

Hamline University

DigitalCommons@Hamline

School of Education and Leadership Student
Capstone Projects

School of Education and Leadership

Fall 2022

How To Create A Successful Learning Environment For Students With Challenging Behaviors

Kristin Otto

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.hamline.edu/hse_cp



Part of the [Education Commons](#)

**HOW TO CREATE A SUCCESSFUL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT FOR STUDENTS
WITH CHALLENGING BEHAVIORS**

by

Kristin Otto

A capstone submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Masters of Arts
in Education

Hamline University

St. Paul, MN

December 2022

Content Project Facilitator: Karen Moroz, EdD
Content Expert: Valarie Swanson
Peer Reviewer: Sharon Rosene

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter One: Introduction

Introduction.....4
My Journey.....7
 Educational Experience.....7
 My Career Experiences.....10
Rationale and Importance.....11
 Addressing the different educational settings.....13
Conclusion.....14

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Introduction.....16
Least Restrictive Environment.....16
 General Education.....17
 Special Education.....18
Positive Behavior Interventions and Strategies.....19
 PBIS Tier Framework.....20
 PBIS Cons.....22
Restorative Justice23
 History of Restorative Justice.....24
 Restorative Justice in Schools.....24
Individual Behavioral Strategies.....25
 Positive Reinforcements for Positive Behavior.....25

Strategies for Managing Challenging Behaviors.....	27
Conclusion.....	28
Chapter Three: Project Description	
Introduction.....	29
Project Description.....	30
Developing the Presentation.....	31
Participates/Audience.....	32
Conclusion.....	33
Chapter Four: Conclusion	
Introduction.....	35
Designing my Project.....	36
Relating it to my Research.....	37
Limitations.....	38
Challenges.....	39
Future Capstone Use.....	40
Conclusion.....	41
References.....	43

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

In 1975, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) was passed by the federal government. Within this law it requires schools to provide special education programming in a child's least restrictive environment. (Pacer Center, 2022, p.1) The least restrictive educational environment is the general education classroom, however that might not be a child's least restrictive environment. Though this law protects a child's right to the same education as their non-disabled peers, it also raises many questions or different views on what that actually means. For example, some parents might argue that their child needs specialized programming or one on one services, where a district feels they are able to meet their needs with support in the general education classroom. (The Pros and Cons of Least Restrictive Environment (LRE), 2017) Another argument might be that parents want their child in a mainstream classroom at all costs. (The Pros and Cons of Least Restrictive Environment (LRE), 2017) As education faces a wide range of disabilities, needs, and academic levels this isn't as easily done or black and white as we would hope for educators. For students with challenging behaviors, I have found how impactful the right environment can be to a student's success.

After having spent 18 years in a federal setting 4 program, which is an extremely restrictive environment outside of a general education school, I have realized that this part of the law is problematic on how districts are handling students with challenging behaviors. In order for some children with behavioral challenges to get to his "least restrictive environment", they need to fail, and fail, and fail again until they end up in the right place. For example, if I look at the

path my elementary education students take before they end up in our level 4 program it is fairly heartbreaking. Usually, they start out in preschool or Kindergarten in a general education setting where they will start to struggle. If they haven't already been identified with needs in their preschool, they then will most likely get evaluated and start receiving special education services. The first step of receiving special education services usually consists of being pulled out for parts of the day, and left in the general education classroom as much as possible to ensure they are in the least restrictive environment. However, for some students who really struggle behaviorally, this is not restrictive enough. As I read through the files of my students when they are referred to our program, the struggles the educators have faced along the way are hard. Most special education classrooms in the general education environment are referred to as the resource rooms, because they are designed just as that, a resource. They are not designed with consistent routines, and expectations. They don't function with behavioral strategies that some students with high behaviors need. Therefore, these students usually continue to fail as their behaviors become more and more out of control, and in some cases they start becoming physically aggressive. It isn't until they have hit such a high level of crisis repeatedly, and the district has exhausted all attempts in programming, that they are then referred to a level 3 or 4 program. The average student that is referred to our program is between the 2nd and 4th grades. That means most of these students have seen nothing but failure for the first 3 - 4 years of their educational path. It has been my personal experience that this becomes problematic for a few different reasons.

The first problem I have observed with this is the longevity of the negative behaviors have been reinforced, which then makes it more challenging to teach replacement behaviors. Oftentimes, when districts or educators do not know how or have the resources needed to manage challenging behaviors they find themselves in a reactive cycle. The second problem I

have observed is the negative impact it has on a student's self esteem and confidence, which over time makes them hate school. I have seen these students go to extreme lengths to avoid any academic demand, or even refuse to come to school because they are that defeated. The last problem I have observed is the damage it does between families and the school districts. The schools start to feel defeated, and lost on what to do as they continuously experience crisis situation after crisis situation, and start turning to the parents for answers. Parents feel that the school district is blaming them, and doesn't "want" their child any more. Equally, families are at the same level of defeat, lost on what to do, and just want to see their child functioning successfully in their home school. It is not an easy situation for either parent or school.

I believe that this is where our system is broken. These students are not lacking due to a lack of effort by professionals in their school, but lacking because their environment doesn't meet their needs. Educators are working hard to help these struggling students, but in actuality, they are dragging out the process. General education teachers are having to handle challenges with students that they are not trained to manage. Administration is struggling to find a balance between guiding the teacher's in their buildings to manage the challenging behaviors they face, and maintain relationships and expectations from parents and the community. When a student is referred to a program outside of a district, it often is not received positively even when it could be the best environment to support that child's needs. I would argue that for students who struggle with challenging behaviors the sooner they are placed in a more restrictive environment (which I do not necessarily mean a level 4 program), they would have a higher chance of returning to the general education classroom with their non-disabled peers.

I believe that there are solutions and ways to help educators at all federal setting levels program for students with challenging behaviors, but there is a lack of resources and training

needed to help support educators in those less restrictive environments. My hope is that through my experiences as a federal setting 4 special education teacher, I can use the knowledge I gained to create another resource to support educators at all levels to help them create environments that can better support students with behavioral needs. That is why I want to create a presentation that can be a concrete resource for educators on: How to create a successful learning environment for students with challenging behaviors. In this chapter, I will lay out my journey through teaching, my own personal experience with working with students with challenging behaviors, and my rationale for the importance of creating environments that fit a child's needs.

My Journey

Education Experience

Starting at a young age I was drawn to children, and knew before High School that I wanted to be a teacher. Originally I thought I wanted to become an Elementary Education Teacher, and started that path after high school at Minnesota State University, Mankato. During my time at Minnesota State University, I started taking a wide range of courses in the area of education. One of my favorite courses was on behavior management, which sparked my interest in behavior management and special education.

I started my student teaching in a 5th grade classroom at the start of the school year. My mentor teacher was amazing, and brought so much positive energy to her classroom everyday. There were two key components that have stuck with me as an educator, which I later applied as my foundation for creating my program. The first key component I learned during this experience was the need for creating a sense of belonging. This team of teachers had created an environment that really celebrated being in school everyday. They functioned as a whole, and brought so much positive energy to their students everyday. Every morning all five 5th grade

classrooms would come together in their pod. They had a theme song, and teachers and students would sing and dance to that theme song as they gathered in the pod. The teacher's did a variety of different activities with the kids during these morning meeting times. For example, they would put on short little skits, be silly, and talk with them on a variety of topics addressing social skills, friendship skills, and school expectations. The meetings were quick, but it brought a positive sense of belonging to the group.

The second key component I learned during this experience was how they addressed academics. In an attempt to meet each student at their level and lower academic frustration, they grouped their students by their ability for reading and math. At the beginning of the school year they assessed all the students, and then placed them into classes based on skills they had or skills they needed. The lower group had less students in that class, where the more advanced groups had more in their class. This allowed for the students who needed more attention and support from the teacher to get it. The lower group had around 15 students, where the top class had almost 30. The teacher's also rotated who took each group throughout the year. If one teacher had the lower group for math, then she typically took the higher group for reading, and vice versa. This way students did not end up having the same teacher for both classes, and the kids did not seem to know exactly the level of the different rooms. During the semester, I was able to observe students thriving both emotionally and academically, and saw how effective these components were for students' success. At the time of this experience, I did not realize how impactful observing these two key components in this environment would be. But 2 years later, these 2 key components became my foundation for how I ran my program and continue to run my program 18 years later.

Though the overall philosophy of my student teacher experience had a huge impact on my approaches as a teacher now, there was a specific student who impacted me and is the reason I changed paths from a general education teacher to a special education teacher. Within our homeroom class, there was a student who struggled behaviorally pretty consistently, despite the strong emotional and academic support this team provided throughout the school day. I was drawn to this student, and he often needed my extra support as I was an extra set of hands in that classroom. I started to build a relationship with him, and would even spend extra time working with him in the special education classroom.

In this model, there was a small room located inside the 5th grade pod. The special education teacher would pull students out of the rooms throughout the day to offer support, or the room was designed as a safe place for those who struggled managing their emotions. Due to the high success within the general education classrooms, there were not a lot of challenging behaviors observed during my semester at the school. The special education resource room appeared to be a positive environment that offered mostly academic support for students when they needed it throughout the day. As the school year went on, I continued to work with this student and had built up a positive relationship. This was my first experience learning how important it is to not just have a relationship, but learn how important it is to be able to set limits or boundaries and follow through. Being able to learn from a team that had developed a method that allowed for positivity, celebration, success, but also strong behavior management with high expectations was a whole new experience for me.

As I watched that student start to find success, and behaviors started to drastically decrease through our group effort I found instant gratitude in this progress. It was extremely rewarding to work with him, and then start to see him do so well. I was drawn to this and

realized how much I enjoyed working with special education students. It was at this point during my student teaching that I decided I wanted to change paths to a special education teacher in the area of Emotional/Behavioral Disorders. So, after I graduated that semester with my undergraduate in Elementary Education, I enrolled into graduate school for special education.

My Career Experiences

I started my journey 18 years ago as a level 4 special education teacher. With very little general education experience under my belt, this job was a risky job to take. The idea of the challenge, and working with students who struggled behaviorally however excited me. I dove right into this position, and I am so glad that I did. I started my first year out with 5 students, a paraprofessional, and a part time therapist. I remember walking in to meet with the paraprofessional and therapist for the first time. They showed me our space, and my heart sank. Our space was small, but felt cold since there was nothing on the walls. It looked and felt like a jail. That summer I spent many days, and weeks decorating the room and making it feel like an elementary classroom. I will always remember the reaction from the other staff when I did this. They told me that we don't hang stuff on the walls, because it will just get ripped down. I responded by telling them that I guess if it gets ripped down they will put it back up and fix it. We went that whole first year, with only 2 incidents where something we ripped off our classroom walls. It was my first of many lessons I have learned along the way as a level 4 special education teacher.

Kids will meet the expectations you set for them. If we create an environment for them to fail where we expect them to do so, they will. However, if we create an environment that promotes success and we expect they can do it; they also will. Year after year, I continued to build off of this. Developing a program that promotes success, belonging, and believing they can

succeed. Over the 17 years, the program has grown. We currently have two locations, with 7 classrooms servicing between 40-50 students. I have a passion for tackling some of the most challenging students, and creating a program or classroom that they can be successful in.

Every year, our program or my classroom dynamics look very different, as my students change. What used to be a very traditional program for students with Emotional/Behavioral Disabilities, has now turned into a program that services a wide range of students with a wide range of disabilities. From Emotional/Behavioral Disorders, to Fetal Alcohol Syndrome, Autism Spectrum Disorder, or Reactive Attachment Disorder. Our students share two common characteristics. The first being that their overall cognitive ability falls within the average range, and they are verbal. The other is that they struggle with handling their emotions in age appropriate ways where they will become physically aggressive towards themselves or others. I have learned through the success of my own students that success comes from creating an environment that supports students needs, provides consistency and follow through, and sets expectations that are obtainable but high. With those expectations changing and the bar being raised as they start to consistently meet those expectations. It is when expectations and frustration levels are too high or unattainable that students are set up to fail. And even though each year my students change, I service different disabilities, and their needs are different. We continue to find success in the majority of the students we service. I believe we see success with our students in this program, because we create an environment that works for the student, instead of trying to make a student fit into our environment.

Rationale and Importance

In my 18 years of teaching level 4 elementary special education students I have learned and found interventions, program development, and behavioral management techniques that have

contributed to my students' success. I also realized that behavioral success has a direct correlation with academic success. Over the last 10 years in my career, I started shifting my focus to helping and educating other educators. I started out as a CPI instructor through Crisis Prevention Institute training Nonviolent Crisis Intervention training to other special education or paraprofessional staff. In doing these presentations I have heard the challenges they each face when working with students with behavioral challenges in different educational settings. Oftentimes as they describe their stories and experiences to me, I hear the reactive cycle they have found themselves in. They are looking for a black and white solution to fix a student's behaviors. The solution they are looking to hear is that their student shouldn't be in their setting and should be moved to a more restrictive environment. The reality is though, there is not one magic solution that will change a student's behaviors, because unless you understand what is driving their behavior you will not understand what you need to do to change it. I have learned over time through my experiences what key components educators need to successfully create environments that promote positive behaviors. There is no set guide that gives educators this information, and lays out the foundation blocks needed to effectively program for these students. There are many different strategies or interventions available for educators, but I believe the lack of success comes from the understanding on when and how to use these different strategies.

The other challenge I have observed through my experiences is that educators are stuck in a reactive approach. The foundations needed to create successful environments are not in place, so when they are faced with challenging behaviors they find themselves reacting in a non-productive way. Sometimes a teacher's attitude is getting in the way of effectively programming for students. If you have a mindset that they are not right for your classroom, then you are expecting them to fail and their behaviors will get worse.

Addressing the Different Educational Settings

Over the last few years, my audiences have shifted from all special education staff to helping general education teachers. Since the pandemic, teachers as a whole are experiencing a higher level of challenging behaviors. On top of it educational staff as a whole are functioning at a much higher stress level as well. In my CPI training, one of the key messages taught is that “Behaviors Influence Behaviors” (Nonviolent Crisis Intervention, 1980, p.32) . If staff are stressed, and functioning at a higher level of anxiety, so will those around them. This mindset will impact not just the students in their care, but their coworkers around them as well. I am finding this mindset is spreading through the whole school, and the overall climate in some of the schools I have presented in are overall struggling.

After presenting recently to a few different elementary general education groups, I realized that general education teachers have very little education on managing challenging behaviors. I then thought back to my education, because that was how I started my career, an Elementary Education Teacher. I also did not get a lot of training on behavioral management. Sure they taught us about general classroom management, but we did not learn in depth about functions of behaviors, or positive and negative reinforcements.

As a teacher with my Special Education Degree, I also do not remember much of my course work focusing on challenging behaviors. Sure they went through the basics, and went into detail about the characteristics of the different disability areas. But they did not teach strategies or interventions for working with the different disability areas. Those are the things that CPI training is providing for educators. I help them learn to identify the behavioral level they are observing, and then give them tools or strategies for how to manage those behaviors. Educators

need to have a variety of tools, strategies, reinforcers, or consequences in their tool kits to be prepared to handle challenges they may face. This is the area that I think educators or paraprofessionals need help with, and why I want to strengthen what I know to continue to guide and help support other educators. Through reviewing literature and applying what I know, I want to create a presentation that can be a concrete resource for educators on: How to create a successful learning environment for students with challenging behaviors.

Conclusion

My path through my education and my career so far has been a huge learning experience, and I have always been a person that continues to challenge myself, and work to the next level. Though working with students with severe behavioral challenges can be both physically and mentally exhausting at times, it has been a career that I have become very passionate about. I have taken a lot of pride in seeing the success in my students I have been able to serve over the years. I am grateful for the path my experiences have led me in my career, and hope to find ways to help students find their strengths and know what success feels like. As my passion continues to grow, I am excited about the opportunities I have and hope to continue to share my experiences with other educators. This capstone project is another stepping stone to help me achieve my goals in helping other educators create environments that students can find success in. That is why I want to create a presentation that will give educators a resource on: How to create a successful learning environment for students with challenging behaviors.

As I continue this journey I hope to dive deeper into the challenges teachers are facing in trying to program for these students, and the best methods for reducing challenging behaviors some students present with like work refusal, defiance, and verbal and physical aggression. In the next section, I will review a variety of literature to gain evidence based support for the

presentation I am creating. I will look at what research based strategies currently are being used, their pros and cons, and how those apply to the different educational settings.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Educators across the country look for strategies, or behavioral interventions to help them manage challenging behaviors in the different educational settings. After having spent the last 10 years as a CPI instructor, I have seen an increased need in helping teachers manage challenging behaviors, especially in the general education classroom. What used to primarily be training special education staff, has now changed into training general education staff as well. Teachers are looking for training, and additional ways to help increase positive behaviors in their classrooms. In this section, I will review different educational environments, and use literature to see what research shows are effective ways to help support students with challenging behaviors in a variety of educational settings. As I work to later create a presentation on: How to create a successful learning environment for students with challenging behaviors. I will be able to apply things gained from the literature review to support my presentation.

Least Restrictive Environment

In 1975, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) was passed by the federal government. Within this law it requires schools to provide special education programming in a child's least restrictive environment. Though many feel that this means that children should be receiving their special education services within the general education classroom, that is not exactly the meaning of that law. The least restrictive educational environment is the general education classroom, however that might not be a child's least restrictive environment. "Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) is a requirement under the IDEA, which states that: "to the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities, including

children in public and private institutions or other care facilities, [be] educated with children without disabilities, and that special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of children with disabilities from regular educational environments occur only when the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved” (Pacer Center, 2002, p.1). It is the responsibility of schools to place children in their least restrictive environment, whether that be in the general education setting, a blend between general education and special education, or solely in special education. In the next section I will define what these different environments look like in the school setting.

General Education

General Education is defined as a program that develops students’ general knowledge, literacy, skills, and competencies to equip them with the foundation for lifelong learning and advanced academic curricula. (UNESCO, 2012) The main roles of the regular classroom teachers are to plan, coordinate, schedule, and evaluate curriculum and instructional outcomes within a secure and positive classroom environment for all students, including those with disabilities (Bouchrika, 2021). Districts across the country are working hard to provide the least restrictive environment for students with special needs, which means that general education teachers are programming for students with behavioral challenges. In order to determine if a child with special education needs can participate successfully within a general education setting the team must consider many environmental factors like their ability to participate with peers of the same age, communication skills, or structure of the classroom. The impact of inclusion in general education classrooms is also impacted by teachers’ attitudes. (Rast, 2016) A teacher needs to have a variety of tips and strategies to help manage behaviors within their general education classrooms, from preventative strategies, visuals, modeling, setting limits, and effectively

following through on setting limits. “In 2016, the U.S. Department of Education conducted research on the implementation of IDEA and found that 94.9% of students between the ages of 6 and 21 served by IDEA spent some portion of their day in general classes. Almost two-thirds (63%) of students with disabilities spent at least 80% or more of their day in inclusion classrooms” (Alvernia University, 2019) Providing services to students within the general education classroom has shown to improve academic achievement, and strengthens peer relationships for all students with or without disabilities.

Special Education

Special Education is defined as a range of services that are provided to kids with disabilities in a variety of settings that help kids to learn. Special education is not a “one size fits all” approach, and is designed to meet the needs of each individual student. (Morin, 2014)

Above we discussed how special education students could benefit or receive special education within the general education setting. However, there are situations where this environment is not a successful environment for some students. When this is the case, students could start being pulled out of the general education classroom to receive more individualized instruction in areas like occupational therapy, speech and language services, reading, math, or social and emotional support. Students who show a need for this kind of support generally benefit from smaller group sizes, with a higher teacher to student ratio. Special education teachers can focus on individual skills that will help them close the gap between them and their non-disabled peers. For students who struggle with emotional or behavioral regulation, these environments can provide them with more structure and immediate feedback to help reduce triggers or anxiety causing the emotional dysregulation. These services can look very different from one child to another. A student could spend only a short amount of time away from their non-disabled peers or they could spend the

entire day away from their non-disabled peers. Students who spend over 60% of their day away from their non-disabled peers would be considered level 3 programs. Level 3 programs are located within the general education school, but provide restrictive programming to students during most, if not the whole school day. In some rare situations, a student needs an even more restrictive environment. These students would then be referred outside their resident district to level 4 specialized education programs or day treatment programs to help meet their needs. Federal setting level 4 programs are the most restrictive environment provided by a public school district. These programs are located in a public separate school facility, where students attend more than fifty percent of their school day. There are many different types of programs that meet the needs of students. Most students in these settings struggle with higher levels of challenging behaviors. They have Behavioral Intervention Plans, which are individualized behavior plans that help support a student's needs throughout the day, and these programs focus heavily on PBIS strategies.

Positive Behavior Interventions and Strategies (PBIS)

One highly studied approach for improving challenging behaviors in the education system is PBIS. In this section, I will review the background of PBIS, define what it is and how it is used in different education settings, and address some of the cons viewed by other professionals regarding PBIS. “Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is an evidence-based three-tiered framework for improving and integrating all of the data, systems, and practices affecting student outcomes every day” (Center on PBIS, 2022). There have been many studies done on PBIS, that support if it is used effectively it can assist in improving behaviors. PBIS originally began as a study in 1980, where the University of Oregon conducted a variety of studies, and evaluation projects to find effective behavioral interventions for students

with Behavioral Disorders. The results, according to Sugai (2012) showed, “These efforts indicated that greater attention should be directed toward prevention, research-based practices, data-based decision-making, school-wide systems, explicit social skills instruction, team-based implementation and professional development, and student outcomes” (p. 4). In 1997, a Federally funded grant became available as part of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and The National Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and supports (PBIS) was created.

Originally, PBIS was created to help support students with Behavioral Disabilities, but shifted to be a school-wide framework for all students. According to Sugai (2012) “As a “framework,” the emphasis is on a process or approach, rather than a curriculum, intervention, or practice” (p.3). PBIS framework is designed with a multi-tiered approach to social, emotional, and behavioral support. It first starts at the school-wide level, where standard expectations are established for all students. Building administrators need to then work with classroom teachers to teach and reward appropriate behaviors observed in their individual classrooms (Sugai, 2012, p.6). Teacher’s also need to have the same approach for handling challenging behaviors to ensure consistency from classroom to classroom.

PBIS Tier Framework

PBIS was designed to function on a 3 tier system. The first tier focuses on all students at a school-wide level. Principals or administrators set standard expectations, rules, and guidelines for their schools. These tiers correlate with the level of support students receive, so in the first tier model overall support is minimal.

Tier 1. Tier 1 supports are meant to be a foundation for all students that helps promote positive attitudes, effort levels, and actions towards others. An example of a tier 1 support might

be a school wide system that rewards random students for acts of kindness, or good grades. You might see a principal announce in a morning meeting over the intercom system a few students he randomly caught being kind or showed leadership skills that week. This motivates other students whose name wasn't called to strive to earn that reward, and motivates them to also display those same targeted positive behaviors. This tier usually works for 80% of the student population. At the classroom level, teachers need to work to create a classroom environment that promotes positive behavior or attitudes, routines, which usually includes defining 3-5 positive classroom expectations that students should know and follow (Center on PBIS, 2022). For some students these standard expectations or approaches are not enough, or effective for them. That is when a student might need more individualized support, and these supports would fall under the second tier.

Tier 2. Tier 2 is meant for a smaller group of students, and in this tier level students are not necessarily in or need special education services. Tier 2 supports include working with smaller groups of students on skills that they are lacking. Some examples of tier 2 support might include a school social worker conducting or working with a few groups of students on classroom or friendship skills. It might include a teacher providing direct instruction on a social skill to those students in need, and then working to provide those students opportunities to practice the skill and give feedback. Again, for some students tier 2 supports are still not enough, so that is when schools would look at providing tier 3 supports.

Tier 3. The level of support should only be needed for a select few of students, and usually at this point students are needing a more individualized approach. Students in tier 3 support are the students being referred for an evaluation for special education, might have an Individualized Education Plan, and/or a Behavioral Intervention Plan. Those plans would address

ways to work with those students individually on their needs, and help to create environments that will allow them to be successful. For example, they might receive support in a different classroom, resource room, or special education program. Their behavior plans will address specific ways educators should address and manage challenging behaviors.

PBIS Cons

Though PBIS is a federally funded program and supported by the Department of Education on a national scale, there are many professionals in the education field that do not support the approach. Samuels (2013) explains, “One critic, an Arkansas-based director of an alternative school behavior improvement program, claims that The U.S. Department of Education is “violating its rules against pushing any type of national practice or curriculum” by requiring schools to use PBIS” (p. 2). The argument by the Department of Education is that PBIS is not a specific curriculum, but a framework or set of guidelines for schools to use to create their own models or approaches (O’Donnell, 2020, p.3). Since the framework or guidelines can appear basic, how schools choose to implement things could look very different resulting in different success rates. Since there are also no set guidelines or specific interventions being used, implementation or expectations could greatly vary between different classrooms that could result in inconsistencies and different success rates (O’Donnell, 2020, p.4). Some educators also argue that “PBIS is a highly disciplinary program which renders authority figures infallible and prohibits students from contributing to the establishment of community norms” (Beyl, 2020, p. 3). The largest argument amongst educators and parents around PBIS is that PBIS supports and promotes a child’s desire to get external rewards or tangible things for positive behaviors. Some would argue that students should learn to find satisfaction in being respectful, kind, and contributing positive citizens to their community without needing something in return. Tangible

rewards can also turn into bribes or enforce the wrong behaviors. Many individuals feel that these approaches promote materialism, and students learn to only do things when they get something in return.

PBIS is a commonly used and researched approach that some schools will use. It works to focus on setting up positive reinforcements that reinforce positive behaviors using a variety of reinforcers. Another commonly, highly research based approach schools are using is Restorative Justice.

Restorative Justice

Another behavioral approach that schools are using to address challenging behaviors in schools is Restorative Justice. Restorative Justice is a principal-based approach to responding to inappropriate behavior (Davis, 2022). In this section, I will review the background of Restorative Justice, define what it is and how it is used in different education settings, and address some of the cons viewed by other professionals regarding Restorative Justice.

Restorative Justice is an approach that can be found being used in a variety of different settings, like juvenile detention centers, jails, and other institutions (Davis, 2022). Restorative Justice will look differently in schools, however has been found to be an effective approach for managing challenging behaviors at a whole school level or even in individual classrooms or programs (Hopkins, 2003, p.3). Hopkins (2003) defines Restorative Justice as, “an innovative approach to offending and inappropriate behavior which puts repairing harm done to relationships and people over and above the need for assigning blame and dispensing punishment. A restorative approach in a school shifts the emphasis from managing behavior to focusing on the building, nurturing, and repairing of relationships” (p.3).

History of Restorative Justice

Restorative Justice originated in the early 1970's, where it started in the justice system as mediation or reconciliation between victims and offenders. In 1974 Yantzi, a probation officer, arranged for two teenagers to meet directly with their victims following a vandalism spree and agree to restitution. The positive response by the victims led to the first victim-offender reconciliation program, in Kitchener, Ontario, Canada, with the support of the Mennonite Central Committee and collaboration with the local probation department (Hopkins, p. 6). Restorative Justice practices can be traced back to cultures across the world like Native Americans, First Native Canadian, African, Asian, Arab, Hebrew, and many others. Over time, Restorative Justice started to broaden to allow for community members and family members of offenders and victims to participate in these practices that worked to rebuild belonging and relationships in the community (Wachtel, 2016). In the early 1990's, The International Institute for Restorative Practices (IIRP) was created. They began training professionals across the world, and according to Wachtel (2016), "Since then the IIRP, an accredited graduate school, has developed a comprehensive framework for practice and theory that expands the restorative paradigm far beyond its origins in criminal justice" (p.1). In 1994, an educator from Australia was the first to use restorative justice practices in an educational setting. Since then these practices are being used across the world by counselors, social workers, youth programs, criminal justice, and education.

Restorative Justice in Schools

In schools that use Restorative Justice they are using groups to allow peers to resolve conflict, repair damage from a situation, or work out differences. This could look a few different ways, since it is designed at three different tiers. In the first tier you might see whole classrooms

coming together in peer led circles to help resolve differences or conflict amongst the group. The focus would be to find solutions, and acceptance of others to come to a plan or resolution. The second tier model would be used to resolve conflict between smaller groups of students or even just two students. The focus is to rebuild relationships, and to promote forgiveness. These might be peer led, but have adult or teacher support during these groups to help facilitate the process (Davis, 2013, p.1). The third tier is used when students are reintegrating into the school system after a suspension. According to Davis (2013), “In practice, these programs vary by district, but inclusion, bringing affected parties together, making amends, and reintegrating students into the classroom community are traditionally common pillars” (p.1)

Individual Behavioral Strategies

I have reviewed two different philosophies that could be applied at the whole school level, or in individual classrooms. There are many individual behavioral strategies that research has shown to be effective for students with behavior disabilities that need more restrictive interventions across the different settings. In this section I would like to review what some of those research-based interventions are, and how they apply to different educational settings.

Positive Reinforcements for Positive Behavior

There are many ways that educators can use positive reinforcement strategies to reinforce desired positive behaviors, and reinforcing replacement behaviors. In this section I am going to discuss three different ways a teacher can use positive reinforcement to reinforce positive behaviors. The first kind of positive reinforcement an educator could use is positive verbal praise. “Praise is one of the simplest and most powerful tools to engage and motivate your students. When used effectively, praise can turn around behavior challenges and improve

students' attitudes about learning" (Morin, 2014). Research does show that positive verbal praise is a very simple but effective tool to help create positive relationships between students and teachers. Despite it being so easily implemented, it is underused in most classrooms.

Another way to reinforce positive behavior is through the use of earned activities and privileges. In this method, students work to earn an activity or privilege for displaying appropriate behaviors. An example of this might be when a child completes an undesired task like math they will receive 10 minutes of choice time. This strategy is easy to apply, where educators set the criteria for students to earn a privilege or activity. When they meet that expectation, they earn their privilege or reward. It is important to know and understand the difference between an earned privilege versus a bribe. If the criteria on how a student can earn the privilege or activity must be set before the activity begins then it is considered a reward or an earned privilege. However, if the expectations are set during a behavioral challenge or after a student has already shown resistance to the expectation, then it is a bribe. This is important because the response of a reward will reinforce behavior, so you need to make sure you are reinforcing the correct behavior you want from the student.

The third method of positive reinforcement that I am going to discuss is a token-based economy or point systems. The Encyclopedia of Mental Disorders defines a token economy as a behavior modification system that utilizes some form of token to encourage the increase of desirable behavior, and the decrease of undesirable behavior. Token based or point systems allow for students to earn tokens or point towards a reward. Rewards usually consist of something tangible, like a toy, treat, or preferred activity. These kinds of systems are often used in self-contained settings where the environment allows for consistent follow through and reinforcement of the point or token system being used. In order for them to be effective they

require very clear expectations, and regulations to ensure they are utilized correctly and reinforcing the correct behavior.

Strategies for Managing Challenging Behaviors

In the different educational environments, it is important for teachers to establish routines, expectations, and rules to help their classroom function. This is especially true for students with more challenging behavioral disabilities. There are three different areas that teacher's need to look at when trying to create structured environments that will help support students' behavioral needs. The first is the physical environment itself. Things like how the classroom is designed, the use of visual supports, the use of lighting, and noise levels. The next area teacher's need to focus on is establishing clear expectations, and rules for students to follow. "Classroom expectations are designed to provide students with clear information on the academic and social responses required of them so that instruction and learning takes place" (Lukowiak, 2010). Students need to have well defined limits, with consistent follow through when those limits are pushed. When effectively establishing limits, teacher's need to have approaches for reinforcing positive behaviors, and established consequences when those limits are tested. If students are aware of what could happen if they choose to push the limits, they are less likely to step outside those limits. It has been my observation in the educational setting that teachers that are the most consistent on following through with consequences when those limits are broken have the least -number of behavioral incidents in their classrooms. The last area that teachers need to focus on is creating consistent routines. There are many different areas that teachers need to consider creating routines for, which is a critical behavioral strategy. According to Lukowiak (2010), "Consistent routines provide students with specific ways to carry out certain functions in the school setting" (p.1) Teacher's should consider establishing routines to manage

daily tasks, like taking attendance, lunch count, bathroom or independent work time. They should also look at establishing routines for disruptions during instruction or promote students staying on task.

Conclusion

After reviewing different pieces of literature it is very clear that, though there are many research-based approaches or strategies for managing challenging behaviors in the educational environment there is a lack of specific programs with clear guidelines on how to exactly program for students with challenging behaviors. There are overall principles like restorative practice approach or PBIS that help schools lay a foundation on their approach for handling challenging behaviors, but since they are guidelines the models can vary and look very different from school to school or even classroom to classroom. There are also many research based interventions or strategies that work, but again based on who is using them and how, the outcomes can also vary from teacher to teacher or classroom to classroom. As I reviewed literature on researched-based strategies used to manage challenging behaviors, I realized that many of the different strategies reviewed in the literature review were pieces of what I am using in my current program. I believe that one of the reasons we have such high success rates in our program is because we have a blend of the pieces reviewed above. I believe that not one specific method works for every student every time. Teacher's need to be able to understand what is driving the behaviors, and then have different strategies or tools in their kits to help manage these behaviors. Through my experiences, and the information I gained through the literature review I will continue to use the information gained to create a presentation that will help teachers create learning environments that are successful for students with challenging behaviors. In the next section, I am going to lay out my plan for my project and the steps I will take to continue in this process.

CHAPTER THREE

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Introduction

18 years ago I started my journey as a level 4 special education teacher. I was young and ambitious, and excited for the challenge that lay ahead. As I started out as a new teacher, especially in such a unique situation I had very little resources. My program was located in the back of a building, and was the only elementary education program in our entire district. My first year teaching consisted of myself, one paraprofessional, a part-time therapist, and 5 students. I worked hard to set up a classroom that allowed for my students to be successful. Having very little experience, I fell back on the two key components that I learned during my student teaching experience. The first, was creating a positive environment with a sense of belonging, and the second was using ability grouping to address academic needs. Those became my 2 foundation blocks for creating my program, Stepping Stones.

Over the years I learned through trial and error, at which I made many mistakes along the way. Looking back now, I would say that it took a good 5 years of experience, before I came to a point where I had finally figured out a model or method that worked to help these struggling students find success. As the number of students grew in our program, so did the challenges that we faced. However, the reward of seeing a student succeed continued to drive me and strengthened my approaches as a special education teacher. About 8 years into my career, the program had grown drastically, and so more teacher's joined my team. This was my first experience educating others on how to effectively program for students with behavioral challenges at this level. Working side by side with them, I was able to teach them how to set up their classrooms, and manage behaviors when they appeared. They were very willing to learn,

and it allowed us to run a very consistent program. This experience however provided me with even more insight on how valuable my knowledge as a level 4 teacher was to other educators.

This led me into a new role, where I became a CPI instructor. CPI is a program that teaches individuals on how to verbally de-escalate a defensive individual, and trains in personal safety techniques. As I started this journey, I realized that I was able to apply so much of my own personal experiences and knowledge to help other educators work with students with challenging behaviors. Over the last 10 years, I have seen the increased need for more training to help educators work with students with challenging behaviors in general and special education settings. Through the literature review, and my own personal experience I found there are very few guides to help educators create environments that are designed to help students with challenging behaviors. Therefore, I want to use the information I have gained through my experiences teaching level 4 behavioral students, and the information gained from the literature review to create a presentation on: How to create a successful learning environment for students with challenging behaviors, that I can use to help other educators who are seeking guidance. In this chapter, I will describe my project, who my intended audience is, how I will gain information and create my presentation, and how I will evaluate whether it was successful.

Project Description

As I started to move out of the classroom, and into a role of educating other educators I wanted to create a project that would support this new role. Providing education and creating environments for students to be successful has always been a role of educators, so why are there not more guides or training that specifically tell educators how to create a successful learning environment for students with challenging behaviors? I know through experience that oftentimes educators need to figure out these methods through their own trial and error. Just like I had to do

18 years ago as a young educator. I believe that part of the reason for the need for more restrictive environments like level 4 separate programs, is due to the lack of skills or education teachers need to successfully manage challenging behaviors. Instead, it is easier to have them removed out of the classroom where their needs can be addressed in a smaller educational setting. So why are we leaving educators to figure these challenges out on their own, instead of giving them the specific tools they need to create environments that can support more students with behavioral challenges. So, that is exactly what I intend to do. Using a variety of information from research based strategies reviewed in my literature review, and my own personal experiences I plan to create a presentation that will give teacher's a fundamental understanding of what is needed to effectively program for students with behavioral challenges. The presentation will have a variety of examples and specific methods I have used or developed that educators can use. This process will look and be a little different based on the setting, since the needs of the students do change in the different settings. There are also different uncontrollable variables that make managing challenging behaviors different in the different settings. For example, the size of a general education classroom versus a special education resource room. Strategies and approaches will naturally need to be different. Overall, I want the presentation to focus specifically on strategies or approaches that can be used in any setting, but since educational environments vary greatly, I do plan to have examples on how the different approaches can be applied in the different settings.

Developing the Presentation

In chapter 2, I reviewed a variety of different research based approaches during my literature review. Through the literature review process, I was able to identify key pieces from some of the research-based methods I reviewed that support many of the key components used in

my program model. In order to create a presentation that uses both the information gained from my literature review and my personal experience, I plan to take a few steps to make sure I create a detailed presentation. The first step I plan to take is to write down the key components identified in the literature review that are important or useful. After I have collected the key components from the literature review, my second step will be to utilize some of my colleagues to help me identify the key components of our program. Through a discussion, we will discuss and identify what pieces we use to run our program efficiently. We will discuss things like the environment, positive reinforcement, behavior management, replacement behaviors, and relationship building.

After completing my first two steps, I will use the information gained from both the literature review and collaborating with my team to identify key components needed for creating programs for students with challenging behaviors. Once I have those key components identified, I will use those as the foundation for my presentation. Within my presentation I will use supporting details like my past experiences, personal knowledge, and information gained from my literature review to support those key components, offer examples, and give more in depth information on the rationale behind the different pieces. I plan to analyze ways these components can be applied to different educational environments, and include those into the presentation.

Participates/Audience

For my project I will be targeting a larger audience to present my project to, to help support educators in getting the tools they need to create effective learning environments for students with behavioral needs. My audience that my presentation will be designed for could consist of general education teachers, special education teachers, paraprofessionals, and

administrators. The reason for this is one of the key components to creating successful learning environments is consistency. According to Schloss and Smith (1998) “The establishment of consistent routines is a critical behavioral strategy, where consistent routines provide students with specific ways to carry out certain functions in the school setting” (p.3). The best way for a school to support a student with more challenging behavioral needs is to create consistency in each of the environments they participate in throughout the school day. (Gym, music, general, or special education, etc.) If the expectations change from environment to environment, the behaviors of that student will also change. The other reason that I need to include all staff in the building is to eliminate the possibility of creating a system that focuses on roles as a hierarchy. For example, if every time a teacher is struggling with a student they send them to the principal/special education teacher/social worker etc., they are giving that student many different messages that could hurt their ability to manage their behaviors in the future. Like they can’t handle them, they don’t have the power, they don’t want them in their classroom, and in return that student won’t respect them.

Conclusion

In this chapter I explained my rationale for wanting to help educators program for students with challenging behaviors. As my journey as a special education teacher shifted to training other educators, I realized that I was able to apply so much of my own personal experiences and knowledge to help other educators work with students with challenging behaviors. Over the last few years, I have given many presentations where I have been able to verbally explain rationale, program design, and behavioral management skills I have been successful with, but I have no tangible form that has all this information. Through this process of creating a capstone project, I will create a presentation on: How to create a successful learning

environment for students with challenging behaviors. I will use the literature I reviewed, collaboration from my colleagues to create a detailed presentation for other educators. My hope is that this will be another resource that teachers or other educators can use to create environments that allow students with behavioral challenges to be successful.

CHAPTER FOUR

CONCLUSION

Introduction

As I started my journey through Hamline University to complete my masters with this capstone project, I started to reflect on my experiences as a special education teacher. Using my coursework from the last few years, research, and my own personal experiences I began to think about how I could apply this to my future goals in my educational career.

After spending the last 18 years as a special education teacher teaching in a federal level IV separate site setting for students who struggled with challenging behaviors, I have learned how to effectively create and manage a successful program for students who struggle with challenging behaviors with a variety of disabilities. This process for me did not come quickly or easily, as it took many years of trial and error to figure out exactly what pieces were needed to help these students find success. Though there are many different researched based strategies or interventions, there is no set program that specifically helps educators' programs for students with challenging behaviors. This was something that I learned early on as a young educator myself, trying to work with students who struggled with challenging behaviors.

After watching the little program I had created as a young educator grow, I realized the need for specific education for educators on how to effectively program for students with challenging behaviors as more teachers and paraprofessionals started joining my team. What started as teaching new staff in my program how to effectively program for students with challenging behaviors, eventually turned into teaching other professionals outside of my school district as a CPI (Crisis Prevention Intervention) instructor. Having been an instructor now for 10 years, I saw the huge shift in students with challenging behaviors struggling in all educational

environments. I heard general education teachers, and other staff in public schools struggling to find ways to program for these students. With my experience and knowledge from working with such a unique group of students over the years, I knew I could be a helpful resource for other educators. That is why I created a presentation on: How to create a successful learning environment for students with challenging behaviors for my capstone project. In this chapter, I will reflect on the process I took for designing my presentation, how the literature relates to my presentation, limitations, and challenges I experienced along the way. I will conclude with how I plan to use this presentation in my career in the future to help other educators create programs for students with challenging behaviors.

Designing my Project

As I started out my journey to complete my capstone project, I wanted to create something that I could use to further my career as an educator. Following the completion of my master's degree, I want to finish my administration license where I am working directly with other educators in Special Education. The skill set I possess has already allowed me to support many different schools, but I wanted to create something that would help me provide them with more concrete information on the best ways to program for students with challenging behaviors. I knew how and what I was using to effectively program for students with challenging behaviors within my classroom. I also knew there was a huge need for a comprehensive program or training that allowed for educators to create an environment that was successful for students with challenging behaviors. I also know that as I continue to grow professionally, I want to work more directly in helping other educators create programs for students with challenging behaviors. What I did not have was a concrete program or the key components identified in a tangible form.

So, this was the direction I decided to go, and went to work creating a presentation on: How to create a successful learning environment for students with challenging behaviors.

Relating it to my Research

During the literature review process of this project, I focused on researched based behavioral interventions or programs that were used to help students with challenging behaviors in different educational environments. Since I wanted to target a larger audience for my presentation in different educational environments, I compared and reviewed different approaches used in different educational environments. In comparing the different approaches from my literature review to those currently used in my program, I learned that we used a blend of the different research-based strategies found during my literature review. With the help from my peer reviewer and other colleagues, we sat down and mapped out the different components that made up our program. We discussed the different pieces, what was needed for them to work, and what pieces as a group we felt were the foundation pieces to running a successful program. From there, I was able to identify six key components needed to program for students with challenging behaviors.

Many of the strategies that I researched are a very narrow approach in my opinion. Meaning, that I feel that they only target a very specific outcome or one piece of what is really needed to help change a behavior long term. For example, the use of a token-based economy. A token-based economy uses tangible rewards to reinforce positive behavior, which is a very well-known researched behavioral strategy found to be effective. However, if this was the only approach used to manage behaviors for students who struggle with challenging behaviors it would not be effective as a standalone strategy. If it is also not designed the correct way, it could reinforce that a student will only produce the desired behavior if they receive something. That is

why I have designed a token-based system that also acts as a natural consequence when negative behaviors are exhibited and have identified the need for a positive reinforcement system as 1 of the 6 needed approaches used to program for students with challenging behaviors in my presentation.

After completing my literature review or research on the different educational environments and research based behavioral strategies, I started to dive deep into what core pieces made our program run successfully. With the help from my peer reviewer and other colleagues, we sat down and mapped out the different components that made up our program. We discussed the different pieces, what was needed for them to work, and what pieces as a group we felt were the foundation pieces to running a successful program. From there, I was able to identify six key components needed to program for students with challenging behaviors. The six key components are, setting up the environment to be supportive, the use of supportive and directive approaches effectively, planning for challenging behaviors, solution focused teaming, building school and parent partnerships, and creating a sense of belonging. And created my presentation on: How to create a successful learning environment for students with challenging behaviors.

Limitations

As I present and discuss the key components that I identified to be important for programming for students with challenging behaviors, there are going to be some different limitations that each group or individual teacher might face. Each educational environment from a general education classroom to a special education classroom, or to a self-contained program are going to have different environmental pieces that allow for some of the key components identified to work effectively. I will also need to take into consideration policies and procedures

that might exist in different environments that could affect some of my suggested components. I believe as I work to use my presentation across different environments with different groups, I will have to individualize my content to fit the group I am presenting too.

Challenges

The journey to completing my capstone paper and project was overall a smooth process but I was faced with some challenges along the way. As I began to reflect on how this project could best support my future goals in education, my thoughts started to become very large. I realized as I started to work through the process that I needed to simplify what I was doing. Though many of my ideas are things I plan to implement in the future, like creating a guide to go along with the presentation, and to create supplemental materials that could help me evaluate current programs. However, for this project I decided to just focus on the presentation and the main content.

Another challenge that I faced is that most of the information I used in my presentation is from my own personal experiences, and knowledge. Since I was the original creator of the program, now called Stepping Stones, and much of my knowledge gained over the years is from my experiences working with some of the most challenging students in the state, it is not exactly supported by research. Though there are many pieces of the program that are proven to be supported by effective research-based approaches, most of the pieces that make up my program are from the success I have had using them over the years with my students.

The last challenge that I experienced during this process is that I am a natural speaker in large groups. I need very little information on my slides, but would have a great deal of information, stories, or examples of experiences to share when presenting. As I created this presentation for my capstone, I had created my slides knowing I would not be verbally

presenting to my audience at Hamline University. Therefore, I do overall feel that my content in my presentation is a lot, and lengthy. This would be an area that I would change and modify after the course, since I do plan to use this in the future in my career. I tried to find a balance between including enough information to deliver the content, without becoming too wordy.

Future Capstone Use

As I completed my project for my capstone through Hamline University, I became very excited to be able to start putting this to use. The last 10 years, I have been presenting and helping other educators as a CPI (Crisis Prevention Institute) instructor. However, though the material is very relevant to education and working with students with challenging behaviors it is not mine. Through this project, I have been able to take my own personal experiences, and knowledge and turn it into my own materials. This presentation will be my first stepping stone into what I hope to accomplish in education in the years to come.

First, I am very excited to use this presentation to present to any group large or small. Just last week, I had a teacher follow me for the day, as she is struggling establishing a level 3 program in the elementary school she works at. After she observed me for the day, we discussed many different things and approaches that I found to be the foundation pieces she needs to implement to create a successful program. I was then able to send her a copy of this presentation as a reference to refer to. It was very rewarding to already see immediately how this could help other educators create successful learning environments for students with challenging behaviors.

The second way I hope to use this capstone project is to help other programs that might be struggling finding success with students with challenging behaviors to identify what piece or pieces they might be missing. I have identified 6 key components needed to be established in a program to effectively program for students with challenging behaviors. I plan to create

additional materials to help me evaluate existing programs or new programs that are needing guidance. I would use these materials to evaluate which of the 6 key components the program has in place and are going well, or I can use it to evaluate which of the 6 key components they are missing and need to add.

Completing my masters through Hamline University is my first step towards my goal of receiving my administration license. I have worked for SWMetro Intermediate District for 18 years. This district is very different from a traditional district in that we service a wide range of students in a variety of unique programs. The opportunities for continuing to help create new programs, strengthen struggling ones, and become a leader within my district is the direction I will be working towards over the next year. My overall goal is to be able to take a hands-on approach observing, being observed, and collaborating with other educators to figure out an effective way to program for students with challenging behaviors, so that they find success.

Conclusion

Throughout this chapter, I have reflected on the journey I took to designing my capstone presentation on: How to create a successful learning environment for students with challenging behaviors. I explained how I decided on what information to use in my presentation and reflected on how it relates to the research I conducted for this capstone project. I discussed the limitations I anticipate encountering, and the challenges I experienced along the way. I concluded with how I plan to use this presentation in my career, and to help others in education. My overall experience working on my masters has been a positive experience, which has left me excited to continue my work as an educator. I have a huge passion for helping students with challenging behaviors. As schools continue to struggle as teacher's leave education due to the challenges

they face with some of these students, my hope is that by giving them this resource, and in some cases hands-on guidance to figure out an effective way to program for students with challenging behaviors, they also will find success.

References

- Bradley University. (2010, Winter). Positive Behavioral Strategies for Students with EBD and Needed Supports for Teachers and Paraprofessionals. 40-52.
- Beyl, S. (2020). Questioning the Rule: The Civic Implications of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) as a Pedagogy of Power (Unpublished Education Studies capstone). Yale University, New Haven, CT.
- Bouchrika, I. (2021, June 7). *Education Jun 7, 2021 What is General Education? Definition, Requirements & A List of Courses*. Research.com. Retrieved March 10, 2022, from <https://research.com/education/what-is-general-education>
- Center on PBIS | Tiered Framework. (n.d.). PBIS.org. Retrieved March 27, 2022, from <https://www.pbis.org/pbis/tiered-framework>,
- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2018). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*. SAGE Publications.
- Crisis Prevention Institute. (1980). *Nonviolent Crisis Intervention*. Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI Training). Retrieved February 20, 2022, from <https://www.crisisprevention.com/>
- Davis, M. (n.d.). *Restorative Justice: Resources for Schools*. Edutopia. Retrieved April 10, 2022, from <https://www.edutopia.org/blog/restorative-justice-resources-matt-davis>
- Friedman, H. S. (Ed.). (2015). *Encyclopedia of Mental Health*. Elsevier Science.
- Fronius, T., Persson, H., Guckenburg, S., Hurley, N., & WestEd. (2016, February). Restorative Justice in U.S. Schools: A Research Review. *WestEd*, 1-27.
- Hopkins, B. (n.d.). Mediation in Practice. *Restorative Justice in Schools*, 4-9.
- Least Restrictive Environments*. (n.d.). PACER Center. Retrieved April 13, 2022, from <https://www.pacer.org/ec/early-intervention/least-restrictive-environments.asp>

- Morin, A. (n.d.). *The Power of Praise: A Guide for Teachers*. Understood.org. Retrieved April 10, 2022, from <https://www.understood.org/en/articles/the-power-of-effective-praise-a-guide-for-teachers>
- O'Donnell, Charles, "Impacts of Positive Behavior Interventions and Strategies Programs on Educator Practices" (2020). *School of Education Student Capstone Theses and Dissertations*. 4497. https://digitalcommons.hamline.edu/hse_all/4497
- Rast J.E., Roux A.M., Myer, O., Shattuck, P.T. Special Education Environments. National Autism Data Center Fact Sheet Series; Issue 5. Philadelphia, PA: Life Course Outcomes Research Program, A.J. Drexel Autism Institute, Drexel University, 2016.
- Samuels, Christina A. (August 27, 2013). Tensions Accompany Growth of PBIS Discipline Model. *Education Week*, Vol 33, Issue 2, 1-16. Retrieved from http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2013/08/28/2pbis_ep.h33.html
- Schloss, P. & Smith, M. (1998). *Applied behavior analysis in the classroom*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- Sociology of Crime, Law and Deviance & McCold, P. (n.d.). *Evaluation of a restorative milieu: Restorative practices in contest*. (Vol. 11).
- Sugai, G., & University of Connecticut. (2012, June 19). *History of PBIS*. California PBIS Coalition. Retrieved March 27, 2022, from <https://pbisca.org/history-of-pbis>
- The Importance of Inclusion Classrooms | Alvernia Online*. (2019, June 5). Alvernia University Online. Retrieved April 13, 2022, from <https://online.alvernia.edu/articles/inclusion-classroom/>

The pros and cons of Least Restrictive Environment (LRE). (2017, August 30). Winning Special Education. Retrieved December 8, 2022, from <https://spednightmares.wordpress.com/2017/08/30/the-pros-and-cons-of-least-restrictive-environment-lre/>

UNESCO Institute for Statistics. (2012). International Standard Classification of Education. [International Standard Classification of Education \(ISCED\) 2011](#)

Wachtel, T. (2016). 3. *History | Defining Restorative | Restorative Practices*. IIRP. Retrieved April 1, 2022, from <https://www.iirp.edu/defining-restorative/history>

What is a Token Economy in Behavior Management? (n.d.). Universal Class. Retrieved April 10, 2022, from <https://www.universalclass.com/articles/special-education/using-a-token-economy-to-manage-behaviors.htm>