

## **Candidate Guidelines for Addressing Educational Needs of Students who are Aggressive and/or Noncompliant**

Candidates who are engaged in an early field experience and/or student teaching field placement may encounter students who may become aggressive or noncompliant during the school day. Occasions have occurred in which a child may throw items, hit, bite, or refuse to comply with instructions when interacting with them. In these instances, procedures should be followed to ensure your safety, the safety of other children in the classroom setting, and the safety of other instructors.

To decrease the likelihood of escalating aggressive and noncompliant behavior, candidates should work with the classroom teacher **to establish a learning environment that is positive and affords multiple opportunities for students to earn reinforcement** throughout the day. Classrooms in which universal (class-wide) positive behavior supports are in place have clearly defined expectations, systematically teach those expectations, have systems for acknowledging students who follow expectations, and have systems of consistent and fair consequences for students who do not follow expectations.

When first arriving to your field placement, arrange a time to meet with the classroom teacher to discuss school and classroom policies and procedures. At the end of that meeting, you should have a written record of all classroom and individual behavior management procedures, and procedures for recruiting support in crisis situations.

**Crisis Management.** Should a student appear to be escalating his or her behavior to a crisis level (putting him or herself or others at risk for physical harm), the first step is to follow the student's behavior support plan. The candidate should work with the cooperating teacher to work **de-escalate the situation as specified in the behavior support plan**. The candidate should remain calm, lower his/her voice and maintain a safe distance from the student. The candidate should follow the procedures for recruiting support in crisis situations that were discussed during the placement interview with the teacher. The candidate should **avoid** arguing with the student and responding to verbal aggression or insults. These behaviors may escalate the student's challenging behavior.

Overall Guidelines:

1. Learn about the classroom management system and any individual behavior management plans.
2. Discuss with the cooperating teacher what are the class and school procedures for behavioral problems.
3. Discuss your role and procedures if the teacher needs to step out of the classroom and a behavioral issue occurs with a student.
4. Restraint and seclusion procedures should only be administered by district teachers and staff. The candidate **will not** engage in either of these crisis level responses.
5. Report any incident immediately to the cooperating teacher (or appropriate school administrator) and your university supervisor.

6. Document all information about any incident immediately.
7. Always use positive behavior supports when engaging with students.
8. Should a student appear to be frustrated or about to engage in disruptive behavior, work to de-escalate the behavior. Ask for assistance if the behavior increases.
9. Remove other students from the area (remove any audience).
10. As a teacher education candidate and NOT an employee of the school district, NEVER attempt to physically intervene with a child who is being aggressive or non-compliant. The only exception to this is when your safety and the safety of another individual are at risk for physical injury.

## RESOURCES

Association for Positive Behavior Support - [http://www.apbs.org/new\\_apbs/genintro.aspx](http://www.apbs.org/new_apbs/genintro.aspx)

- See link for *PBS Practices*

Fox, L., & Duda, M. A. (N.D.). *Positive Behavior Support*. Technical Assistance Center on Social Emotional Intervention for Young Children. Retrieved 11/5/15 from <http://challengingbehavior.fmhi.usf.edu/explore/pbs/pbs.htm>

- This document provides an outline of strategies for ensuring that positive behavior supports are effectively used. The links under “prevention strategies” on page 21 are especially important when addressing immediate behaviors. The link to this document is: [challengingbehavior.fmhi.usf.edu/explore/pbs\\_docs/pbs\\_complete.doc](http://challengingbehavior.fmhi.usf.edu/explore/pbs_docs/pbs_complete.doc)

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports OSEP Technical Assistance Center  
[www.pbis.org](http://www.pbis.org)

- See the link for *School*

Sukhodolsky, D. G., Cardona, L., & Martin, A. (2005). Characterizing aggressive and noncompliant behaviors in a children’s psychiatric inpatient setting. *Child Psychiatry and Human Development*, 36(2), 177-193.

## Definitions:

**Aggressive behaviors** are often characterized by assaultive threats and physical attempts that may result in injury and distress in others (Sukhodolsky, Cardona, & Martin, 2005)

**Individual Crisis Management** need occurs when an individual student becomes agitated, aggressive, and/or unsafe and may put him or herself or others at risk for physical harm.

**Noncompliant behaviors** are characterized by an individual’s refusal to follow instructions or established rules (Sukhodolsky, Cardona, & Martin, 2005)

**Positive Behavior Support** (PBS) *is a set of research-based strategies used to increase quality of life and decrease problem behavior by teaching new skills and making changes in a person’s environment* ([http://www.apbs.org/new\\_apbs/genintro.aspx](http://www.apbs.org/new_apbs/genintro.aspx)).