

Is CHAMPS

Evidence Based?

CONCLUSION

Based on the most recent recommendations set forth by researchers and the U.S. Department of Education, CHAMPS is an evidence-based approach to classroom behavior management. CHAMPS is not a curriculum or program, but instead is a collection of recommendations that are based on more than 30 years of research in the fields of education and psychology. *Safe and Civil Schools* has many examples of district-based studies where CHAMPS has been implemented with remarkable results. Improvements include reductions in classroom disruptions, office referrals, and in-school and out-of school suspensions, along with corresponding increases in teachers' perceptions of efficacy and student motivation and behavior.

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The field of education has been particularly vulnerable to adopting unproven interventions based on current fads, whims, or material attractiveness (Scheuermann & Evans, 1997). However, the political and societal expectations that schools face have dramatically shifted over the past twenty years. For example, today's entry-level jobs require reading skills that are more advanced than the reading level of approximately half of current high school students (Fielding, Kerr, & Rosier, 2007). To meet these heightened expectations and combat fad-based educational approaches, federal mandates such as No Child Left Behind (NCLB, 2001) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, 2004) have shifted from suggesting that most children be successful to mandating that every child is successful. Both NCLB and IDEA legislation focus on the use of evidence-based practices ("scientifically based research"—Report on Scientifically Based Research Supported by the United States Department of Education, 2002) and documenting the progress of each child's learning. This age of educational accountability comes at a time when the resources to support students are declining (Walker & Sprague, 2006) and the composition of the student population is expanding in its diversity of needs, skills, and expectations (Merrell, Ervin, & Gimple, 2005; Ortiz & Flannagan, 2002).

Though the field of education has not come to complete agreement on the definition of evidence-based practice, we have received some guidance. The United States Department of Education (2002) defines scientifically based evidence as “research that involves the application of rigorous, systematic, and objective procedures to obtain reliable and valid knowledge relevant to education activities and programs” (p. 2). More recently, Lembke and Stormont (2005) define research-based practices as those that “are supported by rigorous substantiation of effectiveness.” They clarify that research-based (proven or promising) practices are those that “have been demonstrated to be effective for a group of students as compared to a group of students that did not get the intervention” and have generalized results when “examined in a variety of settings, replicated over time, utilized with a variety of learners” (Lembke & Stormont, p. 271).

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The research should document whether the independent variables of interest produce changes in the dependent variables through the use of a group or single-subject design. Single-subject designs have been recommended for use in research focusing on special populations (Scientifically Based Evaluation Methods, 2005). Horner, Carr, et al. (2005) offer further guidance for determining the rigorousness of single-subject designs. Schools receiving federal funds to implement the Reading First Program (U.S. Department of Education Policy Guidance 2002, www.ed.gov/programs/readingfirst/guidance.doc) have also received guidance on the types of research that constitute evidence-based practice. Recommended research includes:

- Systematic, empirical methods that draw on observation or experiment.
- Rigorous data analyses that are adequate to test the stated hypotheses and justify the conclusions drawn.
- The use of measurements or observational methods that provide reliable and valid data across multiple evaluators or observers, across multiple measurements and observations, and across studies by the same or different investigators.
- Evaluation using experimental or quasi-experimental designs with control groups to evaluate the effectiveness of the conditions, with a preference for random assignment designs or other designs that contain within-condition or across-condition controls.
- Acceptance in a peer-reviewed journal or approved by a panel of independent experts through a comparably rigorous, objective, and scientific review.
- Experimental studies that are presented in sufficient detail and clarity to allow replication or systematic expansion of the findings.

The reason for this shift from access to outcomes may lie in the compelling and compounding evidence documenting the long-term stability and poor outcome trajectories for students who demonstrate early academic and social behavior difficulties (Kazdin, 1987; Walker & Severson, 1992; Walker et al., 1996).

It is often the case that students who need the most support receive the least. The interaction between learning and social behavior is reciprocal. Typically, high-achieving students experience greater social and academic success, while low-achieving students experience increased social and academic failure (Caprara et al., 2000; Catalano, Loeber, & McKinney, 1999).

Academically successful students often assume responsibility for learning (e.g., use self-regulation and goal orientation, exhibit positive social behaviors) and are intrinsically motivated (Caprara, Barbaranelli, Pastorelli, Bandura, & Zimbardo, 2000; Ellis, 1992; Ellis & Worthington, 1994; Grimes, 1981; Swift & Swift, 1968, 1969a, 1969b, 1973), while students with high needs often engage in behaviors that interfere with learning (McKinney, Mason, Clifford, & Perkeson, 1975; Shinn, Ramsey, Walker, Stieber, & O'Neill, 1987; Walker & McConnell, 1988; Walker et al., 2004).

Some school factors have been correlated with increased risk of failure for at-risk students. These factors include inconsistent management of behavior, inappropriate use of reinforcement contingencies, and ineffective instruction (Kauffman, 2005; Keogh, 2003; Walker et al., 2004). Research has shown that teachers may provide less instruction to students who exhibit high levels of problem behaviors (Carr, Taylor, & Robinson, 1991; Wehby, Symons, Canale, & Go, 1998) and that teachers of students with high rates of behavioral difficulties rarely use praise (Sutherland et al., 2000; Van Acker et al., 1996) and often use more disapproval than approval (Jack et al., 1996; White, 1975). Teacher praise has been shown to result in many benefits, including:

- Decreased problem behavior (Madsen et al., 1968; O'Leary & Becker, 1967; Ward & Baker, 1968).
- Increased appropriate behavior and instructional time (Broden et al., 1970; Ferguson & Houghton, 1992; Hall et al., 1968).
- Increased student intrinsic motivation (Cameron & Pierce, 1994)
- Competence development for the student (Brophy, 1981; Gottfried, 1983; Swann & Pittman, 1977).

Negative interactions are associated with poorer academic and social behavior outcomes (Murray & Greenberg, 2006; Murray & Murray, 2004). Research also suggests that students are more likely to behave well and work hard to meet a teacher's expectations when the student-teacher relationship is positive and respectful (Borich, 2004; Brophy, 1981; Cameron & Pierce, 1994; Hall et al., 1968; Marzanno, 2003; Niebuhr, 1999; Pianta et al., 2003; Reinke et al., 2007; Sutherland et al., 2000).

Students achieve more when teachers have high expectations for them (Brophy & Good, 1986; Fuchs et al., 1989). When teachers implement effective behavior management techniques, they can simultaneously increase student engagement and improve academic achievement (Brophy, 1996; 1980; Brophy & Good, 1986; Christenson et al., 2008; Gettinger & Ball, 2008; Luiselli et al., 2005; Scheuermann & Hall, 2008; Smith, 2000). With the increase in diverse student needs and the strong research that links classroom structure, positive feedback, and student-teacher relationships with improved outcomes, it is especially important that teachers of at-risk students work to provide a structured classroom with high rates of positive feedback for appropriate behavior (Stormont et al., 2007).

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CHAMPS is not a program, but rather a compilation of how-to strategies that support teachers in the very skills that have been associated with student success. CHAMPS is a systematic, prevention-oriented approach that guides teachers in providing universal classroom supports that are likely to promote appropriate behavior and reduce disruptive behavior in the classroom. Once the teacher has implemented the core supports, there is guidance for how to structure supports that target smaller groups or individual students who need additional supports. Systemic models like the one utilized in CHAMPS were initially implemented in public health and now span the fields of medicine, welfare, and education (Walker et al., 1996). Educational research has shown that when these levels of support are in place and incorporate meaningful involvement of relevant parties (e.g., teachers, parents, peers), positive student outcomes can be achieved (Horner et al., 2005; Nelson, Martella, & Marchand-Martella, 2002; Walker et al., 1996; Walker & Shinn, 2002).

The foundational principle of CHAMPS—the idea that behavior occurs for a reason and can be taught and changed—is also well supported in the literature (Alberto & Troutman, 2006; Baer et al., 1968; Carr, 1993; Cooper et al., 2007; Gresham et al., 2001; Johnston & Pennypacker, 1993; Langland et al., 1998; Skinner, 1953). In addition, the core features of CHAMPS are organized around the STOIC acronym:

- S** *Structure your classroom*
- T** *Teach expectations*
- O** *Observe and supervise*
- I** *Interact positively*
- C** *Correct fluently*

Each core recommendation is directly linked to studies that document its effectiveness.

S Structure your classroom for success. The way the classroom is organized (physical setting, schedule, routines and procedures, quality of instruction, and so on) has a huge impact on student behavior; therefore, effective teachers carefully structure their classrooms in ways that prompt responsible student behavior (Baer, 1998; Evans & Lowell, 1979; Gettinger & Ball, 2008; Good & Brophy, 2000; Scheuermann & Hall, 2008; Udvari-Solner, 1996; Walker & Bullis, 1990; Weinstein, 1979). Well-designed physical space prevents a wide array of potential behavioral problems (Evans & Lowell, 1979; Simonsen et al., 2008; Weinstein, 1977). Research suggests the physical arrangement should allow the teacher to visually scan all parts of the room from any other part of the room (Pedota, 2007; Shores et al., 1993) and allow for movement that minimizes distractions for students who are working at their seats (Evertson et al., 2003; Jenson et al., 1994).

T Teach behavioral expectations to students. Effective teachers overtly teach students how to behave responsibly and respectfully in every classroom situation and during all major transitions (Brophy & Good, 1986; Emmer et al., 1980; Evertson et al., 2003; Lewis & Sugai, 1999). The research supports the effectiveness of teaching rules (Brophy & Good, 1986; Mendler & Curwin, 2002) using positive and negative examples (Gresham, 1998; Kame'enui & Simmons, 1990; Sugai & Lewis, 1996) with a focus on what teachers expect students to do. This ensures that students know the expected behavior and sets the stage for student success (Barbetta et al., 2005; Colvin et al., 1993; Darch & Kame'enui, 2004; Emmer et al., 1980; Greenwood et al., 1974; Lewis & Sugai, 1999; Marshall, 2001; Mayer, 1995; Simonsen et al., 2008; Walker et al., 1996).

O Observe and supervise. Effective teachers monitor student behavior by physically circulating whenever possible and visually scanning all parts of the classroom frequently. One of the most effective behavior management strategies a teacher can implement is to circulate throughout the room as much and as unpredictably as possible (Colvin et al., 1997; DePry & Sugai, 2002; Gettinger & Ball, 2008; Schuldheisz & van der Mars, 2001). In addition, effective teachers use meaningful data to observe student behavior (particularly chronic misbehavior) in objective ways and monitor trends across time (Alberto & Troutman, 2006; Evertson et al., 2003; Scheuermann & Hall, 2008; Shores et al., 1993).

I Interact positively with students. Teachers should focus more time, attention, and energy on promoting and acknowledging responsible behavior than on responding to misbehavior (Beaman & Wheldall, 2000; Brophy & Good, 1986; Martella et al., 2003; Rosenshine, 1971; Sprick, 2006; Thompson et al., 1968; Walker et al., 2004). Increased positive interactions between teachers and students have been shown to decrease misbehavior and lead to increases in on-task behavior (Beaman & Wheldall, 2000; Brophy & Good, 1986; Thomas et al., 1968; Walker et al., 2004).

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C Correct fluently. Teachers are encouraged to preplan their responses to misbehavior to increase the likelihood they will respond in a brief, calm, and consistent manner. This practice helps ensure that the flow of instruction is maintained (Brophy & Good, 1986; Lewis & Sugai, 1999). Research has consistently shown that students learn more efficiently when they receive immediate feedback about their behavior (Gettinger & Ball, 2008; Good & Brophy, 2000; Hudson & Miller, 2006; Kame'enui & Simmons, 1990). The research supports correcting misbehavior by providing instruction about the rule and how to follow the rule (Darch & Kame'enui, 2004; Emmer et al., 1980, 2003; Evertson et al., 2003) in a direct, brief, and explicit manner (Abramowitz et al., 1988; McAllister et al., 1969). There is a focus on implementing corrective consequences consistently (Acker & O'Leary, 1988; Alberto & Troutman, 2006; Scheuermann & Hall, 2008) and matching consequences to the severity of the problem (Simonsen et al., 2008; Wolfgang & Glickman, 1986). In addition, with chronic and severe misbehavior, the teacher is prompted to consider the function of the misbehavior and build a corresponding plan to help the student learn and exhibit the appropriate behavior (Alberto & Troutman, 2006; Crone & Horner, 2003; O'Neill et al., 1997).

Simonsen and colleagues (2008) conducted a systematic review of the literature. They identified 20 practices that, in general, are supported by the research and have sufficient evidence to recommend adoption to support classroom behavior. The practices were then grouped into five evidence-based critical features of classroom management:

- a. Maximize structure and predictability (including using a physical arrangement that minimizes distraction).
- b. Post, teach, review, monitor, and reinforce expectations (and provide active supervision).

- c. Actively engage students in observable ways.
- d. Use a continuum of strategies to respond to appropriate behaviors (including specific and/or contingent praise, classwide group contingencies, behavioral contracting, and token economy strategies).
- e. Use a continuum of strategies to respond to inappropriate behaviors (including error corrections, performance feedback, differential reinforcement, planned ignoring plus praise and/or instruction of classroom rules, response cost, and timeout from reinforcement strategies).

These recommendations directly align with the practices incorporated into the STOIC model, providing additional evidence for the use of CHAMPS to guide classroom behavior support.

Based on the most recent recommendations set forth by researchers and the U. S. Department of Education, CHAMPS is an evidence-based approach to classroom behavior management. CHAMPS is not a curriculum or program, but instead is a collection of recommendations that are based on more than 30 years of research in the fields of education and psychology. *Safe and Civil Schools* has many examples of district-based studies where CHAMPS has been implemented with remarkable results. Improvements include reductions in classroom disruptions, office referrals, and in-school and out-of school suspensions, along with corresponding increases in teachers' perceptions of efficacy and student motivation and behavior.

For information on efficacy data, contact *Safe & Civil Schools* (800/323-8819) or visit www.safeandcivilschools.com.