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*Chapter 6*

**IMPLEMENTING SCHOOL-WIDE POSITIVE  
BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTIONS AND SUPPORTS  
(PBIS) IN GERMAN SCHOOLS: THE CHALLENGE  
OF KNOWLEDGE POLITICS, EDUCATION CULTURES  
AND TEACHER PERSPECTIVES**

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**ABSTRACT**

Germany, like most other Western countries, faces the challenge of integrating a majority of children and youth with emotional and behavioral difficulties (EBD) into the regular school system. But in contrast to North America, to date Germany does not possess an evidence-based school-wide model like PBIS that could help to actually achieve the Europe-wide or global political imperative of effectively including students with EBD. Learning why it is so difficult to implement PBIS in Germany's schools requires grappling with education studies in the country as well as with the historical development and present social relatedness of competing theoretical paradigms. From this starting point, it will be possible to gain a better understanding of the special professional identity of Germany's teachers and other school staff. It is against this background that the author took initial steps to implement PBIS in German schools. Sharing lessons learned from in-service training workshops, and using individual PBIS elements and interventions will help answer the questions of which areas of PBIS pose the greatest challenges for German teaching staffs and what familiar elements there are in PBIS for school personnel to rediscover and build on relatively easily. This chapter concludes with the observation that for teacher training designed to anchor PBIS in German schools to be successful, it must take into account the prevailing academic backgrounds and national characteristics that contribute to forming the professional identity of Germany's teachers.

## **1. INTRODUCTION: A POLITICAL CHALLENGE TO EDUCATE MOST OF GERMANY'S STUDENTS WITH EBD IN INCLUSIVE SETTINGS**

At UNESCO's "Access and Quality" World Conference on Special Needs Education that took place in Salamanca from June 7-10, 1994, inclusion was singled out as the most important goal of educational policy. In 2008, the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities adopted by the UN General Assembly in New York, 2006 took effect. On June 15, 2011, the government of the Federal Republic of Germany adopted a national action plan to implement the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The individual German states joined in by developing action plans for implementing the UN Convention. For instance, on July 3, 2012, North Rhine-Westphalia passed its action plan "One Society for All – Inclusion in North Rhine-Westphalia". With regard to the education of children and youth with EBD, the above political directives were taken up by the base, i.e., the regular schools, for the most part quite tentatively, because the German school system was not well prepared for such an initiative. Although there have been some more or less successful attempts at integrative or inclusive schooling in the EBD field dating back to the 1980s in Germany, such schooling has continued in alternative schools on a parallel track with special education since then. Even so, the present situation in German schools with regard to the inclusive education of children and youth with emotional and behavioral difficulties in particular can only be described extremely challenging.

Even if individual teachers and schools are doing outstanding work in the German inclusive educational system, there clearly is an overall deficit in schools and classrooms with regard to the systematized inclusive education of EBD students.

## **2. WHY A SYSTEM LIKE PBIS DID NOT TAKE ROOT IN GERMANY BEFORE NOW**

Evidently only a few of Germany's university scholars are aware of the existence of such an evidence-based, three-tiered system of intervention (see Algozzine and Algozzine, 2004; Lewis and Newcomer, 2004; Liaupsin, Jolivet and Scott 2004) that functions according to the principle of "response to intervention" (see Cheney et al., 2010, p. 152; Hawken, Vincent and Schuhmann, 2008; Sailor, Dolittle et al., 2009) and is viewed as workable and effective, especially in North America. In the United States many thousands of schools already utilize PBIS. From 2010 to 2011, approximately 1,400 schools in the state of Illinois had implemented PBIS, 1,000 schools in Florida, 900 in North Carolina, 800 in Maryland, 700 in Colorado, 600 in Missouri and 400 in Oregon (see Horner, Kincaid et al., 2014). Distinctive features are the school-wide deployment of PBIS in American schools and, notably, that it is done on a statewide basis (e.g., Ballard-Krishnan et al., 2003; Simonson et al., 2012).

At present, at the level of the German states there is no purely behavior-focused system of intervention, either for inclusive regular or for separate-track specialized schools. As already touched on, the German university pre-service teacher training institutes to date have not been in a position to recommend appropriate evidence-based, action-oriented models to politicians and administrators, at least none that were suitable for being propagated and implemented on a large scale in the first place.

This may change once PBIS with its three tiers of intervention gains currency in Germany. What a regular school can do on a go-it-alone basis with respect to EBD students but also what it *cannot do* is especially clearly defined in the world of PBIS theory. Politico-ideological pressure on schools and teachers toward “total inclusion” is out of place here and would in no event have a place in pragmatic American thinking.

After all, in the EBD context student safety and teacher wellbeing must always be uppermost in mind. This is why it is not controversial in North America that separate-track, specialized “alternative schools” for youngsters with severe EBD must continue to exist in parallel with the inclusive school system.

In this chapter we will delve into the question of why it is so difficult to implement a behavior related intervention system like PBIS in Germany, and how it might be possible in the future to move even if only incrementally in this direction despite the challenges.

Here the author shares his observations and experiences from an ongoing research project on PBIS implementation and the related teacher training in three German private inclusive regular schools – one elementary school and two high schools - that he collaborates with. A total of 130 professionals – teachers and other school staff, such as school psychologists or social educators – took part in the training workshops.

A series of factors that bear on the implementation of PBIS in German schools must be considered. Along with the political directives under the inclusion rubric mentioned earlier, questions of subject matter expertise in the education of EBD students present themselves.

This is because teachers specially trained in this field are active in the regular inclusive school system in a supporting role.

Furthermore, questions arise about the general professional identity of teachers in the regular school system whom the special education teachers, school psychologists, and social educators must collaborate with.

Another factor that similarly impinges on all the aforementioned professional groups is how knowledge transfer from research to practical application in schools occurs. We know from the literature that knowledge accumulated in the world of research does not automatically make its way into educational practice (e.g., Cook, Cook and Landrum, 2013; Tankersley, Landrum and Cook, 2004). Language barriers make the exploitation of internationally available knowledge on the national level more difficult, with Germany being a case in point.

Another complicating factor is that, in Germany at least, there is hardly consensus on what should be regarded as good, practically- and school-pedagogically oriented research in the first place.

Whereas part of German academe perceives itself as humanistic by tradition and does not work empirically at all, the camp of those scholars that do work empirically is divided between ones who are oriented toward quantitative research (cf. e.g., van Acker et al., 2004) and others who prefer findings derived with qualitative research methods (c.f. e.g., Sabornie, 2004).

Only by analyzing in depth how these factors intertwine and interrelate will we be able to understand why it has been – and remains – so difficult to implement an evidence-based school-wide model like PBIS in the German now-inclusive regular educational system.

### **3. THE HETEROGENEITY OF EBD PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUNDS AND AREAS OF EXPERTISE IN GERMANY**

We begin with an analysis of the professional backgrounds and areas of expertise in the EBD field and how these developed in Germany after the Second World War, once outmoded punitive practices had been abandoned in favor of a specialized EBD pedagogy (see Flissikowski, Kluge and Schauerhammer, 1980). The academic orientations that prevail in German educational studies focusing on the EBD field were and still are of an extraordinary scope and variety, a fact that emerged clearly in discussions with the staffs of the three schools. The first thing we notice in German EBD literature is the psychoanalytic orientation. For decades the classic texts of psychoanalytic pedagogy (e.g., Aichhorn, 1955, 1964; Bettelheim, 1950, 1955; Anna Freud, 1963, 1992; Redl, 1987; Redl and Wineman, 1965 a, b) circulated in the world of theory as well as in practice and made their mark on the writings of German scholars in the EBD field (e.g., Ahrbeck, 1998, 2008; Goetze, 1995). During their university studies, prospective special education teachers might read psychoanalytic treatises on the significance of play for child development.

How children process unconscious conflicts (e.g., Zulliger, 1951) was of as much importance in academic teaching as, for instance, the psychoanalytic identity theories (e.g., Blos, 1962, 1985; Erikson, 1994), that helped to make developmental themes of adolescence accessible and intelligible. Or there were the psychoanalytic coping theories (e.g., Haan, 1977) that offered models covering the conflict themes in children and youth, dealing with which later had to be supported in pedagogical work. The works of Dreikurs (1991, 1993) that were inspired by Freud's student, Alfred Adler, also played an important role in academic teaching. Adler, unlike Freud, had made subject not the cause but the purpose of child behavior, with the resultant broader perspective.

Already beginning in the 1970s, a second important line in EBD theory and practice emerged with behaviorist-shaped behavior therapy or behavior modification. Based on Skinner's work on the control of human behavior (e.g., 1965), this school of theory defines itself to the present day as empirical in the narrower sense (e.g., Belschner, Hoffmann and Schott, 1976; Kern, 1986; Lauth, 1993; Lauth, Brack and Linderkamp, 2001; Lauth, et al., 2008; Linderkamp, 2008). Besides the testing of behavioral control techniques, in this segment of theory a series of special research efforts was also pursued, on the subject of ADHD (e.g., Linderkamp, 2004; Linderkamp, Henning and Schramm, 2011), on training in social skills (e.g., Linderkamp, 2002; Petermann, et al., 2012) for example, or the dismantling of aggressive behavior in children through customized training (e.g., Petermann, et al., 2010; Petermann and Petermann, 2012). From this school of theory also grew offshoots that went beyond the Skinnerian conception of the human being, for example, the works pertaining to a cognitive behavioral therapy that builds on the rational emotive therapy developed by Albert Ellis (e.g., Gruenke, 2001).

A third school of thought in German EBD theory and practice has been influenced by American humanistic psychology and its idea of man as centered on self-actualization (e.g., Maslow, 2014; Rogers 1961; 1980). Special person-centered, non-directive models for counseling and therapy (e.g., Rogers, 1942, 1951), but also the "pedagogy of freedom" (Rogers, 1969), found a clear expression in German EBD pedagogies (e.g., Fitting, Kluge and Steinberg, 1981; Kluge and Sievert, 1990).

The “encounter groups” developed and led by Rogers (1970) as well as the “subject centered interaction” conceived by Cohn (1975) also became models for person-centered university courses in which the students preparing for careers in the EBD field were able to practice awareness of, and reflect on, their own inner emotional life and an accepting, appreciative communication with other group participants (e.g., Fitting, 1983).

#### **4. THE CONTEMPORARY GERMAN ORIENTATION CRISIS STILL MIRRORS THE “THERAPEUTIC” AND “ANYTHING GOES” SOCIETY**

Even with these three schools of theory within the German EBD world that, after all, represent the main streams of psychology, we still have not exhaustively described the situation in the EBD field as it existed during the 1980s. The students in those days encountered supplementary learning possibilities in the for the most part rather liberally and openly structured degree programs through freely chosen courses in sister institutions, i.e., in classes that extended beyond the EBD field per se. Or, as it were, through their own reading as well as workshop experiences outside the university, they acquired other, complementary suggestions for their future EBD work and absorbed them into their pedagogical thinking.

The 1980s were the time of the “therapeutic society.” Self-discovery in realms like yoga, meditation, Zen, Tai Chi and breathing or bioenergetics therapies all belonged to the trove of experiences of many university students in those days. Starting from Rogers’ “pedagogy of freedom,” it was thus not much of a leap to even more liberated designs (e.g., Neill, 1960; Osho, 2013) – and to why these ideas, experiences and concepts should not also benefit students with EBD. Contemporaneously, within humanistic psychology there developed the so-called “holistic” or “gestalt therapeutic” action models (e.g., Perls, 1973) extending to music therapeutic or body-centered spiritual approaches. These currents also found their expression in German EBD pedagogies. For the most part this meant methods that were tested in a framework of qualitative case studies in the boundary area between education and therapy and that were passed around during conference workshops and continuing education to see further development as part of an innovative pedagogical-therapeutic practice.

In the 1990s, accelerated by post-modern discourse, all this ended up, depending on one’s point of view, either in a creatively scintillating multiplicity of theories and action models or in a practically indiscriminate eclecticism. The motto now became “anything goes” (Feyerabend, 2010). It seemed that anyone, whether in theory or in practice – and the workshops held in those days at conferences and congresses attest to this – could acquire or thematize what appeared interesting and helpful for pedagogics and didactics in the EBD field. There were those who drummed with their students, others who did yoga or music relaxation and guided imagery with them. Someone who had middling success in the school classroom or university classes with one of these methods took it to a conference or continued education and offered a lecture or workshop. The posture was one of we have to explore new directions and try something. Anything that somehow works is already good and helpful for EBD students. There was scarcely any psychological current, intervention, or technique that was not also experimentally transferred to the EBD field.

Next to systemic theories and action models (e.g., Palmowski, 2007) constructivist (e.g., Palmowski, 1999; Werning 1998) or solution-focused ones (e.g., Shazer and Dolani, 2007)

fell into line. During their university studies, teachers with a degree in EBD, sometimes also teachers licensed for elementary or secondary schools, acquired competencies in peer counseling or cooperative counseling (e.g., Mutzeck, 2008; Wittrock, 1991). They were then quasi expected to put the famous “wonder question” from solution-oriented brief therapy (De Jong and Berg, 1998) to the colleagues they were to counsel later on in the school setting. The idea was to stimulate those being counseled to generate solutions to difficulties that confronted them in their pedagogical work.

However, teachers working in the field were supposed to generate these problem-solving approaches entirely from within themselves. Special education teachers with an EBD profile hence were to think of themselves primarily as counselors or coaches for teachers in the regular school system. Others, both in theory and in practice, reached back once again to action-taking models of reform pedagogy and experiential education from the period 1900 – 1933 in order to have reference points for their pedagogical and didactic work in EBD.

Others again harked back to the writings of Bowlby (e.g., 1976, 1983, 1988) in developing attachment-based interventions (e.g., Julius, 2001 a, b, c) even though the British concepts of “nurture groups” or “the nurturing school” (e.g., Colley, 2003; Doyle, 2003) have scarcely established themselves in Germany.

Meanwhile, the intersection of pedagogics and social pedagogy became replete with discourses and action-taking models revolving around the truancy phenomenon, for instance (e.g., Herz, 2004, 2006; Thimm, 2000; Warzecha, 2000 a, b; 2001). The American “positive peer culture” (e.g., Brendtro and Ness, 1983; Brendtro and Shabazian, 2003) has also been adopted in Germany with productive results (e.g., Opp and Unger, 2006), tightly linked in part to the issue of resilience and its development in the EBD field (e.g., Opp, Fingerle and Freytag, 1999).

Starting from the philosophical foundations of the lifeworld as a subjectively experienced world (e.g., Husserl, 1970) and simultaneously building on socioecological (e.g., Bronfenbrenner, 1981), sociological (e.g., Beck, 1992) theories, as well as on culture-critical (e.g., Virilio, 2005, 2007) and social-philosophical discourses (e.g., Honneth, 1990, 1994 a, b) led to development of a lifeworld-oriented EBD pedagogy (e.g., Broecher, 1997, 2000). Also entering into this lifeworld-oriented EBD pedagogy are the foundations of development psychology (e.g., Havighurst, 1972), as well as reform educational approaches, for example those of Freinet (see Acker, 2007).

For the route to the destination, this pedagogy navigated by the educational ideal of the critical-constructive, by the educational sciences oriented toward freedom, self-determination, and public spirit (Klafki, 2007). On a foundation of qualitative action and field research (e.g., Altrichter, et al., 2008), the teacher immersed in this lifeworld-oriented EBD pedagogy becomes the “reflective practitioner” (Schoen, 1983).

Within the meaning of a qualitative EBD research, case studies (e.g., Herz, 2011) or analyses of journals kept by teachers (e.g., Broecher, 2015) were produced, or, in a framework of storytelling in higher education, teacher experiences with society’s inclusive and exclusive forces relative to the EBD field were thematized (e.g., Broecher, 2014 a).

## **5. GERMANY'S LONG ROAD TO A SCHOOL-WIDE, BEHAVIOR-RELATED MODEL**

Unlike in the US, in Germany to date no effective school-wide models for interventions in conjunction with EBD students have been created. Instead there prevailed among teaching staffs imbued with the spirit of “1968” a pronounced pedagogical individualism and a tendency to mistrust uniform practices suspected of being controlled by an educational power apparatus not only with regard to the issue of behavior control and discipline but their impact on all pedagogical issues.

This skeptical attitude toward control mechanisms installed in school systems, still articulated today in teacher training, could conceivably be explained historically, because this generation of teachers frequently has associated a uniform course of action with the technique of “enforced conformity” in the Third Reich, later also in the GDR or even Eastern European dictatorships. In this case, the individualism and spirit of provocation cultivated by the German teacher corps seemed to serve as a kind of safety mechanism against being coopted by politicians and higher-ups and which, thoroughly unmoored from concrete political realities, at some point then hived off into an automatic defensive reflex. Remnants were and still are palpable in teacher training today.

Nevertheless, the individualism and provocative mindset of the German teacher corps from the turn of the millenium on were gradually softened by external demands linked with increasingly prevalent outside school inspections for collegial pedagogic conceptualization and appropriate decision making.

The novelty was that now a collegial majority could, for instance, decide on the “Training Room” program (Balke 2003; Bruendel and Simon 2013) and implement it. Thanks to a wave of retirements, the individualistic and free-thinking generation that for many years had molded the pedagogy and culture of a particular school could, from one day to the next, become the minority on a teaching staff. It now happened that these teachers held over from an earlier time were compelled to fall into line with the new micropolitical collegial circumstances. For the first time in German schools, it transpired that one contingent of teachers observed, controlled and, if needed, put pressure on the others to actually implement the decisions generally accepted by a majority.

The first effort undertaken in Germany since 2003 to install a school-wide intervention model for EBD and discipline issues was one going back to the “Responsible Thinking Process” (RTP) (Ford 2004) and the control theory-based (cf. Marken, 2002; Powers, 1998) “Training Room” (TRP) program. While this program does not enjoy any significant acceptance in North America’s scientific community, it spread swiftly in Germany between 2003 and 2010. Even in the absence of reliable surveys, we can assume that during this timeframe roughly 10-15 percent of all German schools worked at least for some time with TRP or its variants. At present, the importance and dispersion of TRP throughout Germany seems to be on the wane again. To date there is also no empirical evidence that the “Training Room” program does in fact lead to a sustained improvement of the situation in school classrooms (cf. Wollenweber, 2013). TRP is nonetheless recommended to schools by the Ministries (e.g., Educational Server Hesse, 2013; German National Educational Server, 2013; Ministry of Culture, Youth, and Sport, 2013; Schools Ministry North Rhine-Westfalia, 2013)

as providing capability in the era of inclusion for coping with students with behavioral difficulties.

A few scholars (e.g., Klemm and Preuß-Lausitz, 2011; Preuß-Lausitz, 2011) with policy consultant expertise also recommend the implementation of the TRP or similar time-out programs in regular schools, there to help achieve inclusion of youngsters with behavior problems. From the beginning, the “Training Room” program was the object of sharp criticism (e.g., Jornitz, 2004; Broecher, 2005, 2014 b; Pongratz, 2010), despite, or perhaps because of, the large constituency in educational practice and its supporters in the school bureaucracies and ministries.

The main points of criticism were: the way the model fixated on class “disturbances”, the one-sided assignment of blame for botched classes to the youngsters with emotional and social needs, the danger of compromising the students expelled from class, the rigid rituals the model provides for, the bureaucratization that comes with the model and the archiving of student behaviors, the questionable documentation of expulsion decisions and above all, how it excluded teacher conduct and the instructional quality from analytical consideration.

The critiques of TRP rest on discourses that, on the one hand, revolve around power and control in educational institutions (e.g., Foucault, 1980, 1988, 1995; Malacrida, 2005). Or, on the other hand, with reference to Erich Fromm (e.g., 2011), a critical finger is pointed at the uniformizing and negation of the learner’s individuality.

Another line of discourse begins with Max Weber’s critique of the educational system’s bureaucratization (e.g., Madan, 2014). In addition, in said criticism of TRP, reference is made to culture-critical discourses (e.g., Merseburger, 2005) that see sinister oppression mechanisms and dehumanization practices looming, like those ultimately manifested in the social expulsion and disciplining of “abnormal” individuals in the camps of the Third Reich (e.g., Broecher, 2014 b).

Parallel with the introduction of the “Training Room”, also gaining ground in German schools was the confrontational pedagogy practiced by Ferrainola in the American Glen Mills Schools. Functioning here as book authors, concept developers and teacher trainers were actors from the theory and practice of extra-educational social pedagogy with a focus on EBD (e.g., Kilb, Weidner and Gall, 2006; Weidner and Kilb, 2008). In these publications, both the Glen Mills school pedagogy and TRP were equally subsumed under the confrontational pedagogy rubric and associated by their content.

However, just like TRP, the pedagogy of the Glen Mills Schools disconcerted German university scholars who were responsible for teacher education in the EBD field. From here then also arose sharp criticism of the Glenn Mills pedagogy, propagated by parts of German social pedagogy, because of the rough methods and highly questionable concept of the human being that undergirds pedagogical practices aimed at breaking the juvenile will.

Even in the face of this criticism, it came to scandalous, i.e., dehumanizing practices in some specialized German EBD schools that pioneered the confrontational pedagogy along the lines of Glen Mills. These came in for massive criticism and condemnation by some university scholars (e.g., Broecher, 2010, 2011; Herz, 2012).

There may still be a few actors, in particular Weidner and his circle, who even today lobby for confrontational pedagogy, but there is no one in German university special education pre-service teacher training institutes who would see them as feasible paths to the future.

These first German efforts to implement a school-wide model for behavior control in the form of the “Training Room” program or the Glenn Mills Schools’ confrontational pedagogy can by now be regarded as having failed.

## **6. KNOWLEDGE POLITICS OR WHY GERMAN EDUCATIONAL STUDIES HAVE TO POSITION THEMSELVES ANEW WITH RESPECT TO THE EBD ISSUE**

The strength of German educational studies resides without question in their socio-critical and discursive-humanistic potential. But which of the pedagogical models and interventions addressing the EBD field are truly available at present to German schools and teachers faced with having to absorb the growing number of students with EBD?

The behaviorist, psychoanalytic and humanistic person-centered models of the 1980s are hardly suited for being applied in the traditional form under current societal conditions and given the elevated demands for scientificity of pedagogic action.

And even where empirically-oriented German researchers have generated evidence-based knowledge on special topics, this is an inadequate start on a systematic response to the complex challenges posed by the present day inclusive school system.

In general, the spectrum of German university institutes active in the EBD field has not yet embarked on pragmatic action. At this time, they are in a period of transition and upheaval. In part, old or once again new ideologizations have gained the upper hand: in the filling of professorships, in the development of degree programs, in conceiving research projects, and in the awarding of research funds. These ideologizations at present center on concepts of a constricted empirical research favoring quantitative data collection and data processing. A material part of this ideologization moreover is that this research must be third-party funded and as expensive as possible so that it will pour concomitant amounts of money into the administrative machinery of universities. The thoroughly interesting results of smaller qualitative studies are quickly lost sight of under these circumstances.

Other ideologizations looming in German university institutes can result from discussions on themes like social inequality, social disintegration or marginalization, equal educational opportunity for all, heterogeneity and diversity, migration and gender issues all the way to politically imposed total inclusion of all students becoming exclusionary, rigid and narrow – even if all these aspects absolutely need and are entitled to remain part of the EBD debates as well as the general education science discourse. And yet: the clear and distinct naming of behavior problems and the exact illumination of the stuff of social conflict is taboo in some of these theoretical bubbles. Eventually it is to be feared that students with EBD are stigmatized by a much too direct and unsparing description of their behavior and their life context. The descriptions of reality when framed by such ideologizations must conform to the criteria of political correctness or give way to them. When that happens, constraints on speech enter the space. However, academic scholarship needs freedom if it is to develop and actually fulfill its mission. It cannot anxiously avoid politically induced conflicts that are better contested on the way to solving them to the extent possible. By the same token, persisting on a purely discursive, socio-critical or else heterogeneic-theoretical level, on which the behavioral difficulties of children and youth are merely remapped to a general student diversity, we

would be doing nothing less than sending teachers without solid training into the more than challenging reality in the schools. It would border on negligence vis a vis the teachers if we failed to pass on to them effective intervention and control techniques specific to EBD. The North American scientific community focused on EBD clearly distances itself from the socio-constructivist discourse (e.g., Anastasiou and Kauffman, 2011).

EBD research, like any other type of research, also has to strive for truth and cannot let itself become corrupted by ideological positioning (e.g., Kaufman, Brigham and Mock, 2004). The “politics of knowledge” are then subjected to critical examination precisely in connection with PBIS (e.g., Sailor and Paul, 2004).

### **7. TO MANY GERMAN SCHOLARS AND TEACHERS, THE NORTH AMERICAN BEHAVIORAL APPROACH SEEMS OVERLY PRAGMATIC AND LACKING DEPTH**

At present, in the strictly empirically oriented EBD research and pedagogy of the majority of American special education institutes, only interventions that are evidence-based in the narrow sense are regarded as effective and made part of academic teaching. For those university scholars and school teachers in Germany who think and work empirically or scientifically, this is of course familiar territory to begin with. This group of teachers, who very quickly recognize their mindset in PBIS, was represented in our in house training sessions and expressly welcomed the logic of the three-tiered model with its scientifically validated interventions.

Then there are the German university scholars and school teachers who to date have defined themselves preponderantly through qualitative research, i.e., action and field research, case studies, qualitative analysis of texts, drawing, other cultural productions, etc. During the debates taking place in the course of the in house teacher training sessions they attested to the fact that acceptance of this strict, exclusive type of American thinking is by no means a foregone conclusion. For when these latter German teachers now enter into the theoretical world of PBIS, they suddenly find themselves standing there with empty hands, or so it might seem at first certainly. It is just this subjective feeling of having nothing to contribute that may put many of them on the defensive or at least regard PBIS skeptically. Quite simply, these teachers, school psychologists, and social educators who are rooted in scientific-hermeneutic or qualitative backgrounds see doubt cast on their identity and value as skilled professionals by this narrow focus on empiricism and evidence grounding.

A special kind of tact is called for now in order to win this group of professionals over to PBIS despite all this. What these teachers and other school personnel bring with them by way of experience and competencies hence must first be honored and then given its due in what must be a collective process of PBIS-centered school development. To many in this humanistically or qualitatively oriented group, the American “behavior approach” appears to be not just overly pragmatic but also lacking in depth. Once again the 1970s and 1980s critiques seem to be reviving of how Skinner and his behaviorist experiments and theories bred fears of the state controlling weak-willed human beings. Perhaps this particular group initially observing, interpreting, and evaluating the intervention system against this background helps to trigger that anti-PBIS defensive reflex.

On closer inspection, however, the teachers realize that PBIS does not rest exclusively on behaviorist and learning-theoretical foundations, even though they do run like a theoretical thread through the entire intervention system. They are supplemented in particular by elements of person-centered planning and of pedagogical relationship building (see Bambara, 2002).

After all, both these elements also play a key role in the psychoanalytic and humanistic models with which many German teachers, school psychologists or school-based social pedagogues have worked until now. To win a German teaching staff over to PBIS – at least this is what recent experience with in house training suggests – highlighting these familiar elements is of utmost importance as a way of building bridges to the theoretical backgrounds, professional values and convictions of German school personnel.

Despite said reservations, this second, rather humanistically or qualitatively oriented group of professionals from all three schools also acquired an overall view of PBIS and of the three-tiered special interventions. That these interventions can be tailored to the individual, especially on Tier III, when working with students with severe EBD, i.e., high risk students (see Kennedy et al., 2001; Kroeger and Philipps, 2007; Goh and Bambara, 2012), accommodated the way of thinking and techniques of this group of teachers, school psychologists and social pedagogues. It now became possible to work out the following during the in house teacher training: find out which factors sustain the problem behavior of a student and how that behavior functions for a child or adolescent, doing so with the help of *Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA)*, a method that is based on *Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA)* (cf. Chandler and Dahlquist, 2010; Conroy et al., 2002; Fox and Gable, 2004; Killu, 2008; Lewis et al., 2004; March et al., 2000; Martens and Lambert, 2014; Moreno and Bullock, 2011; Scott and Nelson, 1999; Shippen, Simpson and Crites, 2003; Smith and Sugai, 2000; Waller, 2009 and others). This was complemented by the realization that FBA is founded on the principle that “challenging behavior is meaningful, has a purpose, and serves a function for the child” (Ryan, Halsey and Matthews, 2003, p. 11).

That the FBA and development of a *Behavior Plan* are done by a multidisciplinary team, that this method starts out by gathering information about the behavior at issue and the environmental events preceding and following it, and that this information is gathered from a range of stakeholders and may involve collaborative conversation, interviews, questionnaires and direct observation procedures represented a helpful point of departure for the professionals in these schools. It allowed them to build on already proven structures and ways of working they themselves had developed in their schools. Even when taking the next step during the in house training posed a challenge for some professionals, by reason of the already mentioned behavioristic groundings, nevertheless, the whole thing was thought through, the object after all being the development and formulation of a hypothesis about the function or purpose of a student behavior.

As a rule, Functional Behavioral Assessment assumes that what motivates the student is to get, avoid, or get out of doing something, and the like. As mentioned previously, this can be interpreted as reductionism, which led to some lively debates during the in house training. Let it be said that most of the professionals in training nevertheless were able to think of numerous examples from their practical work that fitted to one of these student motivational and behavioral patterns. This kind of conceptualizing at least hands the teachers a tool for working independently in structured fashion and reliably as part of teams of educators in

which each teacher's individual perceptions can always be calibrated against the perceptions of their peers.

It dispenses with speculating vaguely about causal relationships supposedly governing or possibly governing student behavior and what it all means, something that can never really be pinned down.

Still within the FBA framework, many participants became fascinated when it came to the conditions under which a behavior is likely to occur. For exactly these conditions are always subjected to professional analysis and reflection later on when it is a matter of changing them in order to influence a student's behavior. Ultimately, one outcome of the in house training in the Functional Behavioral Assessment was an operational definition of behavior. This was coupled with identified antecedent predictors, setting events, ongoing consequences, and a statement hypothesizing what function the behavior served. We started off by working with examples from the literature, such as the following: Sleep deprivation, for example, can become a setting event in a student's life. The writing assignment given by the teacher can become an antecedent for a problem behavior. Say that this problem behavior or "target behavior" manifests itself in the repeated screaming of obscenities; the consequence is that the teacher then sends the student out into the hallway each time. The hypothesis after evaluating all available observations and information now becomes: "When presented with a writing assignment, Johnny is likely to scream obscenities to escape the task. He is more likely to do so on days when he has had little sleep" (cf. Ryan, Halsey and Matthews, 2003, p. 9).

In the next step, we worked with specific examples culled from the field experience of the professionals in the in house training workshops. The next learning objective for the training framework was to develop an effective Behavior Intervention Plan or Behavior Support Plan. The fact that Functional Behavioral Assessment and Function-Based Intervention again are treated here as dynamic processes that continue until all goals are met (Scott and Eber, 2003, p. 134) once again was highly accomodative of the thought processes of the teachers, school psychologists and social educators taking the in house training.

Also subjected to intensive discussion during the training was that the problem behavior has to be very precisely defined, that it must be observable and measurable, and that it must be defined so clearly that even someone not in the least acquainted with the student concerned can recognize this behavior. Some of the professionals in our training then conceded that in the course of conversations with other teaching staff about a particular student's conduct they had to deal to some extent with approximate, unclear or vague descriptions, or with interpretations and construals instead of objective descriptions of student behavior. The potential of the "behavior approach" to imposing more reliability and clarity at this juncture was absolutely seen as a positive by many of the in house training participants.

In the next phase, we worked on the concept of building a "replacement behavior" or "alternate behavior" as encountered and then defined in the course of consultations within the Behavior Support Team before being gradually put into practice and built on by the educators working with a student. This alternate behavior has to fulfill the same function as the problem behavior for the student. It thus must be effective in helping to achieve the youngster's goal.

The alternate behavior has to be easier to engage in than the problem behavior and above all must be socially acceptable. The degree to which the student displays the alternate behavior is shown by the youngster, for instance when sensing a mental block in solving math problems, retiring to a play corner to do something constructive there instead of yelling and

shoving the math booklet off the table as before. For this the student then earns praise and receives reinforcement from the teacher. However, the alternate behavior is still not the truly “desired behavior.” The alternate behavior is in the nature of a transitional behavior and thus can be viewed as a kind of bridge to the ultimately desired behavior. That such a solution as building up an alternate behavior exists was regarded by the in house training participants as a welcome possibility for dealing specifically with high risk students. Suddenly, it became clear to many participants that a constructive alternative for dealing with student problem behavior does exist and that it does not have to be all that complicated to devise and implement such alternatives.

The participants reacted similarly to the issue of “extinguishing problem behavior”, since it is important to show the student that the problem behavior engaged in does not achieve anything. In other words, even screaming obscenities will not lead to being excused from classroom work that the student, who may be totally fatigued, is trying to escape by being banished to the hall by the teacher for instance.

If it did work, this being sent out of the classroom would become the behavior-maintaining consequence to be recognized and altered. Therefore, instead of being sent out when no longer able carry on with the work, the student is given the option of a temporary break busying himself in the play corner and then gradually being brought back to his learning tasks, in this way inculcating an adequate learning behavior.

Finally, another, we worked out a more preventative starting point with Function-Based Intervention: namely, that the problem behavior can also be dismantled or blocked by influencing the “trigger” or “antecedents” and through a pedagogically-skilled handling of “setting events.” These intervention possibilities were received with a great deal of interest by the teachers and other school staff in the respective in house training sessions. It suddenly became clear what the influencing factors that maintain a particular student behavior are. The teachers now had adjusting screws to hand that they could turn for changing student behavior in a targeted manner.

Subsequently, during the training sessions we broached the subject of the various intensity levels of Functional Behavioral Assessments and Behavior Support Plans or Function-Based Interventions available.

The simpler, basic version can be performed in house on their own by school personnel (teachers, school psychologists, social educators, etc.), as long as the behavior is not dangerous or is a problem behavior that does not manifest itself in all possible areas of life. In other words, when they are slight to moderate behavior problems. A more complex version of FBA is deployed for moderate to severe behavior problems that may have dangerous aspects and/or that may surface in multiple areas of life. This then becomes a very time-intensive undertaking, in the course of which emergency plans must be developed for handling situations where a student’s behavior gets out of hand and escalates. This requires intensive work with the student’s family and it calls for collaboration with other agencies (e.g., youth welfare office, psychotherapists, psychiatrists, behavior specialists from psychology and/or special education, police etc.). Immediately after the first in house training session one of the schools began to consider setting up of an internal Behavior Support Team.

## **8. OPPORTUNITIES FOR MORE EFFECTIVE PEDAGOGIC ACTION IN GERMAN SCHOOLS THROUGH CHANGED PERSPECTIVES WITH PBIS**

The fact that PBIS changes the focus from reactive to *proactive* interventions (see Netzel and Eber, 2003) is something comparatively new for German pedagogic circumstances. Teachers in German schools for too long tended to react to behavior problems only when they already manifested themselves, became blatant and could no longer be ignored. Consistent focus on positive behavior is also relatively new and unaccustomed for the German educational system. Rather than focusing on punishing undesirable behavior or getting rid of behavior deficits as before, under PBIS the attention shifts completely to systematic teaching, training and reinforcement of desired and positive behavior. At this juncture naturally, there is a glimmer of learning theoretical principles but also of the theoretical foundations of humanistic psychology. The latter's main concern has always been recognizing the potential and talents in people and supporting them with positive feedback and processes of reflection that promote self-discovery and self-actualization.

One aspect that German teaching staffs in the future are sure to value highly in PBIS is that it deliberately eschews the reactive and punitive interventions as they have from time immemorial existed in German schools in the form of time-outs, chastisement, loss of privileges and detention, suspension, or expulsion. It has been common knowledge in German schools, too, that reactive and punitive interventions – frequently resorted to by teachers out of necessity or mental overload – are often viewed by the students as harsh and unfeeling. Some students may also tend to respond with anger and fear, while others attempt to escape or avoid future interactions with the punisher. Still others may engage in more extreme reactions like vandalism, aggression, or antisocial behavior (see Young et al., 2012, pp. 31-32; Walker, Ramsey and Gresham 2004, p. 31). It is just that until now a practical system like PBIS was lacking to help German teachers implement what are basically good intentions in ways that are truly systematic and effective.

In Germany, the professional identity of special education teachers from empirical backgrounds until now revolved frequently around interventions. These had to be deployed in order to tackle the ever-expanding spectrum of purported dysfunctions, deficits, and abnormalities in psychosocial development and behavior that was mapped and catalogued analogously to the fields of medicine and psychiatry at great scientific expense. A simple change of perspective sometimes works wonders.

As envisaged under PBIS, operating a system geared to training and teaching social skills rather than having a repair shop for misguided or deficit-ridden social behavior will open totally new and different possibilities for German schools. During the present in house training workshops, this aspect garnered a great deal of positive feedback for PBIS. Another aspect that the professionals value highly in the training sessions is how PBIS emphasizes “follow up”, i.e., providing feedback on, staying with, and revisiting problems, themes, and issues, at all times systematically, effectively, sustainably and consistently. This sort of “follow up” has also been developed to perfection in the German general administrative realm under guise of the principle of “resubmission”, but not so much for pedagogical interventions. For this reason, many educational initiatives launched in an engaged and hopeful fashion for youngsters with EBD often went nowhere.

## **9. NEW FOR GERMANY: INSTRUCTIONAL ADAPTATIONS AS EBD RELATED INTERVENTIONS**

It was something of a surprise for many teachers taking part in the in house training that a large part of the PBIS interventions first occurs on the didactic level of class-room instruction and that actually all students (Tier I) in a school are exposed to them. This was particularly true for teachers from the two high schools, but less so for the elementary school teachers, whose work already has a very strong pedagogical-didactic orientation. The learning objective for the in house training at this juncture consisted of having the teachers realize specifically that academic learning and student behavior are intimately linked.

Students with EBD display large academic achievement deficits across all content areas (Nelson et al., 2004). “A key finding in the literature is that EBD students usually struggle academically” (Nicholson 2014, p. 180). They disrupt their own learning and the learning of others (see Trout et al., 2003; Reid et al., 2004), although the interplay of both variables is very intricate and not yet fully understood (Algozzine et al., 2011). Hence, to prevent problem behavior in class, preventive didactic modifications that factor in and weigh individual student traits must be applied.

As signaled by a few contributions during the in house training, many teachers tend to expect stabilization of student behavior more from psychological methods and less through didactic interventions or modifications. There also is a “line of thinking” in the theory that “presupposes that academic instruction cannot take place unless a student's behavior is first under control” (Wehby, Lane and Falk, 2003, p. 195).

This can be contrasted with the high impact of academic instruction that is effective from the outset, albeit accompanied and supported by behavioral interventions. Hence, we need to acknowledge the important role played by academic instruction on which we can then build effective academic, social and behavioral learning. We can assume that much of the off-task behavior of EBD students is escape-maintained.

Academic failure and escape-motivated problem behavior are functionally related and consequently academic interventions can be considered as a meaningful treatment response. Becoming cognizant of this reality was also the learning goal for the teachers during the in house training sessions. In other words, when we want to reduce problem-and off-task behaviors and increase on-task behaviors, research suggests instructional adaptations are effective interventions (Lee, Sugai and Horner, 1999, p. 196). The object therefore is to carry out an “instructional adaptation” that is linked to the goal of more effective management of escape-maintained behavior in the classroom (Moore, Anderson and Kumar, 2005). The “curricular expectations” that apply to a specific classroom subject “are antecedent events”, - here the teachers could already use what they learned in connection with Functional Behavioral Assessment and Function-Based Intervention – and when these are “mismatched with current student skill levels,” undesirable classroom behavior may be the consequence (ibid., p. 216). Consequently, what is needed is to ensure an “appropriate instructional match between curriculum (and/or instructional materials and methods) and the existing level of student academic skills” (ibid., p. 217).

The instructional adaptations will function as proactive interventions because they often change the learning situations that trigger the problem behavior and ameliorate them for students with EBD (Lee, Sugai and Horner, 1999, p. 196). For German special education

teachers in the EBD and LD fields all this may look like familiar territory. For teachers in the regular school system, especially in the high schools who, as a rule, define themselves as having high professional skills in class room subjects that are their academic specialties, this thematization of the linkage between didactics and student behavior can nonetheless be novel and something to get used to. This became evident during the in house training sessions. The key to the future is to stimulate the willingness of these teachers to pay ever more attention to the level of instructional mediation as a cause for student behavior that gets out of hand. This assumes particular importance if, as in the two private high schools, many classrooms include students who had to leave a public high school because of learning and/or behavior problems. This means that a part of the student body here comes with a conflict-filled learning history that can be counteracted by instructional adaptations, among other things. The students' academic learning on the one hand and learning and social behavior on the other can be influenced positively in this way.

The first didactic adaptation is to structure the problem presentation and ways of solving it in a special way by *Breaking Up the Task Components*. To simply make tasks easier would undermine the curricular educational requirements for EBD students, particularly when in high school, and also fail to challenge the students enough so they can develop. What the students need much more is stimuli for learning; they need "opportunities to acquire new skills and expand their behavioral repertoires" (Moore, Anderson and Kumar, 2005, p. 217). That is why it is crucial to break up the task components, split up the workload into steps, and adapt the task so that each step takes less time. These strategies lead to more on-task behavior (Nicholson, 2014, pp. 183-184). Tightly tied into this is the *Teaching of Component Skills*. The term "component skills" refers to "lower level skills that collectively make up complex higher level skills." When they lack one or more component skills, students fail to learn the complex skill. But if the students "possess all component skills necessary to learn a task, learning the larger task is easier and access to positive reinforcement is increased" (Lee, Sugai and Horner, 1999, p. 196).

The foregoing naturally calls for a substantial rethinking on the part of some German teachers, particularly those driven more by their classroom subjects than by pedagogical-didactic considerations. These teachers can no longer on the spot attribute to students that the causes of their emotional and behavioral difficulties reside strictly in them or their familial or social circumstances. Instead, now the instructional mediation processes and how the teacher performs and shapes them are under the microscope, which is precisely what the above-criticized "Training Room" program consistently downplayed and excluded. The interest of the teachers in the in house training workshops in working more intensively with this type of instructional adaptation appeared to be high throughout. A group of teachers asked for more intensive training and coaching on this point.

Also belonging in the repertoire of instructional modifications under PBIS Tier I is *Explicit Instruction* or *Direct Instruction*, understood as an "unambiguous and direct approach to teaching, with an emphasis on providing students clear statements about what is to be learned, proceeding in small steps with concrete and varied examples, checking for student understanding, and achieving active and successful student participation" (Nelson, Benner and Bohaty, 2014, p. 363). The key elements or functions relating to Explicit or Direct Instruction are: 1. Daily review and prerequisite skill check, 2. Teaching of new content, 3. Guided practice, 4. Independent practice, 5. Weekly and monthly reviews (ibid., pp. 367-374). Direct Instruction as described by Eisner Hirsch et al. (2014, p. 209), citing Rosenshine

(2010, p. 7), involves “limiting the amount of material students receive at one time, giving clear and detailed instructions and explanations, and guiding students as they begin to practice,” etc. This intervention, necessary for dealing with the increasing numbers of students with learning and behavior problems, also requires rethinking by teachers, many of whom have been socialized and knitted together so that they sympathize with the concept of an open, reform-pedagogic inspired classroom, even if they have often experienced that too much openness can lead to chaos and low learning uptake. Depending on the generation, these teachers are also conflicted by their freedom-infused, emancipatory educational ideals when they tell today’s students straight-out, clearly, and specifically what is to be learned in what steps and very closely shepherd the entire learning process.

Next, there is *Choice Making*. It demonstrates that the instructional adaptations undertaken in connection with PBIS generally do not have to constrain student autonomy and self-determination. The positive effects of Choice Making as interventions that reduce problem behavior are accepted as givens in EBD research (see Green, Mays and Jolivet, 2011; Shogren, Faggella-Luby, Jik Bae and Wehmeyer, 2004). The more confrontational and the more disruptive a student's behavior is the more important and effective is Choice Making as an entry to a productive learning process. On the other hand, as we get closer to positive social student behavior or on-task behavior, as is usual in general education settings, Choice Making also could and should be dispensed with in order to achieve an optimum level of academic learning (Mizener and Williams, 2009). For students with EBD, different types of Choice Making can come into play, from preference and choice of activity (Romaniuk and Miltenberger, 2001), through within-activity choices (Cole and Levinson, 2002) to a choice of task sequences (Kern et al., 2001). During the in house training workshops, Choice Making immediately enjoyed a high degree of acceptance from the teachers, specifically those in elementary school, because it seems to be compatible with the educational ideals of the teachers working in them. On the other hand, the fact that the research treats Choice Making as less necessary and effective the more stable a student’s behavior is again generated critical feedback, particularly from those in the elementary school area. It is precisely here, inspired by the pedagogical ideal of freedom and self-determination, that we want to foster children’s ability to manage their own behavior and that is reason alone to work a great deal with Choice Making. Still, it is something quite different to deploy Choice Making as a targeted preventative technique targeted to behavioral difficulties in order to dismantle or avoid learning resistance on the part of students.

The next object of the in house training was the systematic offering of *Opportunities to Respond (OTR)* in the classroom. As straightforward as this instructive adaptation may sound, the notion of this intervention provoked much astonishment in the teacher body, given that it is a traditional teacher tool more than any other of the PBIS interventions.

In the research literature, Opportunities to Respond are understood as instructive stimuli that occasion student responses (Haydon, MacSuga-Gage, Simonson and Hawkins, 2012; Sutherland, Alder and Gunter, 2003). This might happen, for instance, through “teacher-directed individual responding” or in the form of “production responses” (Haydon et al., p. 24). With regard to EBD, it has been shown that higher rates of OTRs are associated with increased on-task behavior and decreased disruptive behavior (Sutherland and Wehby, 2001). This in turn has a positive effect on learning motivation and the learning and working behavior of youngsters with EBD.

When that happens, the research literature recommends that these positive developments in the area of student behavior be consolidated and further promoted with behavior-specific praise by the teacher (e.g., Kalis et al., 2007; Marchant and Anderson, 2012; Partin et al., 2010). Teachers that offer their students OTR throughout also foster the pedagogical relationship because they simultaneously signal interest in the youngster's way of thinking and experiencing. OTR as instructional modification in every case aroused special interest from many of the teachers taking part in the present in house training sessions.

It prompted numerous colleagues to make first conjectures how they could immediately escalate the use of OTRs in their classrooms with respect to students with, or at risk for, EBD.

## **10. CULTURALLY DIFFERENT FROM A GERMAN POINT OF VIEW: THE FRAMING OF PEDAGOGICAL INTERVENTIONS**

While the instructional adaptations used in the PBIS framework contain much that is familiar to German teachers that they can immediately build on, the pedagogic interventions implemented on Tier I in North America in part are in a format that strikes teachers in Germany as "culturally different." It is for this reason that they have some little difficulty in adopting these interventions, even if they acknowledge their value and meaningfulness from a purely rational standpoint.

Let us first take *Teaching Clear Behavioral Expectations*. "Kids have to know what is good," is how Gregory Benner encapsulated this intervention during his keynote address at the CCBBD-Conference in Chicago, in September 2013. The literature furnishes us with examples, such as school-wide rules and specific behavioral expectations for the cafeteria and hallway (see McCurdy, Mannella and Eldrigde, 2003, p. 161) that we also used during the in house training workshops in our three schools: School-wide rules: be responsible, be respectful, be ready. Rules for the cafeteria: stay in assigned seat and wait for adult direction, line up quietly and wait turn, keep hands and feet to self, use a quiet voice at all times. Rules for the hallway: face front, walk quietly, keep hands and feet to self, listen for and follow directions. Another well-known example for the Teaching of Behavioral Expectations is the High Five Program (Taylor-Green and Kartub, 2000, p. 233): Be respectful, be responsible, follow directions, keep hands and feet to self, be there – be ready. At times, we also worked with instructional videos during the teacher training on how to convey clear behavioral expectations that obviously had a rather discomfiting effect on one group of participants. In the view of many teachers and other school staff in Germany these procedures are too instructive, too direct, too much directed toward drilling or conditioning the children and youth. At the same time, the psychological strain produced in German schools by noise, chaos, and undisciplined student behavior happens to be enormous. We are therefore faced with a certain contradiction. Many teachers suffer under it, but they have not yet really come around to making any changes. And most of them plainly assume that children and youth simply ought to know how to behave well. Or it may be that teachers some time before did talk about good behavior with the students or they jointly wrote up some classroom rules and pinned them up, and, ever since, the teachers operate on the assumption that their students really internalized these rules and go by them. But the reality is different. Depending on the age group, what constitutes good behavior has to be recalled repeatedly and often must be

practiced anew in order to head off more severe behavioral difficulties in the end, i.e., for the sake of prevention. Many teachers in Germany still have difficulty with this imperative, especially those with a baggage of freedom-infused, emancipatory, participatory education ideals and concepts. This subject was also thoroughly discussed during the in house training and feeds directly into debate in German education sciences described in the beginning of this chapter.

Another cultural challenge for teachers in German schools is the systematic giving of *Behavior-Specific Praise*. “Catch them being good,” is how Gregory Benner succinctly put this pedagogical intervention during his September, 2013 CCBD address in Chicago. Behavior-Specific Praise links significantly to desired, positive learning, work, and student social behavior (Marchant and Anderson, 2012; Stormont and Reinke, 2009; Sutherland, Wehby and Copeland, 2000). However, the German teacher has difficulty dishing out too much pedagogical praise. It hardly fits the German mentality. We heard it repeated often during the training sessions that many teachers during their own schooldays rarely received praise from their teachers.

More likely, most teachers were amply criticized by their former teachers and warmed by the absence of criticism when they had in fact done something well. With these kinds of experience in their own backgrounds, it is of course not always easy for Germany’s teachers to acknowledge that Behavior-Specific Praise provably reduces the time that students must spend outside the classroom due to disciplinary infractions (see Kennedy and Jolivette, 2008). Behavior-specific praise furthermore promotes the development of a positive relationship between teacher and student as well as fostering a good class atmosphere (see Conroy et al., 2009). It is important, however, that the praise actually is given for specific behavior and the intervention is applied consistently and by all adult reference persons that play a role in the life of the school (see Young et al., 2012, pp. 69-71). Behavior-specific praise can be combined meaningfully with offers of Opportunities to Respond (OTRs) (see Partin et al., 2010). First thoughts were already voiced during the in house training to have Behavior-Specific Praise training in schools by means of coaching (see Briere et al., 2015), but also through consistent self-observation (see Kalis, Vannest and Parker, 2007; Simonson et al., 2013).

Another object of the in house training workshops was *Class Wide Peer Tutoring (CWPT)*, a well-researched Tier II intervention found to be effective for raising attentiveness of students and improving their learning in class (see Bowman-Perrott, 2009; DuPaul et al., 1998; DuPaul and Henningson, 1993; Fulk and King, 2001; Greenwood, Delquadri and Carta, 1988, 2002; Maheady and Gard, 2010; Maheady, Harper and Mallette, 2003; McDuffie, Mastropieri and Scruggs, 2009; Ryan, Reid and Epstein, 2004; Spencer, Scruggs and Mastropieri, 2003; Stenhoff and Lignugaris/Kraft, 2007). Referring to Eisner Hirsch, Lloyd and Kennedy (2014, p. 210) Class Wide Peer Tutoring (CWPT) can be described as follows: The teacher divides the class or learning group into two teams. The students in each team are paired up to work together in tutoring dyads.

The teacher hands out to each tutor a set of learning materials (e.g., 10 math problems) along with an explicit guide on how to use these materials. The student pairs start in on the work, with the tutor continually giving praise and point for correct answer to the fellow student. Wrong answers are reworked immediately. After a set time (usually 20 minutes) the two students switch roles. The tutor now becomes the tutored and vice versa. During the entire time, the teacher monitors the students and gives out bonus points to the dyads that do

the assignments in the desired format. When the intervention ends, the teacher issues praise and feedback, allocates point and records progress made by the students. The team with the most points finally gets a reinforcement bonus. Class Wide Peer Tutoring was regarded somewhat skeptically during the training sessions conducted by the author, even if there are bound to be some teachers, possibly in elementary schools, who would like to experiment with such forms.

Even if CWPT per se can be regarded as an innovative idea, it goes against the grain for many German teachers to constantly observe their students and continually parcel out praise, feedback and, above all, bonus points. The next training workshops planned for the three schools must demonstrate what role Class Wide Peer Tutoring as a pedagogical intervention can fulfill in them.

The *Good Behavior Game (GBG)* developed by Barrish, Saunders and Wolf (1969), already part of the education program in the elementary school realm, was next to be taken up in the in house teacher training. The game involves a team-based, behavior-controlling intervention that utilizes group dynamics in a class and that helps children and youth master their role as students and to perform successfully during class.

It is geared especially to attention paying and working well with other students. The children or youth here work together in order to create a positive learning atmosphere for all involved by attentively monitoring themselves and the other students.

Those groups of students win that manage to meet the behavioral expectations and goals, defined precisely by the teacher (with student involvement) ahead of time, by the end of an agreed-on timespan (this could be an hour, two hours, a day, or a week, and so on).

The object here could be that certain criteria or rules may not be violated by the students belonging to each group more than four times, for example. Each rule violation gets a demerit, with the goal being to accumulate the fewest demerits.

It is not meant to be played by pitting teams against each other. The game should be designed so that all groups can win, with teams getting fewer than four demerits, for instance, receiving rewards at the conclusion.

GBG is based on the following four key elements: 1. Classroom rules or behavioral expectations, 2. Team membership, 3. Monitoring behavior, and 4. Reinforcement. The Good Behavior Game has been studied and tested numerous times (see Bostow and Geiger, 1976; Darveaux 1984; Embry and Straatemeier, 2003; Fishbein and Wasik, 1981; Harris and Sherman, 1973; Hegerle, Kescher and Couch, 1979; Lannie and McCurdy, 2007; Medland and Stachnik, 1972; Poduska and Kurki, 2014; Tingstrom, 1994; Tingstrom, Sterling-Turner and Wilczynski, 2006; Warner, Miller and Cohen, 1977; Wright and McCurdy, 2011). The Good Behavior Game has been available in Germany for many schools, especially elementary schools, in a translation by Hillenbrand and Puetz (2008).

High school teachers reacted somewhat skeptically, although pedagogical work utilizing this intervention in grades five and six could be perfectly feasible. However, just as with Class Wide Peer Tutoring, our teachers regarded the constant monitoring of students and the awarding of bonus points by the teacher as culturally foreign and disconcerting.

## 11. NEW FOR GERMANY: THE FRAMING AND THE SYSTEMATIZATION OF SOCIOEDUCATIONAL INTERVENTIONS

The next subject in the in house training workshops was the special character of Tier II interventions since these involve special approaches for “at-risk” students. As a rule, we assume that this group comprises about 10-15 percent of all students inclusive of regular school. However, the teachers and other school staff in the workshops voiced the concern that in their own schools distinctly more “at -risk“ students might be present given that they enroll many students with EBD and/or LD who failed in public high schools in these three private schools. The key question came up during the in house training in which context the Tier II interventions take place – whether they are integrated with the regular classroom instruction or if they are applied in supported groups consisting of the students concerned. In a number of publications, it seems, Class Wide Peer Tutoring and the Good Behavior Game are listed as Tier II interventions (see Bruhn, Lane and Eisner Hirsch 2014; Debnam, Pas and Bradshaw, 2012), even though many of the available instructional videos give the impression that these are rather interventions in the sense of Tier I, i.e., used with all students in a class.

These questions were also taken on during the workshop sessions. The distinguishing trait of Tier II interventions is that the “at risk” students receive the identical intervention in each case that last from several weeks to two or three months. Ideally, it should be possible to lift the at-risk status no later than that. However, should this prove impossible, the student remains longer in the Tier II group or gets transferred into Tier III group that also has “high risk” students in it. For these, measures such as Function-Based Assessment, Behavior Support Plans and Function-Based Intervention are custom developed for the individual child or youth. Overall, this equipped the participants in the in house workshops with a structure for pedagogic support and more clarity about the “4-Ws”: what, when, where and with whom something happens. Especially the socio-pedagogical interventions for at-risk students (Tier II) in the PBIS framework offer German schools a systematization that dovetails with homegrown theory at the intersection of school pedagogy and social pedagogy and the goals embedded in each. That is not to say, however, that Germany can step up with such systematization and refined interventions as are available in North America where some have been in use since the mid-1980s.

During our own in house training sessions in this area, we started with the *Daily Behavior Report Card (DBRC)*. It contains an operationalized list of the behavior types which are being worked on with a youngster at a given point in time. Included are clearly defined criteria for what exactly a student must do before the goal can be considered to have been reached (see Dougherty and Dougherty, 1977). Using the DBRC has proven to have positive effects on the problem behavior of children or youth (see Davies and McLaughlin, 1989; Fairchild, 1983), possibly even with regard to ADHD (see Fabiano et al., 2009), and also promotes the successful completion of homework (see Struckoff, McLaughlin and Bialozor, 1987). Teachers provide immediate feedback to the student at the end of a lesson or school day with a view toward reaching the target behaviors; in the same vein, they praise the child or youth for reaching a goal or, in case it is not quite attained, for the efforts the student made toward it. Frequently, the DBRC is sent home daily with the child for the parents (see LeBel et al., 2012). In this way, the school networks with the parental home on a daily basis (see Schumaker, Hovell and Sherman, 1977). A longer-term version of the DBRC also supplies

data with whose help progress monitoring becomes feasible. The DBRC can likewise be utilized along direct behavior monitoring lines (see Chafouleas, Riley-Tillmann and McDougal, 2002; Chafouleas et al., 2005).

*Check In Check Out (CICO)* builds on the DBRC concept and embeds it in a further systematized context of pedagogical guidance and student and parent counseling. The origins of CICO, which also goes by the name *Behavior Education Program (BEP)* (see Crone, Hawken and Horner, 2010; Filter et al., 2007) date back to the concept of pre-correction, according to which teachers remind a child or youth in an educational context and the situations arising within it of good, appropriate conduct (verbal reminders), before a problem behavior can even appear (correcting a problem before it starts) (see Colvin et al., 1997; DePry and Sugai, 2002; Lewis, Colvin and Sugai, 2000). Pre-correction is accompanied by active monitoring or supervision. Check In Check Out is viewed as highly effective (see Simonson, Myers and Briere, 2011; Todd et al., 2008) and enjoys enormously widespread use in North American schools. For the key role in the application of CICO played by school psychologists (who also took part in the in house training workshops) see Hawken (2006). Check In Check Out proceeds in five steps (cf. Hunter et al. 2014): (1) Morning check in with the mentor; (2) the student hands the Daily Behavior Report Card (DBRC) to each classroom teacher at the start of class; (3) after class, the teacher who taught it fills out the DBRC, gives the child or youth positive feedback or praise, either for goal achievement or for efforts made in that direction; (4) check out with mentor; (5) the child or youth takes the DBRC home for information, joint discussion, and signature by parents or legal guardian. The next morning, the student takes the DBRC back to school, for that morning's mentor check in.

Similar approaches are already in effect in Germany; however, not in such a systematic, evidence based form. It is too early to gauge if and how DBRC and CICO are adopted and implemented by participants of the self-conducted in house training workshops. To some extent, these interventions were received with a certain skepticism, possibly for the following reasons: For one thing, the DBRC means that student-related data are continually produced and archived; for another, the continual note-taking and discussing notes with the student in the CICO framework takes up time at the start and finish of class. Many teachers hold the view that these times in particular are often tumultuous and stressful transition times during which teachers are pre-occupied by many details. In any event, working with the DBRC with CICO requires consistency and discipline. On the other hand, the teachers did admit that a more situational, non-systematic approach to dealing with students at risk for EBD can also be very time intensive, and often the pedagogic daily routine is very much burdened by needing to handle unexpected EBD related interventions. If and how these interventions can be implemented in the three schools in the future is still open and will be the object of further training workshops and coaching sessions in these schools.

Especially popular among the Tier II sociopedagogical interventions during the in house training workshops was the *Check and Connect Program* developed at the University of Minnesota by Evelo, Sinclair, Hurley, Christenson and Thurlow (1996). The intervention was tried in all grades (K–12) and found to be effective. Its efficacy was confirmed by several replication studies (see Christenson et al., 1999; Alvarez and Anderson-Ketchmark, 2010; Anderson et al., 2004; Lehr, Sinclair and Christenson, 2004; Sinclair et al., 1998; Sinclair, Christenson and Thurlow, 2005). Check and Connect is a relationship-based intervention simultaneously geared full force to foster school success and resilience in children and youth. The dynamics at work are that “positive, supportive relationships with adults are associated

with good outcomes for children” (Anderson et al., 2004, p. 95) and that “the best documented asset of resilient children is a strong bond to a competent and caring adult, which need not to be a parent” (Masten and Reed, 2002, cited after Anderson et al., 2004, p. 95). What Check and Connect provides to the already existing mentoring relationships in a school “is a structure and data-collection method that enhances what has been started” (Alvarez and Anderson-Ketchmark, 2010, p. 126). “A cornerstone of the check and connect program is the one significant adult that remains a constant in the student’s life and both checks on and connects with the student” (ibid.). Check and Connect’s objective is promoting the engagement with school.

This “involves positive student behaviors, such as attendance, paying attention, and participation in class, as well as the psychological experience of identification with school and feeling that one is cared for, respected and part of the school environment” (Anderson et al., 2004, p. 97).

Against this background, a child or youth’s low or reduced school attendance is registered as a sign of diminished, school-related engagement. Monitors have the role of a “mentor, case manager, and advocate” (Anderson et al., 2004, p. 98). They “work to create positive relationships between students, families, and the school, always with a focus on the goal of keeping education a salient issue for disengaged students” (idem.). “Activities may range from transporting a child to school, encouraging parents to attend school conferences, reinforcing homework completion after school, or linking a family to a community resource” (Lehr et al., 2004, p. 285).

Translated to the German context, the professional qualification and job descriptions of monitors would approximate that of social educators. If warranted by school size, a monitor may be working to capacity at a school center or is responsible for several smaller schools. A student moving within a school feeder area keeps the same monitor. Continuity of care and relationship here has priority (Anderson et al., 2004, p. 98).

In the case of our three private cooperating schools, the personnel resources are in place. Check and Connect could be implemented with the social educators and other pedagogic staffers on site. Thanks to its theoretical derivation, Check and Connect can be easily be tied into British and German attachment-based pedagogy as well as many of action models developed in Germany that address the truancy issues (e.g., Herz 2004, 2006; Thimm 2000; Warzecha 2000 a, b, c, etc.). The program therefore is highly compatible with the theoretical backgrounds and pedagogic values of German teachers and educators.

*Parental Involvement*, as it plays a role in connection, for instance, with the Daily Behavior Report Card (see LeBel et al., 2012; Park, Alber-Morgan and Fleming, 2011) or with Check and Connect, is familiar territory for Germany’s teachers and school staff. In general, it appears that is important to include parents in the pedagogic work as a way of boosting the effect of the combined measures, at the latest starting with Tier II (see Lewis 2009; Muscott et al., 2008) up to and including conjoint behavioral consultation (see Wilkinson 2005).

In Germany exist many action models for cooperative and consultative work with parents to fall back on and these can readily be tied into PBIS. The same applies to Tier III for *School Based Wraparound Services* (see Duckworth et al., 2001; Eber et al., 2009; Eber et al., 2014; Scott and Eber, 2003), *Systems of Care* (see Burns and Goldman, 1999) and *Inter-professional Work* or *Collaboration with other Agencies* (see Eber and Keenan, 2004; O’Connor, 2013).

In order to work effectively with children and youth with severe EBD, clearly a more comprehensive and broader scope package of measures must be put together, inclusive of the psychosocial counseling and support for a family (see Duchnowski and Kutash, 2009). For these areas as well, the German literature covers numerous action-taking models that in part are also already components in cooperating schools and thus can be further built on.

## **12. A NEW PERSPECTIVE FOR GERMANY: TARGETED IMPLEMENTATION AND EMBEDDING OF SOCIAL SKILL TRAINING IN A THREE-TIERED SYSTEM OF INTERVENTION**

German EBD pedagogy for a long time was more interested in erasing deficits than in systematically *Teaching Social Skills*. It involved searching for ever more refined interventions for behavior problems after they had already manifested themselves. Constructing prosocial behaviors systematically with a view to prevention was not on the radar of teachers in the regular German school system nor that of specially-trained EBD educators.

This was so even though for decades there have been “tons of literature” about this work domain, particularly in North America, but some in Germany as well (e.g., Petermann et al., 2010, 2012; Petermann and Petermann, 2012). *Social Skills Training (SST)* workshops in the PBIS framework take place mainly during Tier II, but elements of these training sessions can also serve a purpose on Tiers I and III.

What is important in all cases is the targeted conveyance of prosocial, constructive ways of behaving in peer group settings as well as the student’s interaction with adult reference persons (see Bloomquist, 2006; Gresham and Elliott, 2014; Kavale, Mathur and Mostert, 2004; McGrath, 2006).

While there are numerous Social Skills Training programs, whose efficacy was tested (e.g., Bulkeley and Cramer, 1990; Caplan et al., 1992; Elias and Clabby, 1992; Elliott and Gresham, 1992; Hensely et al., 2005; Morse, Bockoven and Harman, 1987; Gueldner and Merrell, 2011; Lane et al., 2003; Moore, 2008; Powers, 2003; Royer et al., 1999; Rutherford et al., 1992; Sheridan, 2010; Torrey et al., 1992; Verduyn, Lord and Forrest, 1990; Wilhite and Bullock, 2012), it is not always possible to find out immediately which of these published programs are actually evidence-based. What is lacking above all in the German school system to this day, with no school-wide models like PBIS implemented nationally, is a structure for how to embed Social Skills Training in a particular school’s educational program meaningfully in a customized, theory-based, target-audience related and problem-specific way. The goal of our in house training sessions was first to provide an overview of the SST programs and then in the next phase work intensively with the selected, scientifically recognized models. Narrative reviews of Social Skills Training workshops (see Ager and Cole, 1991; Gresham, 1981, 1985; Hollinger, 1987; McIntosh et al., 1991, Zaragoza et al., 1991) imply that they are most effective when they combine strategic modeling, coaching and reinforcement and the interventions deployed are fine tuned to prevalent social skills deficits.

Meta-analyses of various SST programs, however, yield a rather mixed picture when it comes to their efficacy (see Ang and Hughes, 2001; Beelmann, Pfingsten and Losel, 1994; Coleman, Wheeler and Webber, 1993; Denham and Almeida, 1987; Forness and Kavale,

1999; Gresham, Sugai and Horner, 2001; Kavale and Forness, 1995; Kavale et al., 1997; Losel and Beelmann, 2003; Maag, 2006; Mathur et al., 1998; Quinn et al., 1999; Schneider and Bryne, 1985; Schneider, 1992; Vaughn et al., 2003). But even these meta-analyses demonstrate once again the importance of tightly fitting interventions to specific deficits in social skills and paying attention to treatment integrity (see Cook et al., 2010; Gresham 2014; Wheeler and Mayton, 2014).

Introducing the SST subject into an in house PBIS training context raises diagnostic questions, i.e., existing social skills-related problems must be carefully assessed in order to maximize their fit and hence the effectiveness of the SST measures to be implemented. How to take stock of which social skills are actually relevant in the school context was also a topic during the in house training workshops. The “taxonomy of social skills” developed by Caldarella and Merrell (1997) was used for this purpose. The authors evaluated 21 studies and compiled the spectrum of social skills they found in them into the following five skills dimensions (cited after Gresham, Sugai and Horner, 2001, pp. 333-334) in: peer relations, self-management, academic, compliance, and assertiveness.

During the in house workshops, it was also beneficial to hand out a classification of social skills deficits to help guide the teachers and other school staff in effecting their assessments and interventions. To begin with, according to Gresham (1981) or Gresham, Sugai and Horner (2001, p. 334), depending on what problems are involved, first a few decisions must be made concerning the different interventions and settings that are called for when introducing an intervention, possibly integrated with the general classroom instruction or in the form of pullout groups. It follows that it is something entirely different to build up a non-existent social skill from nothing, help a youngster to better decode situations, or only improve the application of an already present social skill. If a student does not have a specific social skill, even under optimal situational conditions, or the student is incapable of deciphering which social skill would best fit a specific situation, we call this an “acquisition deficit”. Special interventions were developed for this case. But when a youngster knows in principle which social skills suit a situation yet is still unable to display these skills in an appropriate manner, we talk of “performance deficits.” Lastly, if a student finally knows in principle which social skills fit a given situation, and applies these more or less acceptably, but the whole transaction lacks naturalness and fluidity, then we call it a “fluency deficit” (ibid.). These were all included as in house training fundamentals.

In a next step, concrete ways of teaching social skills were discussed during the workshops in the three cooperating schools. According to Quinn et al. (1999, p. 54), these comprise selecting and focused teaching of relevant social skills that each student must urgently build up and absorb or also improve. The social skills involved must be shown, demonstrated and explained to the youngsters during the pedagogic work so that they can then try them out, model and refine them during live learning processes.

The students then need to practice the requisite social skills with pedagogic accompaniment, while simultaneously receiving positive feedback, encouragement, and coaching for further improvement. For immersion, scenarios in which each social skill can be of use or be significant are jointly identified, anticipated or acted out.

Social Skills Training normally comprises the following steps (see Kavale, Mathur and Mostert, 2004, p. 446): (1) Social skills requiring improvement are selected; (2) the relevant skills are shown, demonstrated and explained to the youngsters; (3) the students apply the skill, under guidance and coaching; (4) the students receive feedback and reinforcement

during and after this practice phase; (5) social situations in which the chosen, practiced social skills come into play are reflected on and discussed.

Introduced during the in house training sessions as well-known and well-reputed SST programs were ACCEPTS (Walker et al., 1983) and the Prepare Curriculum (Goldstein, 1988).

In the Prepare Curriculum, Goldstein speaks of “skill streaming.” It contains the four instructional components of modeling, role playing, performance feedback and transfer of training. Of central importance in SST is the teaching of self-management and self-regulation (see Ennis and Jolivet, 2014; Glynn, Thomas and Shee, 1973; Goldfried and Merbaum, 1973; Hansen et al. 2014; Kelly and Shogren, 2014; King-Sears and Bon-fils, 1999; Koegel, Harrower and Koegel, 1999; Martin et al. 2003; Nelson et al., 1991; Patton, Jolivet and Ramsey, 2006; Polsgrove, 1979; Polsgrove and Smith, 2004; Reid, Trout and Schartz, 2005; Thoreson and Mahoney, 1974; Todd, Horner and Sugai, 1999; Wehmeyer, Agran and Hughes, 2000). Self-management and self-regulation as concepts are highly compatible with emancipatory educational ideals that have had a key role in German education since the 1970s. As a result, the in house training participants also detected good tie-in points here. Self-management comprises several components, depending on the model: self-monitoring (see Carr and Punzo, 1993; Dunlap et al., 1995; Gottman and McFall, 1972; Kiburz, Miller and Morrow, 1984; Levenski and Cartledge, 2000; Lonnecker et al., 1994; Moore, Cartledge and Heckaman, 1995; Shear and Shapiro, 1993), goal-setting (e.g., Kelley and Stokes, 1984; Lochman et al., 1984; Locke and Latham, 2002; Miller and Kelley, 1994), strategy selection and implementation, frequently in connection with behavioral contracting (e.g., Rutherford and Polsgrove, 1981), and, lastly, self-evaluation and self-reinforcement.

Also significant with regard to SST are other programs for dealing with emotions, such as the “anger coping program” (Larsen and Lochman, 2002). During the in house workshops, we used the model based on it that was developed by Etscheidt (1991) on 1. Stop and think before you do anything else, 2. Identify the problem, 3. Work out alternative solutions, 4. Gauge the consequences of possible solutions, 5. Choose a possible solution and apply it. There is a natural transition from the subject of anger to the problem of aggressive acts. For this purpose, special aggression replacement training modules were developed (e.g., Coleman, Pfeiffer and Oakland, 1992; Vaughn, Ridley and Bullock, 1984).

Comparable, evidence-based programs for dismantling childhood aggressions were also developed in Germany, with practice in self-perception, social perception, handling emotions, and developing action alternatives, etc. (e.g., Petermann et al., 2010, 2012; Petermann and Petermann, 2012). The drawback is that this entire body of knowledge has not been molded into a practical system that could actually be made available to German schools the way it has been in North America for some two decades.

### **13. SCHOOL-WIDE BEHAVIOR-RELATED SCREENINGS MAY RECEIVE CRITICAL SCRUTINY BUT ARE PERCEIVED AS OPPORTUNITIES**

PBIS is data-based, i.e., data gathering is key to the implementation, evaluation and further development of PBIS in a school. This was a sore point for many of the teachers, school psychologists and social pedagogues in our training sessions; still, another group saw

it as an opportunity for working more systematically with PBIS in the future, since, after all, the collected data facilitate well-grounded decisions (see Young et al., 2012, pp. 75-90). Along the lines of Response-to-Intervention (RTI), under PBIS a systematic school-wide screening of all students is performed, using a scientifically-validated test instrument (see Caldarella et al., 2008; Gresham, 2007; Kalberg et al., 2010; Lane et al., 2014; Marquez, Yeaton and Vincent, 2014; Severson et al., 2007; Walker, 2010; Walker et al., 2005; Walker and Severson, 1992). Diverse social behavior rating scales are available (see Demaray, 1995; Elliott, Busse and Gresham, 1993; Gresham, 2000; Elliott et al., 2008; Gresham and Elliott, 1990; Lane et al., 2010; Merrell, 1993) During the initial steps in the cooperating schools, the *Student Risk Screening Scale (SRSS)* developed by Drummond (1994) was employed, one reason being that it is backed up by sufficient reliability and validity studies for all age groups (K-12) (see Lane et al., 2007; Lane et al., 2008; Lane et al., 2010; Lane et al., 2013 b). In addition, a validation for the SRSS is available for internalizing and externalizing behaviors (see Lane et al., 2012; Lane et al., 2013 a).

Moreover, the SRSS is simple, practical, and easy to administer, and it is free. A teacher who has the subject students in class particularly often, e.g., the home-room teacher, evaluates each of them using a multilevel Likert scale and so defines a profile summed up from the following seven behavior criteria: (1) lies, cheats, and sneaks, (2) steals, (3) behavior problems, (4) peer rejections, (5) low achievement, (6) negative attitude, and (7) aggressive behavior. This then provides a basis for deriving a risk potential that a student represents at that moment based on the teacher's view. The data are collected some two or three times during the school year when they are also evaluated and compared.

No more precise explanation or definition is purposely provided for the seven behavior criteria. The teachers decide intuitively, relying on an overall impression.

Lively, and to some extent contentious, discussions ensued in the cooperating schools whether it made sense or was justifiable to collect data on students with the SRSS. Some teachers thought that assigning students to the three categories Tier I (no risk), Tier II (at-risk) and Tier III (high risk) was problematical.

Some found fault that suddenly negative behavior dimensions intruded into the otherwise positively formulated overall PBIS philosophy that could possibly result in students being labeled as Tier II and III.

Overall, a majority of teachers and other school staff including the school principals nonetheless saw in the school-wide SRSS screening an opportunity for obtaining a previously unavailable, theory-based overview of the students in the three schools from the aspect of "at-risk" or "at high risk" for EBD. One of the high schools at this time is conducting this type of screening using the SRSS. The other two schools are taking a wait-and-see attitude with regard to those results before deciding how to proceed.

Another option for data collection and evaluation that was passed on to the three cooperating schools is *Office Discipline Referrals (ODR)* (see Young et al., 2012, pp. 81-82; Clonan, McDougal, Clark and Davison 2007, pp. 21-23). An ODR is generated by "an event where (1) A student has engaged in a behavior that violated a rule or social norm in the school; (2) a problem behavior was observed by a member of the school staff; and, (3) the event resulted in a consequence delivered by administrative staff that produced a permanent (written) record covering the whole event (Sprague et al., 1999, p. 8). ODRs can be collected and evaluated after specified time intervals, classes, levels, by individual students, school departments, teachers, and so on.

It is noteworthy that a longer-term use of the PBIS interventions impacts the number of ODRs positively. The cooperating schools viewed this opportunity for recognizing changes in the entire system of a school as a positive option to be exploited.

First steps were considered in one of the schools, namely how and in what form ODRs could be gathered and scientifically evaluated.

#### **14. APPRECIATIVE, FLEXIBLE WORK WITH TEACHERS AND OTHER SCHOOL STAFF MEMBERS HOLDS THE KEY TO ADVANCING PBIS IN GERMAN SCHOOLS**

Implementing PBIS in a school calls for systematic planning (see Young et al., 2012, pp. 43-58). It takes a leadership team that tackles planning (see Walker and Cheney, 2012, pp. 17-20). The role of the school administration is of key importance for implementation (see Miller Richter 2012, pp. 69-77).

Tasks and responsibilities must be specified, milestones set and methods thought out for achieving them. Teachers and other school staff must be involved and be won over for PBIS implementation. Interim evaluations and interim stock taking must take place, in order to continue the work jointly in aiming for newly set milestones.

At the same time, formats for training and/or coaching must be found to foster the professional development of teachers and school staff. This was a given in the case of the cooperating schools thanks to the School Foundation's leadership, which, motivated by discussions about PBIS among teaching staffs in two of their schools, initiated the cooperation with the author. Thereupon, with the author acting as external scientific consultant, planning was effected, interim assessments completed, and next steps were considered by a PBIS-related leadership team composed of representatives from all three schools and all participating professional groups who then considered next steps to take.

Almost immediately after the first training workshops a few colleagues commenced visiting each other in their classes to work in common on selected Tier I interventions. They critiqued each other's performance, for instance, in connection with Behavior-Specific Praise or Opportunities to Respond. Other colleagues started out with a consistent self-monitoring approach (see Simonson et al., 2013) related to these two interventions.

The next step is to systematize these informally launched training sessions in relation to the mentioned Tier I interventions, namely at first with those teachers who on their own would like to work on their pedagogic-didactic competencies in this area. In the planning stage at this time is the author entering classes of said colleagues and observes, for example, a teacher's specific praise rate (see Briere et al., 2015). The teacher then will receive observational or performance feedback (see Hagermoser Sanetti, Luiselli and Handler, 2007; Jones, Wickstrom and Friman, 1997; Reinke, Lewis-Palmer and Martin, 2007) from the author. This will be followed by a coaching session, during which the respective teacher, in a step-by-step process, raises his praise rates or opportunities to respond with respect to the students who are "at risk" or "at high risk" for EBD.

In addition, framework conversations were held within the leadership team on offering options for teacher coaching, with a somewhat broader scope and comprising a kind of

teacher motivational interviewing and classroom check-up. Simultaneously, in one of the high schools the first screening with SRSS is being carried out.

In addition, all staffers from the three schools were given a detailed questionnaire with a combination of quantitative and qualitative items designed to get a better feel for their professional backgrounds on which to build more purposefully then.

The questionnaire was passed out before and after the in house training sessions. They will also serve to better gauge the problem load imposed on the individual teachers by students at risk for or with EBD.

Finally, the questionnaires will also help to get a better sense of how the professionals regard PBIS and the individual interventions, with the ultimate goal being tailored future training to fit the teaching staffs at the cooperating schools even better.

In one of the high schools a Behavior Support Team has already been constituted. The school psychologists and social educators taking action here are currently involved in examining the social skills training held in that school with a view to aligning it with international programs. The team aims to deploy the SST programs as Tier II interventions with a still better fit and in a yet more recipient-specific way.

As a further possibility for all participating persons, consideration was given to structured meetings and behavioral consultation (see Noell et al., 2005) that teachers and other school personnel of the three cooperating schools could participate in at regular intervals. They would serve as forums for talking about and exchanging their experiences and progress with respect to PBIS interventions.

With all these activities, it seems requisite and sensible to deal very appreciatively with the teachers and other school personnel in the cooperating schools, to respond flexibly to their desire to learn, and consistently reframe the occasional resistance that surfaces in the training and coaching sessions. If Germany's teachers can experience the PBIS philosophy first hand in such a training, then the doubters and critics someday could come around to realizing this pedagogy's value for the building of a German version of a school-wide, behavior-related model. This could also contribute to the further development and improvement of PBIS with regard to the critical points that have been discussed.

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