

Behavioral Consultation Summary

Name:
School:

Date of Report: 4 June 2007
Grade: 10

Background Information

XXX is a sixteen-year-old sophomore in Ms. XXX's Science class. XXX is a vibrant, outgoing young woman who possesses strong leadership qualities. She exhibits a genuine curiosity in terms of learning course content, and is frequently very self-aware of her behavioral and emotional state. XXX's Science class generally consists of two instructional variations: large group lecture, and individual seatwork.

Summary of Findings

Problem Definition

Ms. XXX brought XXX to this consultant's attention due to recent intensifying of inappropriate verbal outbursts in class. There is no consistency as to the content of these outbursts, although Ms. XXX did note that XXX tended to verbalize more frequently in response to what she perceived as "stupid" comments by classmates. XXX has exhibited these behaviors since the class started in late January 2007, but Ms. XXX noted a recent increase in intensity and duration of these outbursts, so much so that XXX has had to be escorted from the classroom.

Ms. XXX estimates that these outbursts occur multiple times in an 84-minute class, and are usually in response to outbursts from other students. Also, outbursts seem to occur most frequently during the large group lecture format and less frequently when XXX is engaged in independent seatwork. Consequences of these actions vary depending on context; usually Ms. XXX is the adult who addresses them (Ms. XXX, a classroom aide, is also in this class). Ms. XXX gives corrective remarks, and has done so both inside and outside the classroom. Ms. XXX indicates that she has tried to talk to XXX about using her leadership skills to be a positive role model.

An acceptable short-term goal determined by this consultant and the consultee was to reduce the frequency of XXX's outbursts by 30 to 50 percent.

Problem Analysis

Ms. XXX and Ms. XXX agreed to keep a tally of how many times during her classes XXX engaged in an inappropriate verbal outburst. Ms. XXX and Ms. XXX also agreed to record the length of each outburst and to rate each one on a scale of 1 – 3 (least intense to most intense). They accomplished this by making tick marks on a daily tally sheet for every incident. This was deemed an acceptable method of data collection due to its relative unobtrusiveness and relevance to our goal of reducing the behavior's frequency. Baseline data collection showed the following cumulative quantity of verbal outbursts per day, over ten school days: 3, 0 (absent), 7, 2, 9, 0, 4, 0 (absent), 15, 0 (In-School Suspension). The data represents an average of 5.7 outbursts per science class over 7 days in attendance. Additionally, Ms. XXX & Ms. XXX estimated that most of the outbursts could be rated 1 or 2 on a scale of 1 – 3, 1 being least disruptive and 3 being the most disruptive. This consultant and the consultee hypothesized that these outbursts may be an attention-seeking device for XXX. This hypothesis guided our discussion of possible interventions.

Intervention/Treatment Plan

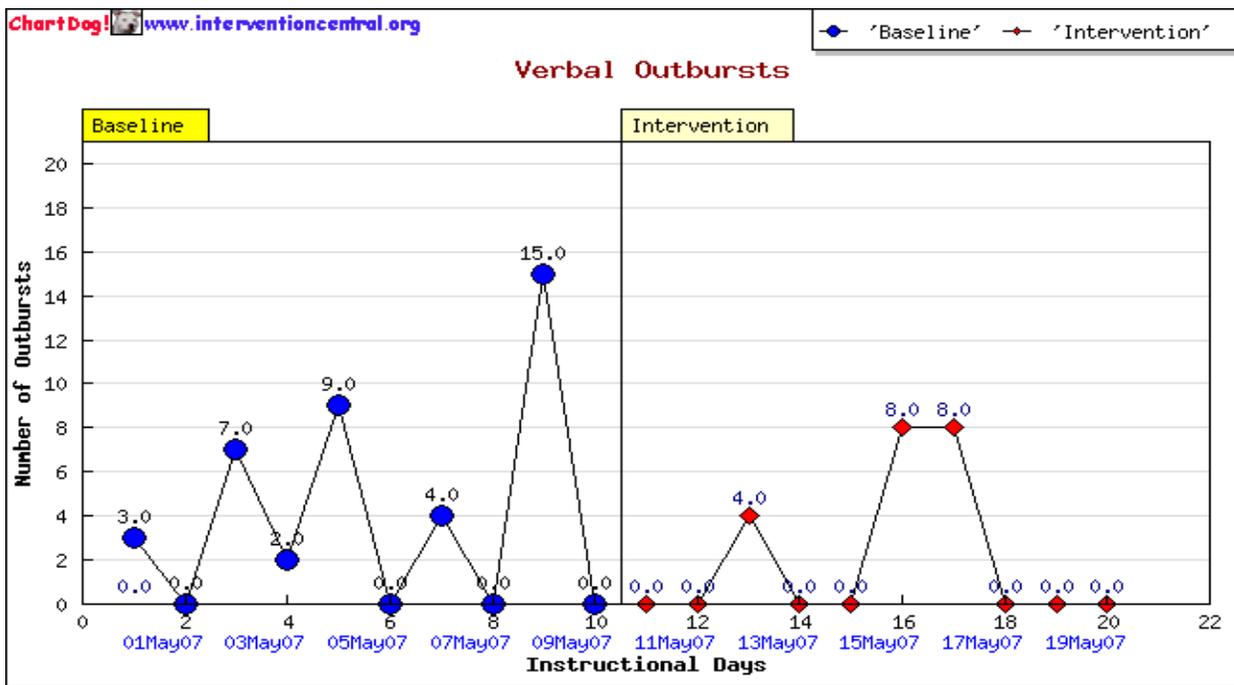
The teacher and this consultant collaborated to develop the following behavioral intervention plan:

1. The teacher will re-organize the class seating arrangement in order to separate XXX from the student who most provokes her target behavior. This will also separate other “problem groups” to improve the overall tone of the class.
2. The teacher will implement assigned seats for computer time, per item 1 above.
3. The teacher and aide will ignore minor, less disruptive behaviors (1s and 2s).
4. The teacher and aide will address more disruptive, “unignorable” behaviors quickly and quietly, and will not engage in dialogue with the student – instruct the student to stop and redirect the student's attention to the desired behavior.
5. The teacher and aide will provide random positive attention throughout the block. Positive reinforcement will likely take the form of verbal praise, and should specifically mention what she's doing well (e.g., "You're doing a great job on that worksheet; keep it up", etc.) Praise should be repeated every outburst-free 10 minutes (time interval can be shortened if necessary), as class allows.

This intervention plan required no external physical resources, and the teacher and aide were the personnel who implemented it. Treatment integrity was determined by the teacher's adherence to the numbered guidelines above. This treatment was acceptable to the teacher, and she agreed to implement the plan as designed; however, treatment integrity was only fair, due to several teacher absences during the intervention period. Despite the absences, the data discussed in the evaluation demonstrates a satisfactory level of treatment validity, conditional upon further monitoring of the intervention strategies.

Plan Evaluation and Recommendations:

The behavioral intervention seems to be working. As evidenced by the graph on the following page, XXX has begun to reduce her inappropriate verbal outbursts:



Since implementing the behavioral intervention, XXX's inappropriate verbal outbursts have been reduced from 5.7 per class to approximately 3.3 per class (above intervention data also include 3 absences over ten class days). The significant reduction in the target behaviors indicates that our initial functional hypothesis was at least partially accurate (see below). The teacher is happy with these results, as we exceeded our specified goal of halving the frequency of the behavior (demonstrated reduction is approximately 58%).

In followup consultation, Ms. XXX noted that while new seating arrangements and positive attention seemed to help, XXX still reacted verbally to distractions caused by peers in the form of engaging with them (e.g., asking students who come to class late where they were, why they were late, etc.). She also noted that XXX was far more likely to remain on-task when listening to music on her headphones. This consultant has asked Ms. XXX to continue to keep a record of informal observations to make up for XXX's absences during the ten-day intervention period; if the current plan ceases to be effective, we will revisit the hypothesized behavior and change the plan accordingly.

A review of XXX's most recent IEP indicated that these outbursts have been problematic in past classes, and that behavior contracts have been effective in helping her to reduce her outbursts. Should the current plan cease to be effective, this is another possible intervention to explore.

This consultant recommends maintaining the new seating chart for the remainder of the school year. The teacher should also continue to offer positive praise when appropriate. Finally, it is recommended that Ms. XXX utilize the headphones as both a reinforcer and an intervention, at her discretion, so as to continue to maximize XXX's on-task time in Science class.

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Date