

RIPPLE EFFECTS
Software to *positively* change behavior



*Positive Behavioral Intervention:
Sample Individual Treatment Plans*

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Introduction

Ripple Effects software is a resource for use as positive, targeted intervention with individual students in a variety of learning, health and corrections settings. It can complement other ongoing approaches, methodologies, strategies and interventions being used. The combined elementary and teen products have more than 500 inter-linking tutorials that address social, emotional, behavioral and academic issues that can interfere with school and life success. Using this program effectively is as simple as these four steps:

1 Identify a student strength that can be a foundation for growth.

Have each student complete the self-profile under the "learning style" topic. For students, understanding how they learn most easily is a first step in recognizing how they can be successful learners. You can also have them complete the tutorial entitled "strengths," which includes a self-profile.

2 Direct them to the issue that has caused immediate concern.

The topic lists include more than a hundred behavioral infractions recognized at most school districts (from talking back, to cheating, fighting, hate crimes, etc.) It also includes health and mental health issues that students face. The multimedia tutorial for each topic automatically leads students to training in social-emotional competencies that are correlated with solving the identified concerns. Simply tell them to follow the underlined words in the illustrations on the "how to" screens. These will link them to the appropriate skill training.

3 Have them seek out an underlying reason.

Students exhibit the same problem behavior for a variety of different reasons. Guessing or interrogating students about personal issues are NOT productive ways to find out those reasons. Instead, ask students to scroll down the topic list to find something that interests them, or that they think could be connected to the underlying reason for the problem. Remind them the underlined links in illustrations will take them deeper. Trust their instincts to find what they need. In many cases, after using the program in private, students will then disclose the underlying problem to a trusting adult.

4 End with building strengths in a key social-emotional ability.

Present it as a process of empowerment, not punishment. The program organizes these key abilities into seven categories: self-understanding, assertiveness, empathy, connection to community, impulse control, management of feeling, and decision-making. They are broken down into building blocks of more than a hundred micro tutorials.

Research base

Ripple Effects software synthesizes research from many fields:

education, psychology, sociology, anthropology, learning, technology design and business. It adapts for delivery on the computer, strategies that have been proven effective in settings with live instruction and *draws particularly from work being done in four related fields.*

• Promotion of positive youth development

This approach focuses on building strengths, such as resilience, self-efficacy and social-emotional competence in all kids. It recognizes that the absence of addiction or school failure is not the same as fulfillment of potential, and emphasizes increasing protective factors, over focusing on deficits and risk.

• Comprehensive prevention

This approach recognizes that school failure, discipline problems and unhealthy behavior, are interrelated issues. They share a common set of risk factors that are present in multiple domains. Since it's not possible to address every issue that might be a problem for every student, it makes sense to focus on reducing the risk and increasing the protective factors that affect multiple problems, from school failure, to gun violence, to HIV rates.

• Individualized, positive behavioral intervention

This approach recognizes that some students need individualized intervention, in response to particular behavior or demonstration of need on their part. When negative behavior prompts the response, they need both skill building, precisely targeted to deal with the immediate problem, and general asset building to enhance protection and reduce risk.

• Learning theory

This includes social learning research, which points to the importance of modeling, rehearsal, interactivity, affective education, and cognitive-behavioral training in developing social-emotional abilities. It also includes research about universal learning design, which focuses on maximizing accessibility to students with diverse learning styles, abilities, disabilities, attention spans, languages and cultural orientations.

Applied research

Ripple Effects software is an example of applied research. It makes hundreds of research-proven strategies accessible to people who don't need to personally know all the research, in order to benefit from it. As part of your planning for Individualized Positive Behavioral Intervention, you can draw from all five of these sources.

Logistics

For each topic allow about 15 minutes. A 45-minute session generally allows three topics. A module made up of multiple topics can be spread out, or compressed to fit a range of time constraints. For instance, with 15 minutes per day, for two weeks, teachers could cover a ten-topic module. A counselor could address those same topics in a two and a half hour continuous session. A case manager might cover them in eight, 45 minute weekly sessions over a semester.

Choose a mode of facilitation. “Sessions” can consist of a group assignment with discussion, or the assignment of individual topic(s) to each student without discussion, or discussion after completion. They can be completed whenever and wherever a student has access to a computer where the software is installed. Alternately, you can closely direct a personal session. Sessions can also consist of a combination of independent exploration and directed discussion.

Respect student privacy. Again and again we have seen that students are more open to the program when they can explore it privately.

Do not over direct how students use the program. There is no right or wrong way for a student to complete a particular topic. They do not need to use each available button or proceed from left to right. However each student needs to complete the interactive “Got It” and “Inside Your Mind” and “Profile” elements for every topic assigned. Monitor completion of the assigned topics by checking the student score card. See your user manual for complete directions.

Maintain a positive approach. Whether in counseling, discipline or remedial settings, whenever possible, start with a strength and end with a strength.

Note: These plans have been developed with real world users in real world settings, with the input from child psychiatrists, special education experts, school nurses, psychologists, teachers, parents, administrators and disciplinarians. Nonetheless They are offered as suggested approaches, not required curriculum. They need to be interpreted and adapted to meet the needs of your students in your unique circumstance.

Creating your scope and sequence

It is not necessary to have a pre-defined, specific scope and sequence

A scope and sequence is built into every topic through the interlocking hyperlink structure. Once you set a student on the process of investigating a concern or interest, the software will guide them deeper to necessary skill building. Being able to customize the scope and sequence is an added benefit, not a requirement for using the program effectively.

Implementers can use already existing Individual Education Plans

as their scope and sequence for students who have such a plan on record. For instance, if a student's plan contains the goal of developing self-control, and/or greater success in managing feelings, simply assign the Ripple Effects tutorials on those topics as one resource to help meet that goal. Because the program records student completion of interactive exercises for each tutorial, you have an easy way to document the training each student has received.

A set of problematic behaviors may emerge around a recurring theme, such as defiance or impulsivity. In those cases, adult implementers may want a broader scope and sequence than is built into the links from a single tutorial. They can find additional ideas in the related topics text box (middle box on the right side of the screen) or can draw from the sample treatment plans that follow.

Discipline settings such as ISS may mandate a certain number of contact hours

ISS has a rolling enrollment and students are assigned for a variety of behavioral offenses. They have a variety of reasons for engaging in that behavior. Those overseeing ISS may feel they have neither the time nor the expertise to customize a themed curriculum for each student. Sample individual intervention plans make it easier to address these situations.

To maximize the effectiveness of the program, many educators want to go beyond responding to particular problems (targeted intervention), to comprehensive prevention that addresses risk and protective factors in multiple domains. Ideally they would also go beyond prevention to promoting positive youth development. This guide offers sample treatment plans for the first group. See accompanying guides for prevention and positive youth development ideas.