

PRE-REFERRAL INTERVENTION MANUAL

Fourth Edition

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I. Using the *Pre-Referral Intervention Manual*

Generally, the pre-referral process begins with a regular educator calling attention to a student with learning and/or behavior problems. A team of educators, typically composed of a special educator(s), a regular educator(s), and/or a counselor(s) from that building, meets with the educator identifying a student for pre-referral intervention. The team, along with input from the teacher calling attention to the student's needs, pinpoints the specific learning and/or behavior concerns for improvement. Goals and objectives for the student in the regular classroom are formally or informally determined, and intervention strategies for the school environment are agreed upon. With consultant assistance from the pre-referral team, the classroom teacher conducts adjusted behavior and teaching approaches for the student for a specific length of time, which may be for several weeks up to a few months. The student's progress is documented and communication continues between the pre-referral team and the classroom teacher. Based on student performance in response to pre-referral intervention strategies, decisions are made as to the student's ability to succeed in the regular classroom with adjustments in instruction, materials, testing, etc. If the student is successful with these adjustments, he/she remains in the regular classroom with continued support. If the student is not successful; formal referral, assessment, and special education services are likely to follow.

The following steps are recommended for using the *Pre-Referral Intervention Manual* in the pre-referral intervention process.

- Step 1: The regular education teacher calls attention to the student with learning and/or behavior problems. The *Learning and Behavior Problem Checklist* is a valuable resource in pinpointing specific areas of concern.
- Step 2: The pre-referral consultant team (e.g., special educator, regular educator, counselor) for the building meets with the regular education teacher to pinpoint specific learning and/or behavior problems the student exhibits.
- Step 3: Goals and objectives for the student are determined. Specific intervention strategies from the *Pre-Referral Intervention Manual* are selected for the student from the learning and behavior problems which were pinpointed.
- Step 4: With consultant assistance from the pre-referral team, the classroom teacher conducts adjusted behavior and teaching interventions for the student.
- Step 5: The student's progress toward the goals and objectives are documented by the classroom teacher. Documenting may be done using the *Intervention Strategies Documentation Form*.
- Step 6: The pre-referral team and the classroom teacher consult to determine the student's progress.
- Step 7: If the student is progressing in the regular education classroom with interventions, the process is continued with consultant support for the classroom teacher and student.
- Step 8: If the student's needs cannot be met in the regular classroom, with adjusted behavior and teaching interventions, formal documentation of the student's learning and behavior performance are used to make a formal referral for assessment and consideration for special services.

(Please note: A more detailed pre-referral model is provided by J.L. Graden, A. Casey, and S.L. Christenson, (1985). Implementing a pre-referral intervention system: Part I. The model. *Exceptional Children*, 51(5), 377-384.)

II. Interventions

A. Memory, Abstractions, Generalizations, and Organization

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Number**

1. Is disorganized11
2. Has limited memory skills.15
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1 Is disorganized

1. Model organization and appropriate use of work materials (e.g., putting materials away before getting others out, having a place for all materials, maintaining an organized desk area, following a schedule for the day, etc.).

2. Allow natural consequences to occur (e.g., work not done during work time must be made up during recreational time, materials not maintained will be lost or not serviceable, etc.) as the result of the student's inability to organize or use materials appropriately.

3. Allow the student to finish an activity unless it will be disruptive to the schedule.

4. Assess the quality and clarity of directions, explanations, and instructions given to the student.

5. Assign a peer to work with the student on specified activities to make certain the student has the materials necessary to do the activity.

6. Encourage the student to develop a habit of asking himself/herself, "Do I have everything?" before leaving the house each morning.

7. Have the student leave necessary materials at specified activity areas.

8. Assist the student in finding a method of organization that works best for him/her (e.g., subject folders, tabbed binder, checklist, etc.).

9. Communicate with parents (e.g., notes home, phone calls, etc.) to share information concerning the student's progress. The parents may reinforce the student at home for being organized/prepared for specified activities at school.

10. Develop monthly calendars to keep track of important events, due dates, assignments, etc.

11. Do not accept excuses. The student must understand that, regardless of the reasons, it is necessary that he/she takes responsibility for not turning in a math assignment, losing pencils, etc.

12. Have the student chart the number of times he/she is organized/prepared for specified activities.

13. Encourage the student to develop an awareness of himself/herself and the environment. Instruct the student to step back and ask himself/herself, "What materials do I need to complete this assignment?" "Have I put my assignment in the correct folder?"

14. Have the student list five qualities of an organized person. Have the student choose one of those qualities to work on each week for five weeks.

15. Encourage the student to keep necessary materials for specified activities together (e.g., gym clothes in a gym bag in the car, backpack with all school-related materials by the door, etc.).

16. Reduce distracting stimuli (e.g., place the student on the front row, provide a carrel or quiet place away from distractions, etc.). This is used as a means of reducing distracting stimuli and not as punishment.

17. Encourage the student to manage his/her daily performance as if he/she were self-employed. This should increase his/her motivation to be organized and fulfill his/her responsibilities.

18. Encourage the student to put items that should be taken to work/school in a designated place (e.g., in front of the door, at the bottom of the stairs, etc.).

19. Choose different people (e.g., counselor, paraprofessional, peer, etc.) to help the student maintain organization of assignments, materials, etc., at school.

20. Provide the student with an appropriate place to store/secure personal property (e.g., desk, locker, closet, etc.). Require the student to store all property when not in use.