



## TIER ONE CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT STRATEGY SNAPSHOT #6

### Class-wide Group Contingency: Positive Behavior Game

**Definition:** A group contingency acknowledges students for performing a desired behavior, saves time and resources by designing a program for an entire classroom rather than individual students, and encourages positive social interactions between peers (Murphy et. al, 2007). The Positive Behavior Game is a classroom-based game, adapted from the Good Behavior Game. It is a format to explicitly teach, remind, and reward positive student behavior and has been shown to increase student social and academic success without detracting from instruction.

#### Rationale

The Positive Behavior Game (PBG) is an “implementation driver”. It supports the use of classroom strategies by clarifying expectations and creating more opportunities for teachers and students to use the classroom strategies. The game format makes it more appealing to students and focuses teacher attention on the positive behaviors students’ display.

- We all learn from reinforcements so if we want students to gain fluency with the behavior taught---both academic and social behaviors---we need to provide contingent reinforcement when those behaviors occur, which will increase the likelihood that they occur again in the future.
- The PBG can be an efficient and practical way to increase the likelihood of appropriate behavior that can be adapted to fit the needs of the students/school.

#### Components

- The teacher identifies and teaches the specific behavior, procedure or routine and links it to school-wide expectation(s)
- The class plays as an entire team and engages in the appropriate behavior.
- All students are included if class wins. If class plays as an entire team or if played by tables, then winning table picks award but all students participate.
- Teacher effectively provides pre-correction (reminders), especially before challenging transitions or routines (includes expectation rule and checking for understanding).
- When the teacher sees a student(s) engaging in the appropriate behavior, the class earns a point. Points are earned at frequent rate (e.g., one point per minute for 10 minutes). Teacher uses BSPS each time a point is earned.
- The points and target rule/behavior are prominently displayed on the board and easy to see from anywhere in the classroom.
- If inappropriate behavior occurs, teacher uses strategy from continuum of strategies to respond to inappropriate behavior (e.g., planned ignoring, prompting, etc...) and the game continues.

#### Tips for Implementation

There are 6 guidelines for implementing a group contingency:

- Choose a powerful reinforcer
- Determine the behavior to change and collateral behaviors that might be affected
- Set appropriate performance criteria
- Combine with other procedures
- Select the most appropriate group contingency
- Monitor individual and group performance
- Set all students up for success
- Pre-correct and re-teach the desired behavior as often as needed
- Provide multiple verbal reminders BEFORE you anticipate the problem behavior
- Consider a non-verbal cue to signal using the desired behavior
- Make students needing extra support “special earners” to earn additional points for the class/table team when they demonstrate the desired behavior.

#### **References**

Embry, D. D. (2002). The Good Behavior Game: A best practice candidate as a universal behavioral vaccine. *Clinical Child and Family Psychology Review*, 5, 273-297.

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