



B.A.S.I.C

NEWS

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December 2016
Volume 1, Issue 2

Can you believe it is already December?! While the school days may seem long at times, the year always seems to fly by.

In this newsletter, we discuss the excitement and uncertainty of the holidays, ways to use the family/classroom routine guides, and First/Then choice boards as an intervention.

We want to send some special thoughts to Heather Ericson and the Chattanooga community with the recent tragedy of the bus crash and all the CDSs and their families and friends who may have been affected by the East Tennessee wild fires.

The next newsletter will be in January and we would love some input from you! Feel free to send us a success story, a favorite activity/lesson, or something exciting happening in your school community.

Until next year, have a safe and happy holiday season!



Nurturing and Responsive Relationships

The holidays are a great time to promote relationships in your school and community. It's a season of giving and celebrating.

Celebrate the first semester: host a hot chocolate party for students who have grown the most in their behavior. With New Year coming up, encourage students to set behavior goals for the New Year. Share these goals with the teachers and follow up with the student in January.

Attend your school's holiday concert: Attending school events is a great way to get to know the parents and support the kids you work with, plus kids love to see their teachers outside of school!

Winter break is a fun and exciting time, but it can also bring about a lot of uncertainty. Some kids may not have regular meals or a routine at home, and with that comes a sense of anxiety. You may notice some increase in challenging behavior with certain kids. Here are some things you can do:

- Have conversation with the student about the break. Prepare them for what is happening. Let them know the last day of school and what day school will resume. Talk to them about break, why do we have it? What can they do? Let them know what you will do.
- Give the student a packet with some fun activities they can do. There are many websites with free [grade level activities](#), [thematic winter activities](#), and [free printable books](#).
- Is there a resource in your community that provides food or free activities during break? Send home a flyer with some organizations and numbers that families can connect to.

Targeted Social Emotional Learning

As the school year continues and you continue to know your students and their behavior, the [classroom](#) and [family](#) based routine guides are a helpful resource in targeting and changing behavior. The guides are written in a friendly way, and think through the behavior logically, preparing you with strategies to minimize the behavior and replacement skills to teach. Consider sharing this resource with teachers or send home a certain page to a parent or caregiver who has a child exhibiting some challenging behavior at home.

Behavior is the language of the children and behind all behavior is a message. The guides target the gaps in social emotional development that we can fill through explicit teaching. On the first page of each routine guide is a blank matrix to fill out if there is a challenging behavior not addressed in the guides. Along with the routine guides, this blank matrix is useful tool to share with all teachers because it breaks the behavior down into manageable parts. It can feel like certain behaviors happen all the time, but when we closely examine the behavior, we will see the behavior is trying to communicate a message. The two general messages of challenging behavior are avoidance (of a task, a person) or access (to attention, or a highly preferred activity). We also know that behavior continues because it is reinforced in some way. The guides target way to respond to challenging behavior that is not reinforcing and target skills to teach to show the child how to communicate in a more effective way.

Why might the child be doing this?	What can I do to prevent the problem behavior?	What can I do if the problem behavior occurs?	What new skills should I teach?
Child wants attention of the teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have a designated seat child close to the teacher or another adult in the room Talk to child before start of activity about the schedule and expectations of the group Have a period after the activity to talk alone with the child Encourage peer interactions by having cooperative activities during the group During peer activities join group or monitor child and other student encourage appropriate interaction Give feedback to child when he/she participates and works with the class 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ignore inappropriate behavior Praise peers for participating and if child imitates, quickly remark on how he/she is participating Remind child to raise hand by modeling or using a visual cue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teach child to raise hand for teachers attention and to wait patiently for a response Teach child how to participate in peer interactions Teach child to participate independently in the activities

Intense Individual Interventions

Visual schedules are helpful for all students. They serve as a reminder for the daily routines and help students know what to expect. Knowing what is to come can reduce anxiety in kids and encourage them to do a task they may not want to do. For kids with challenging behavior, they may require additional schedules such as their own person visual schedule of the day with pictures of themselves in the daily activity or First/Then Schedules. First/Then schedules help teach expectation of the routine and expectation of the student.

The First/Then board below can be used in two ways. It could be a positive reinforcement, first you complete your work, and then you have 5 minutes of computer time OR it could mirror the daily schedule- first we do our desk work, and then we have computer time. If there is a change in the daily schedule, such as indoor recess, a First/Then schedule can bring a student back into the daily routine. For example, instead of going out to recess, we are going to first play board games in the classroom and then go to lunch.



When using a First/Then board for a student or helping a teacher use one, use Velcro on the back the images so the images can be changed multiple times throughout the day. If you are interested in using this strategy, contact Rachel or Anna and we can make the graphics for you.

For children who are more advanced, an additional step may increase student autonomy and self-regulation. [First/Then/After](#) is a three step schedule that builds on First/Then and shows the expectation of the student and the routine.

Transition Resources

Transitions happen many times throughout the school day. If you have your own classroom, kids are transition from the hallway into your room. If you go to a classroom, kids are transitioning from one activity to the next. And during your presentation, you may have students on the carpet for a read aloud and then transition them back to their desks.

Transitions can take time and we can make them more effective and efficient by preparing students for the transition, clearly stating our expectations, and following through on positive reinforcement.

[Here](#) is a list of transition tips and tricks to use during your presentations or to share with a fellow teacher. Start with one transition trick so your students learn what to expect. Keep in mind some classes prefer more active transitions whereas another class may need the transition as a time to calm down.

Below are some tips to remember during all transitions:

- **M**- model- teacher your expectations
- **O**- organize- plan for transitions to make them as short as possible
- **V**- visual- use pictures to clarify behavior expectations
- **E**- excite and engage- make transitions fun, turning it into a little game will encourage students to be efficient



Upcoming Dates and Deadlines:

- March 3rd: West TN Quarterly Meeting in Parsons
- March 8th: East TN Quarterly Meeting in Knoxville

Teaching Tip:

Giving choices is a powerful teaching (and life!) tool. As adults, we like being in control and will be more likely to do something if we think we are choosing to do. When we are sitting on the couch after a long day of work and our significant other comes home and tells us to take out the garbage, we are not very likely to want to do it or even do it without some protest. But if they recognize that we had a long day at work, that the garbage needs to go out and they give us the choice of taking out tonight or tomorrow morning, our likeliness to complete the task will increase.

Now the best case scenario is that they take out the garbage for us, but for the sake of this analogy, we are going to assume that is not an option 😊

When giving choice, both need to be favorable and accessible. Below are some examples:

Try It Out!

"You can choose to complete your work at your desk or at a table in the back of the room."

"Would you like to write with a pen or a pencil?"

"Do you want to read a book or draw a picture in the cool down area?"

*In all three scenarios, the student is not escaping work and the teacher remains in control of the situation.

CDS Shout Outs!

Jett Taylor is giving all teachers and students a post of the feelings chart and self-regulation thermometer as part of her school climate enhancement.

Janine Dorsey is providing her teachers with Pyramid Mini-Module training starting in January.

Thank you **Jocelyn Potter** for inviting us to visit your school and meet your administration.

Thank you to the **25 CDSs** and numerous teachers who completed their IOPs. We appreciate your effort!