starting point.

The core team can support the focus by providing:

- ideas about how to address the goals (for example, sharing information about best practices)
- information about how well the school is currently addressing identified areas of need.

The following story describes how one school chose to focus on preventing bullying.

Principal's Story

Bullying prevention focus

Bullying was a major problem at our school. School council took the lead in establishing a bullying prevention initiative. We held an evening information session to introduce parents and students to the idea of using an effective behaviour supports process to prevent bullying.

We used the “HA HA SO” technique to summarize proactive behaviour that would prevent bullying:

Help

Assert yourself

Humour

Avoid

Self-talk

Own it.

A Grade 6 peer group made up of 12 volunteers—mostly girls—takes the lead on bullying prevention and showing a positive attitude at school. Also, the safety patrol program provides role models and advice for students by putting on skits at school assemblies about how to deal with bullying.

– Principal, middle school



For more information on bullying prevention, see Chapter 9 in *The Heart of the Matter: Character and Citizenship Education in Alberta Schools*, at www.education.gov.ab.ca/charactered.



Also see the Government of Alberta's Web site at www.bullyfreealberta.ca. This site provides information to parents, teens and community members to help them prevent or intervene in a bullying situation.

Targeting behaviour at recess

Many elementary schools identify behaviour during recess as an area of concern. These are some actions a school might take to improve behaviour at recess.

- Develop and review recess guidelines with staff.
- Develop and share related learning activities for classroom teachers to use.
- Encourage teachers to review recess behavioural expectations with students at least once a month.
- Establish a school-wide process to reinforce positive behaviour at recess and address problem behaviour.
- Review monthly data on playground behaviour.
- Conduct a staff and student satisfaction survey at the beginning of the intervention and at other times throughout the process.

Following are several sample learning activities related to appropriate behaviour at recess.

- Review and discuss a labelled map of the school playground.
- Walk around the playground with the classroom teacher and discuss where it is (and is not) safe to play.
- Watch a demonstration of the behavioural expectations in action.
- Rotate through the apparatus and game area stations to learn and practise behavioural expectations for each area.
- Discuss playground behavioural expectations and reviewing "What if ..." scenarios.
- Watch a video of recess play and identify positive and/or problem behaviours.

Step 5: Develop action plans

Most schools find it useful to conduct a needs assessment and then use the information collected to develop a comprehensive, tailor-made plan that targets the behaviours staff have identified as having a high priority.

Action plans define tasks, time lines and people responsible for strengthening and maintaining critical features. Sample tasks might include:

- defining behavioural expectations
- teaching specified behaviours
- acknowledging positive behaviour
- establishing negative consequences
- monitoring behaviour patterns
- modifying physical arrangements
- supervising in different ways.



Tool 10: Action Plan to Enhance School Culture in Appendix A is a sample template for an action plan.

Setting goals

Schools can use information from the assessment process to set three or four measurable goals that can be achieved within a school year. (Goals are broad statements describing appropriate behaviour and conduct.)

The goals should:

- be immediately useful
- lead to other related and/or more important or complex skills
- help students acquire greater independence and adopt more socially acceptable behaviours.

For example, a school might choose one or several of the following goals.

- The noise level in the hallways will reduce by five decibels.
- The frequency of “on time” arrivals for class will increase by 50 percent.
- There will be more injury-free days on the playground.
- There will be more days when supervisors and students hear only respectful language in the hallway.
- Students will complete 95 percent of their homework assignments.

The core team might develop more detailed descriptions of the expected change and what it will look like in order to help school staff communicate expectations, and teach, recognize and reinforce the desired behaviours.

Objectives are narrower statements of school-wide targeted behaviour. A well-stated objective identifies what students are expected to do and indicates how performance will be measured. Well-stated objectives also include checkpoints along the way — intermediate steps between the current level of performance as identified in the school audit and the final objective. These short-term goals follow a logical and developmental sequence of mastering subskills.

The following are examples of specific, measurable school-wide objectives.

- We will implement active supervision in the hallways between classes; the number of students getting to class on time will increase by 50 percent by March 15.
- We will use active supervision to increase positive behaviour; the number of office referrals during morning and afternoon recess will decrease by 25 percent by March 15.

Developing measurable outcomes at the outset will help staff collect more accurate data. When developing goals and objectives, consider the SMART acronym that outlines criteria for effective goal setting:

Specific
Measurable
Achievable
Realistic
Time-limited.

Some schools support school-wide rules and behavioural expectations with overarching mottos phrased in student-friendly, memorable language. For example:

- Respect Yourself, Respect Others, Respect Property
- Keep Yourself Safe, Keep Yourself Learning
- This Is Our School, Let Peace Dwell Here.

Step 6: Communicate the plan

All students must be aware of and understand the school behaviour goals for the year. Communicating the behaviour plan is crucial to student, parent and staff understanding. Having the behavioural expectations clearly stated in student-friendly language and posted throughout the school will help teachers and other adults monitor for positive behaviour. These signs also serve as friendly reminders to students and staff.

Making a plan

One school developed the following plan to communicate what the staff would do to support positive behaviour over a period of a few months.

As a staff, we agree to take these steps:

Right now

- Be in the hall five minutes before class to greet each student as he or she enters the classroom.
- Each week, learn the names of five students you don't know.
- Stop by areas you don't normally visit during your hallway supervision.
- Include an inspiring quote of the day in the morning announcements.

Within the next few months

- Use the moveable display boards to post photos and captions describing positive school behaviour.
- Each week, make three phone calls to parents to deliver a positive message about their child.
- Adjust the supervision schedule to increase the number of staff in the cafeteria and gymnasium at noon hour.
- Continue to make positive remarks to students in various social settings throughout the school.

In the future

- Get as many students as possible involved in the leadership club.
- Publish the criteria for year-end awards in the school newsletter.
- Increase staff availability to talk with students and/or parents before classes begin in the morning.

Developing tools

Schools can use a number of different methods of communicating behavioural expectations. For example:

- displaying posters throughout the school
- organizing assemblies where specific behaviours are modelled and recognized
- making announcements over the public address system
- sharing information through the school newsletter and the school council
- posting information on the school Web site.

One school developed the following charter and introduced it to parents by sending home a copy of the charter with a letter and a quiz.

Project Respect Charter

Any School is a community of learners. We are all here to learn, grow and become good citizens.

At Any School, we:

- respect ourselves
- respect others
- respect property.

Guiding principles

Project Respect is designed to help create a climate of cooperation, respect, safety and academic excellence at Any School. Project Respect is based on five guiding principles. We believe these principles will help create a positive learning environment for all students.

The guiding principles are:

1. Clear expectations for student behaviour.
2. Clear and consistent strategies for
 - teaching appropriate behaviour
 - encouraging appropriate behaviour
 - discouraging inappropriate behaviour.
3. A support system and individual behaviour interventions for students with exceptional learning and/or behavioural needs.
4. Clear methods for evaluating and revising Project Respect.
5. Clear and consistent communication with students and parents about the characteristics and philosophy of the behaviour plan.

Sample letter to parents

Dear Parents:

Any School has always prided itself on being a safe and caring school with a high level of respect among staff and students. Over the past few years the student population has doubled. As a staff, we felt the need to be proactive in establishing a behaviour plan that takes into account our growth.

Since September, the school staff, with assistance from the University of Anywhere, has been developing a school-wide behaviour plan called Project Respect. This plan is designed to foster a climate of cooperation, academic excellence, respect and safety at Any School.

Our plan makes use of effective instructional strategies, consistent correction procedures, logical consequences and positive reinforcement to teach students the skills and behaviour necessary to succeed now and in the future. This month we are working on moving around the building in a safe and respectful manner.

For the past week students have been learning about Project Respect. We have encouraged them to discuss the plan with you. Please spend some family time discussing the various aspects of Any School's Behaviour Plan with your child.

Once you have reviewed the information with your child, please test your knowledge by taking the Parent/Child Test Your Knowledge survey. After you test your knowledge, please sign the form indicating that you discussed the plan with your child and return the signed form (one per family) to your child's teacher. The deadline for responding is Friday, March 7.

We are also interested in any questions or comments you have about the plan.

Test Your Knowledge about Project Respect

Please do this quiz as a family — your child will be able to help you with the answers!

1. Our school purpose states that “We all are here to _____ and become good _____.”

2. Any School’s Three Rs are:
we respect _____,
we respect _____, and
we respect _____.

3. List three ways students can show respect for themselves at school.

4. List three ways students can show respect for others at school.

5. List two behavioural expectations for moving through the building and walkways.

Student Signature

Parent Signature

Please return to classroom teacher by March 7.

Communicating with students at monthly assemblies

We have assemblies once a month where a new theme is introduced and discussed. Past themes have included Sportsmanship, Determination and Respect.

At the assembly, I give students general feedback, such as how the sportsmanship on the soccer field has been great for the past week. We also have bulletin boards throughout the school showcasing our theme of the month.

– Principal, senior high school

Step 7: Implement, monitor and evaluate results of the action plan

Implement

Many schools begin focusing on positive behaviour on the very first day of school. Then throughout the year they provide refresher sessions on behavioural expectations and celebrate successes.

Schools that have successfully implemented a positive behaviour supports system also use these strategies:

- providing orientation for new staff who arrive during the year, including student teachers
- using staff development opportunities to help create a positive school culture that is student-focused and supportive, and provides an optimal learning environment
- analyzing data to see whether interventions are being used consistently
- analyzing data to identify interventions that are not working and need to be changed
- offering staff ongoing professional development opportunities related to needs identified through data analysis
- providing feedback to staff about how well their efforts and interventions are working, including feedback about small successes that might have been overlooked

- using data to develop future goals and ensure that current progress is monitored and sustained.

Monitor and evaluate

Once staff have identified a few key goals to address, the school can set up systems for monitoring results. For example: Are the steps we're taking to reduce the noise level in the hallways producing results? If not, try revising the approach and re-evaluating at a later date.

Targeting specific expectations and gathering data about results in those areas makes the process more explicit and measurable, and provides clear feedback to staff.



Use *Tool 11: Positive Behaviour Implementation Checklist* in Appendix A to monitor the action plan.



See sample strategies on pages 69 to 77, "Data-driven decision making" for information and strategies on monitoring and evaluating levels of behaviour and impact of interventions.

Sample tools

Appendix A

- 1 Active Supervision Observation Feedback
- 2 School Settings Template
- 3 Positive Behaviour Referral Form
- 4 Behaviour Reflection A
- 5 Behaviour Reflection B
- 6 Student Referral Form
- 7 School-wide Audit
- 8 A: Supporting a Safe and Caring School: What Students Say—Kindergarten to Grade 3
B: Supporting a Safe and Caring School: What Students Say—Grades 4 to 6
C: Supporting a Safe and Caring School: What Students Say—Grades 7 to 12
- 9 Survey on Predicting Problem Behaviour
- 10 Action Plan to Enhance School Culture
- 11 Positive Behaviour Implementation Checklist

Active Supervision Observation Feedback

Observer _____

Date _____

Setting _____

Setting description (physical layout, expectations, etc.)

Start time _____ End time _____

Number of staff members present _____

Target behaviours for observation/intervention

Student Tally

Target behaviour	Total	No. of minutes

Staff Tally

Positive/neutral interactions	Total	No. of minutes

Corrections	Total	No. of minutes

Ratio of positive/neutral to corrections	

Adapted from the work of George Sugai.

1. Did supervisor(s) move regularly and systematically throughout setting?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> Some	<input type="checkbox"/> None
2. Did supervisor(s) interact regularly and frequently?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> Some	<input type="checkbox"/> None
3. Did supervisor(s) give friendly reminders before transitions?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> Some	<input type="checkbox"/> None

Other comments:

Recommendations:

School Settings Template

1. Identify a school setting (e.g., hallway, bus, playground).
2. List school-wide behavioural expectations.
3. Identify specific behaviours that illustrate those expectations in this setting.
4. Use explanation, discussion, demonstration, modelling, practicing, role-playing and friendly reminders to teach behaviours.
5. Reinforce positive behaviour when it occurs in this setting.
6. Measure the impact of this direct teaching intervention, and communicate and celebrate results.

School Setting	
School-wide expectations	Related behaviour
1.	• • •
2.	• • •
3.	• • •
4.	• • •
5.	• • •

Adapted from the work of George Sugai.

Positive Behaviour Referral Form

Student's name _____

Referred by _____

Date _____ Time _____

Reason for referral _____

Office Notes

Recognition provided by:

- Conference with student []
- Telephone home []
- Letter sent home []

Summary comments _____

Administrator's signature

Behaviour Reflection A

Name _____

Date _____

Location _____

Time _____

Describe what happened or what you did.

In what way did your behaviour affect others?

What will you do to fix your current problem? What will you do next time?

What can you learn from this?

What will you tell your parents?

Teacher's comments:

Parent contact Yes No

Behaviour Reflection B

Note: Due to copyright restrictions, this form is not available for posting on the Internet. The material is in the print edition, available for purchase from the Learning Resources Centre.

Student Referral Form

1. Student's name _____
2. Division _____ For Information
3. Supervisor _____ For Action
4. Date _____

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| <p>5. Time</p> <p>A Before 8:00</p> <p>B 8:00 – 8:10</p> <p>C 8:10 – 8:20</p> <p>D 8:20 – 8:30</p> <p>E 8:30 – 8:40</p> <p>F 8:40 – 8:50</p> <p>G 8:50 – 9:00</p> <p>H 9:00 – 9:10</p> <p>I 9:10 – 9:20</p> <p>J 9:20 – 9:30</p> <p>K 9:30 – 9:40</p> <p>L 9:40 – 9:50</p> <p>M Recess</p> <p>N 10:25 – 10:35</p> <p>O 10:35 – 10:45</p> <p>P 10:45 – 10:55</p> <p>Q 10:55 – 11:05</p> <p>R 11:05 – 11:15</p> <p>S 11:15 – 11:25</p> <p>T 11:25 – 11:35</p> <p>U 11:35 – 11:45</p> <p>V Lunch</p> <p>W 1:05 – 1:15</p> <p>X 1:15 – 1:25</p> <p>Y 1:25 – 1:35</p> <p>Z 1:35 – 1:45</p> <p>AA 1:45 – 1:55</p> <p>AB 1:55 – 2:05</p> <p>AC 2:05 – 2:15</p> <p>AD 2:15 – 2:25</p> <p>AE 2:25 – 2:35</p> <p>AF After School</p> | <p>6. Location</p> <p>A Assembly in gym</p> <p>B Bus loading</p> <p>C Cafeteria</p> <p>D Classroom</p> <p>E Computer lab</p> <p>F Far field</p> <p>G Field trip</p> <p>H Front entrance</p> <p>I Gym change rooms</p> <p>J Gym equipment room</p> <p>K Gymnasium</p> <p>L Hallway A</p> <p>M Hallway B</p> <p>N Library</p> <p>O Lunchroom area</p> <p>P Music room</p> <p>Q Office</p> <p>R On bus</p> <p>S Parking lot</p> <p>T Playground</p> <p>U Side entrance</p> <p>AA Student phone</p> <p>AB Washrooms</p> <p>Other _____</p> | <p>7. Possible function of behaviour</p> <p>A Obtain peer attention</p> <p>B Obtain adult attention</p> <p>C Obtain preferred items or events</p> <p>D Obtain sensory input</p> <p>E Express frustration</p> <p>F Avoid nonpreferred events</p> <p>G Avoid peer attention</p> <p>H Avoid adult attention</p> <p>I Avoid tasks</p> <p>J Avoid sensory overload</p> <p>8. Problem behaviour</p> <p>A Abusive language/inappropriate language</p> <p>B Fighting/physical aggression</p> <p>C Defiance/disrespect/noncompliance</p> <p>D Harassment/teasing/taunting</p> <p>E Disruption/calling out</p> <p>F Wandering/running off</p> <p>G Lates</p> <p>H Truancy</p> <p>I Vandalism</p> <p>J Theft</p> <p>K Smoking</p> <p>L Alcohol or drug use</p> <p>M Rough play</p> <p>N Matches/fire</p> <p>O Damaging property</p> <p>Other _____</p> | <p>9. Others involved</p> <p>A None</p> <p>B Peers</p> <p>C Staff</p> <p>D Classroom teacher</p> <p>E Substitute teacher</p> <p>F Teacher assistant</p> <p>G Lunchroom supervisor</p> <p>H Other _____</p> <p>I Unknown</p> <p>J Administrator</p> <p>10. Triggering activity</p> <p>A Peer interaction</p> <p>B Adult interaction</p> <p>C Transition – in class</p> <p>D Transition – school-wide</p> <p>E Unstructured time</p> <p>F Seat work</p> <p>G Writing assignment</p> <p>H Reading assignment</p> <p>Other _____</p> <p>11. Administrative decision</p> <p>A Written self-reflection</p> <p>B Loss of privilege</p> <p>C Restitution</p> <p>D Contact parents</p> <p>E Problem-solving session</p> <p>F Office referral</p> <p>G Further referrals or supports required</p> <p>Other _____</p> |
|---|---|---|---|

* Letters and numbers facilitate data entry on Excel spreadsheets.

School-wide Audit

Name of school _____ Date _____

Current Status			Feature	Priority for Improvement		
In place	Partially in place	Not in place		High	Med	Low
			“School-wide” is defined as involving all students, all staff and all settings			
			1. Identified a small number (e.g., 3–5) of positively and clearly stated behavioural expectations			
			2. Directly taught positive student behaviours			
			3. Scheduled student movement to ensure appropriate numbers of students are in the hallways			
			4. Modified physical features to limit unsupervised settings, problematic traffic patterns, and access to and exit from school grounds			
			5. Active staff supervision throughout school			
			6. Regular and systematic reinforcement of positive behaviour			
			7. Clear definitions of problem behaviour			
			8. Clear definitions for consequences for problem behaviour			
			9. Clear distinctions between office-managed and classroom-managed problem behaviour			

Adapted with permission from George Sugai, Robert H. Horner and Anne W. Todd, “Effective Behavior Support (EBS) Survey: Assessing and Planning Behavior Support in Schools,” *OSEP Technical Assistance on Positive Behavioral Interventions & Support*, August 2003, <http://www.pbis.org/files/ebssurvey.doc> (Accessed September 2007).

Current Status			Feature	Priority for Improvement		
In place	Partially in place	Not in place		High	Med	Low
			“School-wide” is defined as involving all students, all staff and all settings			
			10. Team established for behaviour support planning and problem solving			
			11. Regular opportunities for staff to develop and improve active supervision skills			
			12. Active participation of school administrator on the positive behaviour support team			
			13. Regular feedback to staff about behaviour patterns throughout the school			
			14. Strategies for informing parents about behavioural expectations at school			
			15. Strategies for informing parents about their children’s positive and negative behaviour			
			16. Action plan to support school-wide positive behaviour support team			
			17. Direct involvement of all staff in school-wide behaviour interventions			

Supporting a Safe and Caring School: What Students Say— Kindergarten to Grade 3

Instructions

For Kindergarten and Grade 1 students, administer the survey in small groups or one-on-one to obtain the most accurate responses. Define words and provide examples for each question. Give time in between each question for students to answer.

For Grades 2 and 3, the survey can be administered together as a large group, with each student completing their own survey. Read each question out loud and ask students to follow along. Define words and provide examples for each question. Give time in between each question for students to answer.

Before beginning

1. Remind students about the Safe and Caring Schools project in their school.
2. Explain that the school is using this survey to find out how students feel at school. The adults in the school want to make the school safe, caring and comfortable for every student, and they will use this information to make the school more safe and caring.
3. Tell students that the survey is anonymous so they should not put their names anywhere on it. Explain that no one will know who said what and that it is only important that it was said.
4. Define the following terms to the students: all the time, sometimes, never. Give them examples in the context of some of the questions being asked.
5. Explain to the students that they will put an X in one of the three boxes, under “all the time,” “sometimes” or “never” depending on their answer. Draw an example on the board.
6. Tell the students that the term “adults” refers to all grown-ups in the school—teachers, secretaries, custodians, librarians and parents because they are all here to help make the school a safe place for everyone.

This appendix is adapted with permission from The Society for Safe and Caring Schools and Communities, “Supporting a Safe and Caring School: What Students Say—Kindergarten to Grade 3,” January 2005, [http://www.sacsc.ca/PDF%20files/Resources/Student%20Survey%20and%20Guidebook/revised%20surveys/SACSC%20student%20survey%20K-3%20\(June%202006\).pdf](http://www.sacsc.ca/PDF%20files/Resources/Student%20Survey%20and%20Guidebook/revised%20surveys/SACSC%20student%20survey%20K-3%20(June%202006).pdf) (Accessed November 2007).

Definitions and examples

The following can be used as examples to help define some of the more difficult concepts. Use terminology that students are used to and understand. You may find it more effective to define the difficult words as you encounter them rather than addressing them all at the start.

Responsibility

If I make a mistake, I will tell an adult and I will try to fix the problem. If I bump into someone and hurt them, I will say sorry and help them to feel better. If I have homework to do, I make sure it is finished before I go to school.

Respect

If I am nice to other students even if they are different than me, it shows respect. Using polite language and thinking about other people and their feelings also shows respect.

Caring

If people do nice things for me and think about my feelings, it shows they care about me.

Being proud

If I feel good about my school and I like what happens here, I am proud of my school.

Bullying

Bullying means hurting someone or making them hurt inside by saying mean things or acting in a mean way. Sometimes we hurt people by accident, but bullying is when you hurt someone on purpose.

Please note:

These results are intended for the school staff only. They are not meant to be used to compare schools or communities. Please ensure that these results are kept confidential.

A. The General Nature of My School

		All the time	Sometimes	Never
1.	Adults in my school care about my feelings.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.	Adults in my school are friendly.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.	Students in my school care about me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.	Students in my school are kind and helpful.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.	Other people treat me with respect.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.	When people in my school do something important, we celebrate it.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.	My school is a nice place to be.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8.	My school work is hanging up in the school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.	I am proud of my school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10.	I am treated fairly at school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11.	I feel safe in my school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12.	I feel safe on the playground.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

B. Behaviour Between People in My School

		All the time	Sometimes	Never
1.	I take things that belong to someone else without asking.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.	Someone takes my things without asking.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.	People bump or push me in the hallways.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.	I bump or push people in the hallways.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.	Other people tease me, call me names or pick on me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.	I tease, call others names and pick on people.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.	I see other students being bullied at my school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8.	Others bully me at school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

		All the time	Sometimes	Never
9.	I bully others at my school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10.	I get help with my schoolwork when I need it.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11.	My teachers help me to understand what I am supposed to learn.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12.	If people are being mean to me, I know who to go to for help.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

C. School Citizenship

		All the time	Sometimes	Never
1.	I share materials and supplies.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.	I feel comfortable sharing my ideas in school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.	I listen carefully to others.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.	I try to follow the rules.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.	In school, I am learning how to get along with others.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.	I help other people when they need it.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.	I am friendly to people that are different than me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8.	I see other students being teased or bullied because they are different.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.	At school, people make fun of me because I am different.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10.	I help to keep my school neat and clean.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11.	I take responsibility for my actions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12.	I treat others with respect.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Supporting a Safe and Caring School: What Students Say— Grades 4 to 6

Purpose

This survey asks you to tell us about some of the things you do in school and some of the things that you see others doing. The results of this survey will be used to help make your school a safer and more caring place.

This survey is anonymous so you should NOT write your name on it.

Are you a male or a female?

Male	Female
------	--------

What grade are you in?

Gr. 4	Gr. 5	Gr. 6
-------	-------	-------

Directions

Please think back over the **past month** and tell us how often you experienced the items described on the following pages.

- When answering the questions, try to think of specific things that you have done or that you have seen other people doing.
- Do not report anything that someone else told you about.
- If you don't know how to answer one of the statements, put your X in the last box, under "don't know."

IMPORTANT: When the question talks about the "adults in your school" it means all of the adults including the teachers, principals, counsellors, secretaries, caretakers, librarians, assistants and volunteers.

Remember to focus on the past month.

This appendix is adapted with permission from The Society for Safe and Caring Schools and Communities, "Supporting a Safe and Caring School: What Students Say—Grade 4 to 6," October 12, 2006, [http://www.sacsc.ca/PDF%20files/Resources/Student%20Survey%20and%20Guidebook/revised%20surveys/SACSC%20student%20survey%20Gr%204-6%20\(oct%202006\).pdf](http://www.sacsc.ca/PDF%20files/Resources/Student%20Survey%20and%20Guidebook/revised%20surveys/SACSC%20student%20survey%20Gr%204-6%20(oct%202006).pdf) (Accessed November 2007).

A: The General Nature of My School

<i>How often do you experience the following?</i>		Most of the time	Quite often	Once in a while	Almost never	Never	Don't know
1.	The adults in my school show that they care about me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.	Adults in my school smile and are friendly.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.	Students in my school smile and are friendly.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.	I see students being bullied by others at my school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.	I bully others at my school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.	Others bully me at my school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.	I feel safe in my school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8.	Some students stay away from certain places in our school because they don't feel safe.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.	When people in my school do something important, we celebrate it.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please write in any other similar things that you think we should know about.

B: Behaviour Between People in My School

<i>How often do you experience the following?</i>		Most of the time	Quite often	Once in a while	Almost never	Never	Don't know
10.	Someone teases me, calls me a bad name or picks on me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11.	I tease other students, call them a bad name or pick on them.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12.	When decisions are being made at school, I can share my ideas.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13.	When I make a mistake or do something wrong, I take responsibility and try to fix it.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14.	When adults in my school make a mistake or do something wrong, they take responsibility and try to fix it.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15.	Adults in my school listen to me when I talk to them.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16.	Adults in my school notice things I have done well.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17.	Adults in my school notice when I make mistakes.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please write in any other similar things that you think we should know.

C: School Citizenship

<i>How often do you experience the following?</i>		Most of the time	Quite often	Once in a while	Almost never	Never	Don't know
18.	I can share my ideas at school, even if they are different from other people's ideas.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19.	I am friendly to people that are different than me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20.	I make fun of people at school because they are different from me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21.	People make fun of me at school because I am different from them.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22.	I see other students being made fun of because of their looks, culture, religion, or what they can or can't do.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
23.	I see people helping each other at my school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
24.	I help other people when they need it.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
25.	I take responsibility for my actions and behaviours.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
26.	I stick up for people who are being teased or bullied.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
27.	Other students in my school stick up for people who are being teased or bullied.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please write in any other similar things that you think we should know.

D: Activities and Programs

<i>How often do you experience the following?</i>		Most of the time	Quite often	Once in a while	Almost never	Never	Don't know
28.	At school, I get to do what I am good at.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
29.	I am doing well in most of my classes.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
30.	When I ask a teacher at my school, I can get help with my schoolwork.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
31.	I am proud of my school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
32.	If people are being mean to me, I know where to go for help.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
33.	Adults in my school are there for me when I need help.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
34.	My parents/guardians are involved in school activities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please write in any other similar things that you think we should know.

E: Guidelines and Expectations

<i>How often do you experience the following?</i>		Most of the time	Quite often	Once in a while	Almost never	Never	Don't know
35.	Adults in my school are calm when fixing a problem.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
36.	When I have a problem, the adults in my school help me think about different ways to fix the it.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
37.	When I have a problem, the adults in my school listen to my side of the story.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
38.	If I have a problem with other students, the adults in my school help us to work it out together.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
39.	The adults in my school treat me fairly.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
40.	At school, we learn how to get along better with others.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
41.	At school, we learn how to deal with someone who is bullying.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
42.	When there is bullying in my school, adults try to stop it.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
43.	When students misbehave at school, the adults try to find out why before they give out consequences.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
44.	The punishment for bad behaviour in my school helps students learn better ways to behave.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
45.	The punishment for bad behaviour help;s students to take responsibility for their actions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
46.	The adults in my school encourage students to take responsibility for their actions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Please write in any other similar things that you think we should know.							

Thanks so much for your time.

Supporting a Safe and Caring School: What Students Say— Grades 7 to 12

Purpose

This survey asks you to tell us about your school environment and how people at your school behave and interact. This survey asks about specific things that you do in school and things that you see others doing. The results of this survey will be used to help make your school a safer and more caring place.

This survey is anonymous so you should NOT write your name on it.

Are you a male or a female?

Male	Female
------	--------

What grade are you in?

7	8	9	10	11	12
---	---	---	----	----	----

Directions

Please think back over **the past month** and tell us **how often** you experienced the items described on the following pages.

- When answering the questions, try to think of specific things that you have done or that you have seen other people doing.
- Do not report anything that someone else told you about.
- If you don't know how to answer one of the statements, put your X in the last box, under "don't know."

PLEASE NOTE: When we use the term "adults in my school" we are referring to all the adults that are part of your school. This includes the school staff, volunteers, secretaries, custodians, school nurse, school police officer and any other adults that are part of life at your school.

Go ahead now and complete the questions on the following pages.

Remember to focus on the last month.

This appendix is adapted with permission from The Society for Safe and Caring Schools and Communities, "Supporting a Safe and Caring School: What Students Say—Grade 7 to 12," October 17, 2006, [http://www.sacsc.ca/PDF%20files/Resources/Student%20Survey%20and%20Guidebook/revised%20surveys/SACSC%20student%20survey%20Gr%207-12%20\(oct%202006\).pdf](http://www.sacsc.ca/PDF%20files/Resources/Student%20Survey%20and%20Guidebook/revised%20surveys/SACSC%20student%20survey%20Gr%207-12%20(oct%202006).pdf) (Accessed November 2007).

A: The General Nature of My School

<i>How often do you experience the following?</i>		Most of the time	Quite often	Once in a while	Seldom	Never	Don't know
1.	The adults in my school show that they care about me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.	Adults in my school smile and are friendly.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.	Students in my school smile and are friendly.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.	I see students being bullied by others at my school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.	I bully others at my school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.	Others bully me at my school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.	I feel safe in my school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8.	Some students avoid certain places in our school because they don't feel safe.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.	When people in my school do something important, we celebrate it.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10.	I see examples of the school and the community working together.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please write in any other similar things that you think we should know.

B: Behaviour Between People in My School

<i>How often do you experience the following?</i>		Most of the time	Quite often	Once in a while	Seldom	Never	Don't know
11.	People intentionally bump or push me in the hallways.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12.	I intentionally bump or push people in the hallways.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13.	Teachers are available for discussion and support when I need it.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14.	Adults in my school listen to me when I talk to them.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15.	When decisions that affect students are being made at school, I have the opportunity to share my ideas.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16.	When adults in my school make a mistake or do something wrong, they take responsibility and try to fix it.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17.	When I make a mistake or do something wrong, I take responsibility and try to fix it.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please write in any other similar things that you think we should know.

C: School Citizenship

<i>How often do you experience the following?</i>		Most of the time	Quite often	Once in a while	Seldom	Never	Don't know
18.	I am encouraged to discuss various topics and express my point of view even when it is different than others'.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19.	I am friendly to people of different cultures, races, gender, age, sexual orientation, appearance or ability.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20.	I see other students being made fun of because of culture, race, gender, age, sexual orientation, appearance or ability.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21.	People make fun of me at school because I am different from them.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22.	I see students helping each other at my school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
23.	I feel comfortable helping other people when they need it.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
24.	I take responsibility for my actions and behaviours.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
25.	I stick up for people who are being bullied or harassed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
26.	Other students in my school stick up for people who are being bullied or harassed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please write in any other similar things that you think we should know.

D: Activities and Programs

<i>How often do you experience the following?</i>		Most of the time	Quite often	Once in a while	Seldom	Never	Don't know
27.	I have the opportunity to use my special talents and abilities at school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
28.	I feel successful in most of my classes.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
29.	I am happy with my grades.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
30.	When I ask a teacher at my school, I can get help to understand my schoolwork.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
31.	I am proud of my school's programs and activities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
32.	I am proud of the atmosphere in my school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
33.	Adults in my school are there for me when I need help.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
34.	If I have a problem with another person, I know who to go to for help.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
35.	My parents/guardians are involved in school activities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please write in any other similar things that you think we should know.

E: Guidelines and Expectations

	<i>How often do you experience the following?</i>	Most of the time	Quite often	Once in a while	Seldom	Never	Don't know
36.	Adults in my school are calm when sorting out a problem.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
37.	When I have a problem, the adults in my school help me explore various ways to deal with it.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
38.	When I am involved in a problem, I feel like my side of the story is listened to.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
39.	If I have a problem with other students, the adults in my school encourage us to work it out together.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
40.	I am treated fairly by the adults in my school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
41.	At school, we learn how to handle conflicts respectfully and nonviolently	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
42.	At school, we learn how to deal with bullying.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
43.	When there is bullying in my school, adults step in to stop it.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
44.	When students misbehave at school, the adults try to find out why before they give out consequences.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
45.	The consequences for misbehaviour in my school help students learn a better way to behave.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
46.	The consequences for misbehaviour encourage students to take responsibility for their actions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
47.	The adults in my school encourage students to take responsibility for their actions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please write in any other similar things that you think we should know.

Thanks so much for your time.

Survey on Predicting Problem Behaviour

School name _____

Date _____

Administrator Teacher Support staff Parent

Use your experience in the school to answer each of the following questions. Your responses will help us to determine what actions to take in order to create a safer and more effective school environment for all students.

1. a. List the most frequent problem behaviours that you observe or respond to while at school.
 1. _____
 2. _____
 3. _____
 4. _____
 5. _____

- b. At what times of the day do you most frequently observe problem behaviours at school?

- c. Why do you think problems are more frequent at these times?

- d. Can you think of ways to prevent these problems? If so, please note them here.

Action Plan to Enhance School Culture

Build an action plan that defines tasks, time lines and people responsible for strengthening and maintaining these six critical features that contribute to a positive social culture in your school.

Critical Feature	Tasks to Complete	Team/Person Responsible	By When
1. Define behavioural expectations.			
2. Teach students, staff and families to know what positive behaviour looks like and sounds like.	With staff		
	With students		
	With parents		
3. Teach students and staff to handle challenging situations in schools.			

Critical Feature	Tasks to Complete	Team/Person Responsible	By When
4. Acknowledge students who engage in positive behaviour.			
5. Establish fair and consistent consequences for negative behaviour.			
6. Monitor patterns of positive and negative behaviour.			



Positive Behaviour Implementation Checklist

School _____

Date of report _____

Person(s) completing report _____

Status: ✓ = Yes, O = No, N/A = Not applicable

Date					
Establish commitment					
1. Administrator(s) are supportive and actively involved.					
2. Staff support level is 80 percent or higher.					
Develop core team					
3. The school has established a team that represents a cross-section of the school community.					
4. The team has effective, regularly scheduled meetings.					
Establish school-wide expectations					
5. The school has defined three to five school-wide behavioural expectations.					
6. The school has developed a school-wide teaching matrix of social skills and related behavioural expectations.					
7. The school has developed teaching plans for school-wide expectations.					
8. Staff are directly teaching school-wide behavioural expectations.					

Adapted with permission from George Sugai, Robert H. Horner and Teri Lewis-Palmer, "Effective Behavior Support Team Implementation Checklists (Quarterly)," *OSEP Technical Assistance on Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports*, August 2002, <http://www.pbis.org/files/ebsteamchecklist.doc> (Accessed September 2007).

9. The school has clearly defined consistent reinforcements for positive behaviour.					
10. The school has clearly defined consistent consequences and procedures for responding to negative behaviour.					
11. The school communicates its behavioural focus to parents and other stakeholders (e.g., newsletter).					
12. The school community communicates and celebrates when goals are achieved.					
Establish information system					
13. The school gathers, summarizes and reports discipline data.					
14. The school analyzes data and uses it to make decisions about student conduct and behaviour.					
Build staff capacity for supporting positive behaviour					
15. The school has identified and involved personnel with behavioural expertise.					
16. Staff are made aware of opportunities for further learning, professional development and relevant resources.					

Additional comments:

Sample approaches that support positive behaviour supports

Appendix B

- 1 Caring Relationships (*Noddings*)
- 2 Center for the 4th and 5th Rs (*Lickona*)
- 3 Circles of Courage
(*Reclaiming Youth at Risk—Brendtro, Brokenleg and Van Bockern*)
- 4 Community of Caring (*Kennedy Foundation*)
- 5 Developmental Assets (*Search Institute*)
- 6 Emotional Intelligence (*Goleman*)
- 7 Hope Research (*Hope Foundation of Alberta*)
- 8 Lions-Quest Canada/Thrive!
- 9 Moral Intelligence (*Borba*)
- 10 Professional Learning Communities (*DuFour et al.*)
- 11 Resiliency Research
- 12 Safe and Caring Schools Initiative
- 13 Skillstreaming: New Strategies and Perspectives for Teaching Prosocial Skills (*Goldstein and McGinnis*)
- 14 Virtues Project (*Popov, Popov and Kavelin*)

Caring Relationships (*Noddings*)

Dr. Nel Noddings is a professor of educational psychology who believes that developing caring relationships will support classroom, curriculum and school organization. She defines a caring relationship as a connection or encounter between two human beings in which both parties must contribute something.

Noddings argues that the first job of schools is to care for children. Schools need to encourage the growth of competent, caring, loving and loveable people. Moral education allows students to develop the attitudes and skills required to sustain caring relationships.

Noddings believes that caring is the basis of moral education. She sees schools as important learning environments that teach students to care for the world around them.

Noddings identifies these four components of moral education:

- modelling (demonstrating caring in our relations with others)
- dialogue (open-ended dialogue that connects people and helps maintain caring relationships)
- practice (finding opportunities for students to care)
- confirmation (the act of confirming and encouraging the best in others).

Related Web site

www.tc.columbia.edu/centers/mssc/nelnoddings.htm

Related publications

Noddings, Nel. *Educating Moral People: A Caring Alternative to Character Education*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press, 2002.

Noddings, Nel. *Happiness and Education*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2003.

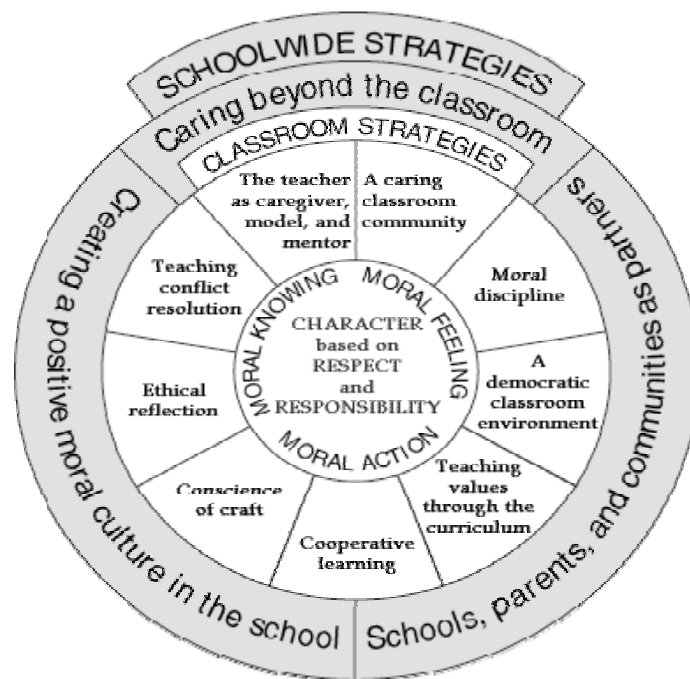
Noddings, Nel, Michael S. Katz and Kenneth A. Strike (eds.). *Justice and Caring: The Search for Common Ground in Education*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press, 1999.

Center for the 4th and 5th Rs (Lickona)

Dr. Thomas Lickona is a developmental psychologist and professor at the State University of New York at Cortland. He frequently consults with schools about character education, and he is on the board of directors of the Character Education Partnership.

Dr. Lickona directs the Center for the 4th and 5th Rs (respect and responsibility). The Center’s philosophy is that character education is essential to the task of building a moral society and developing schools which are civil and caring communities. Character education provides parents and teachers with a variety of tools and strategies that help them to raise responsible, conscientious and compassionate children.

Lickona promotes a 12-point comprehensive approach to character education that uses all aspects of school life as opportunities to build character. The model below, which illustrates this approach, consists of an inner part with nine character-building strategies for the classroom and an outer part outlining three school-wide strategies.



Lickona believes there is no such thing as “value-free” education and that character development is as necessary as academic achievement. Lickona identifies two specific values, respect and responsibility, as the cornerstones of a school’s moral agenda.

Schools using Lickona’s comprehensive approach to character education consider the impact of school experiences on the development of students’ values and character. When this approach is adopted, teachers need to:

- act as caregivers, models and mentors
- create moral communities in the classroom
- practise moral discipline
- create democratic classroom environments
- teach values through the curriculum
- use cooperative learning
- encourage moral reflection
- teach conflict resolution.

Lickona proposes that, in addition to building moral classrooms, schools need to:

- foster caring beyond the classroom
- create positive moral cultures
- recruit parents and community as partners in character education.

Related Web site

www.cortland.edu/character/ (Center for the 4th and 5th Rs)

Related publications

Lickona, Thomas. *Educating for Character: How Our Schools Can Teach Respect and Responsibility*. New York, NY: Bantam Dell Publishing Group, 1991.

Lickona, Thomas. *Character Matters: How to Help Our Children Develop Good Judgment, Integrity, and Other Essential Virtues*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 2004.

Circle of Courage (Reclaiming Youth at Risk—*Brendtro, Brokenleg and Van Bockern*)

The Circle of Courage is a model of youth empowerment based on a Native American approach to life. The model, adopted by hundreds of schools in Canada, is composed of four core values:

- belonging (a need to feel valued and important)
- mastery (developing competence)
- independence (responsibility for oneself)
- generosity (genuine desire to help others).

The Circle of Courage is a philosophical way of explaining why people do what they do, but it also describes how we should treat others. It is a belief system based on treating others with respect.

An individual is at risk of emotional and behavioural difficulties if all four parts of his or her circle of courage are not strong. Schools can use this model to identify the causes of students' misbehaviour and as a guide for improving behaviour, especially for at-risk students. School communities can be "reclaiming environments" that provide a sense of belonging by having adults listen to, interact with and respect youth. Students develop a sense of mastery when teachers, counsellors and other caring adults help them identify their strengths and build on them.

This model suggests that school staff need to promote generosity and create opportunities for students to give and contribute. Focusing on these four core values helps students build character and develop citizenship skills.

Contact information

Reclaiming Youth International
P.O. Box 57
104 North Main Street
Lennox, South Dakota, U.S.A. 57039

Related Web site

www.reclaiming.com

Related publication

Brendtro, Larry, Martin Brokenleg and Steve Van Bockern. *Reclaiming Youth at Risk: Our Hope for the Future*. Bloomington, IL: National Educational Service, 1992.

Community of Caring (Kennedy Foundation)

“The success of this program within our school district has spread to many areas in the province of Alberta ... Records of school suspensions, bullying and other violent behaviours have decreased in one year. The amount of parental involvement, student attendance in school and the number of service learning experiences has all increased. Academically, students improved in the areas of social studies and language arts. We feel that providing students with the opportunity to discuss values in the classroom, particularly how they relate to the curriculum, and practicing these values on a daily basis has had a profound positive impact on the school culture and its climate.”

– Cheryl McInnes
Consultant, Community of Caring
Calgary Catholic Separate School District

The Community of Caring is a program developed by the Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr. Foundation under the direction of Eunice Kennedy Shriver. This values-based approach to positive decision making has been adopted by almost 1,000 schools in the United States and Canada.

Based on the core values of caring, respect, responsibility, trust and family, the Community of Caring school framework provides strategies for creating a caring and respectful inclusive school environment. Students learn to avoid risk-taking behaviour through responsible decision making and thoughtful planning for the future. Students observe caring and responsible behaviour modelled by the parents, teachers, school staff and community leaders who are involved in the program.

The goal is to create an inclusive school culture where all school community members feel safe and cared for. The outcomes include reduced destructive behaviour such as teen pregnancy, drug and alcohol abuse, violence, vandalism, early school-leaving and truancy.

In a Community of Caring school, academics, athletics and the fine arts are important but relationships within the school community are equally important.

The components of a Community of Caring school include a comprehensive action plan developed by a coordinating committee and lead teacher/site facilitator. Following a needs assessment of its school culture, each school develops its initiatives by:

- modelling the five core values and integrating them into regular classroom learning activities and the life of the school as a whole
- providing opportunities for student leadership through forums, cross-grade groups, learning circles, class meetings and activities that encourage them to help each other
- building relationships through family and community involvement
- using service learning and community service to help students grow and strengthen their character
- supporting teachers through staff development and ongoing support.

A Community of Caring school clearly articulates the essence of Catholic education. The Vatican Council II (1965) stated: “What makes the Catholic school distinctive is its attempt to generate a community climate in the school that is permeated by the Gospel spirit of freedom and love.” This spiritual process enhances and supports two fundamental objectives: humanizing education and professionalizing the teaching role.

Related Web site

www.communityofcaring.org

Developmental Assets

(Search Institute)

Developmental assets are critical factors in and positive building blocks for young people's growth and development. The Search Institute identifies 40 developmental assets and groups them into two categories, each with four subcategories:

- external assets (positive experiences young people have in the world around them)
 - support
 - boundaries and expectations
 - empowerment
 - constructive use of time
- internal assets (characteristics and behaviour that reflect positive internal growth and guide choices of young people)
 - commitment to learning
 - social competencies
 - positive values
 - positive identity.

These assets can influence the choices students make and help them to become caring, competent and responsible individuals.

Schools can include developmental assets in their plans to create a positive and supportive learning environment. Teachers can incorporate various developmental assets into learning activities across the subject areas. Research indicates that developmental assets also serve as protective factors that are critical to students' resiliency, health and successes.

Related Web site

www.search-institute.org/assets/

Related publications

Gemelke, Tenessa and Rita Welch. *Building Assets is Elementary—Group Activities for Helping Kids Ages 8–12 Succeed*. Minneapolis, MN: Search Institute, 2004.

Grothe, Rebecca. *More Building Assets Together: 130 Group Activities for Helping Youth Succeed*. Minneapolis, MN: Search Institute, 2002.

Taccogna, Judy (ed.). *Powerful Teaching: Developmental Assets in Curriculum and Instruction*. Minneapolis, MN: Search Institute, 2003.

Emotional Intelligence

(Goleman)

Emotional Intelligence (EI), a term coined by author Daniel Goleman, refers to understanding personal feelings and applying this knowledge when making positive behaviour choices. EI combines intrapersonal and interpersonal intelligence and includes these five characteristics and abilities:

- self-awareness of emotions
- mood management
- self-motivation
- empathy
- managing relationships.

The term “EQ” is often used to represent a relative measure of a person’s healthy or unhealthy innate emotional intelligence.

Goleman believes we must teach children how to recognize and manage their emotions. Educators can model emotional intelligence through their caring and respectful interactions with children.

Schools can help children develop the ability to manage their emotions and make rational decisions, which in turn nurtures emotional intelligence. The classroom provides many opportunities to teach emotional literacy (the ability to have and manage emotions), which can improve children’s achievement scores and overall performance.

Essential life skills related to emotional intelligence include:

- knowing, accepting and managing oneself
- connecting, communicating and cooperating with others
- dealing with conflict.

The EI approach can be integrated across subject areas and can support cooperative learning. Traits of students who are emotionally competent include confidence, curiosity, self-control, cooperation and responsibility.

Related Web sites

<http://ei.haygroup.com/default.asp>

www.eiconsortium.org

Related publications

Brearley, Michael. *Emotional Intelligence in the Classroom: Creative Learning Strategies for 11–18 Year Olds*. New York, NY: Crown House Publishing, 2001.

Doty, Gwen. *Fostering Emotional Intelligence in K–8 Students: Simple Strategies and Ready to Use Activities*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, 2001.

Goleman, Daniel. *Emotional Intelligence: Why it Can Matter More Than IQ*. New York, NY: Bantam, 1997.

Goleman, Daniel. *Working with Emotional Intelligence*. New York, NY: Bantam, 2000.

Mapes, Katta. *Stop! Think! Choose! Building Emotional Intelligence in Young People*. Tucson, AZ: Zephyr Press, 2000.

Hope Research

(Hope Foundation of Alberta)

Ongoing work at the Hope Foundation, a research institute located at the University of Alberta, demonstrates that hope is a multidimensional concept that enables individuals to envision and actively move toward a more positive future. Hope is the motivating factor behind resilience. Having a high level of hope correlates positively with a greater sense of self-worth, academic success, social competence and creativity. Students who have a high degree of hope tend to have strong problem-solving abilities and engage in wellness-enhancing activities. On the other hand, hopelessness is the greatest predictor of suicide.

Hope is enhanced, sustained and learned in trusting relationships with significant others. It is about goal setting and attainment; therefore, it is both a process and an outcome. Hope is a crucial therapeutic factor that encourages people to think about possibilities and solve problems creatively. This attitude and way of thinking can help individuals take more positive actions during times of adversity.

Schools can help students develop a stronger understanding and sense of hope by:

- integrating hope-focused strategies into learning activities; e.g., developing personal Hope Kits that represent a student's ongoing hopes
- using hopeful words and phrases such as "What is the smallest thing we can do ...?" or "What would a hopeful person do in this situation?"
- providing opportunities for reflection
- implementing assessment and evaluation strategies that encourage students and promote feelings of hopefulness
- increasing service learning opportunities that incorporate hope-focused activities; e.g., HOPE KIDS™
- incorporating story and writing themes that provide opportunities for students to explore and reflect on hopeful ways of thinking and acting.

Contact information

Hope Foundation of Alberta
11032 – 89 Avenue
Edmonton, AB T6G 0Z6
Telephone: 780-492-1222
Web site: www.ualberta.ca/hope

Related publication

Jevne, R. F. and J. E. Miller, *Finding Hope: Ways to See Life in a Brighter Light*. Fort Wayne, IN: Willowgreen Publishing, 1999.

Lions-Quest Canada/Thrive!

Lions-Quest is an international nonprofit organization with a mission to “provide leadership, knowledge and resources to develop healthy, capable young people of strong character.”

Lions-Quest programs are based on the theory that children must develop healthy behaviour, communication and decision-making skills, and strong attachments to others in order to become capable adults. The programs are designed to teach young people life and citizenship skills in a caring and consistent environment.

Lions-Quest programs promote core values such as trustworthiness, respect, responsibility and getting along with others. The aim of the program is to help students discover the positive roles they can play in society while reinforcing positive social behaviour and developing essential citizenship skills. The program offers a two-day teacher inservice and program binders for teachers plus supplementary materials. The learning activities described in the program binders can be integrated into the school day and are often taught as part of the health and life skills, and language arts programs.

Lions-Quest Skills for Growing Program

The Skills for Growing program for students in Kindergarten through Grade 5 focuses on skills in four main areas: responsibility, good judgement, self-discipline and respect for others. The six thematic units are:

- Building a School Community
- Growing as a Group
- Making Positive Decisions
- Setting Goals for Service
- Growing Up Drug-Free
- Celebrating You and Me.

Lions-Quest Skills for Adolescence Program

The Skills for Adolescence program for students in grades 6 through 8 works toward establishing a supportive partnership between parents, the school and the community. It consists of nine units:

- Entering the Teen Years – The Journey of Adolescence
- Building Self-confidence and Communication Skills
- Service Learning
- Managing Emotions in Positive Ways
- Improving Peer Relationships
- Strengthening Family Relationships
- Making Healthy Choices

- Setting Goals for Healthy Living
- Summing Up: Developing Your Potential.

Lions-Quest Skills for Action Program

The Skills for Action program for students in grades 9 through 12 is based on the theory that young people can take active and meaningful roles in dealing with issues that affect their lives. It builds essential life and citizenship skills by moving beyond the classroom into school-based service learning. The program has four components:

- Building a Learning Community
- Exploring Personal and Social Responsibility
- Project or Placement?
- Evaluating and Sharing Service Expectations.

Contact information

Thrive!

1C – 180 Frobisher Drive

Waterloo, ON N2V 2A2

Telephone: 1-800-265-2680

Fax: (519) 725-3118

Related Web site

www.thrivecanada.ca

Related publications

Skills for Action. Newark, OH: Quest International, 1995.

Skills for Adolescence, Fourth Edition. Newark, OH: Quest International, 2001.

Skills for Growing, Second Edition. Newark, OH: Quest International, 1998.

Moral Intelligence (*Borba*)

Dr. Michele Borba is an educator who promotes practical, solution-based parenting strategies to strengthen a child's behaviour, sense of self-worth and moral development. Her work has a clear focus on building strong families and revolves around shaping the character and moral destinies of youth. Borba places a specific emphasis on moral intelligence. She believes that all children need to be raised so that they develop solid character, strong minds and caring hearts.

Borba defines moral intelligence as the capacity to distinguish between right and wrong; have strong ethical convictions and act on these convictions in an honourable way. Moral intelligence consists of seven essential virtues: empathy, conscience, self-control, respect, kindness, tolerance and fairness. These virtues become a child's moral compass and enable him or her to deal with the challenges of everyday life.

The foundation of a person's moral intelligence is empathy, conscience and self-control. This moral core gives individuals the power to do what's right. Once a moral code is established, a person can add respect (valuing all life) and kindness (a sense of decency and compassion in relationships). The remaining virtues, tolerance and fairness, are the cornerstones of integrity, justice and citizenship.

Borba believes it is crucial to build children's moral intelligence so they develop a sense of right and wrong, and can respond positively to social influences. She believes that building children's moral IQ has many benefits, including:

- nurturing good character
- getting children on the right course by teaching them how to think and act morally
- teaching critical life skills such as resolving conflict, empathizing and decision making
- promoting a strong sense of citizenship
- inspiring good behaviour and allowing children to become decent, caring and respectful.

Borba believes that all children are born with a capacity for moral intelligence and that, since character traits are learned, they can be taught. She asserts that teachers have the power to teach critical character traits and have many opportunities to weave them into learning throughout the school day and across subject areas.

Borba offers these five steps for teaching a character trait.

1. Accentuate a character trait.
2. Tell the value and meaning of the trait.
3. Teach what the trait looks and sounds like.
4. Provide opportunities to practise the trait.
5. Provide effective feedback.

Related Web site

www.moralintelligence.com

Related publications

Borba, Michele. *Character Builders: Respect for Self and Others—A K–6 Character Education Program*. Torrance, CA: Jalmar Press, 2000.

Borba, Michele. *Character Builders: Responsibility and Trustworthiness—A K–4 Character Education Program*. Torrance, CA: Jalmar Press, 2000.

Borba, Michele. *Building Moral Intelligence: The Seven Essential Virtues That Teach Kids to Do the Right Thing*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2001.

Borba, Michele. *Character Builders: Positive Attitudes and Peacemaking for Primary Children—A Program to Enhance Positive Attitudes and Peacemaking Skills, Preschool through Third Grade*. Torrance, CA: Jalmar Press, 2001.

Borba, Michele. *Fairness and Cooperation: A K–8 Program to Develop the Skills of Fairness and Cooperation in Students*. Torrance, CA: Jalmar Press, 2003.

Borba, Michele. *Nobody Likes Me, Everybody Hates Me: The Top 25 Friendship Problems and How to Solve Them*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2005.

Professional Learning Communities (*DuFour et al.*)

In professional learning communities, teachers and school administrators continuously seek out and share learning experiences, and act on what they learn. The ultimate goal is high achievement and continuous improvement for all students, regardless of their individual circumstances. The objective is to enhance professional effectiveness and improve students' learning. The key questions that guide the development of a professional learning community are:

1. What do we expect students to learn?
2. How will we know if students have learned it?
3. What will we do if students have not learned it?

The key ingredients of a successful learning community are:

- supportive leadership from principals who share authority, and empower and facilitate the work of their staff
- a shared vision that is focused on student learning and reflects the staff's commitment to students' learning
- collaboration among teachers in planning instruction, observing each other's classrooms, providing feedback and applying what they have learned to new solutions to address students' needs
- capacity to analyze data and use it to guide decisions
- a supportive environment that includes adequate resources, policies that foster collaboration and effective communication and staff development
- shared accountability for student achievement
- above all, time—structured time to allow teachers to work together, assess their students' learning, adjust practices and continuously improve their students' results.

Research studies of professional learning communities suggest several clear benefits.

Benefits for staff include:

- reduced isolation of teachers
- increased commitment to the mission and goals of the school
- shared responsibility for the development and success of students
- definition of good teaching and classroom practice
- better understanding of the content teachers teach and the roles they play in helping students meet expectations
- significant advances in adapting instruction to students
- more satisfaction and higher morale
- lower rates of absenteeism.

The benefits for students include:

- increased school completion rates
- lower rates of absenteeism
- enhanced learning and critical thinking
- greater academic gains
- smaller achievement gaps among students from different backgrounds.

A number of schools in Alberta have taken steps to become professional learning communities, often through the support of the Alberta Initiative for School Improvement. The Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA) has also been actively working with schools to implement the professional learning communities model in the Alberta context. A series of interactive workshops that draw heavily on the work of researchers such as Richard DuFour, Linda Lambert, Peter Senge and Michael Fullan is offered by ATA staff to develop a school's capacity to function as a professional learning community.

Because there is no set formula for becoming a learning community, each school must consider its culture of learning and determine which structures will lead to the best course of action. The workshops focus on supporting teaching to enhance student learning while providing opportunities for participants to reflect on the unique needs of their school and community as well as their own teaching practices.

Related Web sites

www.solution-tree.com/Public/ProfDev.aspx (click on Professional Learning Communities)

www.teachers.ab.ca

www.education.gov.ab.ca/K_12/special/aisi/pdfs/Prof_Learng_Communities_2006.pdf
(Alberta Initiative for School Improvement (AISI) research report)

Related publications

DuFour, Richard et al. *Whatever It Takes: How Professional Learning Communities Respond When Kids Don't Learn*. Bloomington, IN: National Educational Service, 2004.

Eaker, Robert, Richard DuFour and Rebecca Burnette. *Getting Started: Reculturing Schools to Become Professional Learning Communities*. Bloomington, IN: National Educational Service, 2002.

Hord, Shirley M. *Professional Learning Communities: Communities of Continuous Inquiry and Improvement*. Austin, TX: Southwest Educational Development Laboratory, 1997.

Resiliency Research

Resiliency can be described as the ability to bounce back and effectively cope with life's difficulties. Resilient individuals tend to be academically and socially successful, have effective relationships with other people and be goal oriented. They also have many positive qualities, including:

- ability to control their own behaviour
- expectations for a healthy lifestyle
- service orientation (giving to others)
- optimism
- sense of humour
- moral sense (right and wrong)
- strong problem-solving skills
- perceptiveness
- independence
- self-motivation
- creativity
- empathy.

Protective factors are characteristics and experiences that help individuals develop personal resiliency and enhanced ability to overcome difficulties. Research identifies these protective factors:

- high behavioural expectations
- strong social skills
- positive bonding with at least one significant adult
- meaningful participation at home, in school and/or in the community.

Schools can foster resiliency by:

- creating a positive school climate
- setting high standards for learning and behaviour
- providing opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate responsibility and decision making
- encouraging students to develop and maintain friendships
- providing peer and adult mentoring
- providing opportunities to participate in activities that involve helping others.

Schools can help students build internal protective factors by encouraging creativity, fostering a love of learning, teaching prosocial skills and providing opportunities to become more independent. These factors help students overcome setbacks, and maintain strength and balance in their lives. Increasing the protective factors in children's lives can help them become more caring, confident and competent members of society.

Related Web sites

Resiliency Initiatives

www.resiliencyinitiatives.com

Resiliency in Action

www.resiliency.com

AADAC

<http://teacher.aadac.com>

Related publications

Henderson, Nan and Mike Milstein. *Resiliency in Schools: Making it Happen for Students and Educators*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, 2002.

Henderson, Nan, Bonnie Bernard and Nancy Sharp Light (eds.). *Schoolwide Approaches to Fostering Resiliency*. San Diego, CA: Resiliency in Action Inc., 2000.

Thomsen, Kate. *Building Resilient Students: Integrating Resiliency Into What You Already Know and Do*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, 2002.

Safe and Caring Schools Initiative

The Safe and Caring Schools (SACS) Initiative, funded by the provincial government, was introduced throughout Alberta in 1996 in response to a perception that standards of student conduct were declining and violence in schools was increasing. The goal was to provide a collaborative and integrated approach to reducing violence in schools.

Although the conduct of a small minority of students is challenging educators and parents, Alberta schools continue to be a safe place for the vast majority. Therefore, from its inception, the SACS Initiative has concentrated on providing information and resources that address the needs of students whose behaviour is negatively affecting learning and teaching environments. Rather than simply identifying what is wrong with our schools or focusing on the number of violent incidents, various SACS projects work toward positive outcomes.

Safe and Caring Schools is a comprehensive framework that helps schools develop their capacity to provide safe and caring environments by promoting respectful and responsible behaviour.

The mission of SACS is to encourage and assist members of the school community in developing the knowledge, skills and supports to ensure that all schools are safe and caring. The goals are to:

- identify and promote effective practices, programs and policies to prevent, respond to and correct any behaviour that is disruptive to teaching and learning
- ensure that all schools are safe and caring
- develop strategies and programs for prevention, intervention and continuous evaluation
- have schools play a leadership role because of their tremendous potential to positively influence the lives of young people
- promote the development of responsible, caring and respectful members of a democratic society
- combine the efforts of government, school boards, schools, students, parents, police and community members to ensure that all Alberta school staff are safe and caring as they strive toward academic excellence
- provide opportunities for active participation by all partners to ensure that schools and communities are safe and caring.

Section 45(8) of the Alberta *School Act* places a specific duty on school boards to ensure that all students are provided with a safe and caring environment that fosters and maintains respectful and responsible behaviour. School boards are required to report efforts and activities undertaken to ensure that their schools are safe and caring.

Several projects have emerged as Alberta educators have worked toward building and sustaining safe and caring schools.

Academic research

The faculties of education at the universities of Alberta, Calgary and Lethbridge have published a number of articles on their collaborative research into the social, psychological, historical and personal dimensions of serious disruptive behaviour and violence in Alberta schools. The results of this research and its implications for practice at the school level have been published in *Building Foundations for Safe and Caring Schools: Research on Disruptive Behaviour and Violence* (1999) by Grace Malicky, Bonnie Shapiro and Kas Mazurek.

The Society for Safe and Caring Schools and Communities

The Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA) has developed research-based bullying and violence prevention programs and resources for students, teachers and parents.

These programs and resources focus on:

- living respectfully/building a safe and caring classroom (developing positive classroom climate and an understanding of and commitment to respect and responsibility)
- developing self-esteem (exploring individual strengths and weaknesses, and our relationships with others)
- respecting diversity and preventing prejudice (learning about and appreciating multiple perspectives)
- managing anger, and dealing with bullying and harassment (addressing bullying and anger in self and others)
- resolving conflicts peacefully/working it out together (using skills and courteous behaviour to resolve conflicts and solve problems).

In 2004, the ATA's Safe and Caring Schools Project was incorporated as The Society for Safe and Caring Schools and Communities (SACSC). The society, which has charitable status, is governed by a board of directors with representation from the Alberta Schools Boards Association, the College of Alberta School Superintendents, the Alberta Teachers' Association, parents, police services, Aboriginal communities, universities and service clubs. There are also a number of members at large.

The Society for Safe and Caring Schools and Communities seeks to prevent bullying and violence by educating children and youth and the adults in their lives about promoting positive social interaction among all human beings. The programs of this nonprofit organization aim to prevent violence and bullying in schools and communities through character education, conflict-management training and building respect for diversity. By helping young people learn from their mistakes and understand why certain behaviour is inappropriate, these programs promote a problem-solving approach to discipline that encourages positive social behaviour.

SACSC uses a comprehensive approach that includes components for students, teachers, support staff, parents and other members of the community. The society has no religious affiliations. The values promoted through SACSC character education, such as respect, responsibility, inclusiveness, caring and compassion, are part of all cultural and religious traditions.

SACSC curriculum resources for early childhood to Grade 12 integrate knowledge, skills and attitudes related to the five safe and caring topics into all grades and across subject areas. The Kindergarten to Grade 6 resource, *Toward a Safe and Caring Curriculum*, includes sample learning activities, tips for teachers and learning strategies. The learning activities can be used across subject areas and the resource is authorized for use in teaching the Kindergarten to Grade 6 health and life skills program. These resources are available for purchase from the Learning Resources Centre.

The *Toward a Safe and Caring Curriculum* resource for secondary schools integrates violence prevention, and safe and caring skills and attitudes across the subject areas. Unit and lesson plans, as well as instructional strategies, are available on the SACSC Web site, www.sacsc.ca.

A SACSC professional development program helps teachers integrate safe and caring principles into their teaching practice by using three approaches:

- modelling safe and caring behavior in teacher–student relationships and discipline practices
- integrating safe and caring knowledge, skills and attitudes into prescribed curriculum by linking outcomes
- using instructional methods that help students develop safe and caring knowledge, skills and attitudes through active classroom participation.

The professional development program includes a number of workshops for teachers and other school staff. In addition, teachers can participate in Web-based micro-workshops on topics such as School Climate, Responding to Inappropriate Behaviour and Brain Research. Curriculum, school leadership and facilitator training programs are also offered. Post-secondary credit is available for completion of these programs.



A student survey titled *Supporting a Safe and Caring School: What Students Say* helps assess school climate and identify the amount of bullying in the school. The survey instrument is available on the SACSC Web site. It is also included in Appendix A (*Tools 8A, 8B and 8C*).

Twenty-eight research-based resource booklets for teachers, students and parents are currently available from SACSC. They address topics such as bullying, media violence, peer support, diversity issues, brain research and complexity theory. Scripts for student assemblies are available for school administrators who are introducing “safe and caring” topics. A complete list of these resources is available on the SACSC Web site.

SACSC has also developed a series of workshops for parents and other adults in the community to help them become better role models of safe and caring behaviour, and to help parents reinforce what their children are learning through the SACSC resources and other school programs. The series includes 25 hours of instruction based on the five safe and caring school topics. A certificate and post-secondary credit is available for completion of the workshop series. Additional post-secondary credit is available for completion of the facilitator training program, which prepares instructors to deliver the workshop series in their communities.

Alberta Education resources

Alberta Education has developed resources to help school staff collaborate with parents and community members to plan and implement effective policies, programs and practices that are legally, educationally and professionally sound. The resources are:

- *Supporting Safe, Secure and Caring Schools in Alberta* (1999)
- *Supporting the Social Dimension: A Resource Guide for Teachers, Grades 7–12* (2002)
- *Working Together for Safe and Caring Schools, Grades 7–12: Resource Manual for Students, Staff and Parents* (2003).

Contact information

Education Manager, Safe and Caring Schools
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8th Floor, 44 Capital Boulevard, 10044 – 108 Street NW
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The Society for Safe and Caring Schools and Communities (SACSC) Office
Barnett House, 11010 – 142 Street
Edmonton, Alberta T5N 2R1
Telephone: 1-800-232-7208
Web site: www.sacsc.ca

Related Web sites

The Society for Safe and Caring Schools and Communities
www.sacsc.ca

Toward a Safe and Caring Secondary Curriculum
www.sacsc.ca/resources.htm

Related publications

Alberta Learning. *Supporting Safe, Secure and Caring Schools in Alberta*. Edmonton, AB: Alberta Learning, 1999.

Alberta Learning. *Supporting the Social Dimension: A Resource Guide for Teachers, Grades 7–12*. Edmonton, AB: Alberta Learning, 2002 (free PDF version available at <http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/safeschools/resources.aspx>).

Alberta Learning. *Working Together for Safe and Caring Schools, Grades 7–12: Resource Manual for Students, Staff and Parents*. Edmonton, AB: Alberta Learning, 2003 (free PDF version available at <http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/safeschools/resources.aspx>).

Alberta Teachers' Association. *Toward a Safe and Caring Curriculum: Resources for Integration (K–6)*. Edmonton, AB: Alberta Teachers' Association's Safe and Caring Schools Project, 1998.

Skillstreaming: New Strategies and Perspectives for Teaching Prosocial Skills (*Goldstein and McGinnis*)

Developed by Dr. Arnold P. Goldstein and Dr. Ellen McGinnis, the Skillstreaming resources address the social skills needs of students who display aggression, immaturity, withdrawal and other problem behaviour. The Skillstreaming approach has four components:

- modelling (learning by imitation)
- role-playing (enacting a role helps individuals understand what to do and how to do it)
- performance feedback (offering constructive suggestions, encouragement and approval)
- transfer of training and homework (using a particular skill in various other settings).

The goal is to help students cope with interpersonal conflicts, develop self-control and contribute to a positive classroom atmosphere.

Skillstreaming the Elementary School Child (1997)

This resource contains 60 skill lessons and is divided into five skill groups:

- classroom survival skills
- alternatives to aggression
- friendship-making skills
- dealing with stress
- dealing with feelings.

Skillstreaming the Adolescent (1997)

This resource contains 50 skill lessons and is divided into six skill groups:

- beginning social skills
- advanced social skills
- dealing with feelings
- alternatives to aggression
- dealing with stress
- planning skills.

Teacher guides, student manuals, program forms and skill cards are available for both levels. The resources present practical skills for successful interaction with others. They are designed to help students develop their ability to learn from their social and personal experiences, and respond positively to life's challenges.

Related Web site

www.skillstreaming.com

Related publications

Goldstein, Arnold P. and Ellen McGinnis with Robert P. Sprafkin, N. Jane Gershaw and Paul Klein. *Skillstreaming the Adolescent: New Strategies and Perspectives for Teaching Prosocial Skills*. Champaign, IL: Research Press, 1997.

McGinnis, Ellen and Arnold P. Goldstein. *Skillstreaming in Early Childhood: New Strategies and Perspectives for Teaching Prosocial Skills*. Champaign, IL: Research Press, 1997.

McGinnis, Ellen and Arnold P. Goldstein. *Skillstreaming the Elementary School Child: New Strategies and Perspectives for Teaching Prosocial Skills*. Champaign, IL: Research Press, 1997.

Virtues Project

(Popov, Popov and Kavelin)

The Virtues Project, founded by Linda Kavelin Popov, Dr. Dan Popov and John Kavelin, focuses on the practice of virtues in everyday life. The Virtues Project considers virtues to be the essence of human spirit and gifts of character.

This approach incorporates four instructional strategies for school staff.

- Speak the language of the virtues (language shapes character).
- Recognize teachable moments (to help build character in ourselves and others).
- Set clear boundaries (to create a climate of peace and safety).
- Honour the spirit (to express what is meaningful in our lives).

Many schools in Canada, the United States and other countries have adopted the Virtues Project approach to develop a culture of caring and character. Instruction and discussion about virtues can be integrated across subject areas. Teachers and administrators are encouraged to use the “language of the virtues” and encourage students to do the same. The approach also encourages having a “virtue of the month” as a focus for the school community, and it includes strategies for recognizing students who demonstrate target virtues.

Contact information

E-mail: WesternCanada@virtuesproject.com

Related Web site

www.virtuesproject.com/index.php

Related publications

Popov, Linda Kavelin. *The Virtues Project: Simple Ways to Create a Culture of Character—Educator’s Guide*. Torrance, CA: Jalmar Press, 2000.

Popov, Linda Kavelin. *A Pace of Grace: The Virtues of a Sustainable Life*. New York, NY: Plume, 2004.

Popov, Linda Kavelin, Dan Popov and John Kavelin. *The Family Virtues Guide—Simple Ways to Bring Out the Best in Our Children and Ourselves*. Toronto, ON: Penguin Books of Canada Ltd., 1997.

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