



INTERVENTION PLAN

De-Escalation

- Behavior: Aggression
- What: This intervention gives a procedure for calming an escalating, angry student.
- Who: Students who are not able to calm down by themselves
- Grade Level: k - 12
- Type of Intervention: Consequence
- Delivery Format: Individual
- Implementation Length: 10-20 minutes
- Special Materials/Equipment: N/A
- Progress Monitoring Option: Magnitude

Introduction

This intervention is particularly useful for students who are out of instructional control and engaging in aggressive behavior such as bullying, fighting, etc. Application of the intervention allows teachers or other staff to assist the student in regaining self-control so that social or academic learning can take place.

Preparation

No special preparation is necessary for this intervention.

Steps

1. If two or more students are involved in the escalating situation (e.g., bullying/teasing incident or verbal and/or physical aggression), provide verbal direction to the involved students:
 - a. First, provide direction to the student or students who were the apparent recipients, in terms of:
 1. Describing what he or she needs to do (e.g., go to class or the school nurse, go into the building, sit down in a designated area, etc.).
 2. Affirming that you will be talking to him or her later.
 - b. Next, focus on the escalating student:
 1. Call the student by name.
 2. Request the student to accompany you to a place where you can sit and talk, naming the place specifically (e.g., the office, your classroom, a nearby bench).
2. Physically “track” the escalating student as you move to the designated area:

- a. Move parallel to the student.
 - b. Maintain a nonthreatening stance (keep your hands down by your sides, keep your facial expression neutral, etc.).
 - c. Remain at least an arm's distance between you and the student.
3. Verbally “track” the escalating student. Keep your voice tone and volume at normal levels and call the student by name with each verbalization:
- a. Make your request (“Eli, please sit down here so we can talk.”).
 - b. If the student does not immediately comply with the request, specify the behavior you want “Eli, you are pacing back and forth. I’d appreciate it if you would stop pacing and sit here.”).
 - c. Acknowledge steps toward the desired behavior and continue to request the desired behavior (“Eli, I appreciate that you’re sitting down. Eli, you are continuing to talk; I want you to stop talking and listen to me. Eli, you’re doing a good job. You sat down and you appear willing to listen.”).
4. Ensure that you have the student’s undivided attention. Apply these procedures until the student is sitting down and no longer engaging in irrational and/or out of control verbal behavior(s).

Considerations

This technique is effective for defusing potentially explosive situations and assisting students to regain self-control. A de-escalation procedure will not, by itself, prevent bullying or other similar behaviors. However, by employing this intervention you can assist students to reach a behavioral state in which instruction is possible. At this point additional interventions and instructional methodologies can be used to teach the student more desirable behaviors.

Progress Monitoring Options

This intervention can be monitored by using magnitude data to determine if the intervention has been effective. Magnitude data are used to express the intensity of the target behavior. Refer to the Progress Monitoring section in this program for a detailed description of this monitoring method.

Supportive Research

Black, D.D., & Downs, J.C. (1993). *Administrative intervention: A school administrator’s guide to working with aggressive and disruptive students*. Longmont, CO: Sopris West.

Davis, J.L., Nelson, C.S., & Gauger, E. (Eds.) (2000). *Safe and effective secondary schools: The Boys Town model*. Boys Town, NE: Boys Town Press.