



## TIER ONE CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT STRATEGY SNAPSHOT #5

### Provide Contingent and Specific Praise for Appropriate Behavior (BSPS)

**Definition:** A behavior-specific praise statement is verbal/written feedback that is *descriptive, specific,* and delivered *contingent upon student demonstration of expected behavior*

#### Rationale

- Contingent praise is associated with increases in a variety of behavioral and academic skills (Partin, Robertson, Maggin, Oliver, & Wehby, 2010)
- Behavior specific praise has an impact in both special and general education settings (Ferguson & Houghton, 1992; Sutherland, Wehby & Copeland, 2000)
- Helps adults and students focus on positive social behaviors and actions
- Most powerful behavior change tool teachers have in their repertoire
- Increases the likelihood students will use the recognized behaviors and skills in the future
- Decreases inappropriate behavior and therefore, reduces the need for correction
- Enhances self-esteem and helps build internal focus of control
- Provides increased opportunities for building positive relationships with students.

#### Components

- Identify student or group
- Describe and acknowledge the rule/behavior being recognized
- Link to school-wide expectation(s)
- A Behavior specific praise statement is contingent upon a student(s) demonstrating behavior being reinforced and delivered immediately upon student accurately displaying desired behavior
- Behavior specific praise statements are delivered 4 times as often as error correction statements
- Optional: provide tangible reinforcement

#### Tips for Implementation

- Deliver behavior specific praise statements at a high rate for a short period while teaching new behaviors or responding to problem behavior
- Name the behavior and tie it back to the classroom expectation(s)
- Bring “surprise” attention to certain behaviors or at scheduled intervals
- Use BSPS to maintain a taught behavior
- Interact in a friendly, supportive manner at all times with students, parents, guests and colleagues
- Initiate positive interactions by:
  - making eye contact

- smiling, nodding, winking
- being welcoming
- offering a greeting
- asking if assistance is required
- providing positive feedback regarding appropriate student behavior
- maintaining an attitude of respect and support, even when correcting student behavior

**References:**

Davis, S. (2007). *Schools where everyone belongs: Practical strategies for reducing bullying*. Champaign, IL: Research Press.

Ferguson, E., & Houghton, S. (1992). The effects of contingent teacher praise, as specified by Canter's assertive discipline programme, on children's on-task behavior. *Educational Studies, 18, 83-93*.

Maag, J.W. (2001). Rewarded by punishment: Reflections on the disuse of positive reinforcement in schools. *Exceptional Children, 67(2), 1*