Recess Interventions That Reduce Problematic Student Behavior and Increase Adult Active Supervision

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NEPBIS
May 18, 2017
Unstructured Settings

- Schools have non-classroom settings such as cafeteria, bus, and recess

- These unstructured settings have more students in the same area with less structure and fewer activities, and this can lead to increases in problematic behavior (Haydon & Scott, 2008)

- Playgrounds have been areas where there has been more bullying behavior compared to classrooms, lunchrooms, and hallways (Craig, Pepler, & Atlas, 2000; Fite et al., 2013)
Review of the Literature
Highlights

• Purpose: Examine the research base of interventions that seek to reduce bullying, aggressive, or inappropriate behavior in recess settings through behaviorally-based interventions

• A systematic search of 6 electronic databases (restricted to peer reviewed empirical studies)

• Boolean Search term: ("playground" or "recess" or "unstructured setting*) AND "school" AND ("intervention" or "program")
Selection Process

Totals

- Screened 331 abstracts from key databases

- 1252 abstracts reviewed

- 103 full articles read and coded

Retained 31 articles for inclusion

- 31 articles fully described; 27 were effective

Included 12 new articles
Behavioral Components

- Increase in Adult Supervision
- Social Skills Training
- Reinforcement Strategies
- Punishment Strategies
- Combined Consequence Strategies
- Antecedent Strategies
- Cognitive Behavioral Interventions
Summary of Article Characteristics

- Most of the interventions included elementary-aged students in traditional public schools

- Slightly over half of studies also included adults; most studies measured the behavior of students, not adults

- Most interventions used social skills instruction for students and some included active reinforcement by adults

- When adult behaviors were included, most interventions addressed active supervision
Components of Effective Interventions

- Social Skills
- Peer Involvement
- Self-Management
- Prompts/Pre-Corrects
- Parent Involvement
- Use of Group Contingencies
- Use of Curriculum
- Classroom Management
- Adult Supervision
- Academic Instruction
Peer-Based Interventions

- Peers trained to act as mediators as part of a conflict mediation program (Cunningham et al., 1998)
- Peers trained as monitors (Fowler et al., 1986)
- Peers tutored other students who were struggling with reading (Kamp et al., 1999)
“Packaged” Interventions

- Incredible Years (Barrera et al., 2002)
- Linking the Interests of Families and Teachers (LIFT; Eddy et al., 2003; Reid et al., 1999; Stoolmiller et al., 2000)
- Second Step (Grossman et al., 1997)
- Steps to Respect (Frey et al., 2005; Frey et al., 2009; Low et al., 2010)
Social Skills Interventions

- Intervention focus: increasing social competence (e.g., Eddy et al., 2003) or teaching discreet behavioral social skills (e.g., Lewis et al., 2002)

- Setting: mostly in the classroom (e.g., Samalot-Rivera & Porretta, 2013), with only one done only on the playground (Nelson et al., 1995)

- Components: direct instruction (52%), modeling (48%), role-playing (62%), feedback (48%), and reinforcement (43%)
Social Skills (Other)

- Problem-solving or conflict resolution
  - Cognitive behavior therapy focusing on problem solving to reduce aggressive behavior and increase cooperative behavior on the playground (Schneider, 1991)

- Involved Parents
  - LIFT interventions included training parents in behavioral techniques (Eddy et al., 2003)

- Combined with peer-based interventions
  - Social skills training for Dyads of at risk behaviorally challenged students and peers, using self-evaluation (self-monitoring technique; Nelson et al., 1995)
Social Skills & SW-PBS

- Social skills lesson plans combined with active supervision and a group contingency (Franzen & Kamps, 2008; Lewis et al., 1998; Marchant et al., 2012)
  - Group Contingency: giving of loops (a token reinforcer) for appropriate behavior that could be turned in as part of a group contingency (classroom based) for additional reinforcers (Franzen & Kamps, 2008)

- Tied to School rules: social skills lesson plans that referenced school rules (Franzen & Kamps, 2008; Lewis et al., 1998; Lewis, et al., 2004)
Active Supervision as the Focus

- 3-hour workshop with modeling, reinforcement, and feedback for supervisor skills and strategies to increase the participation and cooperation of students in recess settings (Anderson-Butcher el. al., 2003)

- Trained staff on organized activities during recess, including using time-out procedures to address inappropriate playground behavior (Murphy, Hutchinson, & Bailey, 1983)
Active Supervision Part of Larger Intervention

- Monitoring of a point system by adults (Dougherty et al., 1985)
- Running of a reward system for appropriate behavior (Stoolmiller et al., 2000)
- Part of SW-PBS interventions
  - Awarding of elastic loops directly to students for appropriate playground behavior as part of a group contingency (Franzen & Kamps, 2008; Lewis et al., 2002; Lewis et al., 1998).
  - Direct instruction for teachers on active supervision (Franzen & Kamps, 2008; Lewis et al., 1998; Lewis et al., 2000)
  - Use of reteaching zones to correct for inappropriate behavior (Franzen & Kamps, 2008)
Most of the effective interventions focused on student behavior rather than adult behavior, specifically on improving student social skills.

The focus of the social skills was variable, ranging from teaching behavioral expectations (e.g., Lewis et al., 2002) to increasing problem-solving (e.g., Schneider, 1991).

Some interventions included SW-PBS (e.g., Franzen & Kamps, 2008); others included packaged curricula (e.g., Frey et al., 2005).
Summary of Effective Interventions

- Eleven (41%) of the effective interventions addressed active supervision as part of a larger intervention.

- Only two effective interventions focused solely on increasing adult active supervision (Anderson-Butcher, Newsome, and Nay, 2003; Murphy, Hutchinson, and Bailey, 1983).

- Only one intervention demonstrated an increase in active supervision (Franzen & Kamps, 2008).
Project RECESS: Restructuring Environmental Contingencies and Enhancing Self-Managed Supervision

Intervention
Funded by the Wing Institute

Feedback provided by my committee:
Brandi Simonsen,
George Sugai, Jen Freeman, Tim Lewis, and Sandy Chafouleas
Research Questions

1. What are the effects of a brief training and self-management on recess supervisors’ active supervision behaviors?

2. What are the effects of increasing active supervision on students’ problematic behavior during recess?

3. Will any increase in recess supervisor’s use of self-management be maintained with the sole use of direct behavior rating scales as part of a self-management strategy of the adult active supervision?
Participants

- Elementary School in a suburban school district
- 4 recess supervisors (paraprofessionals)
- Students who enter pre-identified problematic area on the playground
Active Supervision

- **Moving**: actively walking around a playground, especially in areas where students are in groups or where you know there are usually problems

- **Scanning/looking around**: looking up at the students and following their movements around the playground, especially in areas where you know there are usually problems

- **Interacting**: communicating with a student or group of students
Interacting Includes:

- **Prompting** (precorrecting) students by reminding them what behavior you would like to see before they do that behavior

- **Praising** them for doing the behavior you would like to see

- **Correcting** them (quickly and calmly) for doing behavior you would not like to see, with the goal that you prompt and praise more then you would correct
Student Behavior

• **Moderately Problematic Behaviors**: teasing, refusing to play with other children, pushing; basically low intense aggressive behavior

• **Highly Problematic Behaviors**: repeated verbal teasing and harassment, physical fighting, such as with punching or repeated kicking; basically more intense physical aggression

• **Appropriate Behaviors**: cooperatively playing with others, such as participating in sport and/or games; using playground material the way it should be used, such as sliding down the slide feet-first; following school-wide behavioral playground expectations (which might be part of the behavior matrix of the school)
Intervention: Training

- Two-part training using Powerpoint slides of:
  - Part 1: Active Supervision (rationale for using, definition, examples, non-examples)
  - Part 2: Self-Management (Use of checklist and direct behavior rating scales; definition of self-management, filling out self-management plan)
  - In between Parts 1 and 2, observations using the checklist to see if the adults are doing any of the behaviors. If not, retraining in full of Part 1
  - Duration of training: approximately 10-15 minutes per training
Intervention: Self-Management

Ongoing use of a Checklist and Direct Behavior Rating Scales

- **Reviewing a checklist** on active supervision before the recess period,
- Self-monitoring and self-evaluating by **filling out the checklist** before and after a 15-min segment of recess,
- **Rating** their active supervision and student appropriate behavior using the **direct behavior rating scales** after the 15-minute segment, and
- **Self-reinforcing** (give themselves a privilege/reward on days they filled out the checklist and met their goal).
## Self-Management Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How will you remember to use the checklist before recess?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is your initial goal for filling out the checklist (some of the time, all of the time?)?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is your current rating for active supervision (10%? 50%? 100%?)?</td>
<td># on rating scale:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is your initial goal for rating for active supervision (10%? 50% 100%)?</td>
<td># on rating scale:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How would you like to reinforce (e.g., give yourself a reward) when you filling out the checklist and reach your rating goal?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When would you like to reinforce yourself?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Example of Checklist

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I reviewed the checklist before the observation.</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I did the following:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Move</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I moved throughout the area I was supervising.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scan (look around)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I frequently scanned the area I was supervising.</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interact</td>
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<tr>
<td>I positively interacted with most of the students in the area.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I positively acknowledged at least 5 different students for displaying school-wide expectations and/or appropriate playground behavior.</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I handled most minor rule violations (moderately problematic behaviors) quickly and quietly.</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I followed school procedures for handling major rule violations (highly problematic behaviors).</td>
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<tr>
<td>I interacted for at least 4 positive for 1 negative student contacts.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Behaviors for Direct Behavior Rating Scale’s

- **Active Supervision**: adult is moving, scanning (looking around), and interacting (prompt/remind, praise (including giving out loops), and correcting students.

- **Appropriate behavior**: student is following rules, cooperatively playing, and using equipment as they should.
Direct Behavior Rating: Please rate following behaviors using the provided scale.

**Active Supervision**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% of Total Time</th>
<th>0%</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Always</td>
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</table>

**Students engaged in Appropriate Behavior**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% of Total Time</th>
<th>0%</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
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Key Measures: Supervisors

Direct observation of adult behavior using momentary time sampling for 15 one-minute intervals:

- **Movement:**
  - Percentage of intervals with movement
  - Exact number of steps taken by recess supervisor

- **Scanning:**
  - Percentage of intervals that the supervisor looks around

- **Interactions:**
  - Percentage of intervals that the supervisor communicates with students
  - Percentage of intervals with nonverbal correctives
  - # of loops handed out to students for appropriate behavior after the training (15 available per recess)
Key Measures: Adult Recorded Interactions

Frequency of adult behavior across a 15 minute recording of an observation on the playground:

- **Prompts** (precorrections)
- **Praise** (both Specific and General)
- **Corrections** (both Specific and General)
- **Interactions**
  - Adult Initiated
  - Student Initiated
Key Measures: Student

Direct observation of student behavior using momentary time sampling for 15 one-minute interval in pre-identified problematic area on playground for:

• Moderately Problematic Behavior
• Highly Problematic Behavior
Take-Aways

• “Zone Coverage” helps to reduce need for movement and possibly decreases adult to adult interactions

• Explore the role of the loops for adult behavior as reinforcers for adults

• Consider antecedent environmental changes: increase equipment (jump ropes, sidewalk chalk… )
Take-Aways

• Look to see if there is scanning
• Make direct connections to other trainings in classroom management to playground settings
• Exchange the loops for school-wide reinforcers or use as part of a group contingency
Take-Aways

• Examine your data

  • Where are your problem areas? Do you need more equipment? More supervision? Different supervision?

  • For Example: Are there areas with frequent corrections that can turn into areas with frequent prompts and praise?
Questions?

- Thanks!

- Contact me with any questions at: [LauraKern@hotmail.com](mailto:LauraKern@hotmail.com)