*RELATIVE EFFECTIVENESS OF TEACHER ATTENTION
AND THE "GOOD BEHAVIOR GAME" IN MODIFYING
DISRUPTIVE CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR¹*

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A variety of behavioral procedures have been employed in recent years to modify disruptive classroom behavior. Such methods have been developed with the belief that curtailing disruptive behavior would strengthen positive classroom performance. In this study, two procedures, the good behavior game and the teacher-attention method, were compared to determine short-run effectiveness. Four teachers (two fourth-grade and two fifth-grade) implemented both methods in their classrooms over a five-week period. Presentation of methods was alternated in a counterbalanced design to control for order effects. Each of the four classrooms consisted of 25 students. A time-sampling procedure was used to record the presence or absence of disruptive behavior within 15-second intervals. Disruptive behavior was defined as any talking-out or out-of-seat behavior without permission. The results indicated that both procedures were effective in modifying disruptive classroom behavior, but that the good behavior game reduced disruptive behavior significantly better than the teacher-attention method. In addition, all teachers preferred the game to the teacher-attention procedure. This reaction seemed related to the effort involved in initiating the two activities. The good behavior game required less effort on the teacher's part. However, use of the game alone raises certain ethical considerations. One such issue involves abuse of peer pressure. Also, there is a possibility that negative rules may tend to promote resentment. Positively stated rules would ameliorate that problem. Another relates to the possibility that some teachers might be carried away by the ease of the game's implementation to the extent that behavior control becomes the primary objective in the classroom. As a result, one might consider use of the game to maximize short-term change, but then phase out this procedure in favor of another method (*e.g.*, teacher attention) for long-run effects.

DESCRIPTORS: attending behavior, classroom control, group contingencies, teacher attention, disruptive behavior, good behavior game, children

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