

Non-aversive Non-restrictive Supports for Crisis Management

Crisis management supports are intended to gain rapid, safe control and are not intended to teach new skills or to change behaviour into the future.

Antecedent controls - What would happen if someone held a gun, and nobody came?

- a. **Remove seductive objects.** In the long term, as part of the positive programming strategy, teach the student to tolerate or cope with the presence of the seductive object without having to continue to remove it.
- b. **Re-deploy or re-locate people.** Find out which people are most likely to be assaulted by the student and then staff or group the student with the opposite. Consider why the student does the behaviour and address that issue as well as re-deployment and re-location strategies.

Remove unnecessary demands and requests.

- If the student yells and screams when asked to put their bag away, don't ask them to put away their bag.
- If the student becomes aggressive when asked to sit down, don't tell them to sit down.
- Remember that this strategy is short-term and needs to be paired with a positive programming strategy to shape the required behaviour e.g. putting away their bag, sitting down, etc.
- The task needs to be made so simple and the reward so powerful that the student cannot help but follow the direction.
- Then over time, the task is made progressively more difficult and rewards increased so that the task is done without incident.
- Then over time, the reinforcement can be faded.

Eliminate provocative statements and actions.

- Don't push the student's buttons. If you don't have something nice to say, say nothing.
- Draw attention to what the student is doing that is not what they should be doing, but in a non-confrontational way, approach quietly, stand quietly observing, and then simply saying something like 'hmmm'.
- This communicates the same message but is not critical and should not elicit aggression related to criticism. Meanwhile, using positive programming, teach the student how to cope with and reply to criticism when it does happen, as in the real world it will.
- Rehearsal strategies enable the student to practice what they would say when criticized e.g. 'You don't have the right to speak to me like that'.
- Reduce requirements for waiting. At the same time, incorporate learning to wait strategies in the student's positive program.

Change the location and time of events.

- Some students become aggressive or self-injurious if they are required to change activity or setting quickly. To manage and eliminate the problem behaviour, avoid known locations or changes.
- However, so that the student learns to tolerate changes the necessary skills need to be included in the student's positive program.
- Always use necessary transition supports to minimise challenges.

Re-arrange the environment to disrupt behaviours.

Examples might include

- re-arranging pictures on walls,
- hanging pictures upside-down,
- moving furniture,
- altering the brightness of lighting,
- installing coloured light bulbs, etc.

This is a stimulus change and will only result in temporary changes to behaviour. It is not suited to students who do not tolerate change well and must be used in conjunction with positive programming strategies.

Interrupt the behavioural chain - don't interrupt me, you made me lose my train of thought.

We recognize that not all behaviours occur for attention and that ignoring or removing attention does not remove all behaviour challenges. Strategies to try including:

1. Proximity control

- Stand physically close and touch the student gently on the shoulder when you notice a student starting to become nervous or anxious
- Move away to give the student space to calm down.

2. Introduce humour. Cracking a joke or making a funny noise etc. competes with feelings of anger, upset, depression etc. Using a ticklish spot can work similarly.

3. Instructional control

Prepotent instructions. e.g. teach the student to put 'hands down' and then use this to manage 'hitting' behaviour; 'sit down' and then use this to manage 'running away' behaviour and so forth. We need to include in the student's plan, instructions that we know the student will do because it is a preferred activity and then given the instruction to do that activity when a problem behaviour is seen to be starting.

Positive program reminders. e.g. I can see you want to take a break. Remember, you need to show me the 'break' card, etc.

Self-monitoring instructions. Let's check your chart to see how you are doing, how many happy faces do you need? You are very close. Look at your reward chart. You need to have one token left to get your reward tonight.

Re-direct to appropriate conditions. e.g. remember to wait for your 'time with Eric' Or whatever the preferred activity, person, environment etc. is. (This is a form of stimulus control).

- Ask the student to do something that diverts them from the issue at hand.
- Ask quietly about the program and how he has been doing.
- Give an instruction to the whole class to stand up and take deep breaths and stretch
- Ask the student to make off a checklist for you.
- Ask the student to collect everyone's books etc.

Active listening.

- I can see you are really upset about ...
- Mary's screaming seems to be really bothering you. It is hurting your ears.
- You look like you are hungry to me. Let's go make something to eat.

Facilitate communication.

- What do you want?
- What is the problem?
- Do you have a problem?
- Do you need help?
- What is wrong?
- Show me where it hurts?
- How are you feeling?

Facilitate relaxation.

- Speak calmly and even in a monotonous way. Convey an air of support.
- I can see you are tense and upset.
- You need to calm down. Relax. Go limp like a rag doll. Melt into the floor.
- Take a deep breath, Raise your arms over your head. Now take a deep breath.
- Go to your quiet place.
- Lie down, get comfortable, take a rest.
- Be a turtle. (The Schneider and Robin strategy (1975).