
Original Paper

Instructional Practices, Strategies, and Interventions for Students with Emotional Behavior Disorders

Mercedes D. Chaves

Eastern New Mexico University, Portales, New Mexico

Abstract

Emotional Disturbance and Behavior Disorders play a huge role in affecting students' academic performance. Behavior Disorders falls under the category of Emotional Disturbance within the Individuals with Disabilities and Education Act. If a student has an emotional disturbance or behavior disorder, it does not automatically qualify them to receive special education and related services. To be eligible for special education and related services, the disorder must have a significant impact on their academic performance in two specific areas. The first one is the student must have an inability to learn that cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors, and the second one is the student must have an inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers. For the student to be successful in the academic setting, the family, student, school staff, and IEP team must work together and implement several different strategies, interventions, and instructional practices to help the student perform at their cognitive and or grade level and be consistent with these practices.

Instructional Practices, Strategies, and Interventions for Students with Emotional Behavior Disorders

The journal articles and research in this paper discuss classroom interventions from the elementary level to the high school level for students with emotional disturbance disorders. The interventions include strategies that are implemented using evidence-based practices. The strategies include self-regulating, self-monitoring, and practical strategies used for stress and motivation during instruction time in and outside the classroom.

Practical Strategies

There are four practical strategies discussed and recommended for adolescents who have Behavior Disorders to have a successful transition into adulthood. The four practical categories include individual skills, family factors, school factors, and community factors. Individual skills involve developing self-awareness, self-determination, and self-advocacy skills. Self-determination instruction helps the students with EBD learn how to self-advocate for needed support and services. An effective approach is a self-directed IEP that focuses on multiple sequential IEP meeting participation skills. This encourages confidence in those students. Self-management and self-regulation help the student with EBD learn how to assess and record their own behavior. The student and the teacher define the behavior together and then the teacher introduces the self-management form that guides the student to the guided behavior with praise when exhibited positive behaviors. This teaches the student to control their own behaviors and improve positive behaviors, which can benefit their academic performance and social skills. (Davis & Cumming 2019).

Collaboration between the families and the school is a crucial factor in the student's success with EBD transitioning out of high school. The family partnership model encourages collaborative partnerships with families and increases parental involvement that may produce positive post-school influences of students with EBD. The ten strategies the family partnership models include is the student and family centered approach, shared vision, cultural responsiveness, proactive communication, commitment and care, creative problem solving, providing choices, and reflecting and celebrating. (Davis & Cumming 2019).

Schools need to provide effective transition services, providing follow-up on former students, and training for teachers in the general education classroom. Positive student-teacher relationships improve student outcomes and have a great influence on transitions for students with EBD. Check & Connect is an intervention model that helps schools identify students who are at risk for dropping out of school. Then, it links those students with mentors who assist those students with their individual needs. The focus is building relationships to enhance student problem-solving skills and enhance academic motivation. This also helps the students make progress toward graduating. Check & Connect has a mentor who keeps education prominent for students, systematic monitoring, timely and individualized intervention, and enhances home-school communication and a home learning environment. (Davis & Cumming 2019).

Goal setting is a strategy to learn during transition. Teaching the student the SMART Goals can help the student monitor their progress towards goal achievement. SMART Goals is specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and timely. Following goal-setting strategies is The School to Work Transition Program that provides students with EBD opportunities into the role of a worker. The goal is to develop, implement, and refine in identifying and exploring vocational interests, aptitudes, and abilities, identifying and addressing obstacles and barriers into successful employment, obtaining skills and behaviors to participate in the selected work field, practicing learned skills and behaviors in the real world, identifying long-term goals, introducing adult service agencies. (Davis & Cumming 2019).

Community-based experiences are a strategy to introduce the student with EBD to real-world problems and experiences and teach them how to obtain the necessary skills to survive, live, and be independent. Wraparound is a team service planning and coordination process in four phases, including engagement and team participation, initial plan development, plan implementation and refinement, and transition. The strategy builds constructive relationships and support networks leading to effective school completion, employment, and post-secondary education. (Davis & Cumming 2019).

Academics Success Practices

Using peers' assistance to teach academics and self-management interventions to improve academic outcomes are two of the widest research based and successful interventions used for working and teaching students with EBD. Peer assistance works on improving academic achievement, and time on task. This practice consists of mixing students to support each other through learning processes and tasks. Class wide peer tutoring allows the teacher to use already existing curricular materials and assigning students to pairs to peer tutor by reading, asking questions, and providing prompts and feedback in a structured format. The self-management intervention helps students learn to manage, monitor, record, and assess their behaviors. There are five implementations commonly used by teachers on self-management which include self: monitoring, self-evaluation, self-instruction, goal setting, and strategy instruction. These different interventions teach the student to observe and record targeted behaviors, compare their performance to established criteria, self-statements, selecting a goal and making progress towards that goal, and learning steps independently to solve a problem or reach a specific goal. (Farley, Torres, Wailehua, & Cook 2012).

There are seven steps on how teachers can implement emotional behavior practices. Step 1 is establishing the characteristic. Step 2 is examining the source. Step 3 is deciding on an emotional behavior practice. Step 4 is identifying fundamental elements of emotional behavior practice. Step 5 is applying the practice through effective teaching. Step 6 is monitoring the outcomes, and step 7 is adapting instruction while continuing to monitor outcomes. Following these seven steps and implementing these two strategies gains the student opportunity for long-term success. (Farley, Torres, Wailehua, & Cook 2012).

Types of Interventions

There are several different interventions to teach students with emotional behavior disorder categorized into four groups. These four groups consist of peer-mediated interventions, self-mediated interventions, teacher mediated antecedent focused interventions, and teacher mediated consequence focused interventions. (Ryan, Pierce, & Mooney 2008).

For peer-mediated interventions, there are eight strategies. Two of those strategies are only secondary

evidence based, three are only elementary based, and three are both elementary and secondary evidence based. Falling under the only elementary based strategy includes peer- assisted learning, peer assessment, and peer reinforcement. The strategies only under secondary are class-wide peer tutoring and cooperative learning, the three strategies evidence based for both secondary and elementary are cross-age tutoring, peer tutoring, and peer modeling. (Ryan, Pierce, & Mooney 2008).

Self-mediated interventions have a total of interventions, two of which are elementary, all 5 in secondary, and 3 or those 5 only secondary. The three evidence-based only at the secondary level include self-evaluation, self-instruction, and goal setting. The two evidence-based interventions that are both the elementary and secondary level include self-monitoring, and strategy instruction (Ryan, Pierce, & Mooney 2008).

The list of teacher-mediated antecedent-focused interventions is the biggest list of the four categories of interventions, having 22 intervention strategies list of the four categories of interventions having 22 intervention strategies. The majority fall under the elementary level while only 7 falls under the secondary level. The list of interventions includes the following:

Verbalize math problems	Cubicles
Structured academic tasks	Modeling, rehearsal, and feedback
Teacher planning strategies	Life space interviewing
Adjusting task difficulty	Previewing
Sequential prompting	Adjusting presentation and point delivery rate
Teach test taking skills	Mnemonic instruction
Taped words and drill instruction	Incorporating student interest
Trial and error versus time delay	Individual curricular modification
Personalized system of instruction	Choice-making opportunities
Structured instructional system	Story mapping
Interatrial interval duration	Teacher versus child control of choice of task and reinforcement

The final list of interventions includes six consequence interventions under teacher-mediated consequence focused interventions in which four of the six are elementary based. Contingency reinforces, use of free time, academic contracting, and written feedback are elementary based and the token reinforcement system and bonus contingency in token program are secondary evidence based. Picking a few strategies from each category can help promote a student with EBD academic success and relieve some stress on the teacher (Ryan, Pierce, & Mooney 2008).

Elementary Interventions for EBD

Not all interventions will work for all ages and grade levels. As mentioned previously, there are interventions that are better for elementary, some for secondary education, and some may fit into both categories. Focusing on the elementary level of interventions for students with EBD, there is the Good Behavior Game and the Token Economy. For the Good Behavior Game, the teacher divides the class up into teams and tells the class the rules of the game. They are told when the game starts and ends, and the team can earn points for displaying appropriate behaviors. Whose team has the most points wins the game. This game has shown growth and has been said to have a long-term effect with seeing higher scores on standardized tests, reducing the need of special education services, higher rates of high school graduation leading to higher rates of colleges and employment. (Perkins & McLaughlin 2015).

The Token Economy is a common strategy used to reward good behavior. The teacher determines what tokens are, the target behaviors and conditions, and discusses those conditions with the student and informs them the value of the token then implements secondary reinforces gradually fading those out. The token economy can be on a board, with fake money, stickers (Perkins & McLaughlin 2015).

Positive behavior supports can also be class wide and school wide. The class wide positive behavior support intends to address everyone in the class targeting disruptive behavior and the school wide is to address disruptive behavior to the entire school. These positive behavior supports are either classroom rules or school wide policies. (Perkins & McLaughlin 2015).

Science Strategies for Students with EBD

While there are many strategies that are broad for teachers to implement in any academic environment, some specific strategies have proven to work with teaching specific related content. Inquiry-Based Instruction is the use of hands-on activities. It uses data to make claims and support evidence and student argumentation about scientific claims. It has a continuum with one end discovery learning and increased amounts of explicit supports. The Inquiry-Based Instructional Continuum has least explicit on one end to the most explicit. Starting from the least explicit, it begins opened, then guided, they coupled to a structured setting. Supplemental Mnemonics helps students with EBD remember information, facts, and vocabulary to recall connected essential information. It is a memory strategy for learning content area vocabulary. The Supplemental Non-Mnemonic Strategies could involve the students engaging in active learning with practicing science vocabulary with response cards. A simple strategy could be learning science concepts with teacher to student-generated explanations of the facts. Finally, we can always fall back on peer related strategies. Peer related strategies measure the student's achievement of on-task behavior. It also teaches students to be tutors, makes sure partnerships make sense, selecting instructional material for peer tutoring, reviewing procedures to tutors, role switching, and monitoring progress. (Taylor 2016).

Math Strategies for Students with EBD

While on specific content, we will switch gears to instructional strategies for students with EBD that will benefit them in math. The STAR strategy is research-based evidence that is efficient, practical, and flexible because it can be taught for any mathematical concept in a word problem. The STAR strategy steps are S- Search the word problem; T-Translate the problem in to pictures or equations, A- Answer the problem, and R- Review the solution. Using the STAR strategy can regulate thinking and isolating valuable information. It can help to think abstractly when given a complex problem; choose the appropriate operations to solve the problem and computing accurate, organized ideas. The S has the student regulates student thinking through the information presented. The T involves modeling the scenario with a concrete object. The A follows through with procedural operations, and the R reflects the accuracy of work completed. The STAR strategy can help students relieve stress that can trigger inappropriate behaviors. This strategy can be taught to young people and followed through college (Pelter & Vannest 2016).

TRAP

The next content area traps information for reading and comprehension. TRAP is an instructional method used with students with and at risk for EBD that supports self-regulation and can improve reading comprehension deficits for students. TRAP works simultaneously with SRSD instructional approach and teaches students how to identify the main idea and summarize content specific text. The TRAP mnemonic has four steps that are completed for each paragraph for reading. T is thinking before reading. R is reading the paragraph. A is asking yourself what the paragraph was primarily about, and P is paraphrasing the paragraph. Low intensity behavior strategies are with TRAP. These may be pre-correction, choice making, opportunities to respond, and behavior specific praise statements (Sanders, Jolivette, Rollins, & Shaw 2021).

SRSD for Writing

As mentioned in the last section, SRSD can work with other strategies. SRSD is Self-Regulated Strategy Development. There are six stages of SRSD. The first stage is developing background knowledge. The teacher will explain the strategy. The baseline performance is established right here. The second is discuss it. Discussing this involves explaining the steps, observing the students' attitude and beliefs, introducing the concept of self-talk, self-reinforcement, and self-monitoring. Modeling is step three in which the teacher models of the components work through the entire task to emphasize each step. Step 4 is memorizing it. Step 5 is supporting it by the teacher and the student setting goals

and the support of the teacher fades gradually. The last step is independent performance in which the student can plan, compose, review, and evaluate work using that strategy and self-regulatory behaviors. This intervention allows the instructional stages to be repeated until the student gains the independence necessary to complete tasks on their own. (Bak, Asaro-Saddler 2013).

Self-Monitoring Interventions

Self-monitoring requires self-assessment and self-recording. The two types of self-monitoring interventions are self-monitoring for attention and self-monitoring for academic performance. Self-monitoring for attention increases awareness of a student's attention to a specific behavior or task while alerting the student. This intervention improves behavior so the student can appropriately attend to the academic task. This is beneficial for discrete behaviors such as sitting in the seat, interactions with others, and verbal outbursts. Self-monitoring for academic performance requires the student to perform an academic task and monitor the completion and accuracy of their work. This intervention improves academic performance and behavioral outcomes. For the student to independently self-monitor, the teacher must target and operationally define the behavior, determine how to cue the student to self-monitor, determine the medium for recording the behavior, teach the student how to self-monitor, and implement the intervention. (Cook, Rao, & Collins 2017).

Summary

Recognizing the challenges of students with emotional and behavioral disorders is the first step to help the student succeed in their academics and learning self-regulating techniques to allow them the most appropriate education in the least restrictive environment. Students with EBD need to be provided with effective intervention. Common behaviors in students with EBD may include noncompliance, verbal and physical aggression, self-injury, elopement, and many other disruptive behaviors. Students with EBD need clearly defined expectations for their behavior, monitoring for it, and delivering reinforcement in response to its performance. Doing this will increase your classroom management skills and reduce any outbursts or chances to engage in disruptive behaviors. (French 2019).

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