

E2E First Things First: Implementing Tier 1 and 2 Interventions To Resolve Common Classroom Behavior Issues

“That Kid is Doing Something Weird/Annoying/Disruptive!”

When teams notice a student’s behavior is “standing out” in his/her classes and teachers are noticing that the student is not responding to [typical tier 1 and 2 MTSS classroom interventions](#), it may be time involve the SIT team to assess the student’s behavior in order to try some different approaches. **It’s not time for a full-blown FBA just yet!** There are still some common-sense interventions to try first, and the SIT team can help to coordinate that!

A member of the SIT team will send teachers a survey to identify the behaviors about which teachers feel concerned and to assess which strategies are being tried currently in response to the student’s behavior. First, go through the following list of “typical” interventions. Make sure these are being tried first; these are strategies that can benefit all students.

Problem #1: Student isn’t appropriately engaged in class (not completing assignments, on cell phone or laptop messing around, messing around and killing time).

Have you tried (check all that apply):

- (For the homeroom teacher) Conducting a weekly Executive Function Check with the student to look at grades in Skyward, go through the backpack to locate completed work that needs to be turned in, identifying blank copies of work that need to be completed, cleaning out trash from backpack, restocking paper/pencils/supplies
- Banning the use of earbuds during quiet work times (no “listening to music while you work”)--you can choose to provide ear [PLUGS that look like earbuds](#) (helps with compliance when the person can look normative) when the student claims that he/she is using the earbuds to block out noise and concentrate
- Providing pencil and paper copies of assignments that peers may be completing electronically
- Checking in discreetly with the student to make sure he/she understands the assignment
- Making sure the work being offered is at the student’s instructional level (this includes both the student’s academic level and behavioral/attention level)
- Providing short bursts of 1:1 assistance
- Providing models and exemplars so the student can see what the end product should be
- Seating the student in a location where it’s easy to supervise him/her on his/her laptop
- Asking the student to keep his/her laptop screen brightness up so you can monitor it more easily
- Providing accommodated handouts (such as guided outlines, cloze notes, math handouts with a couple of the problems already worked out, etc.)

- Breaking long or complex tasks into short “chunks” so it’s not so overwhelming; more frequent deadlines
- Providing social consequences for ineffective use of work time (such as lunch detentions) as a consequence for socializing instead of working on assigned tasks
- Having clear procedures surrounding cell phone and laptop use for all students (i.e. laptops closed at the start of class until told to open; cell phone face down on the desk or in a bag/pocket)
- Contacting the parent/guardian to keep them in the loop (and see if consequences at home may help, such as keeping the cell phone at home if phone use is a problem)
- Checking in the student’s cell phone at the office in the morning, then releasing the phone in the afternoon (for students who misuse cell phones during the day)
- Using proximity control to discourage socializing or inappropriate technology use (kids are less likely to engage in inappropriate behaviors if you are standing/sitting close by)

Problem #2: Student is talking out frequently in class with off-topic (or simply too many) comments or is constantly socializing with peers.

Have you tried (check all that apply):

- Not stopping the flow of teacher-directed conversation to acknowledge the comments (planned ignoring, not reinforcing the student’s interruptions by stopping to address them)
- Not allowing class discussions to become sidetracked by non sequiturs (immediately directing discussion back to the appropriate topic at hand)
- Allowing the student a planned moment to tell you his/her latest news during passing period or at another time during class (“John, you can tell me all about trains every day during the last minute before the dismissal bell, but that is the only time we can talk about trains”).
- Seating the student away from preferred conversation-mates
- Seating the student on an outer-aisle seat (so classmates only flank him/her on one side, not both).
- Seating the student in a back row seat (so he/she isn’t diverting attention to himself by sitting in front of peers or turning around backwards in his/her chair to socialize)
- Providing planned time for students to socialize as part of the classroom schedule
- Encouraging the student to write down (paper or e-mail) exciting news to share with teachers instead of blurting it out during class time; teachers should respond back briefly (written or verbally)
- (For the kid with 10,000 comments/questions) Having the student write down comments and questions to share with the teacher later, then having the teacher respond to the questions via e-mail or Messenger later in the day (teacher may choose a predetermined number of questions to answer each day if the list is long)
- Explicitly directing students to let them know if it’s a time to talk or a time to be quiet (“Eyes up here. Pencils down, please. I need you to be silent while I tell you three things about tomorrow’s enrollment.”)
- Providing visual supports (such as a “red-yellow-green” stoplight-style sign--this can also work for the laptop use issue)
- Explicitly redirecting (i.e. “No interrupting please. Raise your hand to speak after I turn off the projector.”)

- Providing guidance to the student about the number of times he/she can expect to get called on when raising his/her hand to answer questions (“John, I will call on you three times today when you raise your hand. After that, you’ve used all your turns and I won’t call on you again today.”)
- Establishing a nonverbal signal that the teacher gives the student when he/she is interrupting, talking too much, or talking too loudly

Problem #3: Student is frequently trying to get out of class (eloping) or not in the assigned area.

Have you tried (check all that apply):

- Reminding student to use passing period for restroom breaks etc. (may stand in the hall and remind the student if you see him/her there during passing period)
- Suggesting the student send an email to the person they would like to see and making an appointment (if the student is asking to leave class to see an administrator, counselor, etc.)
- Offering to send an email to set up an appointment on the student’s behalf
- Requesting staff to come to the student, rather than the student leaving class (i.e. the Nurse brings ibuprofen to the student in class instead of the student going to the Nurse)
- Telling student you will not write passes to leave class, but that they may leave if a pass is sent to class for them
- Providing extra supplies (pencils, paper) so the student won’t “need” to leave to go get supplies
- Marking the student tardy or absent when he/she elopes (if the student leaves and doesn’t come back, changing the attendance record to absent)
- Communicating and coordinating with office staff, nurse, counselors, administrators, and other teachers to ensure that the student isn’t using support services to task avoid (ex. “If you see Jane in the office today, ask if she has a pass. If she doesn’t, walk her back to class; she keeps leaving classes without a pass and is missing a lot of work!”). Making sure that the whole team is on the same page about expecting the student to be in class unless on a scheduled appointment.
- Establishing planned, scheduled meetings with preferred staff (counselors, administrators) at predictable, frequent intervals (every day during 6th hour, every Monday at 1:00pm, etc.) and not accepting “walk-in” appointments that are not critical in nature
- Checking the student’s attendance record and imposing school consequences per the building policy for tardies and absences (i.e. lunch detentions, Saturday school); includes notifying the parent/guardian
- Meeting with the student to talk about why he/she is consistently missing some classes (if the student appears to only be avoiding certain classes, not others) and to problem-solve issues leading to skipping. Are there peer conflicts? Teacher conflicts? Stress about the work? Stress about the environment? Is the time of day problematic--if so, why?
- If the student regularly elopes during passing period, have the teacher send an e-mail to the secretary or administrator (in addition to counting the student absent in Skyward) to alert them immediately that the student has not shown up to class. That will allow administrators to locate the student and get him/her to class.

- Providing verbal praise (“Thanks for staying in class today; I really like it when you’re here”) or other subtle reinforcement (high five, sticker) when the student is on time to class or remains in class

Problem #4: Student is physically fidgety or is getting up and moving around more often than peers.

Have you tried (check all that apply):

- Sending the student on an errand (it doesn’t have to be a real errand)
- Using the student to help pass out papers, collect papers, distribute supplies (providing appropriate reasons to get up and move)
- Allowing students to stand while they work or walk around near their seat in between lessons
- Providing age-appropriate, socially normative fidget objects ([chew necklace](#) for oral stimulation that looks like normal jewelry, wear silky pants/shorts if this is a preferred tactile sensation, pencils equipped with noise-cancelling eraser caps for kinesthetic stimulation)
- Keeping lessons short and providing frequent, brief, planned breaks for all students
- Discreetly guiding the student through a calming strategy (approaching the student non-confrontationally during a quiet work time and doing a quick focusing exercise together, such as [5-4-3-2-1 Sensory Grounding](#))
- Allowing the student to chew a piece of gum (no bubbles)
- Encouraging the student to participate frequently in the lesson
- Providing planned breaks at intervals during class for students to talk/move around
- Seating the student in a location in the room where his/her fidgeting will be less distracting to others (such as an outer aisle seat or back corner seat)
- Providing environmental supports in classrooms to dampen noises created by fidgeting, preferably more than just the student’s area to avoid creating a “standing out” situation (tennis balls on chair feet, rugs or mats below desks to absorb noise from foot tapping)
- Setting an agreed-upon time when the student can leave the classroom for a short walk at a predetermined time (ex. student and teacher know that the student will get up and step out quietly for a 5 minute walk each day at 9:25am, then will re-enter quietly and resume work)
- Posting a start-of-class checklist of supplies for students (“Today you will need the following: book, laptop, pencil, notebook paper, colored pencils”)