School-To-Home Notes: Getting Parents Involved in Teaching Social Skills

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School-to-Home Notes: Getting Parents Involved in Teaching Social Skills

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Brigham Young University Positive Behavior Support Initiative (BYU-PBSI)

Research Aim:
Evaluate stakeholder perceptions of a school-to-home note program used to involve parents in teaching and reinforcing social skills as part of a universal level Positive Behavior Support intervention.

Setting and Participants
This study examined a suburban elementary school in central Utah that is currently in its 6th year of PBS implementation.

- 436 Students, K-6
- Over 50% Free and Reduced Lunch
- Ethnicity: 75% Caucasian, 21% Hispanic, 2% African American, 2% Other
- 187 Parent Participants
- 20 Teachers

Social Skills Program
Instructional Schedule

- Week 1: Social skill introduced by teacher in the classroom
- Week 2: Parent volunteer teaches social skill lesson in the classroom
- Home notes are distributed to students
- Week 3: Librarian teaches social skill lesson using a library book

Data Collection
Survey
- 7 Point Likert-type scale
- Perceptions of: Favorability, Time Commitment, Effectiveness, Ease, Continued Use, Three versions, 12-15 questions, Open-ended comments

Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Parents</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students enjoy doing the home note activities</td>
<td>67.0%</td>
<td>69.0%</td>
<td>70.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home notes should continue in the school next year</td>
<td>65.0%</td>
<td>63.0%</td>
<td>56.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home notes help students improve their social skills</td>
<td>31.0%</td>
<td>29.0%</td>
<td>38.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home notes take too much time</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social skills should be taught in school</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home notes should be used more often after once a month</td>
<td>18.0%</td>
<td>18.0%</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They have more home note activities</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents continue to use the social skills</td>
<td>77.0%</td>
<td>77.0%</td>
<td>77.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It was easy to keep home notes signed</td>
<td>69.0%</td>
<td>55.0%</td>
<td>48.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It was easy to follow-up home notes</td>
<td>70.0%</td>
<td>70.0%</td>
<td>70.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It was easy to understand the importance of teaching social skills</td>
<td>70.0%</td>
<td>70.0%</td>
<td>70.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home notes help students communicate with families</td>
<td>70.0%</td>
<td>70.0%</td>
<td>70.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home notes help students talk to their child during school</td>
<td>94.0%</td>
<td>94.0%</td>
<td>94.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is important to follow the social skills</td>
<td>90.0%</td>
<td>90.0%</td>
<td>90.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is challenging for parents to do their homework</td>
<td>45.0%</td>
<td>45.0%</td>
<td>45.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents estimated the hours spent teaching social skills</td>
<td>35.0%</td>
<td>35.0%</td>
<td>35.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home notes help students learn the steps of the social skills</td>
<td>75.0%</td>
<td>75.0%</td>
<td>75.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Conclusion
All stakeholder groups tended to rate home notes positively, with parents being particularly supportive. The use of home notes appears to be a feasible and acceptable approach to increase parental involvement and potentially improve generalization of social skills taught in schools as part of a universal level PBS intervention.

- Parents: Inform early about scope of the program
- Consolidate across grade levels
- Keep parents involved in the process

- Teachers: Get teachers more involved
- Share what is learned

- Students: Integrate with homework assignments
- Be consistent in procedures
- Use activities that appeal to a broad age range...