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

Sue A. Womack
sue.womack@gmail.com

Ryan H. Shatzer

See next page for additional authors
Authors
Sue A. Womack, Ryan H. Shatzer, Paul Caldarella, and Michael Adams
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Michael Adams, Sue Womack, Ryan Shatzer, & Paul Caldarella
Brigham Young University Positive Behavior Support Initiative (BYU-PBSI)

Introduction
Many agree that schools should be attending to the social and emotional needs of all students (Zins, Bloodworth, Weissberg, & Walberg, 2007). With the increasing recognition of school-wide positive behavior support (NWPBS), social skill instruction has begun to address this issue.

Social skills instruction often has problems with generalization (Gresham, 1998).

Including parents in the instruction and reinforcement of social skills may improve generalization (Armstrong & McPherson 1991; Budd & Izkowitz, 1990).

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

- 107 Parent Participants
- 20 Teachers

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

Respondents
- Students
- Completed in Class
- Parents
- Stratified Sample
- Paper/Phone Survey
- Teachers
- Completed in staff meeting

Social Skills Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skills</th>
<th>M (SD)</th>
<th>M (SD)</th>
<th>M (SD)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accepting</td>
<td>4.30 (1.34)</td>
<td>5.36 (1.45)</td>
<td>4.63 (2.09)</td>
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<td>Responsibility</td>
<td>4.70 (1.69)</td>
<td>6.11 (1.26)</td>
<td>4.39 (2.40)</td>
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<td>Showing Appreciation</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
<td>44.9%</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Following</td>
<td>90.0%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>85.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Listening</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>86.9%</td>
<td>-</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Survey Return Rate

- Student: 100%
- Parent: 60%
- Teacher: 20%

Sample Home Notes

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

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