

Behavioral Interventions and Strategies Series:

Room Clears



Rationale:

Whenever a teacher or school staff member suddenly finds themselves with a student who is presenting a physical danger to self or others, swift action to ensure safety of the student as well as others is critical. Teachers should

be encouraged to seek assistance of appropriate school staff for these students as soon as possible. Districts and schools should also have policies and procedures in place for responding quickly and safely to dangerous behavior. By having a plan, staff can respond consistently and efficiently. One aspect of this plan is referred to as a “room clear” and is often a preferred method for intervening with physically dangerous or destructive behavior because the goal is to remove everyone from the dangerous situation.

Considerations:

- Using a room clear procedure is a way to ensure everyone’s safety
- A room clear removes peers and staff who may serve as an “audience” or give attention to the student who is exhibiting the dangerous behavior
- A class witnessing the event may experience a range of feelings from distress to outrage at the student. Debriefing with students without revealing confidential information about the student engaged in the physically dangerous behavior is appropriate.
- A room clear can help the student engaged in the dangerous behavior to learn to manage their own behavior.
- Always maintain documentation for each instance and notify the parent or guardian
- School leadership should engage appropriate staff in debriefing session
- A room clear should not be used as an intervention for inappropriate behavior but rather as a part of a complete Behavior Intervention Plan for the student based on data from a Functional Behavior Assessment
- Always consult your district or school’s policies and procedures for physically dangerous behavior

Important to Keep in Mind:

- Always Remember to Put **Safety First**
- Remember to Document
- Keep Parents and Guardians Updated
- Always Refer to State, District, and School Policies and Procedures

Reference:

Sprick, R. & Garrison, M. (2008). *Interventions: Evidenced-based behavioral strategies for individual students* (2nd ed., pp. 340-342). Eugene, OR: Pacific Northwest Publishing Company.



Steps to Implement a Room Clear Procedure

Step 1: If Room Clear is used, identify where the rest of the class will go and what they will do.

- Disruption should be minimized so routine procedures should be considered
- A predetermined location for the class should be known
- Relevant instruction tasks should be available and prepared in advance
- Supervising adult should have a list of tasks or activities to do
- Space in the predetermined location should be available for an extended period of time
- The class should be informed of how to react if this behavior occurs for any student

Step 2: Establish Procedures for Supervision of Student Engaged in Physically Dangerous Behavior

- Establishment of procedures and training of all relevant staff is required
- Establish procedures for communicating immediate need and requesting assistance
- Consider which school staff can respond. It is important that several staff members are considered so if one is not available there is an immediate back up person
- Establish procedures for completing required documentation
- Communicate incident with parents or guardians and document conference or call
- If the district or school allows for non-violent restraint procedures under specified conditions only trained staff should be responsible to ensure student safety

Step 3: Determine Consequences for Behavior In Advance

- Although consequences for this type of behavior have shown to have little effect on future incidences, it is best to predetermine appropriate consequences as part of a comprehensive Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP). A BIP should give considerations to skill building opportunities, antecedent strategies, behavior interventions, as well as consequent strategies.
- Appropriate consequences (such as restitution, restorative justice, time out, etc.) should be administered consistently but always give consideration to appropriate adult responses.
- If the student is receiving special education services immediately consult the building special education staff for consultation.