INCORPORATING CHOICE AND PREFERRED ACTIVITIES INTO CLASSWIDE INSTRUCTION

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AGENDA

- Conceptually incorporate opportunities for choice and preferred activities within a tiered model of intervention
- Implementation approaches and guidelines
- Implementation examples
- Future directions for research and practice
Funded by Institute for Educational Sciences (IES) for 5 years.

**Purpose:**

*Develop and evaluate effective and practical school based interventions for high school students in special education who have emotional and behavior problems.*

**Three components:**

- Instructional/classroom strategies
- Mental health supports
- Family and community supports
IMPLEMENTING CHOICE AND PREFERENCE IN THE CONTEXT OF THE TIERED INTERVENTION MODEL

- **Schoolwide Level**
  - Adopt interesting and relevant curriculum
  - Relevant schoolwide activities
  - Student selected expectations and rewards

- **Classwide Level**
  - Setting specific, incorporate in classwide instruction, activities and behavior management system

- **Individualized Level**
  - Link to IEP goals and FBA results

Setting specific, incorporate in classwide instruction, activities and behavior management system.
CHOICE AND PREFERRED ACTIVITIES LINKED TO PBS AND RTI

- Antecedent interventions
  - Best interventions prevent problem behaviors and improve academic outcomes
- Proven successful for
  + Avoiding, decreasing, and eliminating problem behaviors
  + Increasing on-task behavior
- Easy to use in the classroom setting
- Ongoing monitoring
- Providing choice linked to self-determination and quality of life
EFFECTIVENESS OF CHOICE AND PREFERENCE

- Demonstrated with
  - Vocational or domestic activities
    - Increased on task behavior and decrease disruptive behavior during vocational tasks (Bambara, Ager, & Koger, 1994; Bambara, Koger, Katzer, & Daveport, 1995; Seybert, Dunlap & Ferro, 1996; Szymanski, Johnston-Rodriguez, & Karls, 1994)
  - Leisure, recreational, or social activities
    - Increased engagement and duration of activities (Datillo & Rusch, 1985; LaMore & Nelson, 1993)
  - Academic activities
    - Increased assignment accuracy and engagement, and decrease disruptive behaviors (Cosden, Gannon, & Haring, 1995; Dunlap, Kern, Clarke, & Robbins, 1991; Dunlap et al., 1994; Harding et al., 1994; Moes, 1998)
EFFECTIVENESS OF CHOICE AND PREFERENCE

- Demonstrated with
  - Different academic subjects
    - Mathematics, science, social studies, reading and language arts
  - Different academic assignments
    - Textbook exercises, worksheets, math word problems, writing exercises, and teaching money skills
  - Different populations
    - Students with emotional and behavioral problems, with developmental disabilities, and without disabilities
NOT JUST REINFORCEMENT ALONE!

- Providing choice increased on task behavior and decreased challenging behaviors
  - Required to engage in low or moderately preferred tasks
    (Bambara, Ager, & Koger, 1994; Vaughn & Horner, 1997)
  - Required to choose order of nonpreferred task
    (Kern, Mantegna, Vorndran, Bailin, & Hilt, 2001)

- The act of choosing itself produced effects beyond the influence of preference
  (Bambara et al., 1995; Cosden, Gannon, & Haring, 1995; Dunlap, dePerczel et al., 1994; Killu, Clare, & Im, 1999; Umbreit & Blair, 1996)
CHOICE
IMPLEMENTATION APPROACHES: SCHOOLWIDE

- Steps for Using Choice/Preference Schoolwide:

1. Beginning of school year involve students in voting on specific schoolwide activities/rewards/expectations.
2. End of school year conduct student assessments on preferences over curricula and activities provided.
3. Analyze students’ responses.
4. Decide what type of choices are appropriate for your school (i.e., fit schedule, resources, setting).
5. Incorporate the choices you decided as appropriate in your schoolwide activities.
6. Provide the choices as planned while delivering the activities.
IMPLEMENTATION APPROACHES: CLASSWIDE AND INDIVIDUAL LEVEL

- Steps for Using Choice in the Classroom:

1. Create a menu of choices you would be willing to provide your students.
2. Look through your choice menu before you start planning your lesson.
3. Decide what type of choices are appropriate for your lesson.
4. Decide where choice-making opportunities fit best with your lesson.
5. Incorporate the choices you decided as appropriate in your lesson plan.
6. Provide the choices as planned while delivering the lesson.
## IMPLEMENTATION APPROACHES: CLASSWIDE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of Choice</th>
<th>Elementary Students</th>
<th>Secondary Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Choice of task/activity</td>
<td>Drawing letters on colored paper v. tracing letters on personal boards</td>
<td>Interviewing ornithologist v. writing a paper on birds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choice of task sequence</td>
<td>Order to complete spelling words</td>
<td>Order to complete science, literature, math homework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choice of materials</td>
<td>Colored crayons v. pencils</td>
<td>Handwriting v typing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choice of whom to work with</td>
<td>Peers, teachers, older peers</td>
<td>Peers, teachers, study hall supervisor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choice of place of work</td>
<td>Floor, reading mat, individual desk</td>
<td>Individual desk, hallway, library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choice of time to complete work</td>
<td>During current period, next period, next day</td>
<td>During current period, next period, next day</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES: OFFERING CHOICE

- **Steps for Offering Choices to Student/s:**

1. Create a menu of choices you would be willing to provide your students.
   - i. Conduct FBA for students with problem behaviors.
   - ii. If behavior maintained by escape, more likely to benefit from having choice among tasks.
2. Offer the student two or more options.
3. Ask the student to make a choice.
4. Provide wait time for the student to make his or her choice.
5. Wait for the student’s response.
6. Reinforce with the option chosen (give the item to the student).
7. If the student does not make a choice, prompt the student to choose from the provided options.

(Berotti, 1996; Romaniuk et al., 2002; Sigafoos et al., 1993)
IMPLEMENTATION EXAMPLES: CLASSWIDE

Choice of task (Kern et al., 2002):

- Implemented classwide with 6 students with EBD, ages 13 to 14
- During science class, associated with high rates of off-task and disruptive behaviors
- At onset of lesson, students provided with choice of two activities (i.e., conduct an experiment or review a test; watch recycle video or begin little experiment)
- Class vote decided the activity
IMPLEMENTATION EXAMPLES: CLASSWIDE

- Choice of materials (Kern et al., 2002)
  - Middle schools students during science
  - During test preparation (to study using flash cards or fill-in-the-blank worksheets)
  - During student projects (follow the path of a plastic bottle or glass jar)
  - Resulted in significant behavioral improvements
IMPLEMENTATION EXAMPLES: INDIVIDUAL LEVEL

- **Choice of sequence of task** (Kern et al., 2001):
  - 7-year old boy with ADHD
  - Refused to complete work and engaged in problem behaviors
  - Given a choice of the order in which he completed three tasks
  - Problems reduced to near-zero levels and engagement increased to 100%

- Choice of sequence of task (Jolivette, et al., 2001):
  - 3 boys, 6-10 years old, EBD
  - Inappropriate social and task-related behaviors
  - Given a choice of the order in which to complete three math tasks
  - Choice making positively affected the academic and social behaviors of two of the three students.
PREFERENCE
IMPLEMENTATION APPROACHES: SCHOOLWIDE

- Steps for incorporating students’ preference/interests in schoolwide activities:
  1. Conduct a schoolwide preference/interest assessment
     a) Sample students representative of age and ethnic backgrounds
     b) Interviews, questionnaires
  2. Analyze the obtained data.
  3. Choose and personalize activities according to your students’ interests and preferences
  4. Conduct the activities as planned.
  5. Collect ongoing information from your students to further inform you on their preference for future activities.
IMPLEMENTATION APPROACHES: CLASSWIDE AND INDIVIDUAL LEVEL

- Steps for incorporating students’ preference/interests in classroom activities:
  1. Conduct a preference/interest assessment tailored to the corresponding activity.
  2. Think about what you know about your students’ preferences and interests.
  3. Choose and personalize activities according to your students’ interests and preferences.
  4. Conduct the activities as planned.
  5. Collect ongoing information from your students to further inform you on their preference for future activities.
In high school and middle school:
+ Restricted preference assessments are recommended

In elementary schools:
+ Spending time with the students
+ Direct observation
Please indicate your order of preference, beginning with “1” to indicate the most interesting assignment you would like to complete:

- Explain the importance and consequences of civil right movements in America.
- Explain the contributions different social movements have made to our democracy.
- Conduct independent research to identify resources relevant to civil rights.
- Explain how lessons learned from historic struggles apply to emerging civil rights challenges that face our country.
- Provide examples of civil rights outstanding political figures and summarize their achievements.
Increasing assignment completion by incorporating student’s interest:

- Modified math word problems to incorporate students’ names and something of interest (e.g., cars) (Hinton & Kern, 1999).
- Modified assignment to include features of a particular favorite TV show (Clarke et al., 1995).
- Ensure activities are meaningful or functional (Dunlap et al., 1995).
“If I give my students choice, will it reduce the control I have?”

- No research indicating negative effects
- Enables students to better control their environment, improving teacher-student interactions (Jolivette, Wehby, Canale, & Massey, 2001)
“How can teachers provide choice and preference without interfering with provision of required academic content?”

+ Incorporate choice while maintaining academic rigor by presenting student with choice of assignments, choice of response format, etc.
“Are incorporating choice and preference feasible interventions for teachers, including those in general education settings?”

Teachers reported these interventions to be feasible and easy to implement in the classroom (Morgan, 2006).

Interventions did not require significant modifications to ongoing instruction or existing classroom structure (Powell & Nelson, 1997).
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Preventive approaches
- Produce positive effects on both students’ behavior and academic performance.
- Can be integrated while maintaining the integrity of the instructional objectives.
- Feasible to be implemented during ongoing classroom and curriculum routines.
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Provide some sense of control to students who experience lack of control both in school and at home.

- Create opportunities for students to display appropriate behaviors.

- Beneficial for the students in life (decision making).
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Further explore and investigate:

- Ways to incorporate choice and preference in instruction across varying ages, diagnoses, and educational settings and tasks.
- The role of opportunities to make choices on teacher-student interactions.
- Differential effects that preference and choice can have on problem/desirable behaviors.
- Differential effects of integrating choice and preference with students from diverse backgrounds.
QUESTIONS?