Encouraging Self Advocacy for Children with Learning and Behavior Problems

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Preface

- This project is still evolving. In its current stage, this booklet reflects the behavioral needs and comments.
1. Teachers struggle to develop *effective* Behavior Intervention Plans for children with emotional and behavioral disorders.

2. These students may avoid IEP meetings.
   a. Students with emotional and behavioral disorders exhibit an increase in behavior when anxious (aka, meetings with adults!).
   b. Many emotional and behavioral disorders have a high comorbidity of language disorders (Beitchman, Cohen, Konstantareas, & Tannock, 1996).
   c. Students may be uncertain of role or voice.
Also consider:

3. …students with EBD and their increased anxiety related to IEP meetings. “What do I do? What do I say?”

4. …students entering a new classroom space aware of their learning and behavioral needs, but not sure how to share with the teacher.
Today we will:

1. Discuss the importance of self-advocacy for students.
2. Talk about the intentions of the Self-Advocacy Booklet for children.
3. Walk through the phases of development.
Initially developed by graduate students during the fall of 2008.

- School-based Behavioral Health Program
- University of Pittsburgh

The guide is based in part on a similar guide developed by Dr. Sue Perfetti and the Apollo-Ridge School District.
Phase I cont’d.

- How To Use This Booklet - 3
- In The Classroom - 5
- In The Cafeteria - 12
- In Physical Education (Gym) - 14
- In The Library - 16
- In Music - 17
- In Art - 18
- Other Stuff To Know About Me - 19
You know a lot about how you learn best. This book gives you a way to share what you know. Here is how it works:

1. Ask an adult to help you, or fill out this booklet by yourself.

2. Put a check mark (✓) next to the ideas that you like.


4. When you get a new teacher, show the teacher this book.

5. Ask the teacher to make a copy. That will help them remember how to help you.
• Ask me how my morning has been and let me go speak with my counselor if I need to.
• Have me sit close to the front of the classroom to keep my attention.
• Check to make sure I am prepared. Do I have the materials required?
• Greet me pleasantly. Help me get my day started off nicely.
• I have an extremely hard time with separations…it is one of the toughest parts of my day!
• Please don’t rush me to say my goodbyes!
• Understand that I will probably try to keep my family from leaving…offer reassurance that I will see
  my loved ones again soon.
• Encourage me to try to have positive interactions with my peers.
• Greet me and tell me what to do first.
• Let me keep something at my desk that makes me feel better (i.e. a picture of my family, a small stuffed animal, etc.)
• Remind me what we did last time.
• Tell me what I will learn.
• Remind me of the rules and our agreed-upon consequences.
• Give me only a few directions at a time.
• Post what will be happening today.
• Let me sit next to a friend that will help me get started.
• Give me a signal if I am doing well at the beginning of class.
• Put a note on my desk telling me what I will need to do this morning.
• Clarify the rules of the class and the school (ex: no fight, respect others, or no dangerous tools)
• Post the rules on walls or other place that I can easily to see them
• Assign routine simple work for me to help the classroom (ex: water plants every day)
• Tell me what we’re doing today.
• Have the rules in a place where I can see them.
• Remind me of rewards and consequences.
• Give me time to get into the classroom and warm up to you
• Allow me to do my usual routine.
Student Advocacy Phase II

- Inductive Analysis of all 577 comments.
- Sort into surfacing intervention categories.
- Eliminate redundancy.
- Consider the data in the context of potentially helpful interventions.
- Code.
2 Products

1. Student Self Advocacy Booklet (SSAB)
2. Teacher Form and Scoring Guide

Analyze and convert Student data
### 23 TOTAL CATEGORIES
- 577 comments
- Trouble qualifying
- Eliminate comments seeking instructional help – this is another tool; or an addition to this tool

### TOP 8 CATEGORIES
1. Precorrection
2. Anxiety
3. Time
4. Space
5. Organization
6. Posting Rules
7. Agenda
8. Active Supervision
A Few Intended Outcomes

- Increase student participation in IEP/BIP:
  - Student’s completing this outside of the classroom in an “amygdala-free”, self-help frame of mind.
  - A book for student’s created with feedback by student’s.
  - Value and voice – you matter!

- Increase teacher utilization of positive intervention strategies.
Meet Todd – An Eighth Grader

YOU SHOULD KNOW

 Identified in his seventh grade year as needing emotional and behavioral support.
 Suffering from PTSD – serious car accident.
 Failing all subjects accept science and art.
 Decrease in attendance, grades and number of friends.

BEHAVIORS

1. Skipping school
2. Explosive behaviors when questioned about homework
3. Frequent verbal altercations
4. To date, two fist fights in the hallways.
Case Example, cont’d.

Meet Todd

- Refuses to attend IEP meeting
- BIP ineffective
- Preparing for transition to HS
- PTSD, internalizing and externalizing behaviors
Process: Step 1

- Student completes SSAB:
  - Allow time.
  - Do not mandate – invite.
  - Highlight ownership – it does not have to be completed at school.
  - Share IEP flowchart and purpose of BIP.
Process: Step 2

- Teacher analyzes booklet using decoding sheet and considers:
  - Which strategy is the student in most need of?
  - Is there a pattern?
  - Is this a strategy you are familiar with?
  - Is this a strategy you can teach other teachers who work with this student?

- Teacher and student meet to encourage student voice and prepare for meeting.
IEP team reviews the results and discusses behavior intervention plan.
Let the Colors Run

- Strategies
- RTI
- PBIS
- BIP
Phase III: Pilot, Monitor, Adjust

1. Review the completed Student Self Advocacy Booklet.

2. Complete the Teacher Form and Scoring Guide given the completed Student Self Advocacy Booklet.
Phase III: Tell Us:

- Was the student data easy to move into the Scoring Guide?
- Which interventions would be helpful for Todd?
- Do you agree with the interventions selected? Why or why not?


Questions or comments, please contact:

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