Positive Behaviour Support through the IABA multi-element model

The Joys and Tribulations of achieving Positive Behaviour Support as a Whole of School Culture in a Special School

2004 Showcase awards for excellence in schools
Stateaward winner
Queensland Government Education Queensland

EDUCATION FOR LIVING
DARLING POINT SCHOOL

Charmaine Driver cdriv4@eq.edu.au

The School NOW … (2014)

- Co-educational Independent Public Special School
- Students with disabilities from Prep to year12
- Students with intellectual disability or developmental delay, with other needs arising from issues such as autistic spectrum disorder, hearing, physical, vision or speech language impairment, or medical conditions such as epilepsy, diabetes or asthma.
- Students across a wide variety of cultural heritages

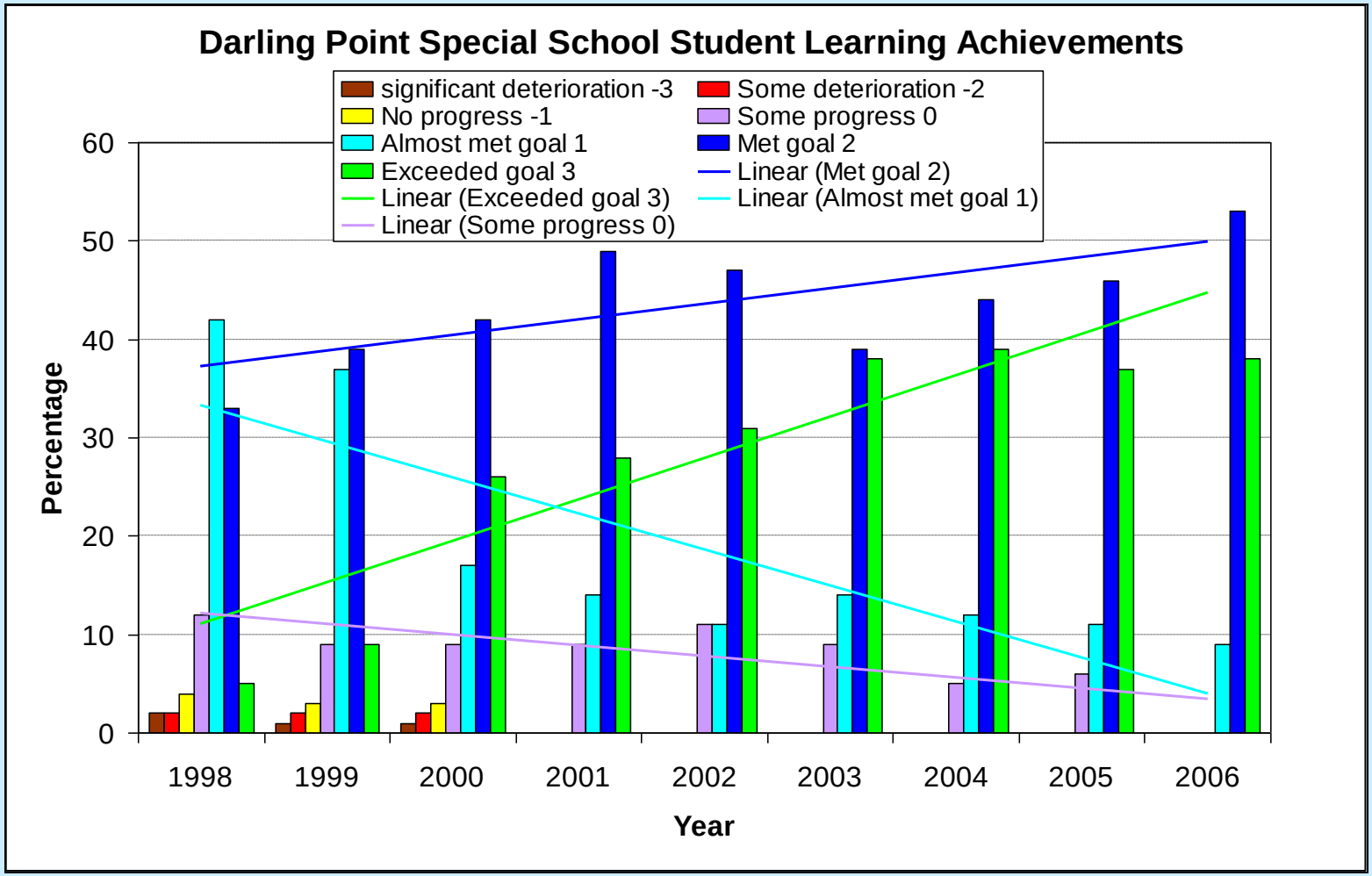
Curriculum at the school …

- **English** and **Literacy**
- **Communication including adaptive and augmented systems and Auslan**
- **Numeracy and Mathematics**
- **Visual Arts**
- **Manual Arts and Machining**
- **Enterprise programs – Packaging, Cleaning, Laundry**
- **Horticulture/Agri-foods** including Certificate 1 course and manage and maintain gardens at the school and at various local businesses and clubs
- **Hospitality** including Certificate 1 and operate through the school Coffee Shop, Tuckshop and Coffee Bar programs
- **Certificate 1 in Vocational Pathways**
- **Health and Physical Education**
- **Hydrotherapy**
- **Science**
- **Asian and Pacific Studies**
- **Life Skills**
- **Music and Drumming**

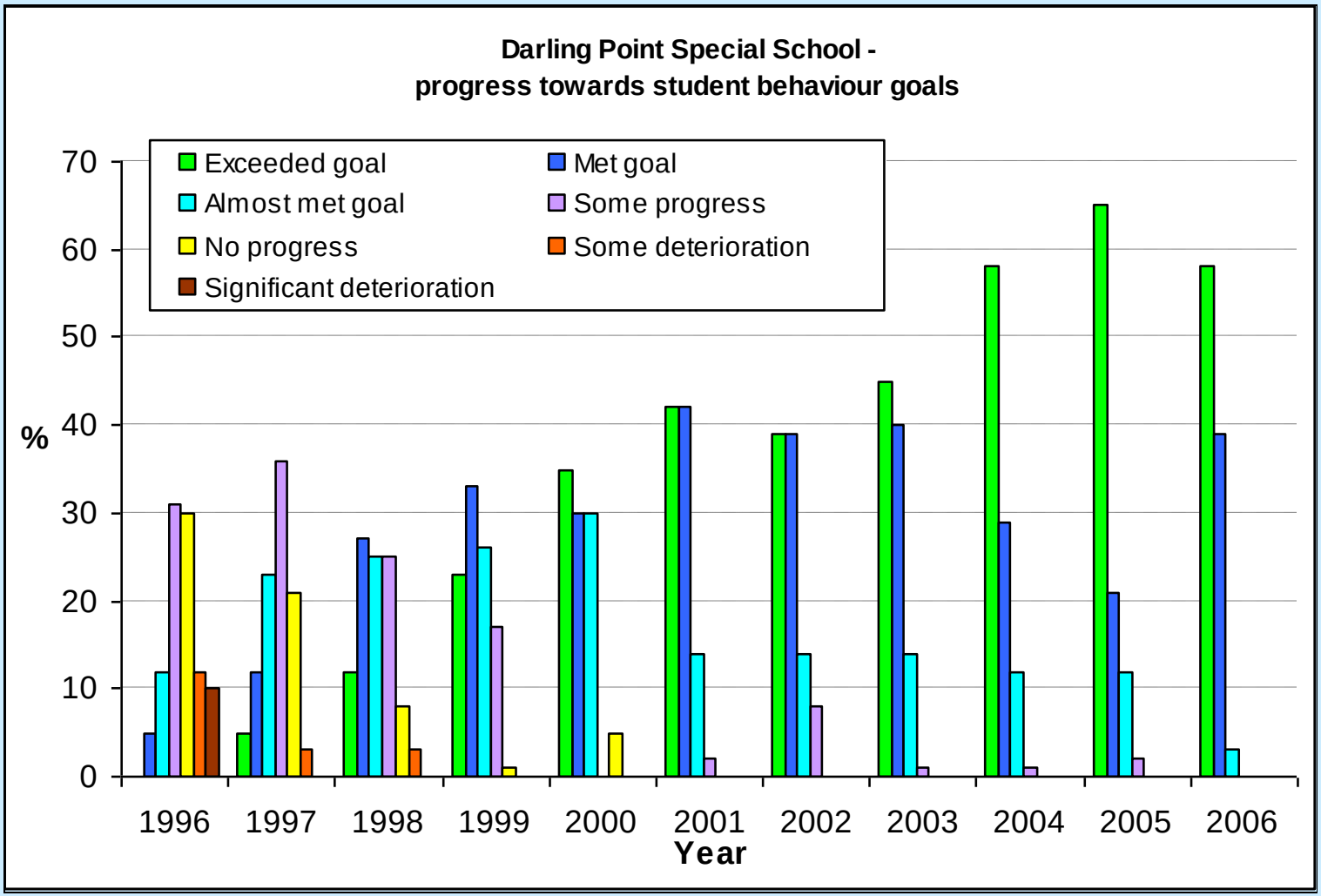
Staff and student data …

- ★Average staff attendance (2013) = 98%
- ★Staff retention 2012-2013 = 100% of eligible personnel
- ★Average student attendance (2013) = 94% (partial out illness linked to disability)

Student learning achievements …

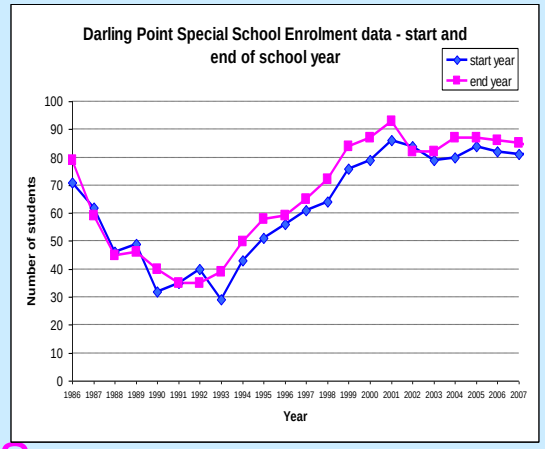


Student progress towards behaviour goals …



Issues in 1996, 1997 prior to PBS research project

- Enrolment growth on a small campus area
- Life quality for staff and students
- Staff morale
- Concerns amongst parents
- Changing nature of student issues
- Staff confidence in working with increasing numbers of students with Autistic Spectrum Disorder
- Range and severity of accidents and injuries associated with student behaviour issues
- Integration of IEPs with school curriculum and behaviour plans



The school process

- Discussions amongst concerned staff, parents, mentors from university faculty, ensuring that we had the information that we needed including conducting a literature search
- Force field and cost/benefit analyses – Who will be affected? How? Best case? Worst case?
- IABA training (4-day and intensive)
- Environmental scan, situational analysis, needs analysis
- Comparison between traditional behaviour management and positive behaviour support methodologies
- Partnership agreement amongst staff and parents, university, community groups
- Decision to undertake a one-year research project

Comparison of traditional behaviour management and positive behaviour support

- **Traditional behaviour management**
  - Views the individual as the problem
  - Attempts to ‘fix’ the individual
  - Aims to extinguish behaviour
  - Sanctions aversives
  - Takes days or weeks to ‘fix’ a single behaviour
  - Often implemented by a behavioural specialist
  - Resorted to when systems are inflexible

- **Positive behaviour support**
  - Views systems, settings and skill deficiencies as the problem
  - Attempts to ‘fix’ systems, settings and skills
  - Sanctions positive approaches
  - Takes years to create responsive systems, personalized settings, and empowering skills
  - Implemented by a dynamic, collaborative team using person-centered planning in typical settings
  - Flourishes when systems are flexible

Moving into the research project

- ✶ Professional development for school research team in the IABA model
- ✶ Information sessions for parents and other interested personnel
- ✶ Values and beliefs clarification across the wider school community
- ✶ Concurrent school culture shift to values-based leadership and management

Starting the Research

- Identification of class group for research project
- Functional analysis and multi-element planning for all students in the research class
- Selection of research assistants and management group for research project
- Identification of data gathering, recording and analysis protocols

Research hypotheses

- That positive programming via the IABA multi-element model provides a framework to achieve long-term behaviour change for students – individually and in groups - in a special school
- That Functional Analysis and Positive Programming approaches can be generalized to a whole of school application
- That teachers and teacher aides are receptive to, and benefit from, a coordinated, structured approach to behaviour support
- That Positive Behaviour Support fosters values-based strategic and operational planning and decision-making
- That Positive Behaviour Support improves staff morale, staff confidence, and staff and student safety as well as student learning outcomes.

Key issues from the literature

Effective behaviour support technologies need

- ✶ Supportive relationships
- ✶ A focus on educational outcomes not compliance
- ✶ Programs that achieve skills for students to meet legitimate needs in an acceptable way
- ✶ Staff professional development, mentoring and coaching
- ✶ Principal and school community support
- ✶ Understanding that behaviour, curriculum, pedagogy, school organisation, leadership and relationships are inter-twined in multi-dimensional ways
- ✶ Understanding of behaviour as purposeful with links to life quality, communication, relationships, sensory perception, and needs – fun, love and belonging, power, freedom

Key factors that were accepted by the school community

- Behaviour is a legitimate attempt to meet a legitimate need
- Punishment does not change behaviour
- Staff characteristics, values, beliefs, and expertise mitigate for or against success
- School systems underpin successful behavioural outcomes
- School leadership and support are integral to positive change in staff behaviour support approaches
- Behavioural consultation and the ‘expert’ model are intrinsically irrelevant for successful behavioural outcomes
- Values-based school cultures support behavioural and learning outcomes

The research class

- ✶ Four students - participation in the research project was actively endorsed by their parents
- ✶ All male, aged from 6 years to 11 years (Mean = 8.75 years)
- ✶ Issues: 2 x intellectual impairment and autism; 1 x autism ; I x intellectual and physical impairment (Cornelia de Lange syndrome)
- ✶ 3 students were not verbal and the remaining student's language was echolalic; one student experienced severe dyspraxia and allergy issues; one student has a orthopedic and medical and issues

Research model

- Single case experimental design
- Data collection used interval-recording procedures for individual general goals
- Data collection used individualized procedures for individual student goals

Programming model

- ✶ Functional assessment using the *Behaviour Assessment Guide* (Willis, LaVigna and Donnellan, 1993)
- ✶ Functional analysis to define problem behaviours, identify target behaviours, antecedents - including setting events, cultural appropriateness, relationship issues, and social valorization
- ✶ Hypothesizing the functions of the problem behaviours
- ✶ Multi-element programming
- ✶ Data gathering, recording and analysis
- ✶ Professional accountability monitoring using the Periodic Service Review process

Multi-element programming to maximize frequency and intensity of desired behaviours

Ecological supports	Positive program	Direct treatments
✶Specific ecological management e.g. temperature, light, sounds ✶Instructional methods and goals ✶Interpersonal relationships ✶Other pollutants ✶Other facilitators	✶General skills ✶Developmental skills ✶Functionally equivalent skills ✶Functionally related skills ✶Coping skills	✶Positive reinforcement ✶Stimulus control ✶Instructional control ✶Stimulus satiation ✶Neuro-physiology ✶Diet ✶Medication

Crisis management strategies to achieve rapid, safe control

★Risk assessment

★Crisis management plan

- Active listening
- Stimulus change
- Ecological manipulations

✓inter-positioning ✓antecedent control ✓proximity strategies ✓instructional strategies	✓facilitative or problem solving strategies ✓stimulus change ✓counter-intuitive strategies

Evidence to support successful outcomes

✶ Student data

- School attendance
- Progress towards general goals
- Progress towards individual goals
- Point-in-time and trend data linking behaviour, learning, well-being, life quality issues
- Communication – time, strategies, etc. - with parents, families, other professionals

✶ Staff data

- Interventions completed
- Time to develop and implement plan components
- Time for training, mentoring, coaching, de-briefing
- Incidents and injuries
- Time required by Principal
- Time required by project management team
- Staff and parent opinion survey data (EQ survey)

Student program components

- ✶ Play skills
- ✶ Choice making
- ✶ Communication
- ✶ Proprioception
- ✶ Coordination – gross and fine motor
- ✶ Reading
- ✶ Numeracy
- ✶ Computers and augmented technology
- ✶ Self help
- ✶ Relaxation and stress management

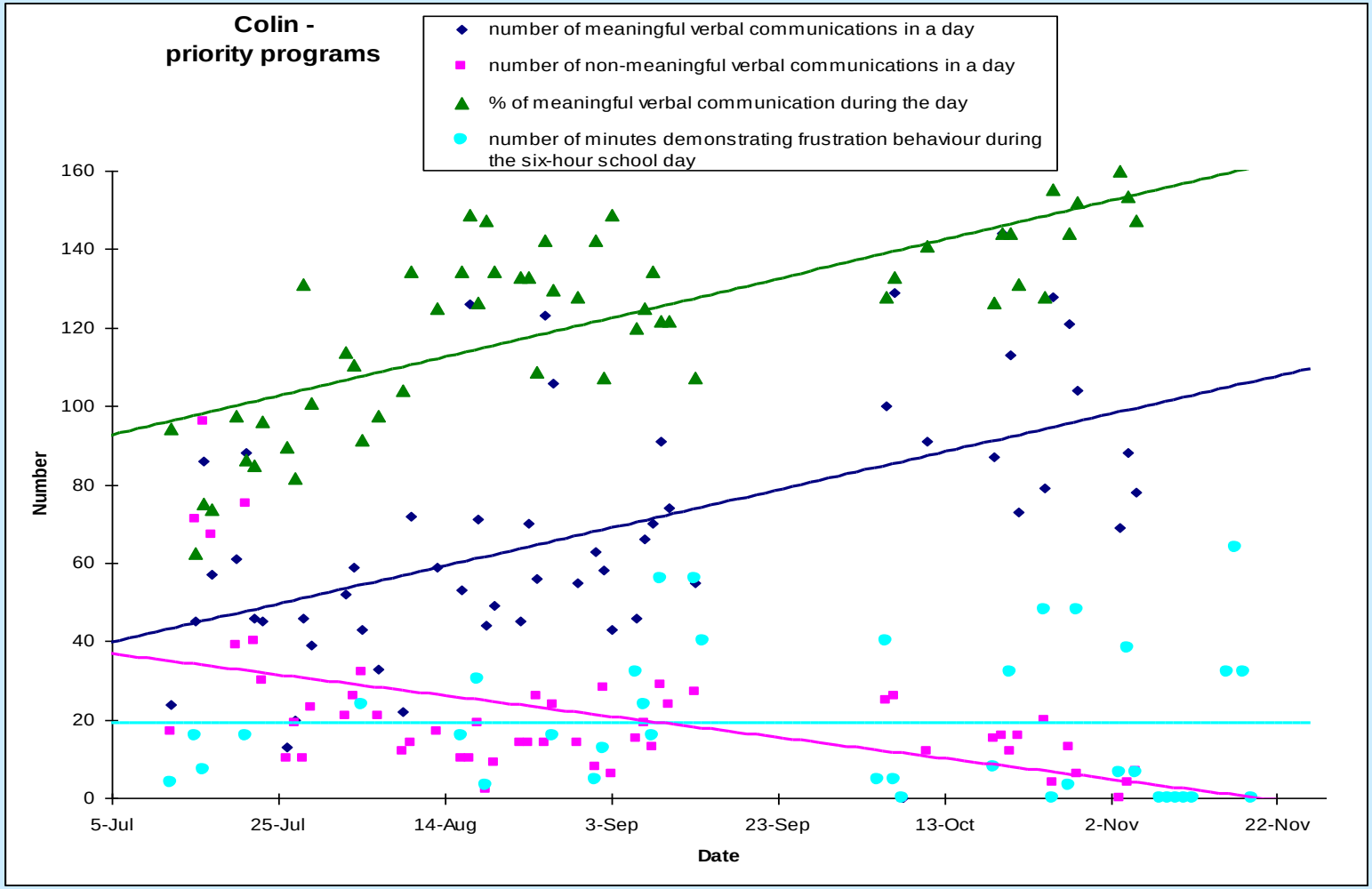
Positive treatments

- Positive reinforcement - reinforcers identified in consultation with family members (inventories) and schedules informed by baseline frequency and incidence data
- Stimulus satiation
- Dietary management – yeast, gluten, diary free diets for two students, no preservatives and artificial colours for all students
- Medication – related to neurological conditions

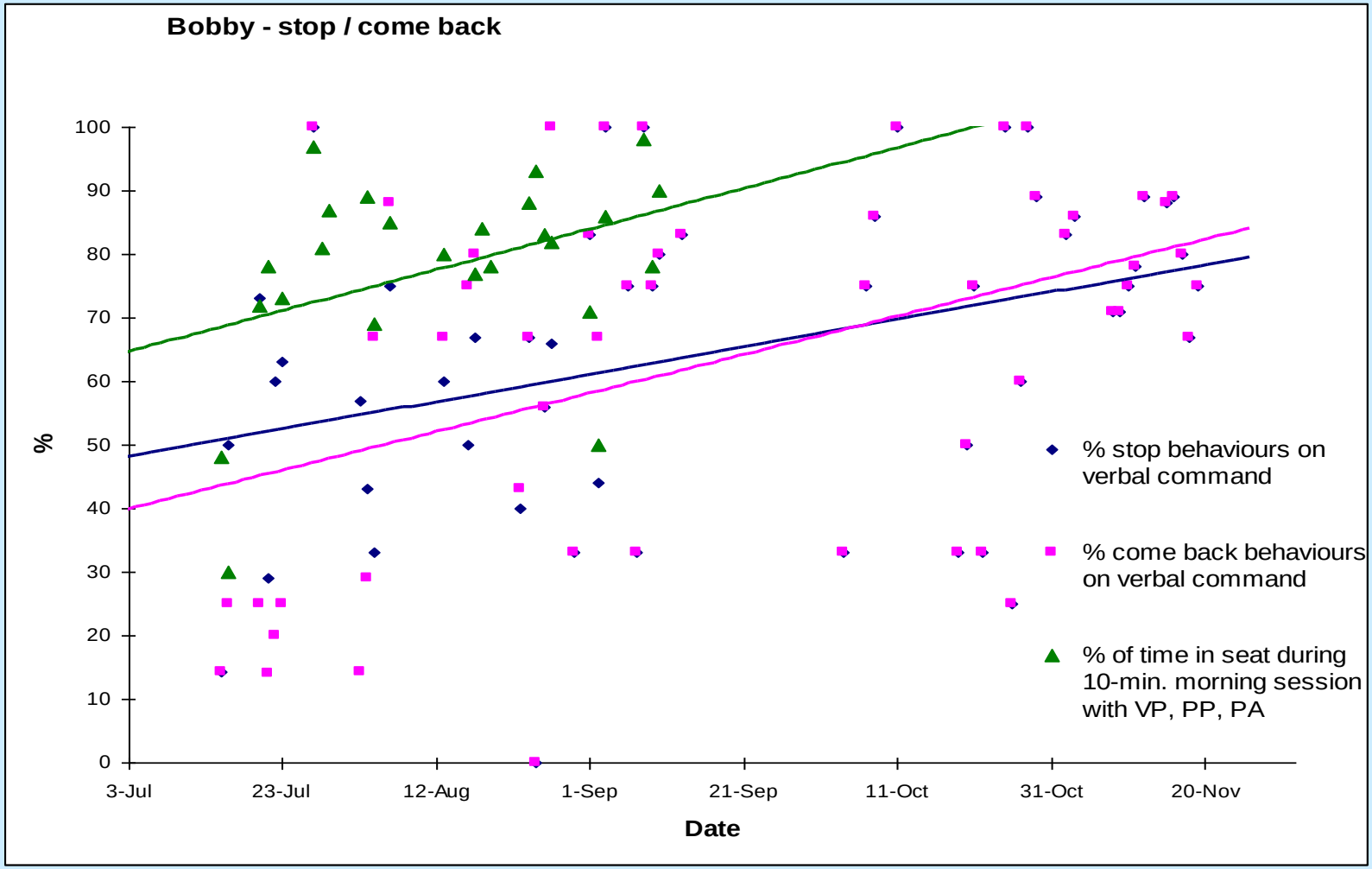
Crisis management

- Active listening
- Stimulus change including non-contingent reinforcement and time-in, capitulation, massage, music, aromatherapy
- No timeout or restraint procedures were used as these were aversive for all four students in the research class and physically contra-indicated for one student
- Staff were taught non-aversive strategies to escape pinches, hair-pulls, grabs which were significant issues in working with one student

Colin's priority data – communication and behaviour



Bobby's priority data – stop/come back



Outcomes

- Short- and long-term behaviour changes were achieved to at least some extent by all four students
- Educational improvements were achieved by all four students
- Staff understood from experience that behaviour is a legitimate attempt to meet a legitimate need – that it is essentially communicative in nature and purpose (a values / beliefs change occurred)
- The team in the research class demonstrated and were able to share with colleagues, their values-based practices

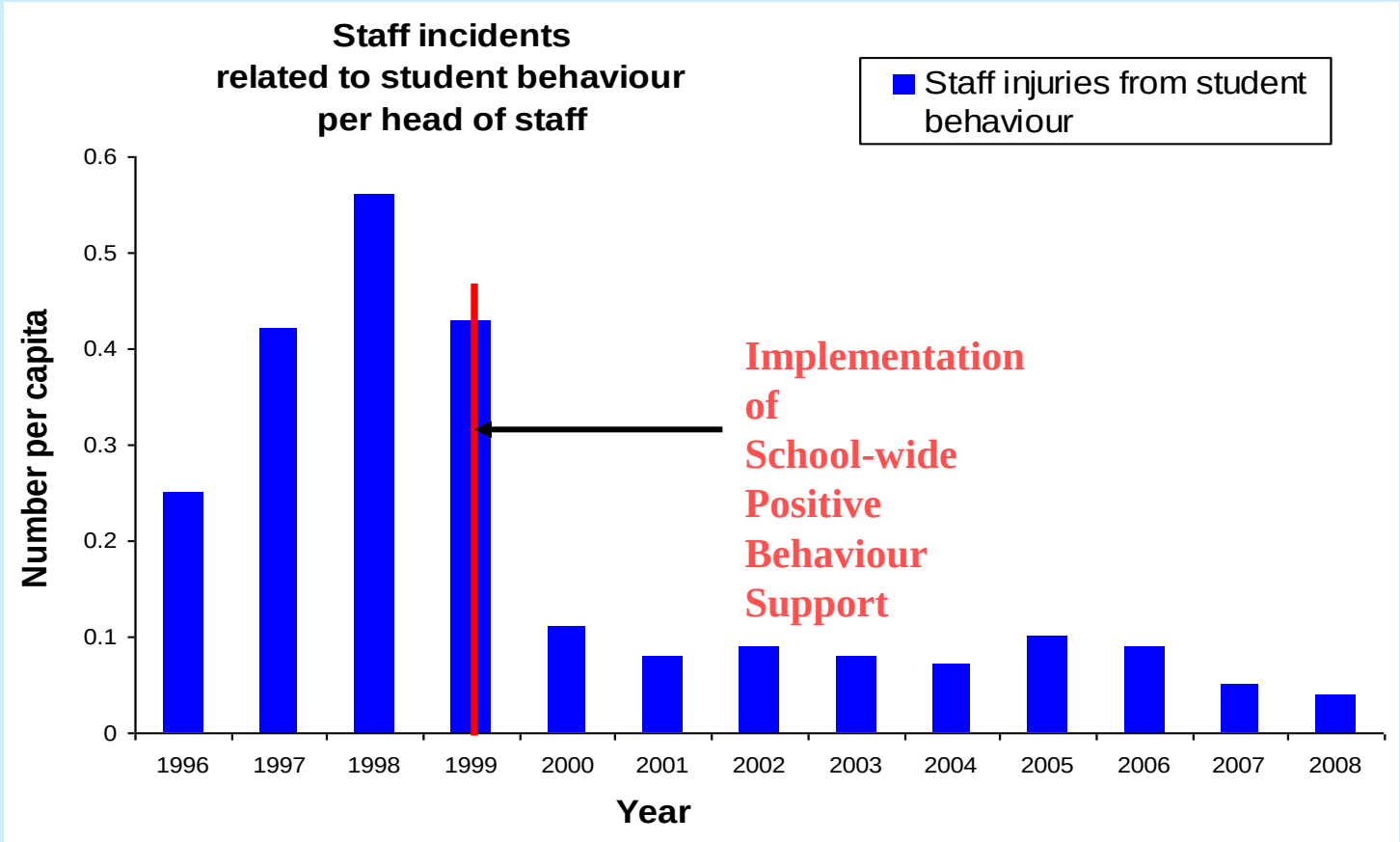
Outcomes cont.

- School-wide endorsement of at least some of the values, beliefs and understandings that underpin PBS and the IABA model
- Unanimous staff decision to adopt PBS and the IABA model as the process for behaviour support across the school
- Greater focus on coaching and mentoring amongst the staff team
- Progress towards horizontal leadership structures in the school and enhanced risk taking amongst staff
- Changes in parent knowledge and understanding of problem behaviour
- Progress towards the school as a coordinated, learning organization

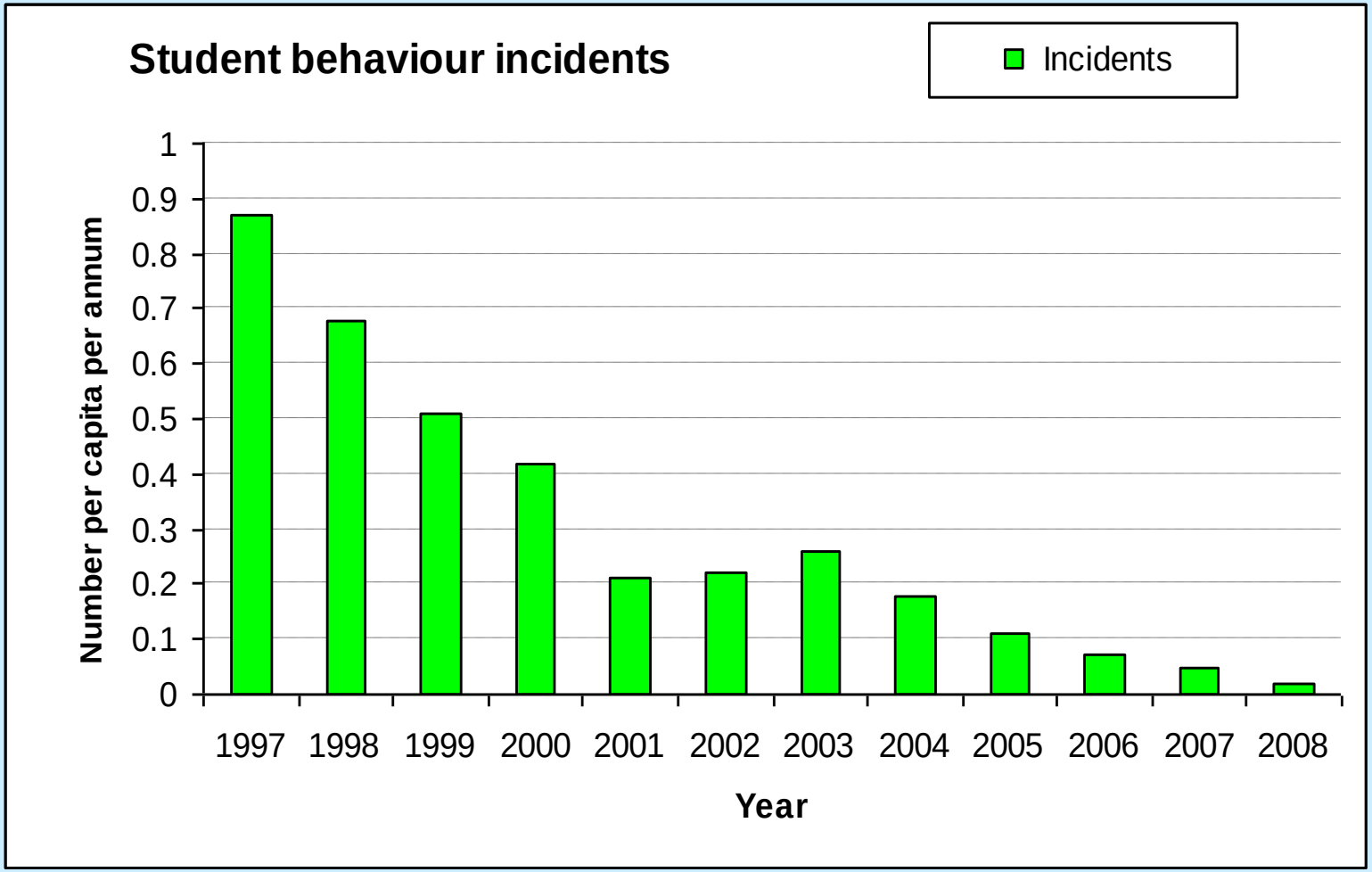
Outcomes …

- Student life quality
- Student behaviour
- Student learning
- Parent and staff satisfaction
- Teacher knowledge and quality practice indicators
- Consistency of practice across the school

Staff injuries caused by student behaviour



Student behaviour incidents



Then to now …

- School focus on PBS in all aspects of planning
- Commitment to Professional Development for all staff
- Adoption of a straight-forward data gathering and analysis mechanism to record, monitor and report student achievements and outcomes (goal attainment scaling)
- Improved staff confidence and satisfaction especially regarding competence, safety, resources, support, school organization

Teacher conclusions about PBS and the multi-element model …

PBS technologies

- ✶ **work best in a values-based strategic and operational planning and decision-making climate;**
- ✶ **need teamwork, consultation, collaboration and networks with other agencies to succeed;**
- ✶ **work successfully in whole class and whole school contexts as well as with individuals by addressing ecological management, skill development, positive non-aversive supports emphasising improvement;**
- ✶ **require active and well-informed support from the school leadership team;**
- ✶ **take time to set up, especially when detailed functional analysis is required but even so, are cost- and time-efficient;**
- ✶ **do not need lengthy program documentation;**

Teacher conclusions about PBS and the multi-element model cont. …

PBS Technologies and the multi-element model …

- ✶ need a succinct programming format so that all members of the class team, including relief staff can be readily informed of the issues and strategies for both proactive and reactive support and confident in applying the components of the plan;
- ✶ provide a focus on skills, systems and the environment and when this happens, the behaviour seems to take care of itself;
- ✶ require an efficient process of data recording and analysis so the team can regularly monitor improvements and analyse issues [goal attainment scaling (G.A.S.) has been implemented across the school];
- ✶ foster a scientific, yet caring approach and perception of our work by families;
- ✶ are based on long-term outcomes not on short-term solutions;
- ✶ reduce the incidence of accidents and incidents linked to student behaviour challenges;

Then to now cont. …

- Improved parent satisfaction especially regarding behaviour, safety, educational outcomes, type of program, home-school relationships, communication and involvement in decision-making and school planning
- Professional conversations amongst staff and parents and other agencies – wrap-around planning, support, mentoring, coaching,
- Focus on life quality, relationships and communication
- Evidence-driven, collaborative goal setting, programming and decision-making
- Enhanced school-community links

More conclusions …

PBS and the Multi-element model used within a values-based school context that is warm, welcoming, responsive, based on transparent relationships and collegiality …

- ✶ work best within horizontal leadership;
- ✶ assist analysis of the purpose of behaviour;
- ✶ enhance staff, family, and student self-perceptions of well-being;
- ✶ support job satisfaction and confidence;
- ✶ contribute to reduced staff absences and work cover claims linked to stress, incidents and accidents;
- ✶ enhance confidence to take risks and manage challenges;
- ✶ improve communication with families.

Actions for success …

- PD to assist understanding that life quality, not behaviour, is the real focus; processes to facilitate behaviour change; and why behaviour change matters
- Ongoing development of values-based strategic planning and decision-making, and implementation of PBS technologies
- Leadership and management approaches that support the implementation of PBS
- Data … data … data

Actions for success cont. …

- Integration of PBS technologies into whole school practices and protocols including curriculum, teaching, assessment, reporting
- Professional development that links the multi-element model with evidence-based explicit teaching approaches
- Mentoring and coaching opportunities for under-graduate teachers and social educators
- Embedding of wrap-around planning and communication protocols

Facilitators for success …

- The existence of real problems that demanded solutions
- Recognition that something different was needed
- Some staff who were flexible and open to change
- A small team who had completed the intensive IABA training
- Highly skilled and motivated university researcher and research assistants
- Principal interest and motivation
- Timing … the school's project assisted in leading the way towards whole school positive behaviour support across schools with the Department of Education
- Alignment between PBS and the Departmental Code of Conduct and the way the model supports a positive school culture
- Developing Performance Framework

Facilitators for success cont.

- Embedded shared values across the school community achieved through cooperative processes amongst Principal, School Council
- The research project
- Supportive staff
- Positive changes in student behaviour as a result of multi-element interventions
- Increased staff : student ratio assisted by international interns from Denmark and Japan
- Some universities teaching PBS within teacher preparation courses
- Alignment between this model and the *Values for Australian Schooling*
- *Emphasis on curriculum and teaching, and student and teacher standards within Inclusive Education*

Threats to success …

- Differential levels of adult understanding
- Beliefs that punishment changes behaviour
- Not accepting that real, long-lasting behaviour change takes time
- Issues with recording and analysing data
- Some staff preferring to work as isolates and not in teams
- Staff transfers as part of Department of Education and IPS processes
- Variable opportunities at the school level to participate in decision making regarding recruitment and selection of staff

More threats to success …

- Changes to staff profile including aging staff
- Changes to under-graduate teacher preparation courses at some universities
- Departmental policies – conflict between SWPBS and policies of suspension and exclusion, and time out and restraint on the other
- Industrial issues
- Student transfers from schools where aversive processes are intrinsic

Making meaning of the multi-element model …

- To succeed, any new approach requires wide-spread knowledge, understanding, acceptance and clear links to the values and beliefs of decision-makers

So … as a team, we consider whether we ..

- **know?**
- **understand?**
- **accept?**
- **believe?**
- **prioritise?**
- **do?**

Right to an Ordinary Life

"I am talking of a silent, aching struggle, ever infused by love, affecting millions of lives, which falls mostly under the radar …people who are unable to connect with and share experiences because they have no other choices available to them."

Hon Bill Shorten M.P. , 2009.

The non-linear multi-element model breaks down these barriers and grants the right of an ordinary life to people otherwise isolated because they simply tried to meet legitimate needs without the skills or supports to do so.