



Focus:
Civilian

Differential Effectiveness of Interdependent and Dependent Group Contingencies in Reducing Disruptive Classroom Behavior

Hartman, K., & Gresham, F. (2016). Differential effectiveness of interdependent and dependent group contingencies in reducing disruptive classroom behavior. *Journal of Applied School Psychology, 32*(1), 1-23.
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SUMMARY: Minimizing problem behavior in the classroom is crucial for social skills development and academic success of students. This study investigated the effectiveness of an intervention strategy for diminishing disruptive behavior (e.g., talking out of turn), the Good Behavior Game (GBG). The aim of the study was to evaluate the effectiveness of GBG by comparing two student groups within the sample: students who received a reward if everyone in their group exhibited good behavior and students who received a reward if only a portion of students exhibited good behavior. The findings indicate that the intervention reduced rates of disruptive behavior within general education classrooms.

KEY FINDINGS:

- Students in the interdependent group, where students received a reward if everyone in their group exhibited good behavior, showed a more stable rate of decreased disruptive behavior over time than the dependent group, where students received a reward if only a portion of students exhibited good behavior.
- The academic behavior and social skills of students, except kindergarteners, improved in all classrooms after the implementation of the GBG.
- Results from program evaluation after the intervention indicated that teachers reported that they found the interdependent and dependent group contingencies of the GBG were acceptable and effective.

IMPLICATIONS FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROFESSIONALS:

- Offer workshops to educate parents on the importance of early identification and solutions for problematic behavior
- Provide team building activities for youth that incorporate strategies for reducing disruptive behavior

IMPLICATIONS FOR PROGRAM LEADERS:

- Develop curricula to help youth program staff implement methods similar to the GBG
- Provide programming that incorporates elements of the GBG to enhance activities for children and youth

IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY MAKERS:

- Support research that investigates effective intervention strategies for youth with disruptive behaviors
- Recommend training for youth program staff to educate them about the importance of reducing problem behaviors in youth programs

Putting Research to Work for Families



METHODS

- Researchers recruited participants from three general education classrooms from two elementary schools in the southeastern United States.
- The outcomes that were assessed included rule violations and treatment integrity. Rule violations (e.g., out of seat or area) were measured by a teacher’s (or trained observer) tally markings on a tracking sheet during the intervention time period. Treatment integrity (e.g., praising acceptable behavior) was measured by the teacher and an observer each completing a form at the end of each session.
- Student behaviors related to social and academic skills were measured using the Social Skills Improvement System Performance Screening Guide (SSIS-PSG) completed by teachers for each student. Teacher acceptability of the intervention was measured using the Intervention Rating Profile 15 (IRP-15) completed by teachers.
- Analyses investigated the frequency of disruptive behavior with and without the GBG. Frequency of disruptive behavior were compared between the interdependent and dependent group conditions.

PARTICIPANTS

- This study included 17 kindergarteners (from one class) and 38 third-graders (from one class with 16 students and another class with 22 students).
- Of the kindergarten students, nine were male; 12 were White, four were Black, and one was Latino.
- Of the third grade students, 17 were male; three were White, 26 were Black, six were Latino, and one was Asian American (the racial identity of two third grade students was not indicated).

LIMITATIONS

- Discrepancies between observer and teacher reports indicated issues in accuracy and consistency of tracking data which could have influenced the results of the study.
- The sample was made up of three general education classrooms across two grade levels which restricts generalizability of findings to other groups of students within schools (different grades, children with disabilities, etc).
- The student behavior measures completed by teachers may be influenced by attempts to minimize problematic behaviors and not accurately reflect the students' behavior.

AVENUES FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

- Examine the effects of the GBG on youth from a variety of ages, locations, and backgrounds
- Explore long term outcomes of the GBG with high school students
- Research strategies for prevention of disruptive behaviors, such as the GBG, within youth programs

ASSESSING RESEARCH THAT WORKS

Design



Appropriate
Research Plan
and Sample

Methods



Excellent
Measurement
and Analysis

Limitations



Few

For more information about the Assessing Research that Works rating scale visit:
<https://reachfamilies.umn.edu/content/assessing-research-that-works>