

Kids Rule:
Supporting the Individual Needs of Frequent Classroom Disruptors

by

Peter Bartanen

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Graduate Supervisory Committee:

Kathleen Puckett, Chair
Sarup Mathur
Michael Halpert

ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

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ABSTRACT

Arcadia Elementary School is an urban Title 1 school that serves 800 students in kindergarten through eighth grade. The school uses a commercial program called *Make Your Day* to manage student behavior. This program, aligned to the tenets of Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS), meets the needs of most students but not the most frequent classroom disruptors. This mixed methods participatory action research study explores the how an understanding of a frequently disruptive student's ecology can lead to more effective support and improved behavioral outcomes. The Behavior Intervention Team process consists of effective data tracking tools and practices and a team-based, data-driven approach to student behavior analysis and is a model for how urban schools can leverage existing resources to better support disruptive students.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The opening sections of the 2002 *No Child Left Behind Act* (NCLB) state that public schools in the United States must meet the educational needs of low-achieving children in the nation's highest-poverty schools. The placement of this statement is paramount: lawmakers for years have recognized that the public school system is failing too many students, particularly those who are most in need. The Obama administration's 2010 plan for reauthorization of NCLB includes a call to "bring lasting change to our lowest-performing schools...and investigate and evaluate what works and what can work better in America's schools" (*A blueprint for reform: The reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act*, 2010, p. 2).

Educators recognize that classroom disruption by even a few students in a classroom or school hampers learning for all students (Basch, 2011). The U.S. Department of Education recommends the use of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) in schools to teach and model clear expectations for behavior (Southern Poverty Law Center, n.d.). Typical PBIS strategies are effective in many schools but current research suggests that these plans are more difficult to implement and take more time to succeed in urban schools characterized by high poverty, violence in the community, and high base rates of disruptive behavior (Lassen, Steele, & Sailor, 2006; Turnbull et al., 2002; Warren et al., 2003). Clearly, there is a need to examine student behavior in this context and implement effective systems to facilitate and augment proven PBIS strategies. Doing so will give urban schools the ability to better meet the behavioral needs of their students.

Students attending inner-city schools are more likely to observe disruptive, threatening, or violent behavior than students in suburban schools, and the same trend holds true for minority students compared to white students (Basch, 2011). Disciplinary referrals tend to originate in the classroom and, according to Milner and Tenore (2010), the referrals are more often for students of color and students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds.

PBIS has a proven track record: it is implemented in thousands of schools across the country. Urban schools, however, typically have systemic factors that they must improve before positive behavior systems and strategies can be expected to be successful. Factors critical to the success of PBIS include consistency among staff members, clearly defined roles and responsibilities, an organized and efficient system for collecting and synthesizing data, and a reporting process for families, students, teachers, and administrators (Horner, Sugai, & Anderson, 2010; Myers & Briere III, 2010). Ripp, Jean-Pierre, and Fergus (n.d.) cite high mobility among student populations, practitioners' beliefs, and educators' resistance to accessing emotions and developing their interpersonal intelligence in the classroom as additional barriers to effective PBIS implementation in urban schools.

Context

This study took place in an inner-city public elementary school in Phoenix, Arizona. Arcadia Elementary School (a pseudonym) serves approximately 800 students in kindergarten through eighth grade, most of whom are Hispanic and African American. Many of these students lag far below grade level in math and reading skills. Student transience is a big concern: as families move in and out of the neighborhood, mostly due

to economic reasons, students filter in and out of school. In addition, some students tend to transfer between neighboring schools and districts for a variety of reasons, sometimes leaving and returning for only brief periods of time.

Arcadia Elementary is situated in an economically impoverished section of a rapidly growing metro area. Only four elementary schools serve this neighborhood where, according to the 2009 American Community Survey, 27% of families fell below poverty level and the vast majority of families (81%) earned less than \$75,000 in that same year. Approximately 87% of students at Arcadia qualified for free and reduced-price lunch through the National School Lunch Program during the 2013-14 school year. Outside of school, students encounter a wide variety of challenges: gang activity is evident in the neighborhood, and drugs and weapons occasionally infiltrate the school grounds.

Yearly teacher and administrator turnover is often as fluid as student transience. In the years immediately prior to this study, the school district endured significant reductions in operating budget, resulting in teacher dismissal and growing class sizes. In 2013 the district shuttered its only middle school, reorganizing the student population of the entire district into three kindergarten through eighth grade schools and one school serving only kindergarten through sixth grade. The following year, the district further consolidated its middle school program: seventh and eighth grade students and teachers from one of the remaining three schools were absorbed into a neighboring school. Administrative changes came along with these transitions, including three new principals and two new assistant principals. In a normal year during the district's recent history, over ten percent teacher turnover is not uncommon.

I was a teacher in the school district for seven years. I began my teaching at the district's middle school before being transferred to Arcadia Elementary School where I remained for two years. I served in several school and district leadership positions, including the campus leadership teams at both schools who created and oversaw the school-wide behavior plan. When I first arrived at Arcadia I was the middle school team leader and behavior coach, responsible for managing classroom discipline issues within the 7th and 8th grade and working with students who need additional support for their classroom behavior. In this role I worked closely with the school's principal and assistant principal to monitor student behavior and ensure the needs of all students were being sufficiently met. At the beginning of the 2014 school year I assumed a new role as one of the school's instructional coaches with the junior high teachers as my primary assignment. I was further able to observe and oversee the instructional practices, including the classroom management systems, underlying Arcadia's junior high program.

The school used a commercial program called *Make Your Day* (MYD), a school-wide citizenship program that develops students' internal locus of control by emphasizing human dignity, personal responsibility, and an understanding that all actions result in consequences (Vale & Coe, 2006). Students were taught the single school rule: "No one has the right to interfere with the learning, safety, or well-being of students." All students and staff members used common language related to this rule. At the end of each class period, teachers and students rated their behavior on a point scale and also confronted others who interfered with their learning, safety, or well-being using respectful dialogue. Students accumulated points over the course of the entire school day; if they earned at least 90% of the daily points possible, they had "made their day." Students who did not

earn this amount received a notification form which they were asked to get signed by a parent. Throughout this process, if a student chose to significantly interfere with the learning, safety, or well-being of others the teacher had the ability to place a student on a “step,” a progressive series of immediate consequences ranging from separating the student from the class to initiating an immediate parent-teacher conference to discuss the child’s behavior.

The school had utilized MYD since the beginning of the 2010 school year. At the time of implementation and formal training, the school only housed kindergarten through sixth grade. Initial implementation of MYD was very successful. Teachers and administrators touted the program as a solution to classroom disruption and bullying that was previously evident. Nearly five years later, a tour of the school and passing conversations with staff members illustrated how intertwined MYD is with the school’s identity. Student-friendly signs illustrated and explained the expectations at every point on campus. Teachers modeled respectful conversation and manners, while framing their expectations within the overarching school rule.

When the school district’s junior high closed its doors in 2013, its students and teachers were disbursed among three of the four remaining elementary schools. Middle school students and teachers, therefore, were expected to fit in with existing culture and programs that were developed in the K-6 mold. At Arcadia, middle school teachers and students were briefly trained and then expected to implement MYD with fidelity, so that implementation remained uniform throughout the entire school. After several weeks of implementation with middle school teachers and students, it became clear that the system

worked well for many but did not meet the needs of the most frequent classroom disruptors.

Prior to the 2013-2014 school year, the school tracked students' MYD points using a spreadsheet system that simply aggregated the points each student earned each period and calculated the totals. It became obvious that a more robust data collection system was needed to explore the extent of the students' classroom disruption. I developed and piloted an online tracking system, called the Pinpoint Tracker (simply dubbed the "Tracker" by study participants), with the middle school teachers that not only tracked the number of points each student earned in a class period but also allowed teachers to write narrative comments about the nature of students' behavior. The Tracker gathered all of the narrative comments from teachers together, categorized and graphed each observed behavior, and presented teachers and administrators with longitudinal, specific data about students' behavior in the classroom.

The junior high team piloted a tiered system of support using data gathered by the Tracker. Students were assigned a "Student Alert level" depending on the number of times they did not make their day in a five day span. For example, a student who did not make their day once in a five day period was placed on Alert level 1, whereas a student who did not make their day in all five days was placed on Alert level 5. With the automated help of the Tracker, students moved up and down these alert levels: five consecutive successful days resulted in a reduction in Alert level.

Within this tiered system, teachers and administrators implemented progressively more severe consequences at each level (shown in Figure 1). At level 1, students were simply asked to return a parent notification form indicating why they did not make their

day. At level 2, students met individually with a staff member about their behavior and discussed strategies for improving. At level 3, students were assigned to a staff member during their lunch period where they are separated from their recess and asked to reflect on their choices and ways to improve. At level 4, students completed similar tasks after school. Finally, upon reaching level 5, students were assigned to the school assistant principal for further action, which was generally in-school or out-of-school suspension.

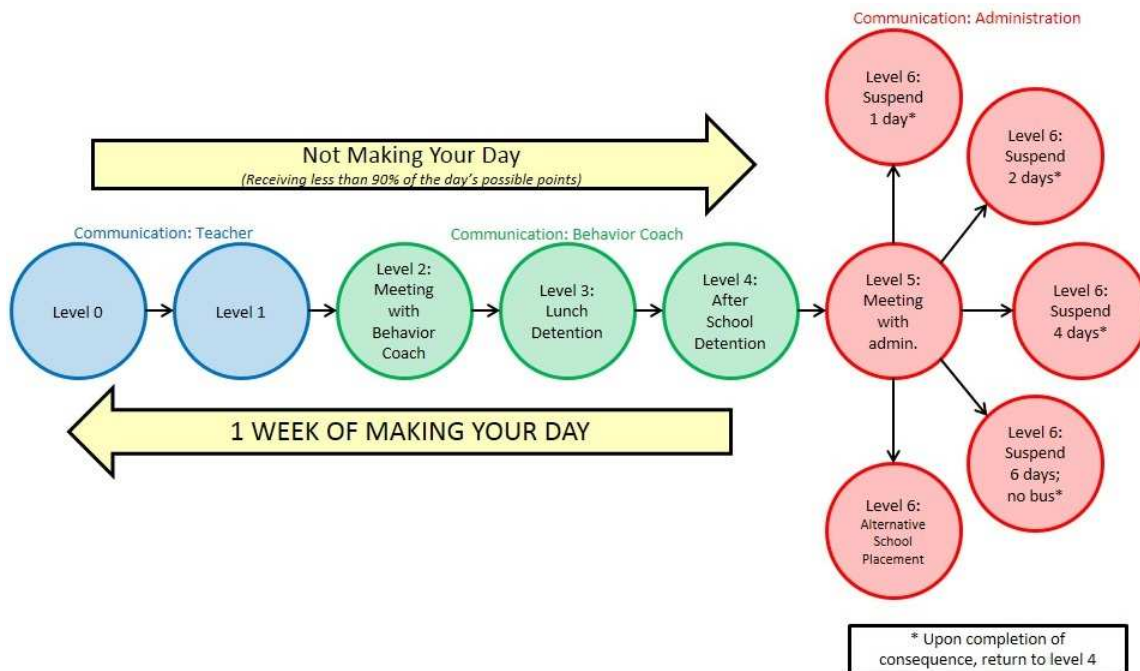


Figure 1. Arcadia’s Progressive Consequence System in the 2013-14 school year. This figure shows how students could progress up and down the system of levels based on the number of times they make their day and the consequences administered at each level.

Problem and Purpose

The progressive consequence system, combined with the PBIS-aligned components of MYD and informed by the Tracker, provided effective support for most students. In a majority of cases, students reached Student Alert levels 1 or 2 and quickly

adjusted their behavior, progressed down the levels, and exited the system. However, there was a critical mass of students for whom this system was not effective.

Approximately fifteen students in the seventh and eighth grades (7.5% of the entire population of these grades) consistently did not make their day and the systems in place did not properly support them. The school's generic approach did not meet the needs of these individual students; an approach more tailored to these students' specific needs was required.

The purpose of this study was to support frequent classroom disruptors by providing individualized strategies and support systems in a manner that respected the pressures and responsibilities already in place for teachers and school administrators. This study examined how school staff members at Arcadia utilized a team-based, data driven approach to identifying problematic students and assigning appropriate interventions. This process took place within existing work hours and regularly-scheduled staff meetings. It was based on the fundamental principles of PBIS and Response-to-Intervention (RTI) and ensured that proper interventions were put in place to support students who needed them most; most importantly, this process placed minimal burden on hard-working classroom teachers and administrators.

RTI is a common approach to meeting students' academic and behavioral needs. The National Center on Response to Intervention describes the program as one that “integrates assessment and intervention within a multi-level prevention system to maximize student achievement and to reduce behavioral problems” (2010). The approach consists of four pillars: multi-level prevention systems, universal screening, progress monitoring, and data-driven decision-making.

Within PBIS and RTI, all students are classified into three levels based on their needs. Most students are considered at the “Tier 1” level of prevention, indicating they need little or no additional support to meet the school’s behavior expectations. For example, these students generally behave well in school after normal instruction and modeling, and therefore need little additional support. A smaller group of students are classified into the “Tier 2” level of prevention, indicating they need moderate additional support. Finally, an even smaller group of students are classified into a “Tier 3” level of prevention, indicating they need individualized, intense support.

In order for any RTI system to be successful, whether related to academics or student behavior, it must be built soundly from the foundation upward (Ripp et al., n.d.). RTI structures are commonly visualized as a pyramid (Figure 2) with the Tier 1 level of prevention at the base and the Tier 2 and Tier 3 levels on top. Successful RTI systems also employ robust data systems that include all students and provide educators access to timely information with which to make informed decisions.

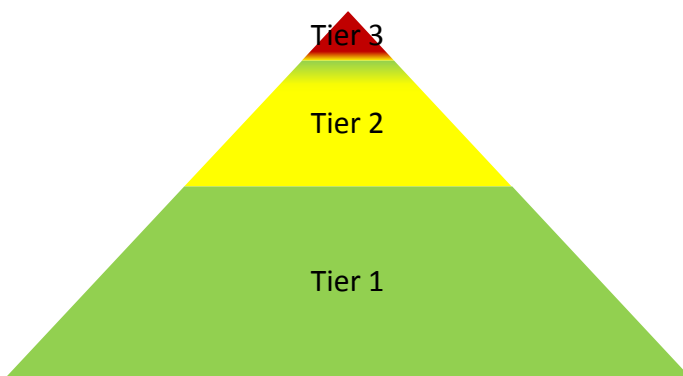


Figure 2. Response-to-Intervention Structure. Most students are classified as Tier 1 students, while only a few are considered Tier 3.

RTI was not new to Arcadia; this approach was at the forefront of academic planning. Student behavior, on the other hand, was rarely viewed through an RTI lens. There simply was not enough proactive behavior support for Tier 3 students; these students were frequently kicked out of class and spent critical instructional time in the office or in another classroom. Tier 3 middle school students, therefore, often struggled academically, leading to further behavior incidents. Arcadia needed a way to support Tier 3 students in a way that maximized time in class but also supported teachers' ability to manage their classroom. In this study, I implemented and studied a "Behavior Intervention Team" protocol to achieve this objective.

Behavior Intervention Team

When students consistently failed to make their day, the school's prescribed approach often included suspension or severe loss of privileges. However, these consequences were not favored by school or district administrators, and were thus sparingly enforced. Teachers and administrators felt frustrated when students routinely failed to meet behavior expectations. The Behavior Intervention Team (BIT) process provided teachers with a team-based, data-driven, and individualized structure for supporting frequent classroom disruptors. The goal of this process was to meet the needs of these students without automatically resorting to suspension or expulsion from school. The BIT systematically identified students based on patterns in their classroom behavior. The team then used ecological data to ascertain the risks and resources the child brought to school each day. The team met to pinpoint problematic behaviors, define desired behaviors, and institute individualized interventions for each student. Once these interventions were enacted, the team measured their effectiveness over time. Effective

interventions continued for as long as the team deemed necessary; ineffective approaches were analyzed and redesigned. The entire process was data-driven, reducing knee-jerk decision-making that was too often based on anecdotal evidence or emotion.

When considering this new process, it was important to consider the various responsibilities and pressures that teachers and administrators already faced. This study examined how the new process was made to be systematic without significantly adding to the burden of classroom teachers. It also observed how teachers and administrators used ecological data to learn about their students and improve their own decision-making. Ultimately, this study showed how an objective, data-driven approach to behavior intervention supported Tier 3 students, reduced their rates of disruptive behavior, and supported the school's fundamental mission of facilitating quality teaching and learning.

Research Questions

This action research study explored three critical questions. First, how did the middle school team use data to develop a positive support system for frequent classroom disruptors? Second, to what extent did the use of the Behavior Intervention Team protocol influence students' classroom behavior? Finally, how did the middle school team utilize behavior and ecological data to develop, monitor, and adjust interventions for classroom disruptors?

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Student behavior is a complex problem, but many recent studies have illuminated relevant ecological factors and documented the potential ways PBIS systems can mitigate them. In this chapter, I will first establish the need for this study by examining literature related to student behavior and poverty. I will then detail the approaches urban schools have taken to handle disruptive students and show that reactive, zero-tolerance, punishment-based behavior systems are not effective for the most problematic students. Finally, I will justify Arcadia’s use of the Behavior Intervention Team intervention by combining self-regulation and ecological theory with best practices from PBIS.

Student Behavior and Poverty

Contemporary scholars reject the commonly-held belief among educators that children and families in poverty are somehow “defective and in need of repair” (Rogalsky, 2009, p. 199). Poverty is not an inescapable trap; children and families in these conditions face varying obstacles on their path to prosperity. Therefore, studies investigating poverty, including this one, must “avoid treating difference as deficit and cultural communities as static” (Lee, 2010, p. 653).

Researchers have long sought to link students’ behavior problems to poverty, but recent studies suggest that economic poverty alone does not correlate to increased misbehavior or academic achievement. Ackerman, Brown, & Izard (2004) conducted a longitudinal study of fifth graders and found that students who grew up in consistent poverty throughout their educational career were at no greater risk of becoming a behavior problem or performing poorly in school than any other student. Furr-Holden et

al. (2008) developed the Neighborhood Inventory for Environmental Typology (NifETy) method for quantifying neighborhood risk using multiple sources of data, suggesting that poverty is a complex concept and cannot be applied to a neighborhood as an umbrella label. Other studies show that factors affecting families in poverty indirectly lead to lower motivation and that students facing these conditions can be successful with proper resources, such as favorable family interactions (Whitaker, Graham, Severtson, Furr- Holden, & Latimer, 2012). These analyses can likely be corroborated by stories from many urban schoolteachers, including myself.

Researchers are revealing that misbehavior and academic struggles are complex and possibly related to “contextual adversity at the family level” (Ackerman et al., 2004, p. 375), neighborhood disorder (Chung & Docherty, 2011; Salzinger, Rosario, Feldman, & Ng-Mak, 2010), trauma and a troubled attachment history (Baker & Hollaway, 2009), and other more specific factors. Clearly the cause of academic struggles and misbehavior cannot be dismissed as a result of economic poverty. Successful schools recognize this: they prioritize instructional and behavior-management strategies that target individual students and families (Sugai & Horner, 2002). In addition, McKinney, Campbell-Whately, & Kea (2005) and Gehrke (2005) found that urban teachers most effectively handle classroom behavior problems in urban schools by creating culturally responsive classrooms and integrating self-reflection into classroom management, instruction, and discipline. Based on these analyses, it is imperative that schools tasked with educating urban youth observe, understand, and intervene in the nuanced, contextual adversity that their students sometimes face.

Inner-city public schools are one location where adolescent identities, particularly ethnic identities, are constantly formed and reformed (Smith, 1993 as cited by Lauria & Miron, 2005). Educators must account for a wide range of complex psychological, sociological, and political forces that dominate their students' lives and constantly shape their identity. Urban educators must also account for the social forces that hegemonically structure their students' lives (Hayes, 2007). In other words, educators must understand their students' daily struggle with demands that they assimilate values, behaviors, and norms of the dominant society (Goldstein, 2007; Lauria & Miron, 2005). Kincheloe (2007) suggests that modern education policies inculcate students with the dominant culture's code of behavior and worldview or attempt to "whiten" urban students of color.

This "whitening" of urban students is by no means always malicious or even intentional. Calarco (2011) found this phenomenon in a recent study of help-seeking behavior. Calarco observed that working-class students at various education levels lacked the same help-seeking mindsets and strategies, compared to their middle-class peers. As a result, these students who would obviously benefit most from the help of teachers or school resources were restricted from their use, and therefore denied a more successful path to achievement in school and beyond (Calarco, 2011). These types of behaviors and resources are referred to as "cultural capital" by social scientists, who have found that such cultural signals favored by middle-class institutions – such as the public education system – are not the same as those required for inclusion, identity, and support in low-income communities (Small, Harding, & Lamont, 2010).

Berliner (2006) helpfully sums up the differing mindsets between low-income families and their more affluent neighbors:

It takes no great wisdom to realize that families with increasing fortunes have more dignity and hope, and are thus able to take better care of their children, than do families in more dire straights, where anxiety and despair are the more common emotional reactions. (p. 986)

Educators working in the context of poverty must adopt an approach that fits the needs and interests of their particular students. Dewey (1916) suggests that educators must “discover objects and modes of action, which are connected with present powers” (p. 149); that is, pedagogy should begin with an understanding of the learner, particularly what interests and concerns her (Kincheloe, 2007).

Unfortunately, many urban public schools (including Arcadia, where this study took place) lack sufficient resources to make behavioral supports fully individualized. Despite ample literature suggesting that all students need these kinds of systems, individual attention and support is often provided only to students diagnosed with special needs. Behavior support systems for general education students remain insufficient.

How Urban Schools Handle Student Behavior

Many urban schools are rife with disruptive classroom behavior. This is due to a variety of factors, including high class sizes (*Schools and staffing survey*, 2008), higher ratios of less effective teachers (Jacob, 2007), and other systemic issues. On a daily basis in these schools, a relatively small number of administrators are tasked with handling a wide variety of behavioral problems on top of other demanding responsibilities.

Most schools classify behavior events according to their severity. Behavior events involving drugs, weapons, or other kinds of violence, for example, are generally immediately referred to a school administrator and, when necessary, involve law

enforcement officials. Relatively mild classroom disruptions such as students calling out, leaving their seat at inappropriate times, using disrespectful language toward other students or adults, and more, are generally treated as the classroom teacher's responsibility until the teacher determines their influence has been exhausted. Sugai and Horner (2002) suggest that teachers tend to respond in reactive and punishment-based manners when presented with student misbehavior in the classroom.

School-wide policies in urban schools are often similarly reactive and punishment-based. Controlling policies such as zero-tolerance and expulsion are used in an attempt to send the message that students who cannot control their behavior will not be allowed to participate in the school environment (Markey, Markey, Quant, Santelli, & Turnbull, 2002). While these kinds of policies are sometimes successful in the short term, they unfortunately reinforce antisocial behavior and impede the school's ability to provide opportunities for quality teaching and academic engagement (Sugai & Horner, 2002). Markey, et al. (2002) blast zero tolerance policies as "the convenient excuse used to get rid of disproportionately poor and minority students whose behaviors may be annoying, but hardly dangerous" (p. 220).

Schools must support all students and teach positive behaviors instead of simply removing troublemakers from their classrooms through the use of suspensions, expulsions, or alternative school placements. Since the late 1990s, when the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) was amended to codify "positive behavioral interventions and supports" into school policy, many schools have taken steps to adopt PBIS strategies into their discipline practices (Sugai & Horner, 2002). Several recent studies have shown the promise of PBIS in all schools, particularly their ability to

decrease problem behavior, help teachers and administrators deal with challenging behavior, and thereby achieve more disciplined schools and classrooms focused more on teaching rather than managing student misbehavior (Warren et al., 2006).

Given the widespread success of PBIS, why is it not a universal solution for all schools – and why does student misbehavior continue to inhibit effective instruction? Payne (2008) describes how urban schools, in particular, suffer from a persistence of failure – inertia to positive, productive change brought about by entrenched attitudes of futility and pessimism, distrust among staff members, limited and mismanaged resources, and high rates of turnover in people and policy. Successful implementation of PBIS efforts requires “a strong bias toward establishing structures and processes that increase the capacity of the school,” (Sugai & Horner, 2002, p. 45) which is hampered by the pervasion of failure in urban public schools. This is not to say that change is impossible; Payne (2008) suggests that urban school reform will occur with the development of shared leadership and an “authoritative-supportive” approach to instruction. Alder (2002) reinforces the importance of the authoritative-supportive approach by showing the importance of teachers finding an appropriate balance between caring for their students and demanding high behavioral expectations; teachers who successfully achieved this balance created safe and orderly classroom environments. One of the principles of PBIS is that school leaders must organize resources, activities, and initiatives in ways that efficiently produce improvements in both teacher and student behavior (Sugai & Horner, 2002).

Improvements to structural factors must complement such a change in culture. Most importantly, schools must adopt practices and systems in which consistent data is

collected and used to evaluate the effectiveness of programs and interventions (Warren et al., 2006). Sugai and Horner (2002) clearly define the purpose of effective procedures for record keeping and decision-making: these procedures should allow for regular feedback to staff about their discipline implementation efforts and should give school leaders the ability to examine patterns across students, time, locations, behavior types, consequences, and staff members. These kinds of effective procedures are difficult to establish in environments characterized by high teacher and administrator turnover.

Furthermore, systems for students who are unresponsive to the general school and classroom systems must be more specialized, comprehensive, individualized, and of higher intensity (Balfanz, Herzog, & Mac Iver, 2007; Sugai & Horner, 2002). Such systems must include a team-based approach to problem solving, a person-centered approach to intervention planning, an emphasis on individualized and targeted social skills and self-management instruction, a link to school-wide expectations, and an early identification and intervention philosophy (Sugai & Horner, 2002). Emphasizing social skills and self-management instruction is critical for urban students who often do not receive this instruction at home. Educators, then, must understand the various factors that affect a student's social skills and particularly their ability to self-regulate. Most importantly, educators must recognize and accept that intervention strategies must not focus solely on school conditions and processes but on factors outside the school walls as well (Bowen & Bowen, 1999; Salzinger, Rosario, Feldman, & Ng-mak, 2008).

Theoretical Framework: Combining Self-Regulation, Ecological Theory, and PBIS

An individual's behavior is a result of their ability to self-regulate. Thus, the goal of the Behavior Intervention Team intervention in this study was to address those cultural

and social factors that affect an individual's self-regulation and resulting classroom behavior. In this study, I use the terms "behavior" and "misbehavior" to refer to a student's actions in the classroom and the term "self-regulation" to describe his or her personal reasons for behaving a certain way.

The Behavior Intervention Team process combines existing research about self-regulation and ecological theory with the best practices of PBIS. I will first describe self-regulation theory and show how students' behavior is linked to their personal and social surroundings. I will then show the important role critical educators play in teaching self-regulation skills and why it is necessary for them to understand a student's ecology. Next, I will explain the origin and principles of ecological theory in order to justify the use of ecological data in this study. Finally, I will show how the combination of these theories with PBIS strategies yields a Behavior Intervention Team process that not only supports individual, general education students but also fits with the existing responsibilities of classroom teachers.

Self-Regulation and Behavior

There is an important distinction between behavior and self-regulation. Carver and Scheier (1998) as well as Zimmerman (2000) argue that human behavior is based on individual goals and that an individual has control over his or her behavior. This control appears in the form of feedback loops that permeate the human experience: an individual sets a goal, acts to realize that goal, then assesses whether the goal was met and adjusts his or her behavior appropriately. Martin (2004) supports this claim but further argues that cultural and social factors influence an individual's goals and, ultimately, their ability to effectively self-regulate.

An individual's ability to regulate, or make conscientious choices, is embedded not only in a complicated web of personal, behavioral, and environmental processes, but also in an additional, more complex layer of social phenomena (Hadwin & Järvelä, 2011). Hadwin and Oshige (2011) outline three prevailing theories of regulation: self-regulation, coregulation, and socially shared regulation, and find that in each theory an individual's choices and their resulting development are inextricably linked to social factors. While these three theories offer different approaches for how an individual arrives at a decision, their common bond is clear: learning and identity, which includes an individual's regulation, is socially situated (Lave & Wenger, 1991).

Rueda (2011) argues that educators have an important responsibility to not only teach content but self-regulation skills as well. Students who are effective self-regulators can compensate for and overcome many problems, including difficult academic and social environments (Rueda, 2011). Certainly these problems include challenges associated with low-performing schools and impoverished communities.

The Importance of Critical Educators

Kincheloe (2004) writes that "critical educators feel that it is an outrage to separate environmental factors from efforts to measure ability or intelligence" (p. 14). More importantly, critical educators recognize and value the perspectives of students. These educators understand how hard it is for students to attend a school where they are constantly reminded that they are viewed as a failure (Baker & Hollaway, 2009; Kincheloe, 2004). Chung & Docherty (2011) note that individuals are most at risk of depression if they view negative events as permanent, personal, and pervasive and that this risk tends to accumulate over time, diminishing an individual's motivation and

response to stress. When situated in a hostile environment, Kincheloe posits, students express natural, logical, and self-protecting acts of aggression, which teachers often identify as deliberate misbehavior.

Critical educators study their students in order to better understand and better teach them. An effective classroom or school-wide behavior plan must demonstrate this core value. A student who continues to receive verbal admonishment, detentions, and suspensions without perceiving their teacher's regard for factors beyond their control is effectively receiving constant reminders of his or her failure and a dictate to conform to values of a dominant society that is not their own. Effective behavior systems must respect and appreciate students' environmental factors, including culture, and seek to mitigate misbehavior through alternative measures that more effectively address those factors.

Unfortunately, understanding an individual's behavior as a result of their context is an incredibly complicated task for social scientists. Lee (2010) concludes that "systems of physiological, cognitive, and socioemotional development are symbiotically linked" (p. 653) meaning that in order to understand an individual's context and resulting behavior, one must account for biological, psychological, sociological, and ecological factors. Sameroff (2010) constructed a framework with which social scientists can study these four sets of factors in an individual. Phillips & Cameron (2012) demonstrated the usefulness of this framework, which I will next discuss.

Ecological Learning

The idea of ecological learning can be traced back to Bronfenbrenner whose fundamental belief was that individuals are complex systems whose biological, cognitive,

emotional, and social elements are intertwined (Bronfenbrenner, Kessel, Kessen, & White, 1986). Bronfenbrenner's seminal theory provided a framework for future models of ecological development. He found that the ecology of human development consists of the interaction within and among four systems, which can be helpfully reified as a series of four concentric circles centered on an individual and growing larger for each subsystem, indicating a larger scope.

First, Bronfenbrenner (1977) defined a microsystem as the relationship between a developing individual and their immediate setting. Next, mesosystems are a collection of microsystems becoming major settings directly involving the developing individual. Third, exosystems are specific social structures that indirectly influence an individual. Fourth, macrosystems account for institutional patterns of culture or subculture (Bronfenbrenner, 1977).

These four systems offer a formal way of analyzing the impact of an individual's environment on their development. This model does not, however, fully realize Bronfenbrenner's thesis: the integration of biological, cognitive, emotional, and social elements. More contemporary theorists, particularly Sameroff and Lee, have found ways to connect these four components.

Sameroff's (2010) unified theory of development combines theory about an individual's psychological and biological processes with four small ecological theories to more fully explain how a person's development is related to factors in their environment. He first presents the biopsychosocial model, first theorized by Engel (1977), as a series of overlapping circles (see Figure 3), showing that a comprehensive analysis of an

individual requires an understanding of biological, psychological and sociological influences.

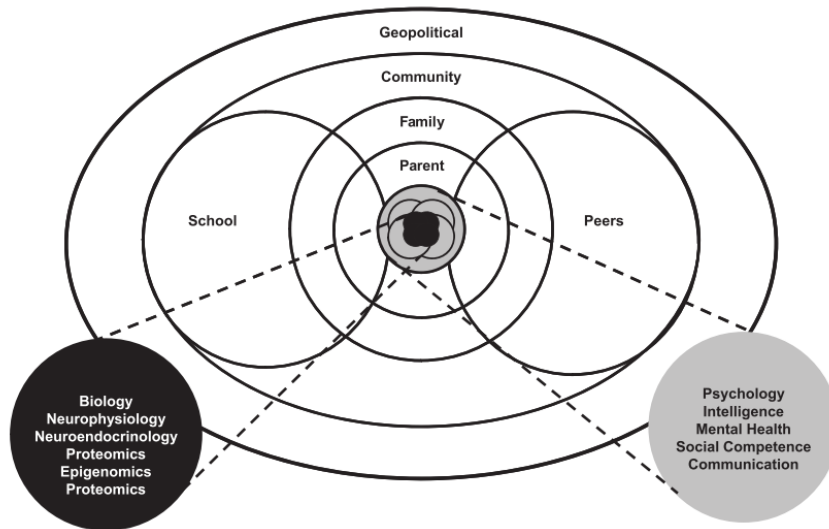


Figure 3. Biopsychosocial ecological system. This is Sameroff's (2010, p. 18) conception of ecological factors that affect human behavior.

Sameroff then combines the biopsychosocial ecological system with four smaller ecological models, which he calls: 1) personal change model; 2) contextual model; 3) regulation model; and 4) representational model.

The personal change model, based on the work of Piaget and Freud, shows that humans develop at four fundamental developmental levels: infancy, childhood, adolescence, and adulthood. At each level an individual demonstrates certain cognitive skills or traits.

The contextual model is derived directly from the work of Bronfenbrenner (1977) and shows that behavior and development are inextricably linked to an individual's social context. A child's behavior and development, therefore, are a result of immediate social

interactions, including parents, family, school, and their peers, as well as more global interactions with their community and geopolitics.

The regulation model takes Bronfenbrenner's work a step further by arguing that individuals' ability to self-regulate develops gradually over time. Infants, for example, have very little ability to make choices for themselves; they are almost completely regulated by outside factors. A fully mature individual more closely enjoys the ability to self-regulate, although this ability is still somewhat affected by outside factors.

Finally, the representational model abstractly represents how individuals view their sense of place. Murrell (2007) found that successful academic attainment for students of color requires that they develop awareness of themselves in cultural, social, and historical context as well as in local contexts. Therefore, this function is critical, as an individual's identity certainly affects how they interpret experiences or interact with their social surroundings.

This unified theory (Figure 4) answers Bronfenbrenner's (1977) call for research to "provide interconnections between systems previously isolated from each other" (p. 528). It also supports Lee's (2008) more recent observation that understanding human adaptation to social, political, economic, and biological ecologies "is the science we want and need to understand" (p. 273).

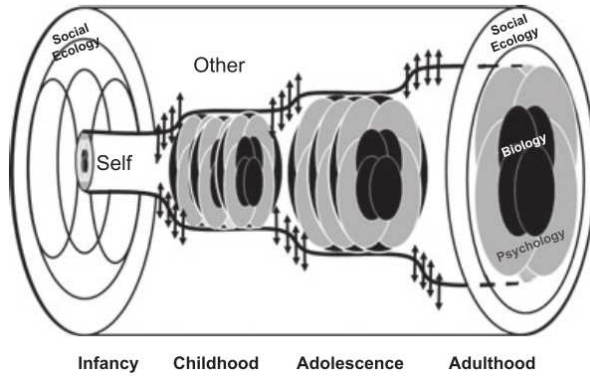


Figure 4. Sameroff's Unified Theory of Development (2010, p. 18)

Armed with this unified theory of development, we now have a framework with which we can better study an individual's ecological development. The next logical theory for researcher-practitioners, then, addresses the concern of what to do with this information once it is obtained. Lee (2010) found that human "adaptation is an outgrowth of interactions between risk and protective factors that are rooted in our biology, our physical environments, and our cultural practices" (p. 649). If we understand all of the risks posed by an individual's ecology, using Sameroff's framework, we can provide protective factors to address them and thus encourage productive adaptation. Adaptation, according to Lee (2010), is the result of a balance relationship between risks and resources, as illustrated in Figure 5. As resources begin to effectively outweigh an individual's risks, he or she is more likely to adapt to overcome those risks.

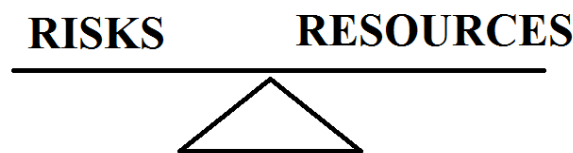


Figure 5. Relationship of Risks and Resources. This figure shows how an individual's adaptation is the result of a balance between risks and resources.

Synthesizing Self-Regulation, Ecological Theory, and PBIS

Urban schools must meet the call to understand their students' ecological factors and establish behavior support systems that effectively teach self-regulation skills critical to students' development. Given the limited resources of time and personnel, these schools must prioritize targeted students and interventions.

Arcadia Elementary, where this study took place, used the Response-to-Intervention framework to effectively prioritize and provide supports for students. The school's *Make Your Day* program and its associated consequences provided effective behavioral support for Tier 1 and Tier 2 students. However, there was not enough effective support for students who continued to struggle, as they were often removed from the school through suspension, expulsion, or alternative school placement.

The Behavior Intervention Team process used in this study combined the essential aspects of self-regulation theory, ecological theory, and the tenets of PBIS. The protocol called for a member of the team to interview and study students identified as frequent classroom disruptors in order to ascertain ecological factors that inhibited their ability to self-regulate. A team of teachers then developed, implemented, and continually monitored relevant, culturally-responsive classroom interventions designed to meet each student's individual needs. The process was designed to ensure that self-regulation skills were effectively and responsibly taught to students who needed them the most.

CHAPTER 3

METHOD

This study addressed the complex issue of student behavior using a school-embedded Behavior Intervention Team process. In this chapter I will outline the timeframe for this study, then explain the data instruments that were used. I will then detail the procedures for the intervention, data collection, and data analysis.

Timeframe

This study consisted of three phases of implementation. Phase 1 occurred throughout the 2013-14 school year as an electronic database was introduced, tested, and tailored to fit the Arcadia Elementary's *Make Your Day* (MYD) program.

Phase 2 took place in May and June 2014 to introduce and pilot new data collection instruments in order to ensure full effectiveness for the formal data collection phase. Final adjustments to the data collection instruments took place over the summer prior to the beginning of the 2014-15 school year.

Phase 3, formal data collection, began when school resumed in July 2014 with staff surveys and MYD training. Recruitment of student participants occurred starting in late August 2014, after one month of school had passed. The intervention took place over the course of ten weeks beginning in September. Final data collection occurred in November and December 2014.

Participants

There are two points of focus for this action research study: the junior high teachers and their students. This study focused primarily on Arcadia Elementary School's six upper-grade teachers (referred to as junior high, grades 7-8) and two administrators.

These individuals were recruited based on their positions within the school and their participation was embedded within their normal job responsibilities. These individuals were introduced to the intervention and data collection instruments during the pilot phase and again at the beginning of the formal data collection phase.

Three students were selected toward the beginning of the formal study. These students were selected using the following criteria: First, they demonstrated a pattern of disruptive behavior over the course of the first month of school. Second, they showed consistently higher-than-normal rates of classroom disruption and little or no improvement after participating in the Arcadia's Tier 2 interventions.

Arcadia's principal and assistant principal recruited participants for the study during their normal course of disciplinary action. They arranged meetings with parents and the students' teachers and asked parents to provide consent for their child's participation in the study. Students were not required to join the study; participation was presented as an alternative to the regularly-prescribed consequences for repeated classroom disruption.

Instruments

Data Collection Inventory

The following inventory details how data was collected during this investigation. Table 1 lists the instrument, its timeline or place in the sequence of the study, the type of data (quantitative or qualitative) and the persons responsible for collecting the data. The next several sections explain each instrument in further detail.

Table 1.

Data Collection Inventory

Timeline	Instrument	Type of Data	Collected by
Phase 1	Pinpoint Behavior Tracker entries (for all 7 th and 8 th grade students)	Qualitative and Quantitative	Classroom teachers
Phase 2 and end of study	Risks and Resources Survey	Qualitative and Quantitative	Researcher
Phases 2 and 3	Pinpoint Behavior Tracker entries (for pilot participants)	Quantitative	Classroom teachers
Phases 2 and 3	Behavior Intervention Plan	Qualitative	Researcher and behavior team participants
Phases 2 and 3	Field notes	Qualitative	Researcher
Phases 2 and 3	Researcher self-reflective journal	Qualitative	Researcher
Phases 2 and 3	Demographic and academic data (for study participants)	Quantitative	Researcher
Phases 2 and 3	Student interviews	Qualitative	Researcher
End of study	Staff interviews	Qualitative	Researcher

Description of Data Collection Instruments

Pinpoint Behavior Tracker entries. The Pinpoint Behavior Tracker (the Tracker) was a program that was connected to Arcadia Elementary School’s intranet database. Using this tool, teachers recorded behavior infractions, assigned consequences, documented parent contact, and kept track of classroom interventions. At the end of each

class period, classroom teachers recorded and categorized misbehavior according to four predefined labels: interference with one's own learning, the learning of others, the safety of others, or the well-being of others. Teachers and administrators used the database tools within the Tracker to total the number of certain types of behaviors, the number of infractions that occurred in a certain time period, the dates and time of infractions, and other patterns. I collected these data throughout all phases of the study and used them to inform the selection and recruitment of participants as well as to ascertain the effect of the BIT process on participants' classroom behavior. The team used teachers' comments to identify the nature of student participants' classroom disruption and guide the process of selecting an appropriate intervention for each student.

Teachers also used the Tracker to record each student's points earned as part of the *Make Your Day* program. At the end of the day the database automatically tabulated students' accumulated points and determined if they "made their day" by earning at least 90% of the points possible for that day. Parents, teachers, and office staff were notified if a student did not make their day.

Staff surveys. I administered the Risks and Resources survey to all staff participants at the beginning of Phase 3 and again at the end of the intervention, in late November. I developed the survey based on Lee's (2010) constructs of risks versus resources as the basis of a student's ecological development. The survey asked participants to complete the survey while considering only students they believe to be the most frequent classroom disruptors. The complete instrument can be found in Appendix A.

The survey was comprised of three constructs. In the “Identification” construct, participants were asked to describe students who they perceive to be the most frequent classroom disruptors. The “Risks” construct, consisting of eight Likert-scale questions, assessed teachers’ awareness of their students’ risks, including environmental and psychological factors. There was also an open-ended item which asked “What risks or challenges do these students face in school and outside of school that other students do not?” Two questions within the “Resources” construct assessed respondents’ opinions about the level of support that Arcadia Elementary provides frequent classroom disruptors. The next nine questions listed the specific incentives and consequences that the school offered students and asked staff members to rate whether these interventions were effective, somewhat effective, or not effective for these students. There were also three open-ended items asking about further resources the school was able to provide students.

Demographic and academic data. Archival data, including student achievement data and grades, were gathered for each participant. These data were used as ecological data points and helped guide the BIT’s decision-making process.

Student interviews. I interviewed student participants using an adaptation of the PBIS protocol. The semi-structured interview targeted students’ strengths and areas of need both at school and away from school. I also asked students to explore the causes and consequences of problematic behaviors to determine which environmental or social factors triggered the problematic behavior. The complete protocol can be found in Appendix B.

Behavior Intervention Plan. As the BIT met about individual students over the course of Phases 2 and 3, information gathered and decisions made by the team were recorded in the Behavior Intervention Plan (Appendix C). This protocol was completed by the BIT at each meeting. The team first documented targeted behaviors and supporting data. They then decided on and recorded accommodations and interventions for the student along with a data collection method, and timeframe.

Researcher field notes. As a researcher-practitioner in this investigation, I kept a set of field notes for Phase 2 and Phase 3 of the investigation. I wrote these notes after each Behavior Team meeting as well as when relevant incidents occurred at the school. I formatted my field notes using two columns: I used the left column to record specific notes, paraphrases, or quotes from each meeting while using the right column to document my own interpretation and analysis of themes and further questions to explore.

Researcher self-reflective journal. As both the researcher and a participant in this study, I recognized that my understanding about this research would likely change as I engaged in this work. Therefore, I documented my growing and changing understanding of my role as researcher and any decisions I make through a self-reflective journaling process as laid out by Ortlipp (2008). This journaling process took place at least once during each Behavior Team cycle. I wrote my journal entries in an electronic document and compiled them for further analysis.

Staff interviews. At the conclusion of the study I interviewed staff member participants using a semi-structured interview protocol which I aligned to Lee's (2010) risks and resources constructs. My interview questions sought to explore staff members' understanding of students' risks and their assessment of the school's resources and ability

to mitigate those risks. I recorded and transcribed these interviews for further analysis. The complete staff interview protocol can be found as Appendix D.

Procedure

Phase 1: Database Development, Introduction, and Tailoring to MYD

Beginning in the 2011-2012 school year, I developed an electronic database to assist school administrators and classroom teachers in documenting and analyzing disruptive classroom behavior. The Tracker first consisted of shared spreadsheets but then evolved into a sophisticated intranet database used by all of the school's administrators and junior high teachers. I developed and tested the database at the school district's junior high school until June 2013, when that school was closed and the district was reorganized.

I redeployed the software, that was previously used only in grades seven and eight, to three of the district's elementary schools which then served kindergarten through eighth grades (Bartanen, 2013). At Arcadia Elementary School, Pinpoint became fully-integrated into the implementation of *Make Your Day* and other classroom procedures. The school's seventh and eighth grade teachers continued to use it extensively. Over the course of the school year, I updated the database software to better align with the school-specific components of *Make Your Day* and the needs of classroom teachers. The Tracker underwent several revisions in order to better accommodate classroom and school procedures.

Phase 2: Pilot of BIT Process and Data Collection Instruments

A pilot of the BIT protocol began in May 2014. I identified one eighth grader who demonstrated consistent patterns of classroom disruption during the second half of the

school year. This pilot participant graduated out of Arcadia Elementary at the end of the year and was not part of the formal data collection process.

I gathered ecological data about the student using the student interview protocol, demographic and academic data available through the school office, and classroom behavior data from the Tracker. I then presented this data to the BIT who then facilitated the selection of an appropriate intervention for the student. Next, I further developed the Tracker to make sure the teachers were able to gather appropriate data and assess the effect of the intervention. The junior high teachers then implemented the intervention with the student and gathered data using the newly developed tool. After approximately two weeks the team reconvened to ascertain the effectiveness of the intervention and data collection tool. The BIT used the pre-developed meeting protocol to facilitate both meetings.

The pilot process illuminated necessary improvements and enhancements to the tracking system and data collection instruments. I made these updates during the summer months to ensure they were ready for the formal data collection process.

Phase 3: Formal Data Collection

Formal data collection began when school started in late July 2014. During one of the in-service days prior to the start of school, a certified trainer from *Make Your Day* retrained the entire staff in how to use the protocol in their classrooms and around the school campus. At this point, I introduced the Pinpoint Tracker to the seventh and eighth grade staff members and also spent the first six weeks of the year monitoring and supporting their fidelity to behavior data tracking. I made sure to deliver this training during normal staff professional development with the help of the school's

administrators. *Make Your Day*'s original creator visited the school early in August to assess the junior high's fidelity to the program, recommend structural changes to improve its implementation, and also to provide further training to the junior high teachers.

Teachers and administrators logged documentation of students' behavior in the Tracker throughout the school year. Arcadia's principal and assistant principal, with support from me, ensured that the junior high teachers followed the *Make Your Day* procedures. Students, by default, earned ten points for meeting all of the expectations of the class period. At the end of class, teachers read the roster of students in that period. Students reported the number of points they earned (out of ten) and the reason why they earned that number of points. Teachers and other students discussed disagreements about points and the final points were then logged into the Tracker. If a student received less than eight points, the Tracker immediately directed the teacher to classify the student's behavior and document anecdotal data about what happened during class. Figure 1 contains a screenshot of this entry form and the interface that appeared when a student earned seven points or less. The database saved students' points and teachers' notes about their behavior. These data were then accessible through school or class reports as well as individual student profile pages.

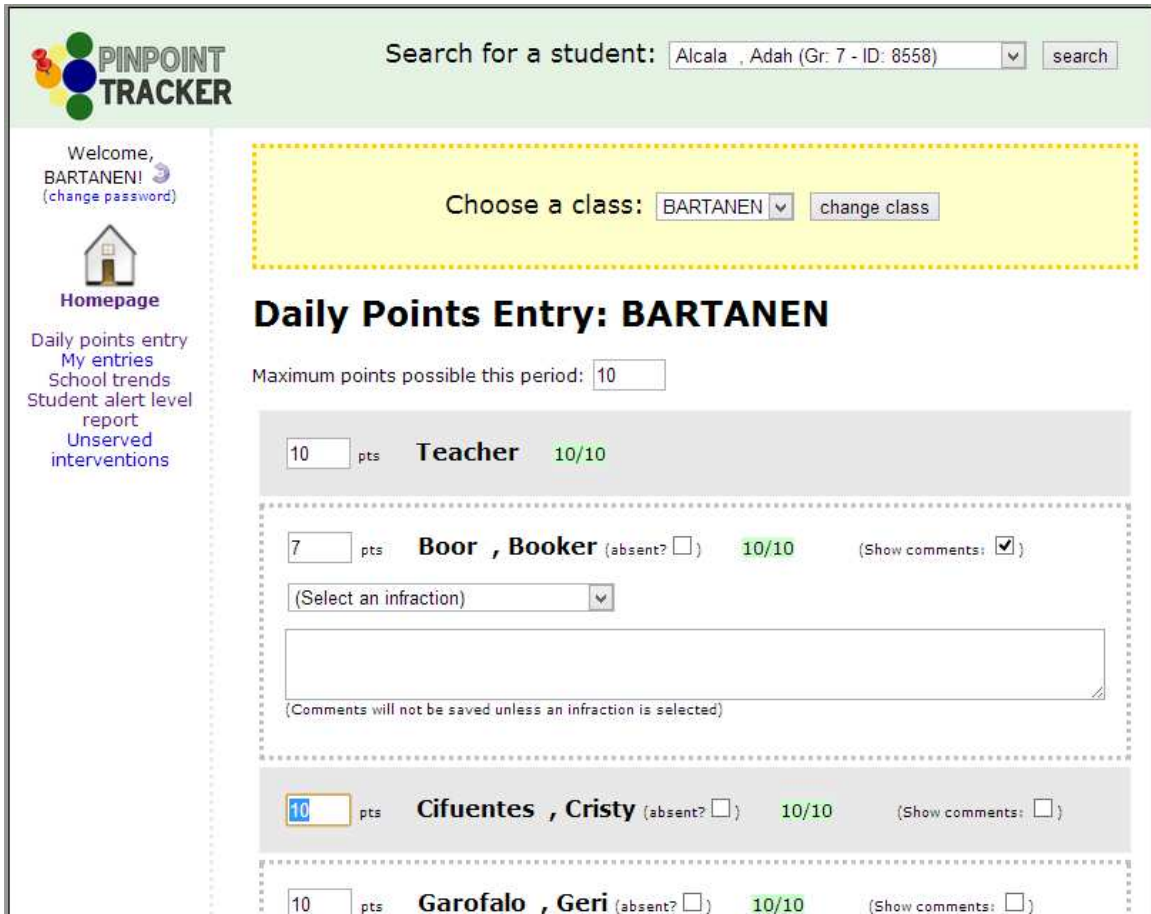


Figure 6. Teacher Entry Screen on the Pinpoint Tracker. This screenshot shows the points entry and comments interface teachers used at the end of each class period to record behavior data.

I introduced the BIT process to the staff members during regularly-scheduled team meetings at the end of August, five weeks into the school year. We identified a student, Victor (a pseudonym), at that time based on the behavior data in the Tracker and the administrators recruited him into the study. At that time, I conducted an interview with Victor and gathered his academic and demographic data to present to the team. At the next team meeting I walked through the protocol with all of the junior high teachers and we produced the first Behavior Intervention Plan.

Identification of additional possible student participants took place beginning in week eight of the school year. Staff members used the Pinpoint Tracker to determine students who were displaying a pattern of misbehavior, generally indicated by consistently not making their day. They also considered students who were choosing Step 4 and removing themselves from the classroom due to disruptive behavior. Student participants were recruited by the school's principal and assistant principal throughout the course of normal disciplinary procedures. Participation in this study was presented as an alternative to normally-prescribed consequences. A few identified students declined to take part in the formal study, but by late September the team successfully recruited two additional students: Antonio and Christopher.

Once we identified each student, I collected demographic and academic achievement data from their cumulative files. I also interviewed each student using the student interview protocol (Appendix B). Finally, I used Tracker data to assemble a behavior profile of each student. I presented these data to the Behavior Team, consisting of each student's teachers, an administrator, and a parent, in some cases. The team analyzed this data and selected an individualized set of interventions for each student along with a behavior goal. This behavior goal addressed the problematic behavior, prescribed a method for collecting data about the student's behavior, and provided a timeline by which the intervention would be assessed for its effectiveness. All of this information was documented using the BIT meeting protocol. The team met with each student to present their intervention and goal. School administrators set the expectation that each student and teacher follow the intervention and data collection process.

After the prescribed time period had passed, the BIT reconvened to assess the success of the intervention and suggest modifications to the student's individual behavior plan as necessary. This process repeated throughout the ten week implementation period for each student.

By early October, halfway through this phase of the study and one quarter of the way through the school year, the team of junior high teachers had taken full responsibility for the Behavior Intervention Team process, sometimes utilizing the protocol without my knowledge. However, the team also expressed concern that the school's approach to Tier 2 students was not adequate and they offered to design and pilot two different systems using some of the principles of the BIT process. I assisted in this process and monitored the development of these programs for the next several weeks as they were introduced to students and implemented. The system they devised, called the "Marketplace," is further explained in chapter four.

At the conclusion of phase three, in late December, I interviewed staff members using the semi-structured interview protocol (Appendix D). I also gathered students' classroom behavior data from the Pinpoint Tracker and compiled my own field notes in preparation for data analysis.

Data Analysis

This study utilized a mixed methods design which, according to Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004), allows the researcher to design a study that most effectively answers their research questions by utilizing the best features of both qualitative and quantitative research. I gathered multiple qualitative and quantitative data and used them to triangulate analyses of the research questions.

I analyzed these data at different times during the investigation. The data analysis timeline is illustrated in Table 2.

Table 2.

Data Analysis Timeline

Phase of Study	Data Analyzed
Throughout study	Student behavior data from Pinpoint Tracker
During Phases 2 and 3	Data generated by the recursive Behavior Team process: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Interview Protocol • Student participants' demographic and academic data • Behavior Intervention Plan • Field notes • Self-reflective journal
End of study	Risks and Resources Survey, staff interviews

First, I analyzed student behavior data from Pinpoint on a weekly basis throughout all phases of this investigation, in order to monitor teacher fidelity and consistency. I used this analysis to ensure teachers' correct use of the tool and worked with individuals as the need arose.

While the BIT process occurred during the second and third phases of this project, participants, including myself, engaged in ongoing and recursive data analysis. This process is illustrated in Figure 7. I collected and analyzed student behavior data from Pinpoint along with demographic and academic data from the school's student information system in order to identify trends and possible participants. I then used the Student Interview Protocol to collect ecological data about each participant and presented it to the BIT. That group analyzed all collected data and developed an individualized

behavior plan. Finally, I documented my observations and made interpretations about the process in my field notes and reflected on my changing perceptions in my journal. The process then repeated, beginning with the collection and analysis of student behavior data under the intervention put in place.

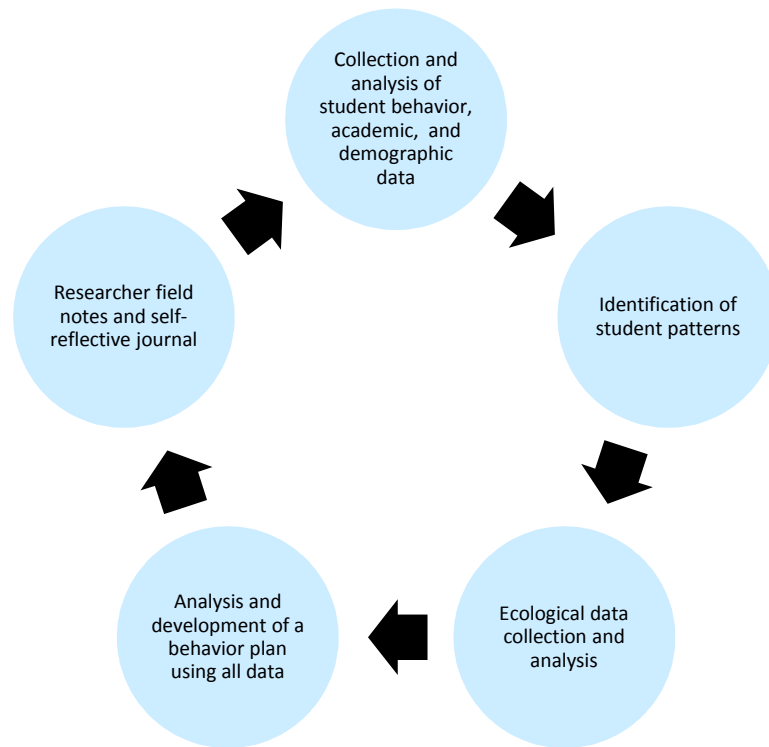


Figure 7. Recursive data collection and analysis process. This figure shows how data was collected and analyzed throughout phases two and three of this investigation.

Finally, after the data collection period had concluded, I analyzed the Risks and Resources survey results first administered to staff members prior to Phase 2 and again at the end of the study. I also collected and analyzed data from the Staff Interview Protocol.

Quantitative Data Analysis Processes

At weekly intervals throughout the study I analyzed student behavior data collected from the Pinpoint Tracker. I aggregated the number of successful days (days in

which the student earned at least 90% of the points possible) each target student achieved that week as well as the number of times each student had a behavior documented in each of the four categories. I closely monitored the number of points earned along with more specific quantitative data depending on the Behavior Team's identified intervention.

At the end of the study, I analyzed quantitative data and searched for changes in behavior patterns over time. I treated student participants as individual cases. I counted the number of documented behaviors for each predefined behavior category (Interfering with one's own learning, interfering with the learning of others, interfering with the safety of others, and interfering with the well-being of others), every week prior to and during the intervention. This allowed me to compare the incidence of certain types of behaviors over the course of the intervention. I also calculated the mean number of days each week in which the student received more than 90% of the possible points, indicating a successful day.

I tabulated quantitative data from the Risks and Resources survey (collected from the school's teachers and administrators) at the conclusion of the study. I compared the frequency of respondents' agreement with each statement at the beginning and end of Phase 3.

Qualitative Data Analysis Processes

I utilized two approaches when analyzing the qualitative data gathered during this investigation. First, I analyzed qualitative data related to students, from the Student Interview Protocol and comments about behavior inputted to the Tracker, using a case study approach. I provided a detailed description of each student individually and then analyzed the data for themes (Creswell, 2009). Since this analysis was a critical

component of the intervention being studied, it remained simple enough so as not to significantly add to the responsibilities of the classroom teachers.

I analyzed data from the remaining qualitative instruments using inductive coding and a grounded theory approach. Though I analyzed different data sets at different times throughout the study, I consistently used the following four step process, outlined by Plano Clark & Creswell (2010). First, I prepared the data, which involved transcribing staff interview data and self-reflection journal entries, compiling responses to open-ended survey questions, then organizing and inventorying Behavior Intervention Plans, field notes, and journal entries.

Second, I read through all of the collected data multiple times to make sense of the entire collection. I then divided the data into segments based on the main ideas that emerged. Each of these segments received a code and I re-read the collection, coding specific data. Next, I analyzed my codes and combined those that were redundant, ultimately narrowing the total number of codes used. To conclude this process I then grouped codes (and their corresponding data) into a few central themes.

Third, I developed a description of each theme, once they were identified, and used the data to explain my findings. I utilized data from various sources to draw general conclusions about what I had learned about each theme.

Finally, I validated my qualitative findings using a member checking procedure. I asked two of my staff participants to read my analysis and provide feedback on whether my analysis was fair and representative of what happened over the course of the study.

Validating My Analysis by Triangulating Data

I utilized a concurrent triangulation mixed methods approach in order to draw conclusions from the data. In this approach, I collected both qualitative and quantitative data concurrently and then compared them to find convergent or divergent themes related to the research questions (Creswell, 2009). For example, I compared quantitative from the Risks and Resources survey with qualitative data from the Behavior Team protocol and the researcher field notes in order to determine how staff members' perceptions of students changed due to the use of ecological data.

I further strengthened the validity of my study by detailing my personal shifts documented in my self-reflective journal. Ortlipp (2008) suggests that keeping and using these journals makes the entire research process – including the often-overlooked yet constantly changing role of the participant researcher – more transparent.

This study yielded an extensive amount of data from a wide variety of data sources. The methodical collection and analysis of these data ensured that I could meaningfully answer my research questions.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

This study took place in three phases over the course of eight months. I collected both qualitative and quantitative data throughout this time. These data are detailed in this chapter. They provide a sufficient basis for my findings and inform the study's implications and next steps, which I will explain in the final chapter.

Table 3 shows the amount of data that was collected from each instrument. It provides a brief description of the instrument, the type of data collected, and the number of data points collected. The next several sections will describe these data in more detail. Table 3.

Description of Collected Data

Instrument	Type of Data	Data Collected
Pinpoint Behavior Tracker entries (for all 7 th and 8 th grade students)	Qualitative and Quantitative	Approximately 7500 entries
Risks and Resources Survey	Qualitative and Quantitative	14 total surveys, 7 pre-surveys and 7 post-surveys
Pinpoint Behavior Tracker entries (for student participants)	Quantitative	44 pages, approximately 200 entries
Behavior Intervention Plan	Qualitative	3 plans, each with multiple updates (7 total)
Field notes	Qualitative	14 entries, 12 pages total
Researcher self-reflective journal	Qualitative	5 entries, 3 pages total
Demographic and academic data (for student participants)	Quantitative	3 sets of demographic and academic data

Student interviews	Qualitative	3 student interviews, 6 pages total
Staff interviews	Qualitative	7 staff interviews, 148 minutes total, 50 pages transcribed

Risks and Resources Survey

I sent the Risks and Resources survey electronically to all of the staff participants of my study. I sent a pre-study survey to the participants in August, at the beginning of the school year, and sent a post-study survey in December, as the data collection period was ending. Seven staff participants completed both the pre-study survey and the post-study survey.

The first section of the survey assessed participants' understanding and attitudes of the risks that students bring to school. The participants were asked to rate their level of agreement with eight statements, with a rating of 1 indicating strong disagreement and a rating of 4 indicating strong agreement. Table 4 displays the number of respondents who either agreed or strongly agreed with each statement and the difference between these totals in the pre-study survey and the post-study survey.

Table 4.

Risks and Resources Survey: Agreement within the "Risks" Construct

<u>"Risks" Statement</u>	<u>Pre</u>	<u>Post</u>	<u>Difference</u>
These students' behavior in school is affected by situations outside of school.	7	7	0
These students generally lack maturity compared to students who do not misbehave.	5	5	0
These students learn poor behavior from their families.	3	4	+1
These students learn poor behavior from society.	5	5	0

These students deliberately choose to misbehave.	4	4	0
These students believe they are capable of succeeding in school.	2	2	0
These students are capable of succeeding in school.	7	7	0
These students are treated fairly at school.	6	6	0

Respondents' agreement with these "risks" statements generally did not change over the course of this study. The pre-study results suggest that there was already a belief among the junior high teachers that students' behavior is affected by factors beyond the school walls. These beliefs align with the embedded theories within Sameroff's (2010) unified theory, because these teachers' responses suggest their agreement that biopsychosocial, developmental, and ecological factors all play a part in a child's school experience. Interestingly, the teachers unanimously agreed that these students are capable of succeeding in school but only two in each survey responded that disruptive students themselves believe they are capable. This suggests that students' struggles with behavior in school may be tied to their self-perception and identity development, and aligns with Murrell's (2007) representational theory, discussed in chapter two. Furthermore, the teachers believed that classroom disruptors were treated fairly at school, suggesting that school-related factors are secondary to out-of-school factors when it comes to influencing these students' behavior.

Within the "Risks" construct, the survey asked participants to list the risks or challenges that frequent classroom disruptors face that other students do not. Table 5 displays their responses. I consolidated similar responses from each list.

Staff members’ responses to this question were very similar on each iteration of the survey. They pointed to the effects of poverty, including turbulent home lives, a history of academic inconsistency and failure, and emotional immaturity and insecurity. The post-survey responses were often more specific and personal, suggesting that teachers had more specific knowledge of the factors affecting their students. In fact, teachers’ responses to this question on the post-survey were longer than on the pre-survey, and some responses contained references to particular students. Both sets of responses, taken together, suggest that teachers possessed a strong awareness of the risks of their students prior to the study and that this awareness became more personal over the course of the study period.

Table 5.

Risks or Challenges Faced

Pre-Survey Responses	Post-Survey Responses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Poverty - Lack of positive role models in their lives. - Lack of consistency and structure in a home life characterized by fighting, drugs, alcohol, lack of food, and poor living conditions - Being labeled as a “bad kid” and developing a ‘reputation’ at school which can lead to school staff treating them differently - Unsure of what they will need to be successful in high school and after - Inability to think about consequences (good or bad) prior to acting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Emotional issues - No one home when they get home from school, so they are being raised by other family members - Being bullied - Homeless - Financial problems - Lack of positive influence from family, friends, and society - Not a strong foundation or follow through at home - Lack of boundaries, discipline, and feedback appropriate to their needs at home - Not receiving enough food, sleep, or other necessary things at home

-
- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Falling behind and/or failing academic classes- Not confident in themselves when it comes to schoolwork- Prone to get into arguments with peers and teachers- Some have to take care of younger siblings and have no time to focus on homework or projects. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Lack of appropriate social cues from adults and peers- Students don't see the effects of what they are doing on the learning environment |
|--|---|
-

Next, the survey asked participants to consider the resources that school offers and how well they support the needs of frequent classroom disruptors. Table 6 shows the mean ratings for each of these statements. I included the final statement, “The Behavior Intervention Team process meets or would meet the needs of these students,” only on the post-study survey because that process did not become a part of the school’s program until this study was fully initiated.

These data show changes in respondents’ attitudes toward the school’s resources that align with the literature and theoretical framework that guided this study. Punitive, one-size-fits-all consequences, such as lunch detentions, after-school detentions, suspensions, and alternative school placements all received decreased support over the course of the study. Placement in an alternative school, the most severe of these consequences, saw the largest decrease; whereas support for this consequence was unanimous prior to the study, three staff members indicated disagreement with the statement at the end. Furthermore, there were four respondents who indicated that they “strongly agree” with alternative school placement in the pre-survey, while none indicated that level of agreement in the post-survey. Though this tool makes it difficult to know precisely how respondents felt about each consequence, this difference suggests a noteworthy shift in respondents’ attitudes toward them.

Table 6.

Risks and Resources Survey: Agreement within the “Resources” Construct

“Resources” Statement	Pre-Study	Post-Study	Difference
The <i>Make Your Day</i> program, as it is currently implemented, meets the needs of these students.	3	3	0
Lunch detentions meet or would meet the needs of these students.	3	2	-1
Meeting with an adult to discuss proper behavior is or would be effective for these students.	6	7	+1
Meeting with parents to discuss behavior is or would be effective for these students.	6	7	+1
After school detentions meet or would meet the needs of these students.	5	3	-2
Suspensions for misbehavior meet or would meet the needs of these students.	4	3	-1
Placement in an alternative school meets or would meet the needs of these students.	7	4	-3
After-school tutoring and clubs meet or would meet the needs of these students.	7	6	-1
After-school sports programs meet or would meet the needs of these students.	7	7	0
Our school is doing everything in its power to meet the needs of students who are frequent classroom disruptors.	5	2	-3

The Behavior Intervention Team process - 7 -
meets or would meet the needs of these
students.

Consequences that align with the philosophy of the Behavior Intervention Team process showed strong and increasing support over the course of the study. Teachers indicated agreement with the strategies of meeting with adults at the school, working with parents, and providing opportunities for after-school clubs and sports. The respondents indicated unanimous agreement that the Behavior Intervention Team meets the needs of frequent classroom disruptors.

Two final data, related to the school's ability to meet the needs of frequent classroom disruptors effectively, are important to point out. Support for *Make Your Day* was low and did not show any change over the course of the study. In addition, five respondents felt that the school was doing everything in its power to meet the needs of these students prior to the study, but only two felt that way after the study had ended. This change suggests an increased awareness of the resources that the school either does not employ or does not utilize well.

To explore this change further, the survey next asked respondents to consider what resources the school has in place that are underutilized and therefore not effectively meeting the needs of frequent classroom disruptors. Table 7 displays the responses, both prior to and after this study.

Staff members noted that after-school programs were not being utilized well enough to meet the needs of frequent classroom disruptors; this belief did not appear to change over the course of the study. However, the difference in the remaining responses

indicate a shift in the staff’s perception of the school’s use of its resources: whereas they felt that support staff, parent resources, and community service resources were underutilized prior to the study, there was no indication of those resources in the post-survey responses. Instead, these responses were more directly related to the perceived needs of the disruptive students.

Table 7.

Underutilized Resources

Pre-Survey Responses	Post-Survey Responses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - After school programs, including tutoring and student council - Psychologist or counselor - Parent resources - Community service opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - After school programs, including tutoring, after school clubs, sports - Alternate locations for students who need a break - Places to socialize with each other in an appropriate manner

Participants were also asked if there were any resources that the school does not have that should be added to the program to support frequent classroom disruptors. I recorded these responses in Table 8.

Prior to the study, staff members struggled to list responses. One staff member wrote that she still felt new to the school and didn’t have a good grasp on what resources the school was missing. However, there were a multitude of suggestions after the study, and these suggestions were very specific and personal. The wealth of responses to this question on the post-survey explains why staff members’ belief that the school was doing everything in its power to support frequent classroom disruptors diminished over the course of the study.

Table 8.

Absent Resources

Pre-Survey Responses	Post-Survey Responses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contact with parents - Having every student be a part of an after-school club, sport, or program - Morning detentions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Positivity - Parent support, including homework support and shared goal-setting - Alternative clubs for students not interested in sports - A shared attitude by all staff members that these are all our kids - Advisory period, including weekly grade checks - Longer recess and lunch period - Ability for frequent disruptors to shadow or be mentored by another student

The final question of the survey presented a vignette to the respondents, asking them to indicate how they would respond to a frequent classroom disruptor in their classroom. These responses were written in narrative form, so I used an inductive coding and grounded theory approach. Five themes emerged from the pre-study survey responses, and three emerged from the post-study survey responses. The themes are listed in Table 9 and then further described in the following subsections.

Table 9.

Vignette Themes

Pre-Survey Themes	Post-Survey Themes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Get outside help - Assemble a behavior contract - Involve parents - Place student in alternative school setting - Talk with the student 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Talk with the student - Implement a Behavior Intervention Plan - Utilize <i>Make Your Day</i> protocol

Pre-Survey Themes

I extracted the following themes from participants’ responses to the vignette on the pre-survey. I will summarize them here and further analyze them at the end of this chapter.

Get outside help. Two respondents indicated that they would reach out to the school’s Child Study Team, the school psychologist, the school counselor, or previous teachers. Child Study Team is a school process which gives teachers ideas for classroom interventions they can use to improve a student’s academic outcomes, and also collects data to determine if a child is eligible to receive special education services. The respondents indicated that the purpose of reaching out to these individuals would be to get ideas to try in their classroom.

Assemble a behavior contract. Five respondents discussed some form of a formal contract for students where they would be expected to exhibit certain behaviors. Three respondents discussed providing an incentive for students who met the stipulations of the contract. One respondent discussed specific interventions that would support the behavior contract goals.

Involve parents. One respondent mentioned working with a student's parents to improve school-to-home communication. This participant suggested sending home a daily report of the student's behavior, activities, and homework so that there would be structure for when the student is at home.

Place student in alternative school setting. Two respondents discussed the option of placing a student in an alternative school setting. Arcadia Elementary possessed a few reserved spots at a neighborhood alternative school which concentrated on improving students' behavior through a highly structured setting. The two responses indicated that continually-problematic students should be placed in this school with the hope of getting the student "back on task."

Talk with the student. Five respondents discussed talking with students about the classroom issues. The purpose of talking with the students differed between the respondents. Two respondents described talking to a student in order to determine root causes for his or her behavior. Two more respondents described the purpose of talking to the student as letting them know the desired behavior and the consequences of meeting and not meeting those expectations. The final respondent discussed how they would talk with a student in order to develop a solution that would work for both the teacher and the student.

Post-Survey Themes

I obtained these three themes from participants' responses to the vignette on the post-survey and have summarized the key ideas.

Talk with the student. One respondent mentioned they would have a conversation with the student about the consequences of their actions. This was discussed as a discrete step, and not part of an overall plan or approach.

Implement a Behavior Intervention Plan. Six respondents discussed the Behavior Intervention Team approach that was instituted during this study. Respondents discussed the inclusion of all teachers, administrators, parents, and the child in the decision-making process. They discussed getting to know the student on a more personal level so that they could recommend changes to the learning environment. Finally, they discussed the collection of data to determine if the plan was working or not.

Utilize Make Your Day protocol. One respondent, prior to discussing the Behavior Intervention Team approach, discussed how they would utilize the *Make Your Day* protocol, allowing a student to opt out of class participation or allowing them to choose to go to step and separate themselves from the rest of the class. The respondent also suggested removing the student from the classroom entirely and providing a quiet or “out of the normal environment” while supporting the student through after-school tutoring later.

Staff members’ responses to the pre-survey vignette were much more scattered than those on the post-survey. While some elements of the Behavior Intervention Team protocol were evident prior to the study, including involving parents and getting to know the student, most responses included severe consequences, including alternative school placement. Post-survey responses suggest staff members’ awareness of the protocols in place in the school, especially the Behavior Intervention Team. The responses further

suggest that staff members viewed the BIT process as a viable and effective tool for supporting frequent classroom disruptors.

Student Participants

Throughout the course of this study, the middle school team identified and recruited three students they wanted to include in the Behavior Intervention Team process. I conducted interviews with each student, using the student interview protocol, and also gathered demographic, academic, and behavior data on each student over the course of the study. The team of teachers, administrators, and parents also assembled Behavior Intervention Plans for each student. I will report data collected from these sources together to describe each participant and their experience in school during the study.

Victor

Victor was one of the most talked-about seventh graders at the beginning of the school year, and the Tracker data immediately showed that Victor would be a good candidate for the BIT protocol. During the first four weeks of school, Victor made his day only 50 percent of the time and his teachers documented poor behavior sixteen times. In addition, his parents were summoned to the school four times because Victor chose Step 4, meaning he was removed from the classroom for an extended period of time until a parent was able to arrive at the school to meet with his teacher.

Tracker documentation showed that Victor was struggling to meet the behavior expectations in all of his classes. Teachers noted that Victor refused to listen to instructions, yelling and calling out during instruction, throwing objects during class, and even fighting with other students. Figure 8 shows how many times Victor's behavior was

documented over the course of the study, as well as the breakdown of these behaviors into the four categories outlined by *Make Your Day*: Interfering with one’s own learning, the learning of others, the safety of others, or the well-being of others.

Within the first four weeks of school, it is clear that not only was Victor’s behavior documented several times, but the types of behavior he exhibited primarily interfered with the learning, safety, or well-being of other students. This trend was of particular concern to the teachers, who saw how Victor’s behavior was detrimental to the learning environment and indeed affected with the experience of the other students in Victor’s class.

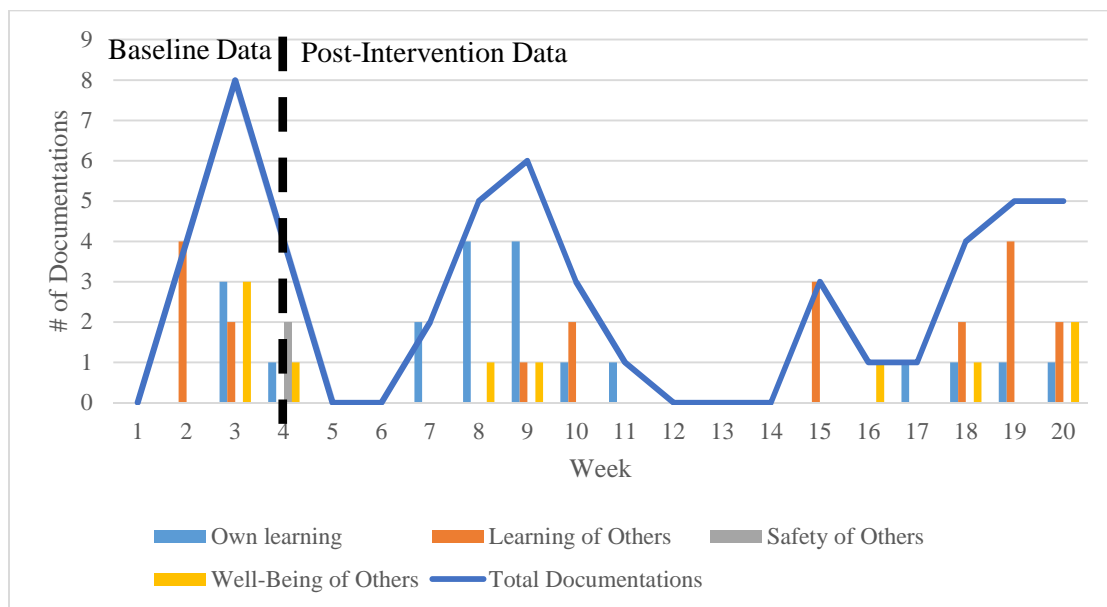


Figure 8. Total number of documentations of Victor’s behavior. The top (dark blue) line indicates the total number of documentations while the bars show the categories of those behaviors.

At the beginning of Week 5, after the junior high team had identified Victor, I gathered his demographic and academic data. I also conducted an interview with the student and combed through his Tracker entries in preparation for the creation of a plan.

Victor's records indicated that he had attended Arcadia Elementary since third grade, so he and his family were familiar with the *Make Your Day* program. Victor was an honors-level student; in the first quarter of the year he earned a 2.6 grade point average in his core classes of Language Arts honors, pre-algebra honors, and seventh-grade science honors. Outside of school, Victor was heavily involved with his club soccer team as well as his neighborhood soccer team, which his father coaches.

In his interview, Victor noted that he had soccer practice every day of the week, usually for two hours or longer. He stated that he often got in trouble in school after having late practices and not enough time to do his homework. Victor also described that he often got mad with his teachers when they addressed his behavior. He felt like sometimes he was unfairly blamed for actions in which he was a co-participant, that he was often the first to be singled out and sometimes assigned complete responsibility for whatever took place. Finally, Victor noted several times that he most often got into trouble when he was able to choose his seat or working group. He stated that his friends tended to get him to do things he wouldn't otherwise do, which explains why he often had trouble in the unstructured hallways and in his oversized music class.

Victor's Behavior Intervention Team, consisting of the entire seventh and eighth grade team, the principal and assistant principal, and myself, convened and discussed this information with the goal of putting a support plan in place. The team decided to target Victor's disruptive behaviors that were interfering with the learning of other students in the class, particularly his calling out and yelling during class as well as throwing objects. They would work toward the goal of Victor taking responsibility for these actions and ultimately reducing the incidence of these kinds of behaviors. The team decided that they

would provide Victor with short, timely personalized decision-making lessons privately during one of his afternoon classes. The teachers also committed to working with Victor's parents to provide social skills training.

The team decided to put two accommodations and two interventions in place to support Victor. The teachers committed to reprimanding Victor privately, rather than in front of his peers, and would offer reinforcement of the rules and expectations prior to removing Victor from the learning environment. The team also decided not to utilize *Make Your Day's* step system with Victor and instead institute a reflection sheet protocol by which Victor could analyze his behavior and receive feedback.

Victor's progress would be monitored over the next three weeks. Figure 8 shows that during weeks 5 through 8 the total number of documentations about his behavior decreased, but the types of observed behaviors changed. Victor's documented actions were primarily classified as interfering with his own learning, rather than with others' learning, safety, or well-being. During this time, teachers noted behavior such as not completing homework, not participating in class activities, and off-task behavior on his computer. In addition, Victor chose Step 4 only one time during this period and made his day 78 percent of the time.

The team met again in Week 9 and focused on this change in behavior. The teachers amended their plan in a fairly simple way: they contacted Victor's parents about the possibility of him attending after-school tutoring twice a week so that he could complete his assignments and also committed to providing Victor more explicit direction on when he could use his computer in class. Victor's math teacher noticed that most of the work-completion issues occurred in her class, so she worked with Victor to determine

a more suitable seating arrangement. In her staff interview, she mentioned her work with Victor specifically, noting that she allowed him to select his seating partner and location, with guidance of course, and he chose to work with a slightly higher-achieving student who ended up pushing Victor to improve.

Victor showed improvement over the next several weeks. Figure 8 shows that he received fewer and fewer documentations for poor behavior. Victor made his day 88 percent of the time over the next five weeks and had only one Step 4 incident. In Week 14 the team met again and decided to remove some of the mandated supports they had put in place for Victor, most notably his modifications to *Make Your Day*. I continued to track his behavior beyond the conclusion of this formal process and found that his misbehavior became more prevalent toward the end of the fall semester. This trend, however, matched a general trend in the junior high over that time. Most importantly, by the end of the second quarter Victor's grade point average had climbed to 3.7, he was making his day upwards of 90% of the time with no Step 4 incidents, and his teachers reported significantly improved overall behavior.

Antonio

Antonio became a clear candidate for this study early in the school year. Within the first five weeks of the study he amassed 24 documentations for his behavior, including four Step 4 incidents. In addition, Antonio made only 38 percent of his days, including an entire two weeks where he did not make his day even once.

Throughout these first five weeks, Antonio displayed a wide range of behaviors. Several teachers noted that he was talking and laughing inappropriately during class. Then, when he was redirected, his behavior would escalate to verbal harassment of other

students as well as the teachers. Typically, these outbursts would be in Spanish. Teachers further noted that Antonio would typically bounce back and forth between being allowed to participate in class and choosing *Make Your Day*'s steps, where he was separated from the class. This would become routine, indicating Antonio's understanding of the *Make Your Day* process and his willingness to test its boundaries and consume his teachers' time. There was one incident where he threw a pencil at a student, hitting him in the face, and then kicking him as he was being removed from the classroom. Figure 9 shows the large amount of incidents that were documented early in the school year and led to Antonio's identification as a candidate for this study.

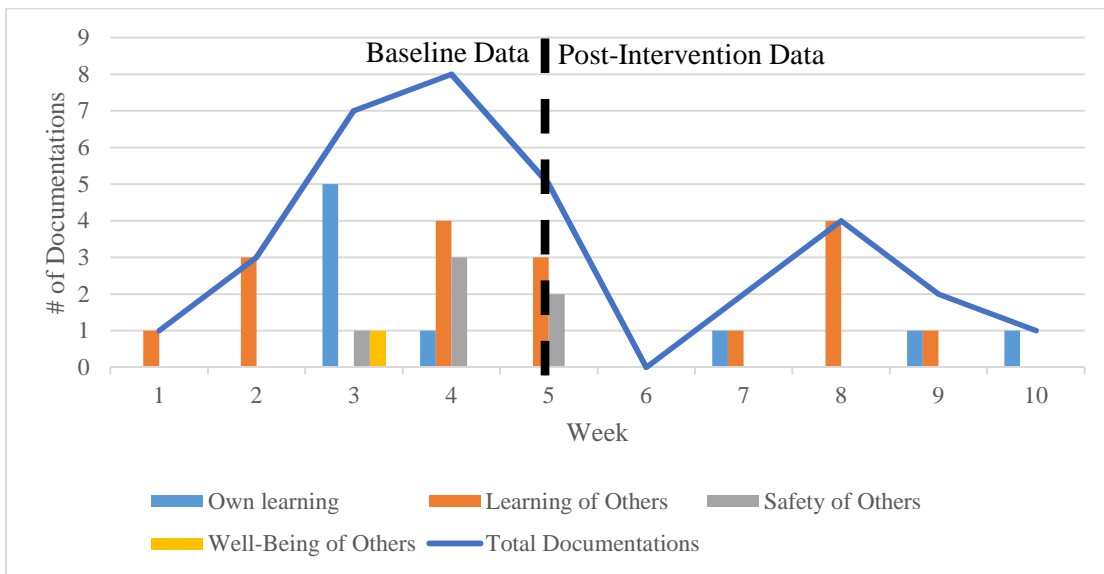


Figure 9. Total number of documentations of Antonio's behavior. The top (dark blue) line indicates the total number of documentations while the bars show the categories of those behaviors.

Antonio's mother was at Arcadia frequently due to these incidents. She met with teachers and administrators and consistently expressed frustration that she did not know what to do. She stated that she was seeing many similar issues at home and was seeking

some outside help but also wanted to work with the school as well. Antonio's mother joined the Behavior Intervention Team twice as they met to discuss Antonio's behavior and create a support plan for him.

I met with Antonio at the end of Week 5. During his interview I learned that he was not very socially connected. After school, he typically went home and played video games on his computer or X-Box. He was trying out for the school soccer team, but figured that his poor behavior and grades – he was earning a 1.7 grade point average – would prevent him from actually being able to participate. Antonio, like Victor, was an honors-level student who had always scored well on standardized testing and had shown he was capable of high academic achievement. He stated that he liked to disrupt class because he liked being part of the group of boys known for doing so. He also expressed that he didn't really ever make his day, and so the system was of little import to him.

Antonio's teachers, as well as his mother and the assistant principal, met and completed a Behavior Intervention Plan. Antonio joined the process for part of this meeting. The team decided to target Antonio's propensity to interfere with others' learning, including throwing things, shouting out, and cursing inappropriately. Knowing Antonio's desire to join the soccer team (which happened to be coached by the school psychologist), the team suggested that Antonio participate in a social skills training group consisting of boys soccer players who were struggling with their behavior as well. The teachers committed to providing clear, concise directions as well as reminders and prompts about proper behavior in the classroom. In addition, the team decided to implement a behavior contract within *Make Your Day*, which meant that Antonio's points would be based only on two criteria: how often he disrupted class or demonstrated

disrespect toward others. In addition, in order to help Antonio feel successful, they temporarily reduced the percentage of points that Antonio was required to attain order to make his day. Typically, students must earn 90 percent of the day's possible points; Antonio would only need to earn 75 percent. The team agreed that these would be effective first steps but that they would need to monitor Antonio's progress in a short time frame, so they scheduled a meeting two weeks later to assess his behavior.

Figure 9 shows the immediate reduction in behavior documentations during that two week span, weeks six and seven. Not only did his behavior documentations decrease, but Antonio began to make his day more consistently. In these two weeks, Antonio made 50 percent of his days, up from zero the entire two weeks prior. The team met again at the beginning of week eight and, seeing this progress, decided to continue the plan that was in place but increased Antonio's *Make Your Day* threshold to 85 percent.

Over the next three weeks, Antonio continued to make his day with more regularity and ended week 10 having made his day 81 percent of the time. His classroom documentations also remained low. However, teachers and administrators began noticing that Antonio would have individual days where his behavior was extremely disruptive, earning him a Step 4. In these three weeks, he earned Step 4 twice; both for excessive class disruptions. Staff members also noticed that Antonio's out-of-class behavior was becoming more problematic. He frequently found trouble on the playground or in the hallway bathrooms.

At the end of Week 10, one of these incidents in the hallway earned Antonio an immediate office referral and subsequent placement in an alternative school. He remained at that school for the duration of this study.

Christopher

In the eighth week of the study, Arcadia’s assistant principal identified Christopher as a candidate for the BIT protocol. In consultation with Christopher’s mother, the assistant principal found that his classroom behavior was primarily interfering with his own learning and his academic outcomes. Though Christopher’s behavior documentations were not as numerous as other students, he did experience a two week period where he had five Step 4 incidents and made only fifty percent of his days. Figure 10 shows the number of Christopher’s behavior documentations over time.

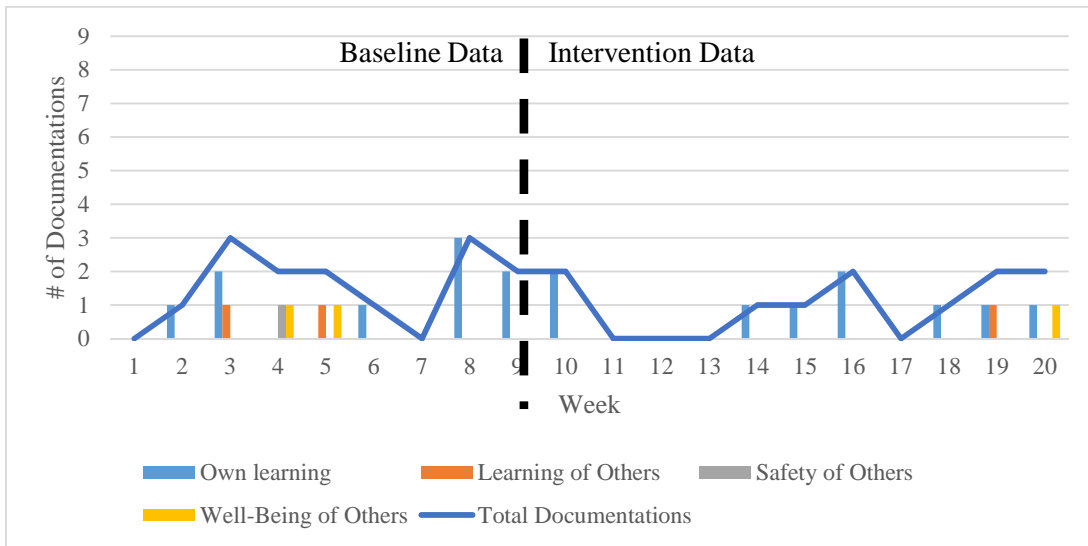


Figure 10. Total number of documentations of Christopher’s behavior. The top (dark blue) line indicates the total number of documentations while the bars show the categories of those behaviors.

Many of Christopher’s documentations followed a consistent theme. Christopher would sometimes refuse to do class assignments or participate in class activities, and would lie when confronted about his reasons for doing so. When placed into step, and removed from the class activity, Christopher would make noises to attract his teachers’ attention.

I met with Christopher at the end of week 8. I learned that Christopher had recently arrived at Arcadia, toward the end of the previous year. He had one close friend, an eighth grader, who he didn't see very often at school. Christopher told me about his struggles in class, especially that he did not like working with other students and would often opt out of group activities or argue with his group members out of frustration. He felt that having to work with others was the cause of his acting out, and also the reason why he was not performing well in his classes. He loved playing on his computer, and admitted that he would often play computer games while he was supposed to be completing an assignment. Christopher also described a system in place at his old school, where he could earn privileges by demonstrating good behavior, and that had helped him get through the year.

Christopher's teachers, the school counselor, the assistant principal, and his speech therapist met to create a Behavior Intervention Plan. The key behavior that the team chose to target was Christopher's disengagement from group work, with the hope of teaching him to collaborate appropriately, listen to others, and accept others' ideas. The team agreed that Christopher needed social skills training, which he would receive in his speech class and also during classes, particularly when group work was planned, and that the teachers could provide specific cues to Christopher whenever he was working with others. The team decided to allow Christopher to select one group member that he would be able to work with, while the other members were assigned by the teacher. When Christopher got upset with his group, he was allowed to quickly go to a "cool off" station with the expectation that he would shortly return to his group. They agreed to track Christopher's disengagement from group activities using the Tracker, and that he could

earn a short computer break on Fridays if he disengaged fewer than four times during the week.

In the three weeks immediately following the implementation of this plan (Weeks 11 through 13 in Figure 10), Christopher did not receive any documentations of interfering behavior. He would, in fact, find me in the hallways and provide an update on his day and whether he was on track to earn his Friday reward. There were scattered documentations in the final weeks of the study, as shown in Figure 10, but the team felt that Christopher’s interventions were showing success. Indeed, by the end of the study his grade point average had risen from 1.3 to 2.3.

Staff Interviews

I conducted interviews with seven staff members at the end of the study, following the prescribed semi-structured interview protocol but allowing the participants’ responses to shape my questioning and our discussion. My inductive coding process yielded seven categories. These categories are briefly outlined in Table 10 and then summarized and explained in further detail in the following sections.

Table 10.

Staff Interviews: Coding System

Category	Explanation	Examples
Characteristics of Disruptors	What qualifies a student as a frequent classroom disruptor	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• “The same disruption from the same student more than two times a class.”• “Is constantly seeking attention in a positive or negative way.”

Factors Affecting Behavior	Specific issues, inside or outside of school, that influence a student's classroom behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “They’re not getting enough support at home and they feel like they need more attention, even if it’s bad, here.” • “It could be educational factors, content that they’re struggling with.”
<i>Make Your Day</i>	Discussion of <i>Make Your Day</i> and its implementation and implications for frequent classroom disruptors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “<i>Make Your Day</i> does nothing, doesn’t motivate them, and so they’ll never go to the office because they’re not fighting or doing graffiti... but they’re consistently interfering with learning.”
Behavior Intervention Team Process	Features or principles of the BIT process enacted in this study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The BIT “helped identify those specific behaviors rather than looking at the entire kid. So it focused your work.” • “It’s all about team collaboration, sitting down at a table together with people... who know how to support the child and the teacher.”
Positivity	Discussion of participants’ beliefs of how “positive” or “negative” the school’s approaches to discipline are	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “If kids picked up on the positivity of the faculty and staff...it would be easier to actually teach life skills when they’re not getting a negative vibe from everybody.”
Zero Tolerance	Beliefs, opinions, and ideas about related to zero-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “If your mindset is I’m just here to teach, then this is

tolerance discipline policies
and procedures

probably not the place for
you.”

- “You can’t actually kick a kid out and tell them to go to the office but I think that would be better... it would give the teachers a little slack.”
-

Characteristics of Disruptors

I asked staff members to describe the characteristics of frequent classroom disruptors and found that they gave two types of answers. There were many comments about the specific types of behaviors they deemed disruptive as well as a discussion of frequency of those disruptions. There was also some discussion of classroom factors that lead to disruption.

Staff members described frequent classroom disruptors as those who exhibited attention-seeking behaviors, such as calling out, talking out of turn, getting out of seats inappropriately, and throwing things. Disruptors are often seen and heard, but teachers noted that there are some students who disrupt the learning process by refusing to participate or quietly disengaging from class activities.

Many respondents discussed the frequency of the disruptive behaviors and actually defined the term frequent. One respondent remarked, “The same disruption from the same student more than two times in a class after being redirected. Once, mistake. Two, oops. After that, there’s no way that it’s an accident.” Another respondent suggested that these students were those that were demonstrating similar behaviors in a

variety of places, including multiple classrooms, the playground, and special area classes, such as PE and music.

Respondents also discussed how these students tend to be disruptive at less structured times during a class period. In the science lab, these frequent disruptors are the students who are off-task or not meeting expectations during independent or group lab activities. In other classrooms, these disruptive behaviors appear when students are bored or not engaged in content.

Factors Affecting Behavior

Respondents discussed many reasons why frequent classroom disruptors demonstrate such behavior. They were often careful to distinguish between factors within their classroom (or the junior high in general) as well as those beyond their control. The staff members often cited the effects of poverty but also discussed cultural and family issues that they believed to be at the root of these students' behaviors. Clearly, as one teacher said, "The influence is maybe a little bit different from case to case."

Student identity was a clear factor. Students "want the acceptance of [their] peers" or, since they sometimes struggle with their classwork, to "shine as far as being a class clown or doing something other than academics." These students often feel pressure to fit in with their peers, stand out, and be recognized for something.

Several respondents discussed issues of collective identity among the entire junior high. They pointed to how poorly those students are treated by adults at the school. One teacher commented, "If they've been behaving badly for their whole entire life, they're expected to behave badly...and then they start to believe it." Another teacher recited a student mindset that she had been told:

“They don’t care what teachers think because they’re like well, every teacher freaking hates me anyways. I don’t give a crap what I do, I’m going to run and jump around campus and act like a lunatic because whatever, they don’t care about me.”

Another teacher described how she hates going into the school cafeteria because of the lack of respect being shown to the students.

Staff members often cited home issues that students face. It is clear that some students disrupt because they are hungry or didn’t get enough sleep. Others did not have their homework completed from the previous day. Some students have to handle drugs, alcohol, and violence in their homes.

There was also evidence of cultural factors that may affect students’ behavior. One respondent noted that the frequent classroom disruptors in her class, the students who call out or always feel like they need to say things, “are usually more of the leaders at home... the ones that get to speak at home so they’re used to saying what to do and they want to answer right away.” Some of these students are the “main speaker for their non-English speaking families, so they’re used to answering first...and their parents allow them to. That’s their job. Speak for me, translate for me. And there isn’t a patience.” Another teacher cited these students’ role models – parents, siblings, and others – who demonstrate disruptive behavior in their interactions with other adults. Respondents suggested that the school’s expectations for students do not always line up with the cultural values of their families and communities.

Make Your Day

Make Your Day (MYD), unsurprisingly, was a frequently discussed topic. Every staff member I interviewed discussed the program, mentioning its successes and shortcomings, and analyzing its role in the experience of frequent classroom disruptors as well as all of the junior high students. The consensus was that MYD provides helpful structure for most students but falls short in supporting frequent classroom disruptors.

Consistency is critical for middle school students. One staff member summarized *Make Your Day*'s role well: "The consistency, the kids know, they get it. They understand what it is. It makes it so that when kids go from class to class no teacher does something completely different. So they know what's expected." Another teacher pointed to the consistent consequences associated with MYD, particularly the fact that students know they will need to take accountability for their actions at the end of each class period. Most staff members agreed with the sentiment that "at least [*Make Your Day*] gives everyone a language to speak, which for kids like ours that struggle with structure and consistency, if they know every adult that they come in contact with has the same expectations, that's a real positive." *Make Your Day* provides a consistent foundation, including language and protocols, which is essential to any effective school-wide behavior approach.

Staff members agreed that *Make Your Day*, on its own, does not effectively support frequent classroom disruptors. One teacher addressed it directly: "I don't think [*Make Your Day*] is doing a service to those kids that need it the most." Teachers cited their use of "steps" most often, arguing that facilitating step with students provided the negative attention that these students desired. Several recalled students who had learned

to “game” the system, choosing to go to step (and therefore draw the teacher’s attention) many times during a class period. One teacher remarked on her record-keeping on the day that I interviewed her: “Today I think I wrote down step 1-2-3-3-2-1-2-3 like I was, it looked like a beta code,” referring to the complicated computer code she was teaching to her enrichment class. She continued, “There’s simply too many opportunities for them, and they know the limits, because these students go from one to three and then they stop.”

Staff members also cited these students’ lack of interest in *Make Your Day* or its associated consequences. One teacher noted that students know the school rule –no one has the right to interfere with the learning, safety, or well-being of others – but that by the time they’re in middle school it has just become “white noise.” Another teacher observed that students feel it is a “little-kid thing” and are upset that their teachers are treating them as such. Staff members further pointed out that students do not take the parent notification forms that they receive after not making their day very seriously, as very few return them with their parents’ signature.

Admittedly, staff members also cite their own lack of enthusiasm for *Make Your Day* as detrimental to its success. There were many explanations of personal tweaks teachers had made to MYD in their classroom, ranging from assigning points to students who were disruptive to not using steps whatsoever, and instead resorting to management techniques such as cueing and teacher proximity. Though these kinds of modifications do not fall in line with the *Make Your Day* philosophy, staff members pointed to their immediate effect in extinguishing behavior in the short-term.

Behavior Intervention Team

As participants explored aspects of the school's program that support frequent classroom disruptors, they discussed the Behavior Intervention Team protocol as well as its key principles and values. Some referred to the process (and the student participants) directly, while others discussed features they had "unofficially" adopted as part of their practice. Finally, staff members discussed one critical shortcoming in its implementation.

Staff members' attitudes toward the BIT process were generally very positive. One respondent commented that this "is really where the money's at, if you want long-term change" and expressed a desire for the school district to support this structure in order to support students' behavioral needs. Staff members spoke to the power of having a team approach to supporting students, as they didn't feel like they were alone in their efforts.

Staff members discussed the importance of having data, because it allows them to dig deeper into a disruptive student's misbehavior and find specific causes and actions. One teacher described the purpose of this well, stating that "targeting those specific behaviors rather than blanketing it with a one-size fits all cure... gives us things we can focus on as far as getting [students] in the right direction." Teachers are able to determine if a behavior is part of a pattern or if it is an isolated incident, and are able to activate the proper resources based on the situation. Another teacher noted that utilizing the tracker allowed the team to share ideas about what has worked and what has not and collectively come up with a consistent plan to which they can all agree and implement. Another staff member discussed the importance of collecting good data in order to find patterns: "So really being strategic about keeping notes on when are the flare ups happening? Is it

morning, is it afternoon? In children who are split between parents, maybe when they come back from dad's house is when we see some of the episodes flare up." These comments clearly speak to the ability of collected data to inform teachers' next steps when handling a classroom disruptor.

Many respondents discussed the importance of building relationships with students and getting to know the factors that affect their behavior. Several teachers noted that they have had discussions with students about what was going on that caused certain behaviors, rather than simply removing them from an activity or from the classroom. They discussed how important it is to understand, at least at a basic level, what is going on in a student's life before issuing a blanket consequence. One teacher summed up the importance of relationships well:

I would sit down with my [disruptors], I'd talk to them, we would have talks before class would start so I could gauge how their behavior is just entering the room... I'm finding out who are those students who are coming in with those extra baggages and what do I need to do to adapt to help them be successful in the classroom. So it's all about getting to know those students so you can help them as much as possible.

Teachers clearly value their relationships with students and believe the information they learn about their students can and should inform their actions in the classroom.

A few staff members discussed some of the shortcomings of the BIT protocol. The most common criticism was the time involved in completing the process to the best extent possible. One teacher described the data analysis, "It's not something at the end of the day where you go 'Hmm, I'm going to go look on the tracker today,'" while citing the

rich data that could be found there. Another lamented the difficulty of arranging schedules with all of the student's teachers, an administrator, and a parent. Though these time factors did not detract from staff members' perception of the effectiveness of this approach, their discussion turned toward ways the process could be better facilitated using technology and other collaboration techniques.

Positivity

Many participants discussed the school's approach to frequent classroom disruptors as either "positive" or "negative." Several staff members leveled criticism against *Make Your Day* as a primarily "negative" approach while praising some of the "positive" systems they helped put in place, and some then endorsed zero-tolerance practices that I will discuss in the next section. The discussion of "positive" versus "negative" sheds light on staff members' underlying beliefs about student discipline and their level of support for the school's policies and procedures.

Some teachers expressed the view that "with *Make Your Day*... all we feel like we're doing is disciplining." They discussed how the tone of MYD seemed to be pervasively negative, and according to one teacher, it "takes away from teaching, like you gotta sit there and during points... you have to point out each and every single thing they did wrong. Like I have a concern with this and this and this."

Many expressed a desire to build systems based on positivity, that direct most of the teachers' attention toward students who are meeting expectations and, according to the observation of one staff member, "are tolerating the [disruption] along with me." Some respondents pointed out that positive systems, like the Marketplace program they put into place in the middle of the study, can help build community and "have the

teachers and students come together, live together, and build that relationship that they need.”

Zero Tolerance

In some cases, staff members seemed to rally around the idea of positive discipline systems and, in the next moment, asked for administrators to further support them in zero-tolerance policies for disruptive classroom behavior. There was some mention of utilizing detentions, suspensions, and alternative placement for frequent classroom disruptors.

Two staff members spoke highly of their use of after-school detentions to curb student misbehavior. They both cited tardiness, in particular, which was a clear issue in the junior high at the beginning of the school year. The team decided to institute after-school detentions not only for tardiness but other behaviors as well. One teacher commented, “I think having [detention] in place really has changed the dynamic that the teacher has in the classroom, and it works. I like it.” Another teacher pointed out that by issuing detentions to frequent classroom disruptors, they were forced to stay after school and complete assignments that their disruptive behavior had prevented them from finishing.

Two other teachers discussed their desire to be able to take a break from disruptive students by having them removed from class and sent to another location. They felt that if a student was excessively disruptive that they should be “sitting in a different classroom and doing work. Just getting out of this classroom and into a classroom where they don’t have friends. Just like, you can’t socialize anymore.” However, another staff member addressed this mindset directly, noting that “I don’t believe you can coexist in

this environment if your belief is it's someone else's problem to handle my discipline problems." Most of the other participants tended to agree with this sentiment, noting that classroom discipline should primarily remain in within the purview of classroom teachers, and that administrators should play a supportive role, only stepping in when all else fails.

Field Notes

I analyzed my field notes at the end of the study, and this inductive coding process yielded four categories. These categories are briefly outlined in Table 11 and then summarized and explained in further detail in the following sections.

Table 11.

Field Notes: Coding System

Category	Explanation	Examples
<i>Make Your Day</i> Implementation, Fidelity, and Consistency	Notes about MYD training, experiences with getting the protocols going, and how teachers' use changed throughout the course of the study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The goal for implementation over the next couple weeks is to establish consistent routines and ensure that students are taking the program seriously.” • “Two teachers are issuing points for their entire class period rather than letting students reflect.”
Attitudes	Staff members' beliefs and values surrounding discipline, including their beliefs about <i>Make Your Day</i> as well as other approaches they tried	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Teachers complained that <i>Make Your Day</i> wasn't worth the amount of time it consumed.”

Use of Tracker and Data	Evidence that staff members were using data to drive decision-making.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Staff members agreed that consistency is critical for any system’s success.” • “Teachers met and talked about how often [student] made their day.” • “[A teacher] expressed surprise at the amount of information available through the Tracker.”
Ownership of the Discipline Systems	Staff members’ belief that discipline is their responsibility, and their efforts to seek solutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Teachers noted that there were too many students qualifying for tier 3.” • “[One teacher] described a system, based on PBIS, she had used in her previous school.”

Make Your Day Implementation, Fidelity, and Consistency

I spent a significant amount of time, particularly at the beginning of phase three of this study, observing the staff’s experience with *Make Your Day*. I observed that staff members’ perception of the program started off very positive at the beginning of the year, particularly as they were trained, and started to wane throughout the course of the first semester. I also kept track of how teachers tweaked the discipline program to meet their own individual styles.

The beginning of the 2014 school year was significant because of the amount of attention paid to properly training teachers in the *Make Your Day* program and ensuring it was being facilitated well in the classrooms. At the time, I noted the prevailing theme of

Make Your Day at the school: “to build self-reflection and self-responsibility and students, and we should celebrate the process rather than just the end result.” Staff members at Arcadia heard this message again and again, from the initial full-day training before school began, to staff meetings as the year got underway, to a visit and subsequent middle-school specific training by the program’s creator. I noted that throughout the first three weeks of school that I went in and modeled *Make Your Day*’s points procedure with the intent of ensuring that teachers and students “are taking the program seriously and reflecting in a positive way.”

As the school year continued to develop and my own responsibilities began to shift to instructional, rather than behavioral, support, I began to hear whispers and see some evidence that teachers were modifying *Make Your Day* to fit their own teaching styles. I noted some evidence that teachers were growing frustrated with the process and were not seeing results, particularly with their most frequent disruptors. I observed teachers rushing through the end-of-class points process, separating students from class activities for an extended period of time, and issuing step four referrals quickly in order to remove a student from the classroom.

I worked with my principal and assistant principal to support teachers in their implementation of the program. In these field notes, I wrote about how the key issues were mostly occurring in the classrooms of our brand new teachers. I also discussed how setting clear expectations with all teachers helped reinforce the idea that consistently following MYD protocols would eventually lead to prolonged success. Setting these expectations and reinforcing them throughout the remainder of the study ensured that the school’s first tier system was running as effectively as possible.

Attitudes

I first began to note attitudes about discipline a few weeks into the school year, when I first began hearing grumblings about *Make Your Day* from the junior high teachers. I noted, early on, that the school's attitude toward MYD was different than the previous year: enough staff members had left and been replaced and the administrators' decision to retrain the entire staff seemed to wipe away many of the misconceptions about *Make Your Day*. This was particularly true in the junior high, which consisted of an almost entirely new set of teachers. I began to sense a growing frustration with *Make Your Day* but also a desire to build and implement new systems to fit different needs.

Early on, I noted fairly strong enthusiasm for punitive consequences for student behavior: detentions, office referrals, and suspensions. As time went on, the enthusiasm for detentions lingered but teachers' attitudes toward referrals and suspensions began to change. As we implemented the BIT program with some of the most frequent classroom disruptors, there was strong evidence of shared commitment, belief in and valuing of these students, and a desire to teach replacement behaviors rather than simply removing a child from the learning environment. Late in the study, I noted that "teachers took responsibility for teaching students the desired behaviors, rather than relying on administrators to handle it." Administrators took on a support role, stepping in to help teachers with the most difficult students, without usurping the teachers' authority in their own classrooms.

Teachers' attitudes about student behavior and their conversations with other teachers and parents changed over the course of the study as well. Toward the beginning of the study, I noted that teachers' lunch or after-school conversations about students

often descended into deficit-thinking. Parent meetings were sometimes contentious, because teachers would often rely on anecdotal data when discussing students' behavior and lacked clear, consistent documentation. As the Tracker became a more integral part of the school's processes, teachers and administrators brought its data to these meetings, and conversations became data-centered and oriented toward finding solutions for long-term student behavior issues, rather than short-term "band aids" for a recent transgression.

Use of the Tracker and Data

The introduction of the Behavior Intervention Team process was the first opportunity for me to model the rigorous data analysis and identification of trends that would be required to put effective individualized plans in place. I noted that after going through the initial process for Victor, staff members were "shocked at the amount of data, and the information they could learn from that data, within the Tracker." There was also some discussion about the types of things that teachers should include in their tracker documentation, including a renewed commitment to take more time to complete Tracker entries and specifically label students' behavior.

As the junior high team designed supplemental programs and procedures toward the second half of the semester, they discussed various ways to use the Tracker. They built systems using quantitative data, including tracking the percentage of days made per class and providing class-wide incentives. They also utilized qualitative data, finding patterns and meeting with parents and other school officials to discuss specific behaviors they were seeing. By the end of the study, staff members were beginning to consider how the Tracker could assist in this qualitative data analysis.

Ownership of the Discipline Systems

I observed that the junior high team began to take ownership of the discipline processes as time went on. After the early introduction to *Make Your Day* and the initial frustration and grumbling, most staff members did begin to take time in their classes to follow the protocol and made small tweaks so that they could feel that they were meeting the requirements of the program but also staying true to their own style.

After introducing the Behavior Intervention Team process, staff members immediately began to take ownership of that idea. Almost immediately, they began to look at Tracker data to identify possible participants. Some scheduled meetings, even unbeknownst to me, to create plans for frequent disruptors. Almost immediately after I introduced the protocol and the team went through the first round of interventions, the program took on a life of its own and I did not have to actively push to make sure it was happening.

About halfway through the fall semester, staff members realized that their work with the BIT was important but that there were too many students qualifying for such a plan. They requested a meeting to discuss ways to modify the school's Tier 2 approach, which previously had simply been issuing detentions, to further support students before they became eligible for Tier 3. We worked together to create new systems based on the principles of PBIS, which they termed the "Marketplace" and the "class tier system." One teacher commented that she was proud of the fact that "this team works together to solve problems and help themselves."

The junior high team conceived the "Marketplace" as a virtual store where students could purchase rewards with virtual currency that they obtained by making their

day. Teachers noticed that frequently disruptive students were very aware of their *Make Your Day* point totals throughout the day, and once these students realized they could not possibly make their day, they lost investment in the system and their behavior became even more disruptive. The team decided that students could earn virtual currency, dubbed “Behavior Bucks,” even if they did not make their day. The Behavior Bucks awarded to each student would be prorated based on how many points he or she earned compared to the amount of points possible that day. A student who did not make their day, for example, but earned 75 percent of the points possible for that day, still earned approximately 75 percent of the Behavior Bucks awarded.

Students could view and spend this virtual currency by accessing the Tracker from their computers. I assisted the team by designing the technical aspects of the store, but the team decided which “items” to sell and managed the upkeep. Rewards included basic school supplies, tickets to special school events and assemblies, and coupons for free movie tickets or free-dress days.

The team also decided to enact a system whereby each homeroom class could earn privileges based on their collective success with *Make Your Day*. Homeroom classes that made their day over 90 percent of the time (on average) in a given week earned privileges such as flexible seating, more freedom during transitions between classes, and the ability to listen to their personal music at certain points in classroom lessons. Those classes that made their day between 80 and 90 percent of the time received the transitions privilege, and classes who made their day less than 80 percent did not receive any of these extra privileges. The stated goal of the program was to increase students’ regulation of each other.

These new programs, facilitated by the teachers, demonstrate the ownership that the junior high team took regarding classroom discipline. There was less demand on the school’s administrators and more positive consequences. Most importantly to the teachers, these systems allowed them to pay more positive attention to students who were meeting class expectations and encourage frequent disruptors to meet those expectations as well.

Researcher’s Self-Reflective Journal

Finally, I analyzed my self-reflective journal, and this process yielded three categories. These categories are briefly outlined in Table 12 and then summarized and explained in further detail in the following sections.

Table 12.

Self-Reflective Journal: Coding System

Category	Explanation	Examples
My Role	Observations of conflict between my roles as a researcher and practitioner.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I had to step away and let the teachers take the lead.” • “I wanted to put forth my own ideas while not interfering with the method.”
Beliefs about <i>Make Your Day</i>	My shifting beliefs and attitudes regarding the school’s primary approach to handling classroom discipline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “As a teacher, I did not agree with many aspects of <i>Make Your Day</i>.” • “I am beginning to see the value in having this consistent program in our school.”

Values Regarding School Leadership	My perceptions of school leadership and change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I have had to become a critical thinker.” • “It is important for me to see things from both a classroom and more administrative perspective.”
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My Role

I found that throughout my work I was balancing three roles: Arcadia’s junior high instructional coach, junior high team member (and thus a participant), and researcher. The friction between these roles influenced my interaction with Arcadia’s staff members and my interpretation of what was taking place during this study.

I began my work on this study as a classroom teacher and team leader for the school’s junior high. I was able to help shape policy but was also “living” the effects of those policies. In other words, I had a ground-level view of the behavior problems facing the junior high. I also helped make decisions out of a sense of self-interest – I could choose to commit to ideas that I knew I could accomplish, or at least get by with, in my own classroom. My role changed at the beginning of phase three of this study, and I was no longer facing these issues in the classroom every day. I had a more birds-eye view of what was happening in the middle school, which at times was advantageous but sometimes conflicted with my beliefs and ideas as a classroom teacher.

In team meetings about behavior, I often felt pulled to take over conversations and push my own agenda, because that’s how I had operated as a classroom teacher. However, I also wanted to keep my researcher hat on as well, staying as true to my

method as I could and observing the results. In the end I found a balance: I endeavored to play the supportive role, assisting staff members in implementing policy that was necessary for the school to function but also nurturing ideas and systems the staff created throughout the study.

Beliefs about *Make Your Day*

I found that my own perceptions about *Make Your Day* shifted throughout this study. Early on in my work, I reflected on my experience with *Make Your Day* as a classroom teacher, noting my frustrations with some of its procedures and my belief that it is not a viable school-wide management system. As my formal job responsibilities changed and I began my work, my awareness of systems and factors beyond my single classroom affected my perception of *Make Your Day*.

As a classroom teacher, my perceptions of *Make Your Day* were largely reflective of my students' attitudes toward the system. Throughout phases one and two of this study, when I was in my classroom role, I understood the reasons why the systems and protocols were in place but chose to implement them only to the extent I felt necessary to comply with the spirit of the program. I built the Tracker in a manner that complied with *Make Your Day*, but in my classroom I operated under my own interpretation of its philosophies. As a result, I regarded *Make Your Day* as more of a necessary nuisance rather than a tool, as it is intended.

My beliefs changed after participating in the formal training at the beginning of phase three of this study. Armed with a more administrative perspective and the background knowledge from *Make Your Day*'s creators, I spoke about the program differently and carried it in higher regard. I began to see how many of the protocols that I

felt as a teacher were inefficient and unnecessary do, in fact, align with prevailing theory about student behavior in schools.

By the end of the study, I found myself in a more nuanced position regarding *Make Your Day*. Many aspects of the program, for most students, are valuable and the intentions and philosophy behind it are good. My work with middle school teachers in implementing changes to Arcadia's Tier 2 and Tier 3 systems, however, led me to question *Make Your Day*'s viability for frequent classroom disruptors and forced me to consider more productive supplemental strategies for those difficult students.

Values Regarding School Leadership

My perceptions of school discipline systems changed as a result of this research, and was certainly influenced by my shifting roles and perceptions of *Make Your Day*. I began to see the necessity of coordinating, critiquing, and adjusting ideas and systems in the interest of creating a cohesive discipline plan that met the needs of the wide range of people and demands that govern a school. In my final entry, I remarked that "schools are much more complex than I had even considered."

With that in mind, I found that effective leadership in the school setting requires constant negotiation of those and factors that are often beyond the school's control. Implementing a program such as the Behavior Intervention Team that meets the needs of frequent classroom disruptors, I wrote, "demands keen awareness of one's context and the ability to carefully consider the multitude of factors in play." My reflections throughout the study suggest that this study was not only a quest to improve the well-being of an underserved population but also an opportunity to improve my quality as a school leader.

In chapter one I outlined the three essential research questions I would explore during this action research study. In the next three sections, I will revisit those questions and discuss what my collected data suggests about each one.

Research Question 1: How did the middle school team use data to develop a positive support system for students?

Data clearly influenced many of the decisions about how to respond to student behavior throughout this study. Consistent and meaningful data collection underpinned much of the work that took place throughout the first half of the school year. A robust database replaced spreadsheets as the data collection method for teachers early in Phase 1 of the project, and this system continued to be embedded into teachers' professional development throughout all phases.

Staff members spoke highly of the Tracker and how important it became as the school year progressed. One teacher summarized the purpose of the tool as a way to identify patterns in student behavior: "It's a really valuable tool to say 'Hmm, they're doing this in my class every day, and they're also doing this in this other class every day... we can target those specific behaviors rather than blanketing it with a one-size-fits-all cure." They suggested improvements during my final interviews, indicating their belief that this tool could play an even greater role in their daily work. Another teacher expressed a desire for even more data analysis in the tracker so that she could facilitate the Behavior Intervention Team protocol on her own and in an even more timely fashion.

When considering all three students in the BIT protocol, teachers utilized tracker data to determine specific problematic behaviors that each student exhibited. They relied

on ecological data, collected both formally and informally, to make decisions about interventions to support individual students. By the end of the study, staff members could cite specific risks that frequent classroom disruptors brought to school each day, shown not only through their survey responses but their interview comments as well. Relationships were constantly cited as an important resource for diagnosing student needs and putting quality interventions in place.

Teachers and administrators relied on Tracker data when meeting with students and parents. I described in my field notes how these conferences relied less on anecdotal data, which is often perceived as personal, exaggerated attacks on a student or parent's behavior, and instead used more objective analysis to search for solutions and supports to assist struggling students.

Behavior data also helped drive staff members to re-examine the Tier 2 behavior systems at Arcadia. Faced with the knowledge of how many students qualified as needing Tier 3 behavior support, the team stepped back and put new systems in place. These systems themselves relied on data. For example, after seeing that many students "gave up" on *Make Your Day* after realizing they no longer could earn 90% of the points possible, the team decided to enact an incentive system that prorated rewards based on students' success. In addition, they created a class tier system that encouraged students to examine their class statistics and hold each other accountable for their behavior.

Research Question 2: To what extent did the use of this intervention process influence disruptive students' classroom behavior?

Three students participated in the Behavior Intervention Team protocol. These students were identified by Arcadia's teachers and administrators as frequent classroom disruptors, primarily using behavior documentation from the Tracker.

Generally, students' participation in this intervention contributed to a decrease in their documented disruptive behaviors in the classroom. Tracker data showed substantial changes in documentations, and this was corroborated by staff members' discussions of these students within their interviews. Teachers pointed out success stories from their work with these frequent disruptors and were able to cite specific support they were able to provide BIT participants to lead to improved behavior.

Participation in this protocol did not completely extinguish students' disruptive behavior. As the study progressed and student participants' behavior supports were slowly changed in response to their needs, there is evidence that disruptive behaviors began to reappear, particularly in weeks 18 through 20 of the study. This coincides with an increased number of documentations for disruptive behavior among middle school students in general.

Research Question 3: How did the middle school team utilize behavior and ecological data to develop, monitor, and adjust interventions for classroom disruptors?

Behavior and ecological data were critical in the identification of frequent classroom disruptors and the development of appropriate interventions. The team primarily used behavior data found in the Tracker to identify student participants. Once

these participants were identified, the Behavior Intervention Team sought out ecological data to enhance their understanding of each child's needs. This data included information about the student's background, academic and behavior history, and his or her relationships with family, friends, and teachers.

The Behavior Intervention Team protocol guided teachers and administrators to use ecological data to design appropriate interventions. The team considered several factors when making decisions: Antonio's intervention plan, for example, relied on the support of the soccer coach, a key individual who was able to connect with the student due to his desire to play on the school team. In Victor's case, the team identified specific patterns in the student's behavior documentation, compared it with the student's own reflections on his behavior, and then decided to provide decision-making lessons, believing that would be the most critical skillset for decreasing his disruptive behaviors.

The Tracker played a central role in data collection and analysis. Teachers and administrators relied on documentations recorded through this system to judge whether their interventions were working or whether they needed to be adjusted. Behavior trends, particularly whether the students made their day, were quickly and easily identified using the software. Staff members noted that the tracker was easy to use and also made efficient use of time. They appreciated having a consistent documentation system that all teachers in the school used.

I noted a general trend that Arcadia's teachers and administrators began to collect data more consistently over the course of the study and effectively used data when meeting with students and parents. Conversations shifted away from emotion and exaggeration and instead relied on data to help support decision-making.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

This study was borne out of my own struggle managing student behavior during my first years of teaching and observations of my school district's efforts to understand and support teachers and frequently disruptive students. I have documented one research cycle of many that have already taken place as ideas and organizational beliefs about student behavior have continued to evolve. The quest to mitigate disruptive behavior and maximize learning certainly does not end here; these systems will continue to evolve. In this final chapter, I will discuss how this work will continue and explore its implications for the school and district as well as the broader research community.

Next Steps

The most exciting aspect of this project was observing how a technology tool and a clear protocol supported school staff members' understanding of disruptive students' risks and the school's subsequent efforts to provide resources to mitigate those risks. The results of this study reaffirm the importance of understanding the ecologies of students' lives when deciding how to respond to their actions. Teachers and administrators successfully collected meaningful data about students, analyzed it appropriately, and implemented individualized supports for the most difficult students in their classrooms. Over the course of this study, Arcadia Elementary's response to disruptive students relied less on punitive, zero-tolerance, one-size-fits-all consequences and more on processes that diagnose students' needs and provide just-in-time support for those students, keeping them in the classroom and also ensuring that their behavior does not interfere with their peers' learning.

By the end of this study, staff members had many ideas on how this work could be further refined. They pointed to the Tracker as an essential element of their teaching and requested enhancements that would streamline aspects of the Behavior Intervention Team protocol and allow busy teachers to effectively facilitate this practice with a wider pool of students. Specifically, they suggested that the Tracker could perform deeper levels of analysis of students' behavior, perhaps identifying students' behavior trends using a wider variety of variables, including subject area, time of day, and more. Teachers expressed their desire to spend less time re-hashing students' past behaviors and more time designing targeted interventions that had a high probability of success.

At the beginning of this study, I maligned the amount of time staff members spent complaining about students' disruptive behavior without considering how they could support those students in their own classrooms. The most prevalent response to these students was to kick them out of class and to the office with the expectation that administrators would solve the problem through suspension or expulsion. However, the most critical finding of this study is that effective data collection and analysis systems and a clear process for supporting disruptive students contributes to changing teachers' attitudes about how to respond to disruptive behavior. Arcadia Elementary's middle school team assumed a greater level of ownership over the school's behavior support systems and continued to build those systems around the principles of the Behavior Intervention Team.

Implications for the School and District

Arcadia will likely continue to use *Make Your Day* as its primary school-wide system for teaching responsibility and managing student behavior. Other schools in the

district recently adopted the program as well. Each district school has also implemented the Tracker to assist in their implementation of *Make Your Day*. This means that there are opportunities for similar initiatives to further support frequent classroom disruptors. The protocol used in this study should serve as a template from which each school can build support systems that meet the needs of their student populations.

This study suggests that *Make Your Day*, in isolation, may better serve younger grade levels. In the middle grades, the program effectively supports many students but teachers and administrators must build procedures and systems that better meet the biopsychosocial needs of the junior high student. That is to say, staff members must understand the complexity of the biological, psychological, and sociological systems that are intertwined and clearly factor into students' experiences at school.

There is a clear need for the school district to more broadly support these kinds of initiatives. To date, support systems have been assembled in piecemeal fashion, with some community influence, but a clear strategic plan for supporting student behavior has not yet been developed. Other school districts have adopted clear Response to Intervention processes for behavior (RTI-B) with dedicated staff members and financial resources to assist school teams in identifying students' risks and providing interventions. This approach has shown success in building school-level capacity for identifying students' needs and leveraging district and community resources to provide effective support.

Implications for Broader Research

Ample literature suggests that the most successful schools develop support systems that are culturally responsive and based on individual students' needs (Gehrke,

2005; McKinney et al., 2005; Sugai & Horner, 2002). Urban schools, however, often must improve on fundamental factors necessary for this to happen effectively. In chapter one, I outlined three such factors: consistency among staff members, an organized and efficient system for collecting and synthesizing data, and a reporting process for families, students, teachers, and administrators (Horner et al., 2010; Myers & Briere III, 2010).

The results of this study suggest a way for urban schools to improve these fundamental factors. School leaders must create behavior systems and provide accountability so that staff members consistently document and respond to student behavior. This can be accomplished with a program such as *Make Your Day*, which provided the foundation for Arcadia's behavior systems, but must also include protocols for identifying individual students' needs and implementing individualized support systems for students.

Schools need organized and efficient systems for collecting and analyzing data. The Tracker is an example of this kind of system. This database was developed to fit the specific needs of Arcadia's behavior program and was used to systematically collect and synthesize behavior data. The system was easy for teachers to use and its use fit well with classroom routines and procedures that were already in place. The Tracker's success was made possible by school administrators' insistence on consistency among staff members and adherence to a school-wide behavior system.

Finally, schools need clear communication procedures among families, students, teachers, and administrators. The Behavior Intervention Team protocol is an example of one such procedure, as it involves all stakeholders in the decision-making process. The process relies on automated, systematic identification of students who need additional

behavior support through the Tracker. The protocol then calls for teachers and administrators to get to know these students and understand the multitude of factors affecting their classroom behavior. Finally, students and parents are included in the implementation and assessment of interventions.

This study has shown that urban schools can reach the high standard of providing culturally responsive, individualized support systems for students. PBIS approaches, to date, have shown the most promise in making this a reality. Urban schools, however, often face challenges in implementing such approaches. This results of this study suggest that overcoming these challenges is possible, even for resource-tapped districts and schools.

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APPENDIX A
RISKS AND RESOURCES SURVEY

Introduction and Consent Form

Dear Participant:

I am a doctoral student under the direction of Dr. Kathleen Puckett in the Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College at Arizona State University. I am conducting a research study that focuses on how our school can best support frequent classroom disruptors.

I am inviting you to participate in completing the following questionnaire that will help me gather important data. The questionnaire will take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete and your participation is voluntary. If you choose to complete the questionnaire your responses will help make a contribution to the information known about frequent classroom disruptors and the school's ability to support those students. There are no foreseeable risks or discomforts to your participation.

Your individual responses to the questionnaire are anonymous and will only be seen by the research investigators. All information will be kept confidential. The aggregate results of this study may be used in reports, presentations, or publications but your name will never be used.

If you have any questions concerning the research study, please contact Peter Bartanen at Peter.Bartanen@asu.edu or Dr. Kathleen Puckett at Kathleen.Puckett@asu.edu.

If you have any questions about your rights as a subject/participant in this research, or if you feel you have been placed at risk, you can contact the Chair of the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board, through the ASU Office of Research Integrity and Assurance, at (480) 965-6788.

Completion of the questionnaire is your consent to participate.

Sincerely,

Peter Bartanen

Please think about students you consider frequent classroom disruptors. These are students whose classroom behavior disrupts the educational process in your classroom, not necessarily those who misbehave outside the classroom. Please answer the following questions as they relate to those students.

Part 1. Identifying Frequent Classroom Disruptors

How do you define “Frequent Classroom Disruptor?” (open response)

Part 2. Risks

Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. These students’ behavior in school is affected by situations outside of school.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. These students generally lack maturity compared to students who do not misbehave.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. These students learn poor behavior from their families.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. These students learn poor behavior from society.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. These students deliberately choose to misbehave.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. These students believe they are capable of succeeding in school.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. These students are capable of succeeding in school.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. These students are treated fairly at school.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

What risks or challenges do these students face in school and outside of school that other students do not? (open response)

Part 3. Resources

Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. Our school's behavior plan, as it is currently implemented, meets the needs of frequent classroom disruptors.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Our school is doing everything in its power to meet the needs of frequent classroom disruptors.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Again considering only frequent classroom disruptors, please rate how effective you perceive each of the following incentives and consequences.

	Effective	Somewhat effective	Not effective
1. Lunch detentions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Meeting with an adult mentor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Parent meetings	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. After school detentions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. In-school suspensions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. Out of school suspensions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. Placement in an alternative school	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. After-school tutoring and clubs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. After-school sports programs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. Other incentives or consequences: (please describe)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11. Other incentives or consequences: (please describe)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12. Other incentives or consequences: (please describe)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

What resources does our school currently have that could be better utilized to meet the needs of these students? (open response)

What resources should our school pursue that could meet the needs of these students? (open response)

Consider this scenario: A middle school student has been in your classroom all year. Since day one of school, this student has been a constant disruption to your classroom. He calls out at all the wrong times, pulls other students off-task, and displays other attention-seeking behaviors. Each time you call home and consult with parents, his behavior improves for a short period but then the problem behaviors return. The disruption has reached a critical stage – action must be taken for the benefit of you and your students. The school’s assistant principal refuses to suspend the student until the classroom teachers have exhausted all of their strategies, with the rationale that all students need to be given the opportunity for success and suspension should only be used as a very last resort.

As a classroom teacher, how would you handle this situation? (open response)

APPENDIX B
STUDENT INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

This interview protocol is intended to facilitate a semi-structured interview with students who are identified as frequent classroom disruptors according to teacher documentation in the school's electronic tracking system. Follow up questions will be based on participants' responses.

Adapted from the PBIS Functional Behavioral Assessment Behavior Support Plan (F-BSP) Protocol, available at http://www.pbis.org/common/pbisresources/tools/F_BSP_protocol.doc

Introduction and Consent

Interviewer: Thanks for meeting with me today. I'm here to learn about you and your behavior in the classroom. Your other teachers and I are going to use this information to figure out how to give you the help you need in order to be successful. I may use some of your information in my research study as well but I will not include your name.

I have a few questions about your interests as well as your behavior during school. If there are any questions that you'd rather not answer, you don't have to. You can also choose to not be interviewed and it won't affect your grade or how you're treated by me or any other teacher.

Your parents know that you are participating in this study and have given permission for you to participate if you would like to. I am not tape recording this interview but I may make a few notes on my paper.

Study ID #: _____

Grade: _____

Date: _____

Student Profile:

- 1) What are things that you like to do, or do well, while at school?
- 2) What are things that you like to do while away from school?
- 3) What are some things that you do that get you in trouble or that are a problem at school?
- 4) (For each listed behavior) How often do you _____?
- 5) (For each listed behavior) What kinds of things make it more likely that you will have this problem?
- 6) (For each listed behavior) When and where is the problem most likely to happen?
- 7) (For each listed behavior) When is the problem behavior least likely to occur?
- 8) (For each listed behavior) Is there anything that happens before or after school or in-between classes that make it more likely that you'll have a problem?
- 9) (For each listed behavior) What usually happens after the problem occurs?

APPENDIX C

BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION PLAN

Student Information:	Student ID: Date:
Behavior Team members:	
Problem Behavior: Inappropriate behavior(s)	
Replacement Behavior: What is expected of the student?	
Method of <i>Teaching</i> Replacement Behavior and By Whom: How will we teach the desired behavior and who will teach it?	<input type="checkbox"/> direct instruction, by: <input type="checkbox"/> social skills training, by: <input type="checkbox"/> anger management, by: <input type="checkbox"/> providing cues, by: <input type="checkbox"/> role playing, by: <input type="checkbox"/> modeling, by: <input type="checkbox"/> behavior contract, by: <input type="checkbox"/> stress management, by: <input type="checkbox"/> decision-making lesson, by: <input type="checkbox"/> use of mentor(s), by: <input type="checkbox"/> other: (specify), by:
Accommodations, Interventions, and Who's Responsible for Them: What help will we give the student to help him/her succeed? It is VERY important that these accommodations and/or recommendations be followed consistently by teacher(s), aides, and school staff.	Accommodations to assist the student in displaying the replacement behavior: <input type="checkbox"/> clear, concise directions <input type="checkbox"/> supervise free time <input type="checkbox"/> frequent reminders/prompts <input type="checkbox"/> avoid strong criticism <input type="checkbox"/> frequent breaks/vary activities <input type="checkbox"/> predictable, routine schedule <input type="checkbox"/> teacher/staff proximity <input type="checkbox"/> specified study area <input type="checkbox"/> reprimand the student privately <input type="checkbox"/> preferential seating <input type="checkbox"/> modify assignments <input type="checkbox"/> avoid power struggles <input type="checkbox"/> review rules and expectations <input type="checkbox"/> specifically define limits <input type="checkbox"/> provide alternate recess <input type="checkbox"/> avoid physical contact <input type="checkbox"/> provide cooling off period <input type="checkbox"/> provide highly-structured setting <input type="checkbox"/> communicate regularly with parents <input type="checkbox"/> other: (specify) Interventions and Who's Responsible for Them: 1. 2. 3. 4.
Method of Measuring Progress: How will we know if it's working or not?	<input type="checkbox"/> direct observation <input type="checkbox"/> daily behavior chart <input type="checkbox"/> weekly behavior chart <input type="checkbox"/> charting/graphing <input type="checkbox"/> self-monitoring <input type="checkbox"/> # of office referrals <input type="checkbox"/> # of Pinpoint entries <input type="checkbox"/> other: (specify)

Length of Behavior Plan	<input type="checkbox"/> one week <input type="checkbox"/> two weeks <input type="checkbox"/> other: (specify)
Positive Consequences for Appropriate Behavior: What can the student earn?	<input type="checkbox"/> verbal praise <input type="checkbox"/> immediate feedback <input type="checkbox"/> computer time <input type="checkbox"/> earned privileges <input type="checkbox"/> earned tokens/points <input type="checkbox"/> positive call home <input type="checkbox"/> tangible rewards <input type="checkbox"/> free time <input type="checkbox"/> positive office visit <input type="checkbox"/> other: (specify)
Negative Consequences for Inappropriate Behavior: <i>What happens if the student does not behave?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> loss of points/tokens <input type="checkbox"/> loss of privileges <input type="checkbox"/> time out <input type="checkbox"/> phone call home <input type="checkbox"/> community service <input type="checkbox"/> detention <input type="checkbox"/> send to office <input type="checkbox"/> in-school suspension <input type="checkbox"/> out-of-school suspension <input type="checkbox"/> escort to another area <input type="checkbox"/> other: (specify)

(adapted from <http://empeglow.angelfire.com/DisciplinePlan.pdf>)

APPENDIX D
STAFF INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

This interview protocol is intended to facilitate a semi-structured interview with teachers and administrators. Further follow-up questions will be based on participants' responses but remain within the scope of classroom discipline.

Introduction and Consent

Interviewer: Thank you for joining me today. I am conducting research about how this school supports frequent classroom disruptors. I am interested in your perspective! I have a set of seven questions to ask you but may also ask some follow up questions based on your responses. I expect the interview will take approximately 20 minutes of time. If there are any questions you do not feel comfortable answering, please let me know and we will move on to a different topic of conversation.

With your permission I would like to record our conversation so that I may transcribe it later. What you say will remain confidential. Your name will not be included in the transcript and only the research team will have access to what you say. I may use the information gathered or some quotes in reports, presentations, or publications but your name will never be used. Is this agreeable?

Semi-Structured Interview Questions

- 1) Please describe the characteristics of a "frequent classroom disruptor."
- 2) What factors influence these students' classroom behavior?
- 3) How does the school identify frequent classroom disruptors?
- 4) Does the school's behavior program meet the needs of these students? Explain.
- 5) How does the school's program and resources influence students' classroom behavior?
- 6) What supports does the school provide for students and teachers?
- 7) How did the following programs support students and teachers this semester?
 - a. Pinpoint Tracker
 - b. Initial Behavior Team meetings where student data was analyzed

Follow-up Behavior Team meetings to review and assess interventions

APPENDIX E
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVALS

APPROVAL: EXPEDITED REVIEW

Kathleen Puckett
 Division of Teacher Preparation - West
 480/727-5206
 Kathleen.Puckett@asu.edu

Dear Kathleen Puckett:

On 11/1/2013 the ASU IRB reviewed the following protocol:

Type of Review:	Initial Study
Title:	Data-Driven Disciplinary Decisionmaking: Supporting Classroom Disruptors in an Urban School Setting
Investigator:	Kathleen Puckett
IRB ID:	STUDY00000157
Category of review:	(7)(b) Social science methods, (7)(a) Behavioral research
Funding:	None
Grant Title:	None
Grant ID:	None
Documents Reviewed:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consent Form - Teachers and Administrators.pdf, Category: Consent Form; • Student Assent Form - simplified version.pdf, Category: Consent Form; • Parent Letter of Permission.pdf, Category: Consent Form; • IRB Application - Social Behavioral - 2013 10 31.docx, Category: IRB Protocol; • Pre-Intervention Survey for Staff and Administrators, Category: Recruitment Materials; • Staff Interview Protocol.pdf, Category: Recruitment Materials; • Script to Recruit STAFF Participants.pdf, Category: Recruitment Materials; • Script to Recruit STUDENT Participants - 2013 10

	31.pdf, Category: Recruitment Materials; • Student Interview Protocol - 2013 10 31.pdf, Category: Recruitment Materials;
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The IRB approved the protocol from 11/1/2013 to 10/31/2014 inclusive. Three weeks before 10/31/2014 you are to submit a completed "FORM: Continuing Review (HRP-212)" and required attachments to request continuing approval or closure.

If continuing review approval is not granted before the expiration date of 10/31/2014 approval of this protocol expires on that date. When consent is appropriate, you must use final, watermarked versions available under the "Documents" tab in ERA-IRB.

In conducting this protocol you are required to follow the requirements listed in the INVESTIGATOR MANUAL (HRP-103).

Sincerely,

IRB Administrator

cc: Peter Bartanen
Peter Bartanen

APPROVAL:CONTINUATION

Kathleen Puckett
Division of Teacher Preparation - West
480/727-5206
Kathleen.Puckett@asu.edu

Dear Kathleen Puckett:

On 10/1/2014 the ASU IRB reviewed the following protocol:

Type of Review:	Continuing Review
Title:	Data-Driven Disciplinary Decisionmaking: Supporting Classroom Disruptors in an Urban School Setting
Investigator:	Kathleen Puckett
IRB ID:	STUDY00000157
Category of review:	(7)(b) Social science methods, (7)(a) Behavioral research
Funding:	None
Grant Title:	None
Grant ID:	None
Documents Reviewed:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Assent Form - simplified version.pdf, Category: Consent Form; • Consent Form - Teachers and Administrators.pdf, Category: Consent Form; • Parent Letter of Permission.pdf, Category: Consent Form;

The IRB approved the protocol from 10/1/2014 to 10/30/2015 inclusive. Three weeks before 10/30/2015 you are to submit a completed "FORM: Continuing Review (HRP-212)" and required attachments to request continuing approval or closure.

If continuing review approval is not granted before the expiration date of 10/30/2015 approval of this protocol expires on that date. When consent is appropriate, you must use final, watermarked versions available under the "Documents" tab in ERA-IRB.

In conducting this protocol you are required to follow the requirements listed in the INVESTIGATOR MANUAL (HRP-103).

Sincerely,

IRB Administrator

cc: