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Student Perceptions of the Check-In/Check-Out Intervention

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STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF THE CHECK-IN/CHECK-OUT INTERVENTION

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Abstract

This study investigated student perceptions of the Check-In/Check-Out intervention. Twelve students, who participated in the Check-In/Check-Out intervention were surveyed regarding their opinions and understanding of procedures. The data gathered from this study suggests that educators should look closer at the implementation of Check-In/Check-Out as well as those students who are unresponsiveness to the intervention. Educational implications and recommendations for future research are discussed.

Keywords: Check-In/Check-Out, Tier 2, Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports

Chapter 1

Introduction

Recent legislation, including the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and subsequent amendments to IDEA, have mandated the use of positive behavior interventions and supports in schools in order to promote appropriate classroom behavior. Similarly, legislation has put an emphasis on evidence based practice specifically related to addressing inappropriate behaviors in school. Following these pushes from legislation, each year more and more schools across the country have implemented multi-tiered prevention models of behavior support as a way to support a diverse student population (Ross & Sabey, 2015). According to the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP, 2016) Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is currently used in more than 20,000 schools across the nation. PBIS involves three tiers of intervention. Tier 1 “focuses on the prevention of problem behavior and the development of prosocial behavior” through “explicit instruction in expected behavior and school-wide consequences for both appropriate and inappropriate behavior” (Ross & Sabey, 2015, p. 246). According to Simonsen, Myers, and Briere (2011), the second tier of intervention is designed to provide additional support for the 10-15% of students who are unresponsive to primary tier interventions. The third tier of intervention addresses the 1-5% of students who require intensive, individualized interventions (Ross & Sabey, 2015; Simonsen et al., 2011). These interventions typically include conducting a Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) and implementing a Behavioral Intervention Plan (BIP).

One example of a Tier 2 intervention is Check-In/Check-Out (also known as the Behavior Education Program). Check in-Check out (CICO) generally includes increased

monitoring from educators, increased feedback to students about their behaviors, positive reinforcement for appropriate behaviors, and a home-school communication component (Todd, Campbell, Meyer, & Horner, 2008). Ample research has surfaced indicating that CICO is effective at reducing the frequency with which students engage in minor problem behaviors (Bruhn, Lane & Hirsch, 2014; Filter, McKenna, Benedict & Horner, 2007; Hawken, Bundock, Barrett, Eber, Breen & Phillips, 2015; Hunter, Chenier & Gresham, 2014; Ross & Sabey, 2015; Todd et al., 2008; Wolfe, Pyle, Charlton, Sabey, Lund & Ross, 2016). To date, no studies have evaluated the perceptions of participants on CICO. The present study was designed to examine the perceptions of student participants, specifically knowledge related to protocol and opinions associated with the intervention. This study may help implementers of CICO to understand why certain students are unresponsive to the intervention. Similarly, it may point out discrepancies in the implementation of the program.

Statement of the Problem

While an abundance of research exists documenting the effectiveness of the CICO program, researchers have yet to explore the perception of students participating in this intervention. It is imperative that students understand how the program works and the benefit of utilizing the program in order to be successful and to generalize learned skills. Likewise, if students have negative feelings towards any aspects of the program (such as the structure, interactions with the coaches, or reinforcers) they will be less likely to succeed.

Purpose of the Study

Due to lack of data, student opinions of the CICO intervention remains an important research area. The purpose of this study was to gain insight into the perceptions of those students who have participated in CICO. This study evaluated participant's knowledge related to the intervention as well as their attitudes towards specific aspects of CICO.

Questions of the Study

1. How do student participants describe their involvement with the Check-In/Check-Out Intervention?
2. How do student participants rate their experience with Check-In/Check-Out?

Assumptions and Limitations

Research was conducted using questionnaires that were individually given to student participants. It is assumed that participants responded to the survey questions ethically and honestly. This study was limited to a small sample of student participants from the same elementary school. Time constraints of the academic school year were another limitation of the study.

Significance of the Study

As legislation continues to push for the inclusion of positive interventions and supports into school curriculums, the need for effective Tier 2 interventions continues to grow. CICO is one of the most prevalent interventions used in schools today. With vast implementation of this intervention, ample research has surfaced attempting to evaluate the effectiveness of the intervention. While the intervention has proven effective with particular subgroups of students, there are still many individuals who are unresponsive to the intervention. Gaining insight into the

perceptions of student participants may provide educators with information on how to improve or adapt the intervention to address the behavioral needs of a large population of students.

Definition of Terms

Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP). An individualized behavior support plan based on the results of a functional behavior assessment (Sugai et al., 2000). The plan typically includes individualized, assessment-based intervention strategies, including teaching of replacement behaviors, rearrangement of the antecedent environment, and procedures for monitoring, evaluating, and reassessing the plan (OSEP, 2016a, ¶ 3).

Check-in/Check-out (CICO). “A school-based program for providing daily support and monitoring for students who are at risk for developing serious or chronic problem behavior. It is based on a daily check-in/check-out system that provides the student with immediate feedback on his or her behavior and increased positive adult attention” (Crone, 2004, p.2)

Daily Progress Report (DPR). A form listing school-wide behavioral expectations that is used to rank how well individual students are following expectations during the school day. An example of Daily Progress Report is shown below in Figure 1.

Add Your School
Logo Here!

CHECK IN CHECK OUT POINT SHEET

Points Possible _____
 Points Received _____
 % of Points _____
 Goal Met _____

2 – Great Job!
 1 – So, so
 0 – Doesn't meet goal

Name: _____
 Date: ____/____/____

GOALS:

Target Behaviors	MATH	SOCIAL STUDIES	SPECIALS	RECESS	LANGUAGE ARTS	SCIENCE
Respectful	2 1 0	2 1 0	2 1 0	2 1 0	2 1 0	2 1 0
Responsible	2 1 0	2 1 0	2 1 0	2 1 0	2 1 0	2 1 0
Safe	2 1 0	2 1 0	2 1 0	2 1 0	2 1 0	2 1 0

Parent Signature: _____

Figure 1. Daily Progress Report

Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA). “A systematic process of identifying problem behaviors and the events that (a) reliably predict occurrence and non-occurrence of those behaviors and (b) maintain the behaviors across time”. (Sugai et al., 2000, p.137)

GOTCHA. A system for labeling appropriate behavior that is used in Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports. Gotchas are used as reinforcement to increase the reoccurrence of appropriate behavior (OSEP, 2016b, ¶ 6).

Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS). PBIS is an application of a behaviorally-based systems approach to enhance the capacity of schools, families, and communities to design effective environments that improve the fit or link between research-validated practices and the environments in which teaching and learning occurs. Attention is focused on creating and sustaining primary (school-wide), secondary (targeted group or simple individual plans), and tertiary (individual) systems of support that improve lifestyle results (personal, health, social, family, work, recreation) for all children and youth by making problem behavior less effective, efficient, and relevant, and desired behavior more functional (OSEP, 2016c, ¶ 1)

Response to Intervention (RTI). The practice of providing high-quality instruction and interventions matched to student need, monitoring progress frequently to make decisions about changes in instruction or goals, and applying child response data to important educational decisions (OSEP, 2016d, ¶ 1).

Chapter Summary

Following mandates from recent legislation, the use of PBIS in schools has dramatically increased (IDEA, 1997; Ross & Sabey, 2015). With a push for the use of evidence based practices, researchers have attempted to evaluate the effectiveness of Check-In/Check-Out as a Tier 2 intervention for students with mild problem behaviors. Much research has surfaced indicating that Check-In/Check-Out may be effective with certain populations of students, however there is a lack of research evaluating the students' perspectives of the method. The present study was created to assess student perceptions related to Check-In/Check-Out.

Chapter II

This chapter reviews the history, legislation, and theory that have influenced the implementation of PBIS and CICO into today's school systems. This chapter also reviews current literature regarding the implementation and effectiveness of PBIS and CICO.

Special Education Law

Over the course of history, the view of individuals with special needs has shifted from rejection and discrimination to acceptance and advocacy. A number of laws have been passed over the last few decades to ensure that all students, regardless of any diagnosis, are given the same opportunities to learn as their non-disabled peers.

Section 504

Section 504 was passed as part of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. According to the U.S. Department of Education (USDE, 2015, §3), Section 504 is a civil rights law that prohibits the discrimination of individuals with disabilities in public school districts, institutions of higher education, and other state and local education agencies. This law also provides the right to a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE), regardless of the severity of an individual's disability (USDE, 2015, §3).

Education for All Handicapped Children Act

Following closely after the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, was the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (EAHCA) of 1975. EAHCA was enacted as a means to establish a process by which educational agencies would be held accountable for providing education to individuals with disabilities (Wright, 2010). EAHCA also included procedural safeguards, which were put into place in order to protect the rights of students and their parents (Wright, 2010).

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

In 1990, EAHCA was amended and renamed the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) (Wright, 2010). Similar to EAHCA, the purpose of IDEA is to provide an appropriate education for students with disabilities and to protect the rights of students and their parents (Wright, 2010).

One major element of IDEA is the Individualized Education Program (IEP), which is an educational program specifically designed to meet the needs of each student identified as having one of the thirteen disabilities covered under IDEA (Heward, 2006). These disabilities include: Autism, Deafness, Deaf-Blindness, Emotional Disturbance, Hearing Impairment, Intellectual Disability, Learning Disability, Multiple Disabilities, Orthopedic Impairment, Other Health Impaired, Speech-Language Disorder, Traumatic Brain Injury, and Visual Impairment including Blindness (Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, 2014). According to Heward (2006):

The IEP specifies the child's unique educational needs, states present levels of performance, identifies measurable annual goals and short-term objectives, and describes the specific special education and related services that will be provided to help the child attain those goals and benefit from education. (p.19)

The IEP, along with the child's progress towards meeting these goals, is reviewed annually by educators, parents, and administration (Driscoll & Nagle, 2010).

Table 1. *13 Categories of IDEA and the Percentage Served*

Category	% Served	Category	% Served
1. Specific Learning Disability	35%	8. Multiple Disability	2%
2. Speech Language Impairment	21%	9. Hearing Impairment	1%
3. Other Health Impairment	13%	10. Orthopedic Impairment	1%
4. Autism	8%	11. Deaf-Blindness	< 0.5%
5. Intellectual Disability	7%	12. Traumatic Brain Injury	< 0.5%
6. Developmental Delay	6%	13. Visual Impairment	< 0.5%
7. Emotional Disturbance	5%		

*Note: Adapted from the National Center for Education Statistics. Deaf Blindness, Traumatic Brain Injury and Visual Impairment are not exact numbers because they equal less the 0.5% of the population served under IDEA. The numbers above are representative of the 2013-2014 school year.

Another aspect of IDEA is the right to a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). A FAPE is offered at no cost to the parents and must include an IEP to meet the individual needs of each student (Heward, 2006). IDEA includes a “Zero Reject” clause that states that no child can be denied an education based on the nature or severity of their disability (Heward, 2010). In fact, legislation places responsibility on local state agencies to locate, identify, and evaluate individuals with disabilities (Heward, 2010).

Another element of IDEA is the Least Restrictive Environment. According to Heward (2010), LRE refers to the idea that a student should be educated, to the maximum extent possible, with his/her non-disabled peers. Students should only be removed from general education settings when supplementary aids and services cannot meet the needs of the student

(Heward, 2010). A continuum of placement has been developed to aid in servicing students in their least restrictive environment. As outlined in Figure 2, the continuum of placement ranges from the general education setting to the residential setting.

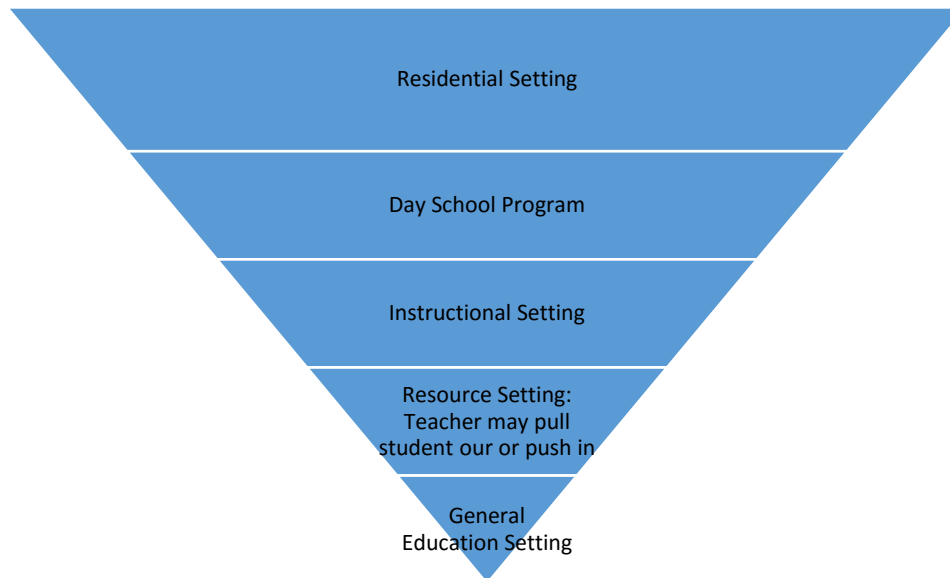


Figure 2. Continuum of Placement

IDEA further stipulates requirements in the identification, evaluation and placement of students with special needs.

In 1997, amendments to IDEA introduced new concepts to address the education of students whose behaviors violate school codes of conduct (Sugai et al., 2000). Section 614 (d) (3) (B) (i) of Public Law 105-17 states that “in the case of a child whose behavior impedes his or her learning or that of others, the child’s IEP team must consider, when appropriate, strategies, including positive behavioral intervention strategies and supports, to address the behavior.” The legislation goes on to further explain regulations regarding the use of functional behavior assessments and behavior intervention plans in a student’s IEP when necessary. At the same

time, amendments impel researchers to improve services and results for students with disabilities, specifically indicating that it is the responsibility of researchers to:

Develop and implement effective strategies for addressing inappropriate behavior of students with disabilities in schools, including strategies to prevent children with emotional and behavioral problems from developing emotional disturbances that require the provision of special education and related services. (IDEA, 20 U.S.C. § 614, 1997)

The inclusion of these provisions into IDEA represents an important effort to improve the quality of behavioral interventions and support planning for students with special needs (Sugai et al., 2000).

Response to Intervention

Response to Interventions was introduced with the reauthorization of IDEA in 2004. Legislatures, as well as the Office of Special Education, included this framework as a method of providing more effective early intervention in the general education setting for struggling learners as well as improving identification of students with specific learning disabilities (Zirkel, 2016,). Amendments to IDEA in 2006 gave states the power to permit or require the use of RTI in public school systems, resulting in 14 states adopting RTI as mandatory in identifying students with Specific Learning Disabilities (Zirkel, 2016, § State Laws). The RTI process begins with the inclusion of high quality instruction and ongoing student assessment (National Center for Learning Disabilities, 2016, ¶1). A multi-tiered approach is used within RTI to differentiate instruction for all learners (NCLD).

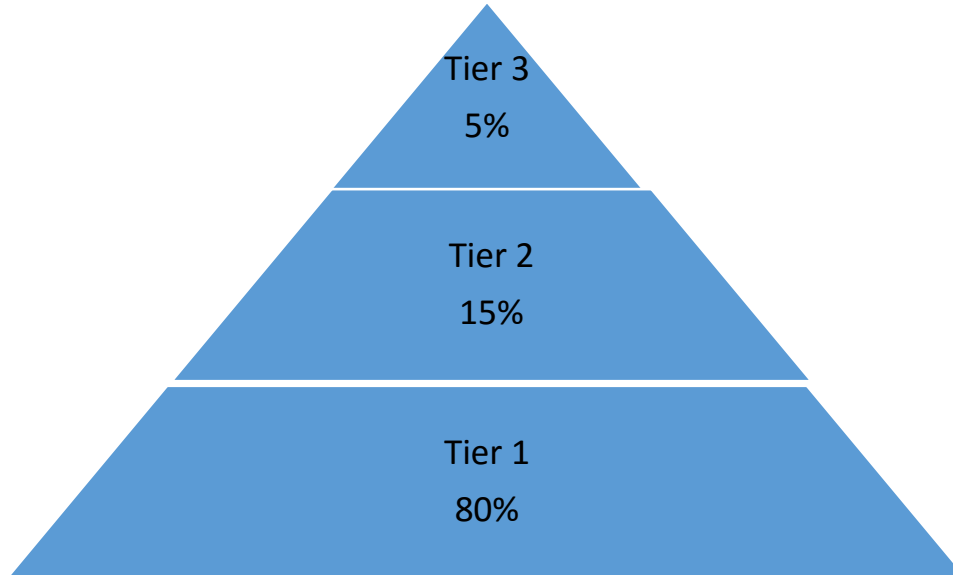


Figure 3. Response to Intervention

Tier 1 represents the 80% of students that are successful in the general education setting through the use of high quality instruction and differential teaching (NCLD, 2016). Tier 2 includes 15% of students and typically involves small instructional groups used to supplement general education instruction through the use of drill, practice, and cumulative review (NCLD, 2016). Tier 3, which represents only 5% of the student population, involves implementing an Individualized Education Plan to meet each student's unique needs (NCLD, 2016).

No Child Left Behind

Signed into Law in 2004, No Child Left Behind (NCLB) expanded the role of the federal government in public education as a result of low academic achievement in American students (Yell, 2016). NCLB aimed to increase academic achievement in schools by requiring states to establish systems of accountability for student improvement (Yell, 2016). The law requires that states and school districts use numerical data to prove student advancement and to bring all students up to state standards. NCLB made a point to include students with disabilities into these

measures of accountability in order to ensure that these students receive the academic attention they deserve (Yell, 2016). In 2015, NCLB was modified and became known as the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). ESSA shifted the power of creating measures of accountability from the federal government to the states (USDE, 2016).

Behaviorism

According to Santrock (2000), behaviorism is a theory of learning that focuses on directly observable behavior rather than internal, unobservable mental processes. Behaviorism focuses on two behavioral concepts, classical conditioning and operant conditioning (Santrock, 2000). These concepts are based on associative learning, which consists of learning that two events are connected (Santrock, 2000).

Classical conditioning. “Classical conditioning is a type of learning in which an organism learns to connect or associate stimuli” (Santrock, 2000, p. 239). According to Santrock (2000), in classical conditioning “a neutral stimulus becomes associated with a meaningful stimulus and acquires the capacity to elicit a similar response” (p. 240). Santrock goes on to explain that, in classical conditioning an unconditioned stimulus is a stimulus that automatically produces a response. This response is called the unconditioned response. A conditioned stimulus is a previously neutral stimulus that eventually elicits a conditioned response after being associated with the unconditioned stimulus. An example of classical conditioning involves Ivan Pavlov’s experiments with dogs. In his experiments, Pavlov first learned that upon seeing its food, the dog would begin to salivate. Pavlov presented the conditioned stimulus, a tone, just before presenting the unconditioned stimulus, the dog’s food. Eventually, the dog learned to associate the neutral stimulus (the tone) with the unconditioned stimulus (the food), causing the

dog to salivate upon hearing the tone. Santrock (2000) maintains that classical conditioning does not have a prominent part in human learning within schools, but seems to affect emotional responding. Classically conditioned responses are also easily extinguished if the conditioned stimulus is not consistently followed by the unconditioned response (Santrock, 2000).

Operant conditioning. McCormick and Presley (1997) explain that operant conditioning is far more important to human learning; while classical conditioning typically elicits an involuntary emotional response, operant conditioning elicits a behavior that the learner can control. Operant conditioning is based on Thorndike's Law of Effect, which states that "behaviors followed by positive outcomes are strengthened and behaviors followed by negative outcomes are weakened" (Santrock, 2000, p. 144). In operant conditioning, consequences of the behavior, rewards or punishments, lead to changes in the probability that the behavior will occur (Santrock, 2000). Reinforcement, or rewards, are consequences that increase the probability that a behavior will occur. Reinforcement can be positive or negative. Positive reinforcement refers to when the frequency of a response increases because it is followed by the presentation of a stimulus. Whereas negative reinforcement refers to when the frequency of a response increases because the response either removes the stimulus or involves avoiding a stimulus. Punishment is a consequence that decreases the probability that a behavior will occur (Santrock, 2000).

Three important aspects of operant conditioning are generalization, discrimination, and extinction. Generalization refers to a student giving the same response to similar, but different stimuli, people, or settings. (Santrock, 2000). Discrimination involves differentiating among stimuli or environmental events (Santrock 2000). Having this skill allows students to discriminate when and when not to apply their learned behavior. Extinction occurs when a

previously learned response is no longer reinforced and the response decreases. Extinction is most commonly used to decrease the frequency of a negative behavior (Santrock, 2000). If the source of a student's reinforcement for a negative behavior is identified, that behavior can be placed on extinction by removing the reinforcement.

Applied behavior analysis. Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) “involves applying the principles of operant conditioning to change human behavior” (Santrock, 2000, p. 246).

According to Santrock (2000), several strategies can be utilized in order to increase desirable behavior. The first strategy is to choose an effective reinforcer, meaning to choose a reinforcer that works best with each subject. For this reinforcer to be effective, it must be given only after the subject performs a particular, desired behavior. Reinforcers can be natural or artificial.

Natural reinforcers occur as a consequence of the response in a natural environment (Rusch, Rose, & Greenwood, 1988). A reinforcer is considered artificial when it is manipulated by other individuals or when it is not a natural reinforcer for the response (Rusch et al., 1988). According to Rusch et al. (1988), the distinction between the two types of reinforcers is important because responses are unlikely to generalize when using artificial reinforcers. However, natural reinforcers are easily generalizable to new stimuli, settings, and individuals (Rusch et al., 1988). Additionally, it is important to determine when the subject will be reinforced. It is recommended that a fixed ratio schedule, where the behavior is reinforced after a set number of responses, be utilized upon teaching a new skill. A partial reinforcement schedule, such as a variable-ratio schedule or a variable-interval schedule, involves reinforcing a behavior after an average number of times or a variable amount of time has passed. Partial reinforcement is recommended for when

a behavior is mastered as it produces greater persistence and greater resistance to extinction (Santrock, 2000).

Prompting and shaping are two techniques that should be used to increase the likelihood that a response will occur. A prompt refers to an added stimulus or cue that is given just before the response. “Shaping involves teaching new behaviors by reinforcing successive approximations to a specified target behavior” (Santrock, 2000, p. 250). In the beginning, any response that somewhat resembles the desired behavior may be reinforced. Subsequently, responses that more closely resemble the target response are reinforced (Santrock, 2000).

Santrock (2000) discusses ways to decrease undesirable behaviors while using ABA. The first strategy is to utilize differential reinforcement. Differential reinforcement refers to reinforcing a behavior that is more appropriate or that is incompatible with the negative behavior. The second strategy, extinction, is withdrawing positive reinforcement for a child’s negative behaviors (Santrock, 2000). The last strategy involves punishment for negative behaviors.

Self-Efficacy

According to Zimmerman (2000), self-efficacy is defined as “personal judgments of one’s capabilities to organize and execute courses of action to attain designated goals” (p.83). Self-efficacy is effected by past experiences, where failure reduces self-esteem and success generates a positive self-concept, leading to higher motivation, effort, and success (Long, Wood, Littleton, Passenger & Sheehy, 2011). Recent research has indicated that self-efficacy has a strong influence on academic achievement (Multon, Brown, & Lent, 1991; Zimmerman, 2000). Specifically, Zimmerman (2000) indicates that self-efficacy influences aspects of academic

motivation such as choice of activities, level of effort, persistence and emotional reaction. In their meta-analytic investigation of the relationship between self-efficacy and academic outcomes, Multon et al. (1991) found that self-efficacy is related to academic performance and task persistence. Student beliefs about their level of capability seem to be highly correlated with actual achievement of goals.

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support

Consistent with the core principles of RTI, PBIS attempts to make problem behaviors less effective, efficient, and relevant, while making desired behavior more functional in order to create and sustain healthy school environments (OSEP, 2016c; Sugai et al., 2011). Like RTI, PBIS is a three-tiered model offering a range of interventions based on the individual needs of each students (OSEP, 2016c).

At the core of PBIS is behaviorism, which supports the idea that most human behavior is learned, can be changed, and is controlled by environmental factors (Sugai et al., 2000). Behaviorism emphasizes investigating the function of behavior, changing the environment, teaching new skills, and removing rewards that maintain negative behaviors (Sugai et al., 2000).

Similarly, PBIS emphasizes assessment prior to intervention, manipulating environmental triggers to reduce the likelihood of problem behaviors, developing replacement social and communicative behaviors, and careful design of consequences (Sugai et al., 2000). The goal of PBIS is to use positive reinforcement and consequences in order to decrease the likelihood of negative behaviors while increasing the likelihood of positive behaviors in the school setting.

Tier 1

To implement Tier 1 effectively, an administrator and several other school personnel attend a training led by a skilled trainer. These individuals become a part of the PBIS team. They then decide on three to five behavioral expectations, determine protocols for office discipline referrals, and create a “gotcha” program (OSEP, 2016e, ¶7). The “gotcha” program is created with the purpose of offering positive reinforcement for appropriate behavior. All staff provide the “gotchas” with specific praise after witnessing appropriate behaviors throughout the school (OSEP, 2016b, ¶13).

The underlying theme of PBIS is to teach behavioral expectations as any other core curriculum subject would be taught (OSEP, 2016b, ¶10). According to Ross & Sabey (2015), Tier 1 interventions, commonly referred to as simply PBIS, are implemented throughout the entire school. The authors maintain that Tier 1 supports focus on preventing problem behavior and the need for further intervention, while simultaneously promoting prosocial behavior (2015). Ross & Sabey go on to explain that behavioral expectations are explicitly taught through school-wide consequences for appropriate and inappropriate behavior (2015). These consequences typically include “gotchas” or some other form of positive reinforcement for positive behavior as well as office discipline referrals for negative behavior (OSEP, 2016e).

Progress monitoring is another important aspect of PBIS. For most schools who implement the program, the number of office discipline referrals for each student is documented (OSEP, 2016e). This documentation serves to guide the PBIS team in determining who would benefit from a more intrusive intervention. While not all students may respond to PBIS, all

students do participate in the program regardless of involvement in a more intrusive intervention (Bruhn et al., 2014).

Tier 2

Tier 2 interventions are designed to address the 10%-15% of students who are unresponsive to the first tier but do not engage in behaviors that pose an immediate danger to themselves or others (Filter et al., 2007). According to Wolfe et al. (2016), the rationale behind Tier 2 interventions is when students receive effective behavioral supports early, it may prevent later, more substantial behavioral problems. The authors go on to explain that without these interventions, schools run the risk of students with emerging social-behavioral needs slipping through the cracks. Without these preventative measures, school resources can be expended on costly and timely interventions (2016). As Maggin et al. (2015) contend, secondary interventions aid school personnel in identifying those students in need of even more intensive levels of support. Tier 2 supports can be defined as interventions that are standardized, quickly and continuously available, consistent with Tier 1 expectations, data-driven, and flexible enough to support functional modifications (Wolfe et al., 2016).

Tier 3

Tier 3 interventions address the 1-5% of students who are unresponsive to the first and second tiers of intervention (Ross & Sabey, 2015). According to Hawken and Johnston (2007), these interventions typically involve conducting a functional behavioral assessment, which involves defining the challenging behavior, identifying events and circumstances that are associated with the behavior, and determining the social function of the behavior. The authors go on to explain that this information is often collected through indirect assessments, direct

observations and environmental manipulations (Hawken & Johnston, 2007). Individualized interventions, or behavior intervention plans, are designed and implemented based on the results of the functional behavioral assessment (Hawken & Johnston, 2007). These interventions often integrate school, family, and community services, and may require significant time and resources in order to be implemented effectively (Hawken & Johnston, 2007; Simonsen & Briere, 2011).

Tier 2 Interventions

A number of Tier 2 interventions have been created to help support students who are unresponsive to the first tier of intervention. Common Tier 2 interventions include Social Skills Training, Behavior Contacts, and Home-School Notes.

Social Skills Training

One example of a Tier 2 interventions is Social Skills Training. According to the U.S. Department of Education (2013), Social Skills Training (SST) is a collection of practices that use a behavioral approach to teach age-appropriate social skills, such as communication, problem solving, and self-management. SST generally occurs in pull-out, small-group settings with four to six children (Gresham, Sugai, & Horner, 2001). According to Gresham et al., “SST has four primary objectives: (a) promoting skill acquisition; (b) enhancing skill performance; (c) removing problem behaviors; and (d) facilitating generalization and maintenance” (2001, p. 338). Research has indicated that SST has positive effects on social-emotional development and social competence (Gresham et al., 2001; USDOE, 2013). However, As Gresham et al. explain, SST often emphasizes rote performance in contrived situations, resulting in failure to demonstrate sufficient generalization and maintenance (2001). While students may demonstrate

changes in behavior within the learning environment, transfer of these skills to different environments may be limited.

Behavior Contracts

According to Wielkiewicz (1986), behavior contracts are agreements designed to promote behavior change by specifying target behaviors and contingencies. The major features of behavior contracts are: (a) clearly stating the behavioral expectations; (b) incorporating rewards for adhering to the contract and (c) incorporating consequences for not meeting expectations (Bowman-Perrott, Burke, de Marin, Zhang & Davis, 2015). According to Bowman-Perrott et al. (2015), behavior contracts have been found to elicit academic gains, improved social behavior, and reduction of aggressive and violent behaviors in the general education and special education settings. In their meta-analysis of research, Bowman-Perrott et al. (2015) found that behavior contracts have a moderate effect on behavior change. However, the authors express caution in the use of behavior contracts because not all students demonstrated a positive response to the intervention.

Home-School Collaboration

According to Cox (2005), "Home-School Collaboration refers to the relationship between families and schools where parents and educators work together to promote the academic and social development of children" (p. 473). Research has demonstrated that home-school collaboration programs can be effective in producing changes in school-related behavior (Cox, 2005). According to Wielkiewicz (1995), one method of home-school collaboration is home notes, where the teacher communicates information to parents through a note. Students are given rewards or consequences by the parents based on the information conveyed on the note. In their

1995 study, Kelley & McCain evaluated the effectiveness of a home-school note program on five elementary age students with attention and hyper-activity problems. The authors found the program to be effective in increasing attention and productivity in the classroom. However, the use of home-school requires parental consistency and knowledge of behavior management techniques, making it difficult to implement and problematic to measure effectiveness of the intervention (Wiekiewicz, 1995).

Check In-Check Out

One example of a Tier 2 interventions is Check-In/Check-Out (CICO). As a Tier 2 intervention, CICO is designed to address minor problem behaviors such as off-task behavior in class, talking out of turn, or disrespect (Hawken et al., 2015).

Procedures

Check-In/Check-Out builds on school-wide expectations related to PBIS by providing frequent feedback regarding classroom behavior and rewards for appropriate behavior (Hawken et al., 2011). The intervention aims to increase antecedent prompts for appropriate behavior, increase adult feedback, enhance structure, and improve communication between home and school (Filter et al., 2007). According to Hunter et al. (2014), Check-In/Check-Out is based on the concept of pre-correction, where teachers remind students of appropriate behaviors before problem behaviors have the chance to manifest. This increased adult contact, coupled with increased collaboration between home and school, is integral to the success of CICO (Hawken & Johnston, 2007).

Although slight variations may exist, typically CICO is implemented in the same manner. According to Ross and Sabey (2015), “students are typically placed on CICO after receiving a

teacher referral, receiving two or three office discipline referrals (ODRs), or scoring low on a behavioral screening tool” (pp. 246-247). Once a student begins the CICO intervention, they are assigned a CICO coordinator, or coach. According to Hawken et al. (2014), the coordinator is typically a staff member who spends 10 to 15 hours per week implementing the intervention. Hawken et al. (2011) explain that each student begins each day checking in with the coordinator, wherein he/she ensures that the student is prepared for the day and provides the student with a Daily Progress Report (DPR). According to Hawken et al., (2011), the DPR lists the school-wide behavioral expectations and serves as a means for teachers to rank how well the student has met these expectations throughout the day. Teachers are also providing the student with verbal feedback regarding their performance throughout the course of the day (Hawken et al., 2015). At the end of the day, the student meets with the CICO coordinator, who calculates the student’s percentage of points earned for that day, provides praise and encouragement, and gives the student a predetermined reinforcer based on their performance (Hawken et al., 2011). The student takes a copy of the DPR home for a parent signature and returns it the next day (Hawken et al., 2011).

It is the responsibility of the CICO coordinator to enter the data related to daily percentage of points for the student and provide data to the behavior support team (Hawken et al., 2014). The behavior support team meets biweekly to evaluate student progress and make decisions regarding modifications and transitions (Hawken et al., 2011).

The ultimate goal of the program is for the student to engage in the appropriate behaviors without teacher support. Crone et al. recommend using self-management as a means to scaffold the student’s appropriate behavior as support is faded (2010). According to the authors, “The

goal of self-management is to increase the student's sense of responsibility and ability to manage his or her own behavior without the need for redirection, prompting, and management by an adult figure" (2004, p. 93). According to Rusch et al. (1988), if a student has the ability to manage his or her own behavior, the intervention may be effectively generalized to all settings or conditions in which the learner finds himself or herself.

Research

An abundance of researchers have demonstrated that CICO is effective at reducing problem behaviors in students. For example, Simonsen et al. (2011) conducted a study to compare the effectiveness of CICO with a school's standard practice in reducing problem behaviors in students. In the study, standard practice included assigning students to sessions with school counselors based on perceived needs (Simonsen et al., 2011). While all students enrolled in the study demonstrated a decrease in problem behaviors, those students enrolled in the CICO intervention improved further (Simonsen et al., 2011). Findings indicate that the CICO method may be a more effective alternative than standard practice.

In a 2008 study, Todd et al. implemented the CICO intervention with four students in a rural elementary school. The researchers calculated the percentage of 10-second intervals in which the participants were engaging in problem behaviors during 20-minute observation sessions before and during intervention (Todd et al., 2008). The four participants demonstrated, on average, a 17.5 % reduction in problem behavior, indicating that CICO is effective at reducing problem behaviors for elementary age students. In a similar study, Filter et al. (2007), assessed the effectiveness of CICO in three elementary schools in the Pacific Northwest. Filter and his colleagues (2007) collected data to compare the rates of office discipline referrals before

and during participation in the CICO program. Data indicated that 68% of students benefited from the CICO method, decreasing the average office discipline referrals to one ODR every 5.59 days before intervention, to one ODR every 8.47 days during intervention (Filter et al., 2007).

Modifications to CICO

Many researchers have indicated that CICO may only be effective for a specific subset of students (Hawken et al., 2014; Maggin et al., 2015; Wolfe et al., 2016). For example, Hawken et al., (2014) contend that the intervention may only be appropriate for those students engaging in behaviors maintained by adult attention. On the same note, in their review of the literature Wolfe et al. (2016), found CICO to be ineffective for students whose behavior was maintained by escape or avoidance. However, in their 2011 study, Hawken et al. attempted to determine if CICO was effective across multiple different functions of behavior. Results indicated that CICO was most effective for treating behaviors maintained by adult-attention (Hawken et al., 2011). However, results also indicated that the intervention was effective for behaviors maintained by escape, avoidance, and peer attention (Hawken et al., 2011). Furthermore, students with behaviors related to escape and avoidance responded positively to CICO modifications that directly addressed behaviors related to their own specific problem behaviors (Maggin et al., 2015).

Similarly, researchers have demonstrated that CICO may only be effective for those students engaging in externalizing problem behaviors. According to Hunter et al. (2014), externalizing behaviors include aggression, conduct problems, disruptive behaviors, hyperactivity-impulsivity, opposition-defiance, and acting out. Hunter et al. attempted to evaluate CICO as an intervention for students with internalizing problem behaviors in their 2014

study. For this study, CICO was adapted to focus on cognitions, feelings, and behaviors (Hunter et al., 2014). Student participants demonstrated a decreased score on the Student Internalizing Behavior Screener (SIBS) and the Social Skills Improvement System Rating Scale (SSIS-RS), indicating that CICO was effective at decreasing the internalizing behaviors of student participants (Hunter et al., 2014).

Research has demonstrated that CICO can be modified even further to meet the needs of different populations. For example, in their 2015 study, Ross & Sabey blended CICO with a social skills training program to decrease negative social engagement while increasing positive social engagement. This program identified a set of discrete social skills for each participant and included a seven minute individual or group lesson prior to lunch recess (Ross & Sabey, 2015). Lessons involved explicit instruction, modeling, guided practice, and daily assignments (Ross & Sabey, 2015). All participants demonstrated an increase in positive social engagement and a decrease in negative social engagement, indicating that this modified CICO intervention may be appropriate for students who are unresponsive to the basic form of CICO (Ross & Sabey, 2015). Lastly, while most research indicates that CICO is solely effective in reducing problem behaviors in elementary age students, some research has indicated that CICO may be modified to address the needs of preschool and high school aged students (Hawken et al., 2007).

Chapter Summary

Check-In/Check-Out is an intervention utilized with those students who are unresponsive to Tier 1 supports but do not exhibit severe problem behaviors. Research indicates that this intervention is highly effective at reducing the problem behaviors of students in need of Tier 2

supports. Similarly, the method may be modified to meet the needs of a larger population of students.

Chapter III

Methodology

The purpose of this study was to investigate student perceptions of the Check-in Check-out intervention. A quantitative approach was used, followed by a survey design. The opinions of student participants was sought, specifically regarding the process, coaches, and motivation.

Participants

This study took place at an elementary school in Cook County, Illinois. Twelve elementary school student participants were surveyed. Participation in this study was based on three factors: (a) current or previous student participation in the check in-check out intervention (b) parental consent (c) student assent. To ensure anonymity, participants were not asked to provide any identifying information.

Instrument

A survey was specifically developed for this study. This survey was reviewed for content validity by an expert panel of professionals and peers of the Multi-Categorical Special Education Program at Governors State University. The panel reviewed the survey and made suggestions regarding modifications. Modifications were made to the survey, ensuring content validity. The survey consisted of three sections. The first sections was designed to obtain demographic information about participants. Section two consisted of questions that assessed student knowledge of the intervention. The final section of the survey was designed to obtain the opinions of student participants. This section used a five point Likert Scale, specifically designed for children.

Procedures

This survey was distributed to 12 students who were enrolled in the Check-In/Check-Out intervention during the 2015-2016 school-year. The study was conducted following ethical guidelines. The parents or guardians of all students provided informed consent for student participation.

Data Collection

Surveys were distributed to small groups of qualified students in the classroom, the library, and the lunchroom. A trained adult read questions and statements to those students who had difficulty reading. Similarly, a scribe wrote answers for students who had difficulty writing. All responses written by the scribe were verbatim. Participants who did not demonstrate difficulty with reading or writing completed the survey independently.

Data Analysis

Quantitative techniques were used to gather and analyze the data. Data was organized into an excel spreadsheet, where frequencies and percentages were calculated. Data was analyzed using a standard descriptive approach. Data was presented in tabular, graphic and narrative representation (see Gay & Mills, 2012).

Chapter Summary

This survey was specifically designed to collect information on the perceptions of students using the Check-In/Check-Out method in a local elementary school. The researcher obtained parental consent for all student participants. Anonymity was guaranteed for all participants. The results of the surveys will be analyzed and discussed in Chapter IV.

Chapter IV

Results

The purpose of this chapter is to examine the results of the survey that explored the perceptions of student participating in the Check-In/Check-Out Intervention. Twelve surveys were completed by student participants. All participants were asked to indicate their gender, age, and whether they participate or have participated in Check-In/Check-Out.

Demographics

The demographic portion of the survey indicated that the majority of participants were male (75%) compared to female (25%). The age of students ranged from first grade to fifth grade, with the majority of students being in first grade (33%) and second grade (33%). All participants indicated that they had participated in the CICO intervention.

Procedural Information

Section II of the survey examined procedural information related to Check-In/Check-Out.

Reason for participation in Check-In/Check-Out. When participants were asked why they were participating in the CICO intervention, 25% of students responded that they didn't know. Other participants responded with answers such as "To help me make better choices," "I did not listen," and "because I am bad in the classroom."

How to discontinue Check-In/Check-Out. When asked when they would discontinue the intervention, forty-two percent of participants responded that they didn't know. Forty-two percent of participants responded with a time, such as "at the end of the year" or "in third grade." Eight percent of participants responded with an event related to changes in their own behaviors

(e.g. “When I listen better), while the remaining 8% believed the intervention would end when they no longer wanted to participate.

Student involvement. Table 2 summarizes participant results related to their involvement with the Check-In/Check-Out intervention. The table indicates that the majority of students shared their Daily Progress Report with a parent/guardian. While some students indicated that they did not do it consistently, no students indicated that they did not show their DPR at all. Fifty-eight percent of students indicated that teachers explained why they received a low score on their DPR. Forty-two percent of participants responded negatively or neutral, indicating that teachers did not indicate why students received reductions in scores, or were inconsistent in their explanations.

Table 2

Procedural Information

Statement	Positive n (%)	Negative n (%)	Neutral n (%)
I show my Daily Progress Report to my mom or dad.	9 (75%)	0 (0%)	3 (25%)
My teachers tell me why I received 0s and 1s on my Daily Progress Report.	7 (58%)	4 (34%)	1 (8%)

Note: Positive = Strongly Agree or Agree; Negative= Strongly Disagree or Disagree. 0s and 1s on a Daily Progress Report represent a low score and indicate inappropriate behavior from the student.

Perceptions of Check-In/Check-Out

The statements in Section III were designed to assess student perceptions of the CICO intervention. Data indicates that participants were split in regards to their attitudes of their

participation in the intervention and whether or not they believed the intervention to help them be a better student. While the majority of students indicated that they enjoyed talking with their coaches, there was an increase in neutral responses related to this statement. Finally, Data demonstrated that participants had a favorable attitude regarding their interactions with coaches in relation to CICO, receiving perfect scores, and earning GOTCHAS. Table 3 summarizes participant responses to this section.

Table 3

Perceptions of CICO

Statement	Positive n (%)	Negative n (%)	Neutral n (%)
I like using CICO.	6 (50%)	6 (50%)	0 (0%)
Using CICO helps me to be a better student.	7 (58%)	5(42%)	0 (0%)
I enjoy talking to my coach Everyday.	7 (58%)	3 (25%)	2 (17%)
My coach makes me feel good About doing CICO.	10 (83%)	1 (8%)	1 (8%)
I feel proud when I get a Perfect score.	12 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
I feel happy when I earn A gotcha.	11 (92%)	0 (0%)	1 (8%)

Note: Positive = Strongly Agree or Agree; Negative= Strongly Disagree or Disagree

Figure 4 breaks up responses to the statement “I like using CICO” and “Using CICO helps me to be a better student” by grade level.

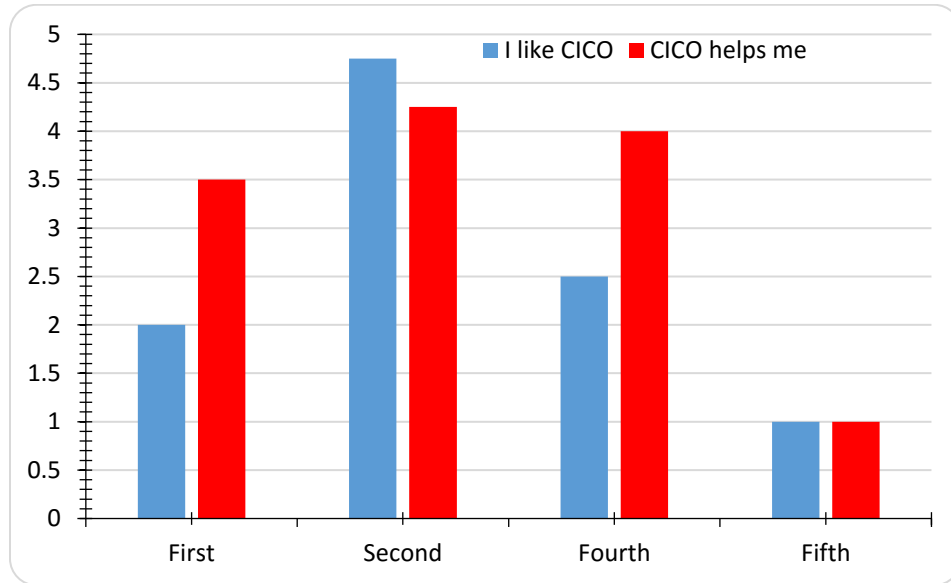


Figure 4. Student Responses by Grade Level

Chapter Summary

This chapter provides the results of the data gathered from twelve participants in the CICO intervention. The results of the data collected demonstrate a lack of student understanding of the protocols related to CICO. While data indicate that the majority of students find aspects of the intervention rewarding, there was a split in responses regarding whether students liked participating in the intervention or believed it to be beneficial.

Chapter V

Discussion and Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to investigate the perceptions of participants of the Check-In/Check-Out intervention. This study also investigated procedural knowledge of participants.

Discussion

Recent research has demonstrated the effectiveness of Check-In/Check-out as a behavioral intervention for students with mild problem behaviors (Bruhn, Lane & Hirsch, 2014; Filter, McKenna, Benedict & Horner, 2007; Hawken, Bundock, Barrett, Eber, Breen & Phillips, 2015; Hunter, Chenier & Gresham, 2014; Ross & Sabey, 2015; Todd et al., 2008; Wolfe, Pyle, Charlton, Sabey, Lund & Ross, 2016). However, research has also indicated that a subset of students are unresponsive to the intervention (Hawken et al., 2014; Maggin et al., 2015; Wolfe et al., 2016). While most researchers have attributed student unresponsiveness to the function or nature of the problem behaviors, the current study has demonstrated that this lack of student responsiveness may be related to student perceptions of their participation in CICO (Hawken et al., 2014; Wolfe et al., 2016).

Conclusions

In order to increase appropriate school behavior, reinforcement of desired behaviors must be consistent and motivating (Santrock, 2000). Check-In/Check-Out, which is based on the principles of behaviorism, works on the assumption that students find the chosen reinforcers gratifying. When asked to rate how happy students were upon receiving the reinforcer, students responded with an average of 4.75, indicating that the GOTCHA is an effective reinforcer in this setting. Similarly, students responded with an average of 4.75 when asked how proud they felt

upon receiving a perfect score on their Daily Progress Reports. This indicates that students find receiving a perfect score naturally reinforcing, meaning they will be more likely to generalize the appropriate behaviors across settings (Rusch et al., 1988).

While students in second grade demonstrated high enjoyment in the intervention, those students in first and fifth grade demonstrated a lack of enjoyment. This may provide insight into the age range for which the intervention is appropriate.

When responding to questions related to procedural information, first grade students also demonstrated negative views of the intervention. 100% of first grade participants attributed their participation in the intervention to a negative aspect of their behavior, such as being bad at school or not getting along with other students. Likewise, when answering the same question, second grade students responded by saying they did not know or related their participation in the intervention to something outside of their locus of control, such as them missing too many school days. The disparity between the two grade level responses may be related to their levels of enjoyment. First grade students seem to view the intervention as a punishment for negative behavior whereas second had a general positive view of their participation even though they could not communicate why they were included in the program.

When responding to when participation in the intervention would end, the majority of participants responded that they did not know (42%) or responded with a conjectured time (42%), such as “at the end of the year.” Not only were all of those responses which included a time frame incorrect, but they also demonstrate a lack of participant understanding of how to withdraw from the intervention. This lack of procedural knowledge may also relate to negative

outlooks on participation in the intervention or, even worse, a lack of commitment to the intervention.

Educational Implications

If students are non-responsive to the Check-In/Check-Out intervention, it may be important to assess whether they find the reinforcer or achievement of a perfect score motivating. While the majority of the students in the present study found the reinforcer motivating, non-responsiveness of other students may be attributable to lack of interest in the GOTCHA. Additionally, if students do not find the achievement of a perfect score naturally reinforcing, they are unlikely to generalize the learned behaviors to new settings.

Self-management remains an essential aspect of generalizing learned skills to new environments and conditions (Crone et al., 2004; Rusch et al., 1988). However, student participants demonstrate a lack of knowledge of the procedures related to CICO. If students are to be truly successful in generalizing learned skills, they must have an understanding of this procedural knowledge.

Similarly, presenting CICO in a positive manner rather than a punishment for inappropriate school behavior may prove beneficial for students. If students are viewing the intervention as a punishment, they may feel stigmatized by their participation and be less motivated to participate.

Recommendations for Further Research

Since this study is limited to a small number of participants and limited to one school district, it would be recommended to duplicate this study or a similar study with a larger and more diverse sample set to ensure the generalizability of the results found here. The sample

should include a larger number of participants as well as schools. A qualitative comparison of the implementation of CICO across schools or districts relative to the success and perceptions of students involved in the intervention may provide more insight into the effectiveness of the intervention.

Summary

The main areas of research that were include in this study were special education legislation, theory related to behaviorism, positive behavior interventions and supports, and the Check-In/Check-Out intervention. A survey was developed to assess the perceptions and procedural knowledge of participants in the Check-In/Check-Out intervention. While only half of participants indicated they enjoyed taking part in the intervention, the majority expressed that they found aspects of the intervention rewarding. The inability of subjects to express their reason for participation or when their participation in the intervention would cease demonstrated a lack of procedural knowledge related to Check-In/Check-Out. Researchers must continue to examine why certain students are unresponsive to Check-In/Check-out in order for their intervention to address the behavioral needs of a larger population of students.

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Appendix A:

Survey

Put an X in the circle that describes you.

- 1. I am a Boy Girl

- 2. Grade:
 Kindergarten First Second
 Third Fourth Fifth

- 3. Do you or have you participated in Check-in Check-out?
 Yes No

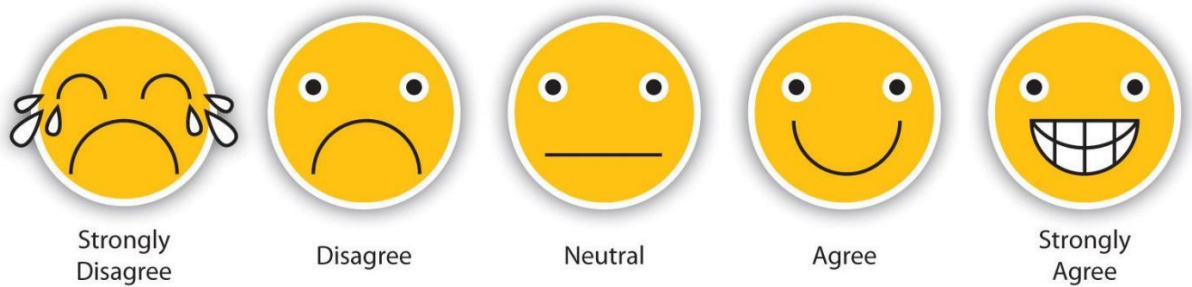
Please write your answer below the following questions.

- 1. Why are you on Check-In/Check-Out?

- 2. When will you stop participating in Check-In/Check-Out?

Please circle the picture that best represents your response to the statement.

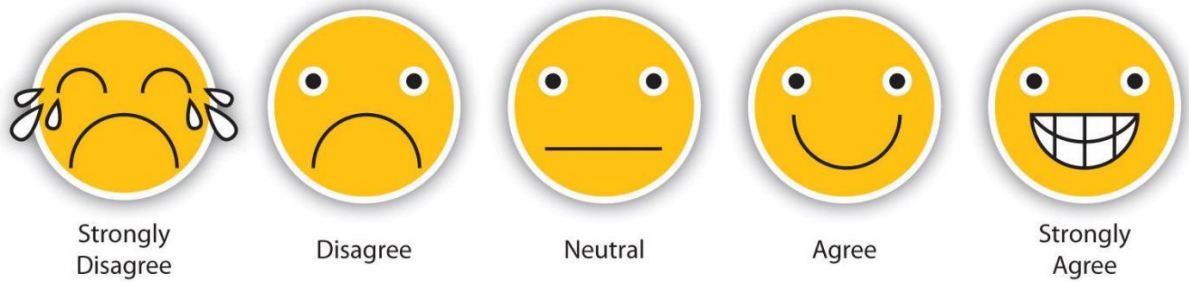
- 1. I show my Daily Progress Report to my mom or dad.



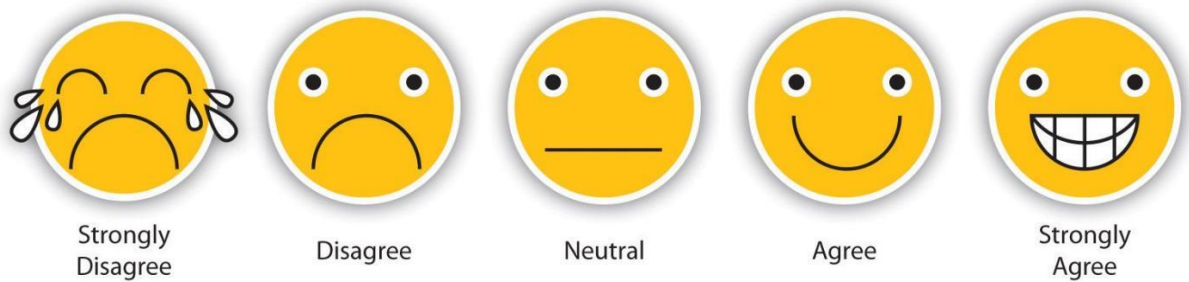
2. I like using Check-in Check-out.



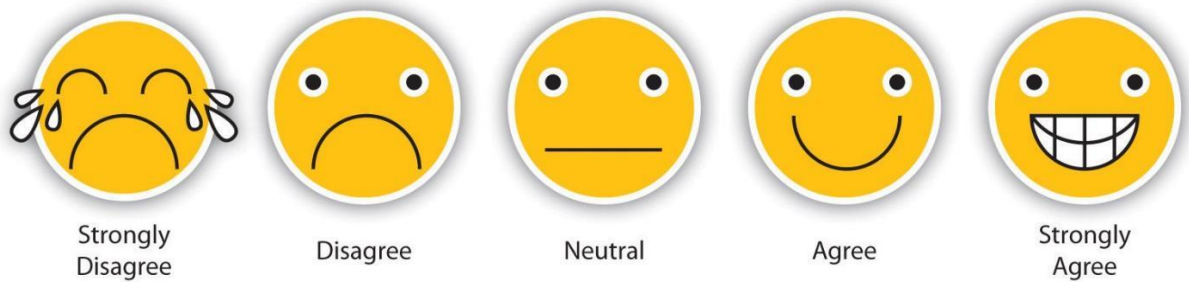
3. Using Check-in Check-out helps me to be a better student.



4. My teachers tell me why I recieved zeros and ones on my daily progress report.



5. I enjoy talking to my coach everyday.



6. My coach makes me feel good about doing Check in-Check out.



7. I feel proud when I get a perfect score.



8. I feel happy when I earn a GOTCHA.



Appendix B:

CITI Report