



Faculty Publications

2010-11-01

Getting Students to School on Time Using Teacher Written Praise Notes

Lynnette Christensen
lynnette_christensen@byu.edu

Paul Caldarella
Paul_Caldarella@byu.edu

K. Richard Young
Richard_Young@byu.edu

Colleen Densley

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/facpub>



Part of the [Teacher Education and Professional Development Commons](#)

BYU ScholarsArchive Citation

Christensen, Lynnette; Caldarella, Paul; Young, K. Richard; and Densley, Colleen, "Getting Students to School on Time Using Teacher Written Praise Notes" (2010). *Faculty Publications*. 17.
<https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/facpub/17>

This Poster is brought to you for free and open access by BYU ScholarsArchive. It has been accepted for inclusion in Faculty Publications by an authorized administrator of BYU ScholarsArchive. For more information, please contact scholarsarchive@byu.edu, ellen_amatangelo@byu.edu.

Using Teacher-Written Praise Notes to Decrease Tardiness in Elementary School Students*



Paul Caldarella, Lynnette Christensen, and K. Richard Young
 Brigham Young University Positive Behavior Support Initiative

Introduction

- Principals and teachers consider student tardiness to be a serious issue.
- Especially challenging with elementary children often dependent on an adult to get to school on time.
- Frustration that late students disrupt instruction and require re-teaching.
- Tardiness is widespread and associated with:
 - Lower academic achievement
 - Use of drugs/alcohol in secondary school
 - Employment difficulties later in life
- School policies often punitive, but ineffective.
- School-Wide Positive Behavior Support (SWPBS) interventions may help.
- Teacher praise is a positive strategy shown to be effective for problem behavior.

Method

Setting

- Urban K-6 elementary school
 - 646 students
 - 25% low SES
 - 18% mobility
 - 80% Caucasian
 - 9% Hispanic
 - 6% Asian
 - 5% Other

Participants

- Each teacher selected a student exhibiting moderate to severe tardiness

Demographics

Name	Gender	Ethnicity	Grade	Academic Concerns	Behavioral Concerns
Faye	F	Caucasian	1	No	No
Bryce	M	Caucasian	1	No	No
Wade	M	Caucasian	1	No	Yes
Gary	M	Caucasian	6	Yes	Yes
Ron	M	Caucasian	6	No	Yes
Ellie	F	Caucasian	2	Yes	No

Design

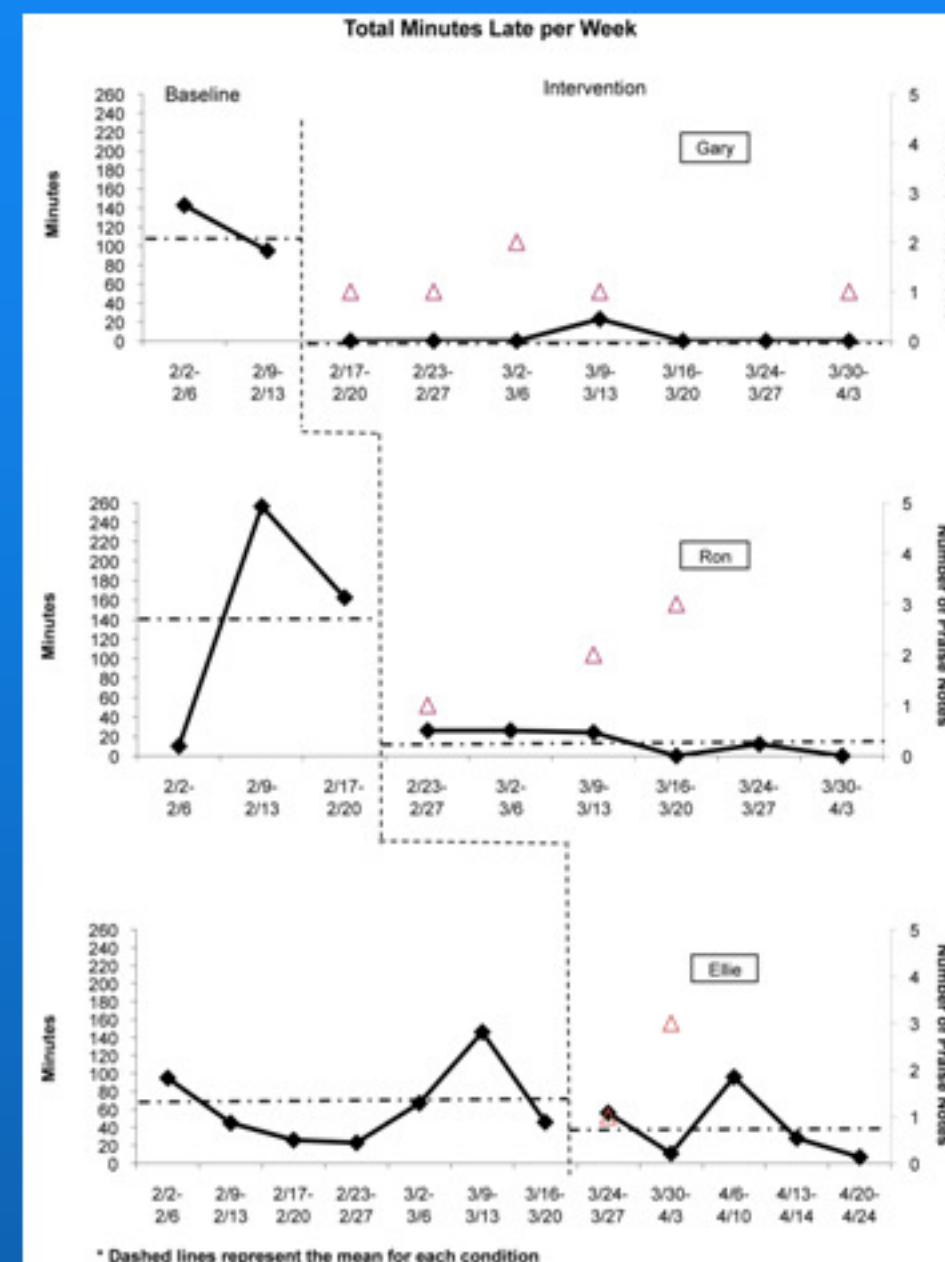
- Multiple baseline across students

Purpose

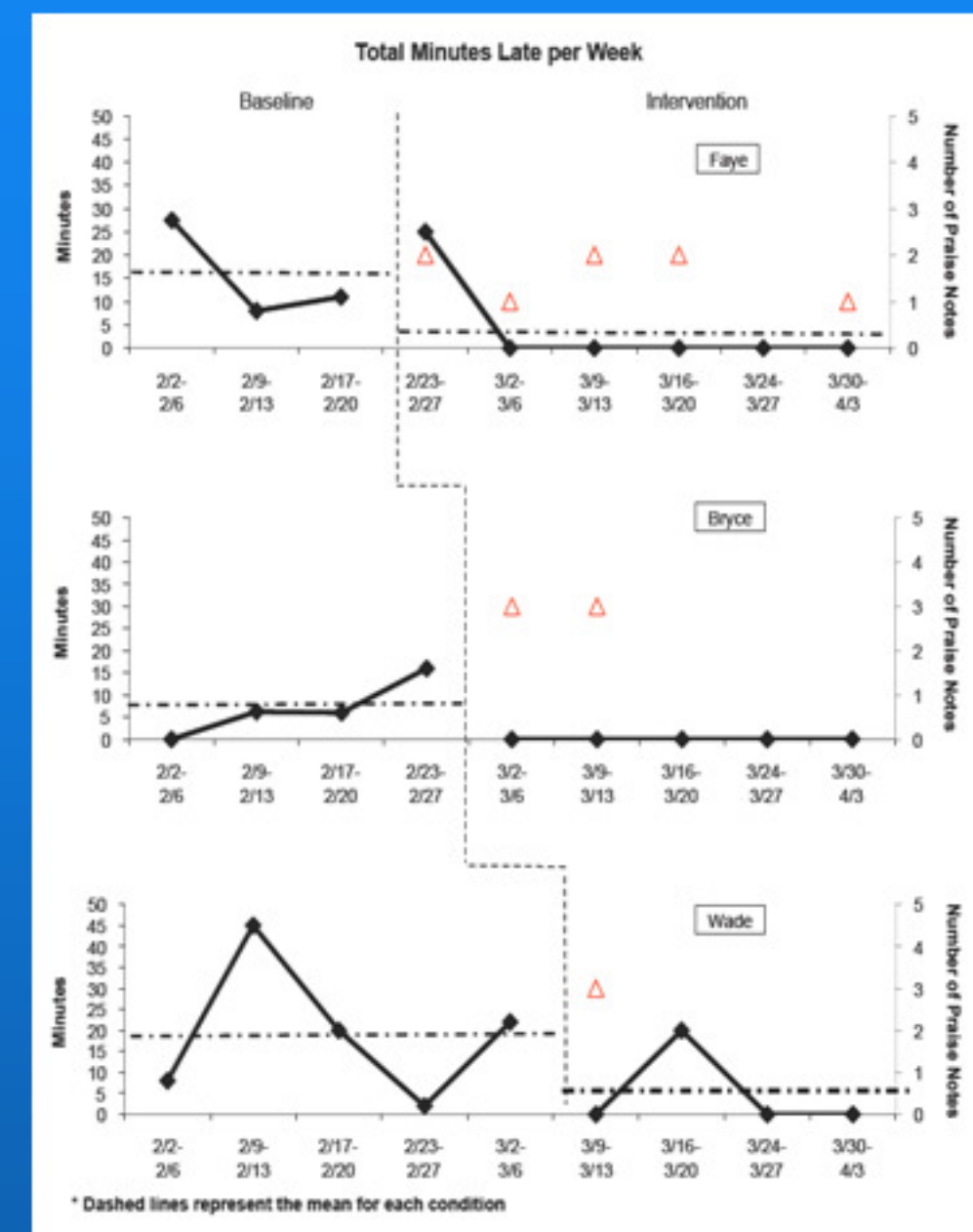
To evaluate the effect of teacher written praise notes on elementary school student on-time behavior.

Results

Severely Tardy Students



Moderately Tardy Students



	Average Minutes Late per Week		Decrease	Average Number of Notes/Week
	Baseline	Intervention		
Gary	119.00	3.29	97.24%	.86
Ron	142.95	14.67	89.74%	1.00
Ellie	63.99	33.62	47.47%	.80
Mean	108.65	17.19	84.18%	.89

	Average Minutes Late per Week		Decrease	Average Number of Notes/Week
	Baseline	Intervention		
Faye	15.49	4.17	73.10%	1.33
Bryce	7.06	0.00	100.00%	1.20
Wade	19.40	5.00	74.23%	.75
Mean	13.98	3.06	78.12%	1.09

*This study will soon be published in the journal *Intervention in School and Clinic*.

Procedures

SWPBS Context

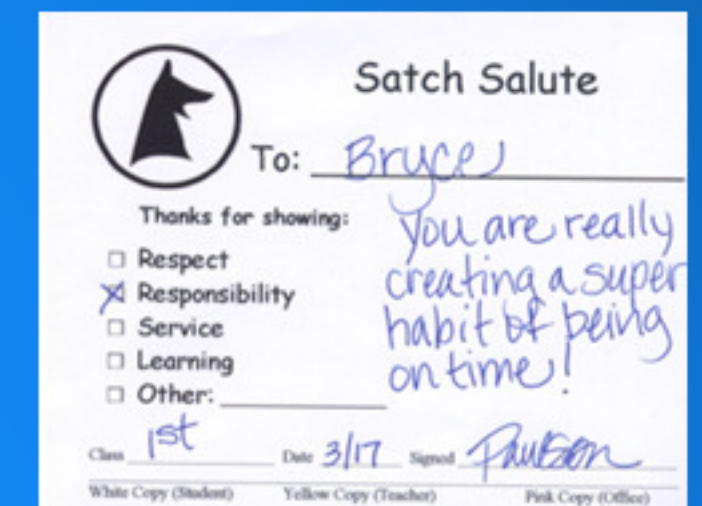
- Clear expectations
- Character development program
- Student recognition system
- Teacher written praise notes for respect, responsibility, service, and learning
- Students on time for the whole month received a reinforcer

Independent Variable

- Principal letter to parents
- Teachers wrote praise notes for students arriving on time

Dependent Variable

- Number of minutes late per week



Recommendations

- Important to select students who show a pattern of being late over several recent weeks.
- Reasons for tardiness and whether this would be an appropriate intervention should be discussed.
- To be implemented effectively, praise notes should:
 - Include specific statements about being on time
 - Be written consistently
 - Be used with reminders or reinforcers to help teachers be more consistent
- Other interventions (e.g., punishment) should be removed to decide if notes cause improvement.
- More research is needed in elementary schools.