

### **ABC Final Project**

The challenging behavior that I targeted for my ABC Project was keeping hands to oneself. My student Adam was constantly touching, hitting or poking other students. This became an increasing problem especially when we were sitting at the carpet. Once he started touching another student, that student who was being touched started to complain and interrupted everything that was going on. I did not want one of my students to feel uncomfortable in the class. However, those calling out about being touched were interrupting the entire class. Therefore, I felt that I needed to work on the problem behavior at hand which was keeping one's hands to one's self.

Not only was keeping hands to oneself a problem on the carpet for Adam, but it also was a problem when we were lined up and were walking down the hall to go somewhere. Again, it caused the student who was being touched to call out "stop" and interrupted our quiet hallway line. I was then forced to stop the line to deal with the behavior making us late for specials/lunch.

As a result, Adam caused challenges for me in my teaching mainly when I was trying to keep the classroom under control. He seemed to be the catalyst that set off the entire class. For example, he would touch somebody. The child who was touched would call out and then that seemed to be an invitation for everyone to just start

talking again. I then had to refocus the class once again. It took a lot of time away from my instructional time because I needed to be constantly refocusing the group due to his inability to keep his hands to himself.

I think my stance towards Adam before intervention was changing constantly. There were sometimes that I felt I was abiding by Brophy's Attributes of Effective Socializers. I was keeping my cool and had a lot of patience with Adam. However, there were other times where I felt like I was about to scream. I never actually did, but that thought sometimes rolled around in my head. I just wanted to say sometimes, "Seriously, how many times do I have to tell you to keep your hands to yourself?" Again, this never came out of my mouth, but I was thinking it. This meant, when I was feeling challenged by Adam sometimes my patience and determination were not in place. I needed to remember when this happened to take a step back, take a breath and to keep pushing forward with Adam because he was making progress.

The Brophy stance that I needed to work on at the beginning was my patience and determination (not really the determination part, but the being patient part). There were some days that I felt like I had no patience at all for Adam and it was something I had been trying really hard to work on.

Since Adam had such difficulty keeping his hands to himself, I collected data for three days (the data is attached at the end). I observed how many times Adam touched another student during morning meeting, literacy stations and choice time. I compared that to another boy that I observed touching other students during the same time of day.

After analyzing the data collected of Adam from observing him touching other students when he was expected to keep his hands to himself I noticed several interesting things. One thing I noticed was that the behavior occurred most frequently during morning meeting which is conducted on the carpet. During this time the students are seated within close proximity to each other. During this time Adam (and all of the students) is able to choose his carpet spot. Adam chooses to sit usually by other boys. On Wednesday, he sat by a girl and the occurrences that he did not keep his hands to himself went down. Making me believe that if the conditions were changed so that Adam was seated next to a girl he would have a better chance of promoting positive behavior.

A second thing I noticed was that the behavior occurred less frequently during literacy stations. During this time students are seated at their table doing an independent literacy activity. Adam sits at a table between two girls and another boy who sits across from him. All other tables are also doing independent (however

different) independent literacy activities. It would appear that Adam was able to keep his hands to himself more during literacy stations because he was not sitting in as close proximity to other students as he was on the carpet and the students who surrounded him were girls.

The last activity that I observed Adam during was choice time. During choice time students get to pick from a variety of playtime activities. Adam does not want to have to sit out during choice time and miss out on a chance to play and therefore tries very hard to keep his hands to himself. On the first day, he was playing blocks with two other boys and one girl and this was the day that he needed the most reminders. Since blocks requires students to play closely with each other Adam had a hard time keeping his hands to himself and I often noticed him getting "too rowdy" during this playtime activity. On the second day, he was playing puzzles with one other boy and two girls. I believe he did not need as many reminders on this day because puzzles is more of an independent play activity and therefore he was not in as close of proximity to other students as he was when he was playing with the blocks.

After analyzing the data I collected on Adam, I was trying to change his inability to keep his hands to himself while at the carpet. When observing Adam I noticed that this is a major problem mostly during time on the carpet when he is in close proximity to other students. His inability to keep his hands to himself was

distracting to Adam, other students in the classroom and myself. Constantly needing to redirect Adam made the morning meeting and lessons I tried to conduct on the carpet somewhat choppy making it difficult for students to follow along. Therefore, I wanted Adam to not touch other students when he was expected to keep his hands to himself.

There were three intervention strategies that I tried with Adam. The first strategy was to give him a sectioned off spot of the carpet that his body needed to stay in. I used tape to make a box for Adam that would be "his space" and he would need to keep his hands, legs and body within that box while we were at the carpet. Brophy suggested having the child work in "stimuli-reduced spaces for working," (p. 273). Not only did I have a set area for Adam to sit in, but I made sure I was in close proximity to him or that he was surrounded by other girls since my observations of Adam concluded he was less likely to touch someone if he was sitting by girls.

The second intervention strategy that I tried with Adam was making him my "carpet messenger." Meaning about every 5 minutes I had Adam go do something that involved him to get up and move about the classroom. These errands included turning on/off the lights, getting something from my desk, getting me a book to read, etc. This allowed Adam to be able to move more often during our time at the

carpet. Brophy states a teacher may try to "increase their opportunities for movement around the classroom" and to "use these students as messengers or assign them other helper roles that involve physical movement," (p. 273).

The third intervention strategy that I tried with Adam was giving him a "fidget toy." A fidget toy was something for Adam to keep in his hands while we were at the carpet to give his hands something to do instead of touching other students. I asked the Special Education department at my school if they had something that could be helpful for Adam. They gave me a squishy ball that had a loop for Adam's wrist to go through. Therefore, it allowed Adam to squish the ball and move the ball around while it was attached to his wrist.

The first intervention strategy of making a set box for Adam to sit in at the carpet was appropriate because it gave him a set boundary that he needed to stay in. I think often times Adam did not realize he was doing something wrong because he seemed to have a problem controlling his impulses. However, I was expecting this to work because it would allow Adam to visually see the boundaries in which he needed to keep himself in as opposed to just telling him where he needed to keep himself in. Also, I thought this was an appropriate strategy because Brophy has stated that having a set working space for a student with hyperactivity can help control that child's behavior (p. 273).

The second strategy of giving Adam the title of the "carpet messenger" was appropriate because it gave him the opportunity to move around when we were sitting at the carpet for a longer period than Adam could handle. It seemed at times that Adam's body needed to be constantly in motion and so I knew it was difficult for him to stay seated for even a couple of minutes. Therefore, I was expecting this to work because Adam would be given opportunities to move around the classroom in a safe and nonintrusive way. By running "my errands" on the carpet he would be less distracting to other students around him because he would not be getting as restless on the carpet and touching other students because of this. Another happy outcome of Adam being the carpet helper was that it would make him feel needed in the classroom. I thought that this would give him a sense of accomplishment within the classroom and make him feel better about himself.

The third strategy of giving Adam a "fidget toy" while on the carpet was appropriate because it would keep his hands busy in a constructive way instead of a way that would get him into trouble. Having the fidget toy would allow Adam to keep his hands in constant motion without bugging others around him. I was expecting this to work because I noticed that Adam's hands were always moving even when he was trying his hardest to keep them to himself. By giving him the fidget toy it would keep his hands moving and also remind him that his hands needed to stay to himself and not

go wandering towards another student to touch them. Also, I thought this was appropriate and expected to work because I had a long conversation with the Kindergarten Special Education teacher about Adam and strategies I could use on him and she has found with Kindergarteners the fidget toy works very well.

After my implementation of the planned interventions, I observed a decrease in his problem behavior. On average before the intervention strategies Adam was touching another student on the carpet about 7 times. After implementing the interventions Adam's behavior of touching others had decreased to about two times on the carpet. And of those two times, one of the times was usually initiated by another student. For example, a student would go into "his area" on the carpet. Therefore, I thought the strategies I decided to implement have really improved Adam's behavior on the carpet. Along with my intervention strategies I developed, Adam and I have now had more opportunities to get to know each other. He now trusts me more and I really only have to give him a "teacher look" and he knows that he needs to get his behavior into check. This relationship did not develop overnight obviously. It took quite a few weeks for us to know and understand how we react to situations. Therefore, I think this was a huge factor along with my intervention strategies to the improvement of Adam's behavior.



Overall, I think my intervention strategies are working very well. There has been a lot of promising changes in the target behavior with the three strategies that I decided to implement. With the defining his space on the carpet, he now knows exactly where he needs to be. There is not a question of where he or his body should be because he can clearly see the lines.

The fidget toy has been a great success as well. He uses this pretty much the entire day. He uses it during specials (like art, music, and library), when we are walking through the hallway and basically any time that he is not using his hands for something else. An interesting thing I started to notice with this is that he seems to be using the fidget toy less and less. I have given him the ability to just go and get it whenever he feels he needs the toy. I have noticed that he goes and gets it less and less. However, his positive behavior has stayed the same.

Lastly, the extra movements while sitting at the carpet have seemed to help as well. Since Adam has such a little attention span, this helps him regroup without it being a huge disruption. However, there has been a problem with this particular strategy. The other students seem to be a little jealous of Adam because I am always asking him to do things for me. I try to be conscious of it that I am not asking him to do too many things. However, it is very noticeable that I ask him to do things much more than other students. I am not sure how to eliminate this matter. I had a

discussion with the group when I gave Adam his fidget toy and started the intervention strategies that we all needed different things to learn and for some of us to learn we need to have something in our hands to hold. The discussion seemed to help a little, but I know there is still that jealousy.

I believe the intervention strategies I am using with Adam would be considered "best practices" because of the information I have received from reading Brophy's text and communicating with the Special Education department at my school. On page 273, Brophy suggests using "stimuli-reduced spaces for working," and I believe that I am doing this with a sectioned off area for Adam to sit in at the carpet. Also, Brophy states a teacher may try to "increase their opportunities for movement around the classroom" and to "use these students as messengers or assign them other helper roles that involve physical movement," (p. 273). I am doing this by having Adam be my "carpet messenger" and therefore continuing to use "best practices." Lastly, using a fidget toy was recommended by the Special Education department at my school and since they have a lot of experience working with students like Adam they would know the "best practices" to use in this particular situation. Therefore, overall I believe I am doing a good job using "best practices" with Adam.

After looking at Brophy's list of effective socializers on page 20, I feel that I could do more modeling with Adam about the desired behavior I wish for him to

have. I did a lot of modeling with the whole class at the beginning of the year. However, as the year goes on I do less modeling than I wish I did. I think modeling to Adam how to deal with situations that frustrate him would greatly help his impulse control because he would be able to have the words to say what he wants to say.

In conclusion, my professional stance has changed greatly when it comes to Adam. Before I began intervention, I had a hard time keeping my patience in check when it came to Adam. It was very frustrating to have to constantly remind him to keep his hands to himself. I have noticed that my thoughts and attitudes have changed drastically towards this student. I have learned a lot more about him (especially family background) that has given me a better understanding of why he is the way that he is. I think this helped me handle the behavior better because I knew the reasons behind it. After learning about Adam's family background, I have realized that I am the only person he can count on to be there every day for him. Our relationship has become much more meaningful to me and to him. This has greatly impacted not only his behavior, but his academics as well.

I see myself shift less and less to an ineffective professional stance. I believe this is because my class has finally become "one." We all have a better understanding of each other and my students know what is expected of them now. We continue to

take calming breaths when I feel that I need to regroup and/or when I feel that my class as a whole needs to regroup. This has been a very effective strategy to get us all back on track.

### Collect Data About the Challenging Behavior

Target Student: Adam

Date: October 12, 2012

Observer: Emily Rouls

Start Time 10/9/12

End Time 10/11/12

**Observation Recording Form:** Touching other students when expected to be keeping his hands to himself.

#### Tuesday, October 9, 2012

Time/Activity	Morning Meeting	Literacy Stations	Choice Time
Target Student	7	3	4
Comparison Peer	1	0	2

#### Observational Notes:

I noticed that the comparison peer is nervous about getting into trouble and therefore only needs one reminder to get him back focused if any. However, Adam does not seem fazed by the repercussions of his actions.

#### Wednesday, October 10, 2012

Time/Activity	Morning Meeting	Literacy Stations	Choice Time
Target Student	9	2	5
Comparison Peer	1	0	1

#### Observational Notes:

Today was a rough day on the carpet during morning meeting for Adam. I had to remove him from the carpeted area to a table chair because he could not keep his hands to himself.

#### Thursday, October 11, 2012

Time/Activity	Morning Meeting	Literacy Stations	Choice Time
Target Student	6	3	7
Comparison Peer	0	1	0

#### Observational Notes:

Today was a pretty standard day for Adam.