

Behavioral Interventions and Strategies Series:

Corrective Consequences



What are Corrective Consequences? Corrective consequences are responses to inappropriate behavior or rule violations. Responses to misbehavior often rely solely on punishment as a means of correction. More effective responses to misbehavior include opportunities to teach appropriate behavior and prevent future occurrences of the behavior (Bear, 2010). Much like with establishing rules and expectations in the classroom, consequences are more likely to encourage positive behavior when they are preplanned and taught explicitly to students. When consequences are preplanned you do not have to make decisions about consequences in the moment, consequences match behaviors in severity, consequences can be administered more consistently, consequences can be given without the influence of emotion, and students know what to expect for certain behaviors. There are a number of effective corrective consequences that can be used to reduce inappropriate behavior in the classroom (see Page 4 for examples). How you set up a system of consequences for behavior in your classroom and the consistency with which you implement those consequences are key components to effective reduction and prevention of inappropriate behavior.

Developing a Plan for Consequences: To be most effective, consequences should be evidence-based (meaning there is research to support how to conduct the consequence and evidence that a particular method works), used sparingly (consequences that are used too frequently lose their power), match the severity of the behavior, and are implemented consistently. Consistency with implementing corrective consequences is imperative—without consistency, you’re a consequences system will not be effective. They also should be explicitly taught to students. When students are taught what to expect after a specific behavior, they have no room to make excuses about not knowing what would happen when the consequence is implemented.

Progressive vs. Nonprogressive Consequences: There are two primary forms of consequences systems - Progressive and Nonprogressive. *Progressive* consequences systems involve students losing points, status on a color system, etc. for each behavior infraction. Points levels and colors are associated with a progression of consequences. With Progressive consequences, all misbehaviors are addressed with the same consequences of increasing severity despite the fact that not all misbehaviors are equal in severity. For example, with a Progressive consequences system, a student who frequently calls out and a student who pushes another student will ultimately receive the same consequences for their behaviors even though calling out and physical aggression are not behaviors of the same severity. Progressive consequences systems work better when minor behaviors are addressed with a Progressive system and more serious behaviors are addressed with consequences that are maintained on the same level for each behavior. It is also important to consider allowing students to earn back points/color levels/etc. through engaging in appropriate behaviors, teaching students how to recover from mistakes and reinforcing appropriate behaviors.

Nonprogressive consequences systems cover all misbehavior by identifying categories of misbehavior that increase in severity and determining consequences for each category that match the severity of the behaviors. For example, Level 1 behaviors receive no corrective consequences beyond a gentle reprimand. Level 2 behaviors receive minor consequences such as Time Owed or Positive Practice. Level 3 behaviors are more serious behaviors and, therefore, receive more serious consequences such as Time Out, Detention, Parent Contact, or Restitution. Level 4 behaviors violate a school’s code of conduct or involve violence of some kind and require an ultimate consequence such as an office referral (Sprick, 2009).



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Explicitly Teaching Consequences: Regardless of the type of consequences system you choose, it is imperative that you explicitly teach your students what to expect for misbehaviors. Explicit instruction of consequences can be achieved through several approaches including *Active Teaching of Classroom Rules* and *Say, Show, Check* (TIERS summaries and coach cards available). Part of explicit instruction of consequences includes posting consequences and reviewing the system when necessary. Two methods of posting consequences systems in your classroom are a What if? chart and Consequences Matrix.

What If? Chart: One way to communicate your preplanned consequences to your students is through a What If? chart. What If? charts list corrective consequences for inappropriate behavior on the right side of the chart and positive consequences for appropriate behavior on the left side (Rhode, et. al., 2010). See Page 3 for an example of a What If? chart.

Consequences Matrix: Another way to communicate your consequences plan to your students (and help you remain consistent with consequences) is through a Consequences Matrix. Like the What if? chart, a Consequences Matrix outlines severity levels of behaviors or categories of behaviors, examples of behaviors within each level, and planned potential consequences for each level of behavior severity (Sprick, 2009). See page 3 for an example of a Consequences Matrix.

Keep in Mind:

- ✓ Implement Corrective Consequences Consistently
- ✓ Fit Severity of Corrective Consequence to Severity of Behavior
- ✓ Implement Consequences Unemotionally
- ✓ Plan to Interact With Student Briefly, Without Arguing, When Misbehavior Occurs



References

1. Bear, G. G. (2008). Best practices in classroom discipline. In A. Thomas & J. Grimes (eds.), *Best practices in school psychology V* (pp. 1403-1420). Bethesda, MD: NASP Publications.
2. Rhode, G., Jensen, W. R., & Reavis, H. K. (2010). *The Tough Kid Book* (2nd ed.). Eugene, Oregon: Pacific Northwest Publishing.
3. Sprick, R. (2009). *CHAMPS: A proactive & positive approach to classroom management* (2nd ed.) (pp. 115-119). Eugene, OR: Pacific Northwest Publishing.
4. Sprick, R. (2006). *Discipline in the Secondary Classroom: A positive approach to behavior management* (2nd ed.). New York: Jossey-Bass.



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Example What If? Chart

WHAT IF???

Positive Consequences

- Good Job!
- Raffle Ticket
- Rock Star List
- Classroom Helper
- Special Time with Teacher
- Choose Your Seat
- Good Note Home
- ??Mystery Reward Jar??

Negative Consequences

- Verbal Warning
- 15 Seconds Off Recess Time
- Name in Consequence Book
- ??Mystery Consequence Jar??
- 15 Seconds off of Computer Reward Time
- Phone Call Home
- Not Eligible for Raffle Drawing

Serious Behavior Clauses:

- Out-of-Class Time Out
- Office Referral

Adapted from *The Tough Kid Book* (Rhode, Jensen, & Reavis, 2010)

Example Consequences Matrix

Level	Example Behavior	Potential Consequences
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accidentally Blurting Out • Chair Not on Floor • Fidgeting 	Calm Verbal Redirects or Reprimands
2-Mild	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talking Out of Turn • Failure to Initiate Tasks (Repeated) • Failure to Bring Materials • Repeated Tapping or Noise Making • Failure to Follow Classroom Rules • Tardies 	Think/Reflection Sheets, Time Owed, Time Out, Positive Practice, Response Cost
3-Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Derogatory Comments • Throwing Objects • Tantrums • Profanity • Sleeping in Class 	Kindness Jar, Restitution, Response Cost, Detention, In-school Suspension
4-Office Discipline Referral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Danger to Others • Threats (Harm to Self, Others, Property) • Bullying 	Appropriate Action by Administration

Corrective Consequences

Response Cost/Loss of Point:

Students begin day/week with a predetermined number of points. A point is taken from the student for each behavior infraction. Remaining points are used to obtain rewards/privileges.

Restitution:

Student engages in an activity to repair any damage that may have been done on his or her part to someone or something.

Warning/ Reprimand:

Verbal/nonverbal prompt or redirection.

Time-Out:

Student is removed from a reinforcing environment and placed into an environment that does not provide the opportunity for reinforcement.

Time Owed:

Each behavior infraction is equivalent to a small amount of time taken from the student during a valued activity—such as recess or time between classes.

Demerits:

Negative points that add up to a predetermined negative consequence are given to a student for each behavior infraction.

Detention:

Student serves detention in a nonstimulating setting based on the schoolwide system.

Behavior Improvement Form:

Student completes a form that requires him or her to reflect on their behavior and avoid future problems.

Office Referral:

Student is sent to the office for the most severe inappropriate behavior.

Positive Practice/ Overcorrection:

Student practices appropriate behavior by repeatedly rehearsing the appropriate behavior and paying attention to learning the behavior.

Explicit Instruction:

Teach student how to perform appropriate behaviors.

Mystery

Consequence:

Student pulls from a box containing several mystery consequences.