

**By: Abby Jennings**

Reading Discussion:

School psychologists may contribute to Problem-Solving Teams in a variety of ways including implementing a data collection system, evaluating data, researching potential interventions, implementing interventions, providing support to general education teachers, or identifying students who may be in need of tier 3 supports. The most important factor for school psychologists to remember when being a member of a Problem-Solving Team is that effective teamwork and intervention implementation is the key to ensuring student success. School psychologists can play an integral role in ensuring the Problem-Solving Team works effectively and efficiently as well as helping to ensure interventions are implemented with fidelity. School psychologists can assist in evaluating interventions through observations or providing small group or 1:1 support services. Overall, school psychologists can be a valuable member of the Problem-Solving Team through providing a wide range of ideas and supports. One challenge that I see in utilizing the Problem-Solving Team framework to assist in tier 3 interventions is ensuring that all team members are on the same page and working towards the same goal. I could see where it would be easy to try to pawn student problems off to other professionals or believe a certain issue is “not your job” to assist with but by utilizing a team style of problem-solving different opinions and ideas can arise that may provide more effective support to students. Additionally, having different types of educational professionals on the Problem-Solving Team can allow for different viewpoints and perspectives to be discussed and evaluated.

Lastly, a key idea that stuck out to me was that there is not one single intervention that can be applied across all students and will solve the problem at hand 100% of the time. It is important to remember that the problem-solving process is based on trial and error. What works for one student may not work for another or what worked for a student in the past may no longer be effective. The foundation of the Problem-Solving Team is that various interventions will be tried until an effective intervention is found. I believe it is important to try to not become discouraged when interventions do not work but instead continue to seek out new interventions that can better serve the student’s individual needs.

Activity Discussion:

Mock Case:

Josh is a second-grade student at Happyville Elementary School. Josh is typically a happy student who enjoys school. Josh’s favorite school subject is math, and he likes to spend time with his classmates a recess. Since the start of this school year Josh has struggled to stay in his assigned seat during teacher instruction time. Josh will move from his seat to various parts of the classroom and distract other students. Sometimes, Josh will pace back and forth around the room attempting to find another activity that he may engage in instead of listening to the teacher instruction. Josh’s teacher has tried everything they can think of to help Josh stay in his seat during instruction time but has not had success. The teacher believes it is time for the problem-solving team to meet regarding Josh’s inability to stay in his seat and attempt new interventions.

Problem identification:

In this scenario, the problem at hand is that Josh does not sit in his seat during teacher instruction time. Anytime Josh left his seat at an inappropriate time without asking the teacher for permission the occurrence was documented accordingly. Both the teacher and classroom para collected data on when Josh left his seat and compared data to ensure accuracy and consistency of data collection. The classroom teacher has noticed the problem since the beginning of the school year but has been collecting data consistently for four weeks to ensure an appropriate amount of baseline data had accrued.

Problem Analysis:

Several hypotheses were developed by the Problem-Solving Team for why Josh may not stay in his seat during teacher instruction time including that during teacher instruction time Josh is not receiving enough sensory input. A second hypothesis was that during teacher instruction time Josh is bored and therefore seeks out conversations with his classmates. The final hypothesis that was developed is that Josh's desk is not a comfortable environment for him to learn in and therefore he seeks out alternative locations. The hypothesis that the Problem-Solving Team determined to be most likely was that Josh becomes bored during teacher instruction time, therefore leading him to seek out conversation from his peers and alternative activities to entertain himself. The Problem-Solving Team settled on this hypothesis because Josh can stay in his seat during group work time and individual work time when he has an assignment to work on. This was determined through teacher data collection by counting how many times Josh was not in his seat during the various types of instruction throughout the day.

#### Developing a Plan/Hypothesis:

The Problem-Solving Team established that an appropriate and obtainable goal for Josh would be to only leave his seat without asking one time during a 30-minute teacher instructional period. Currently Josh is leaving his seat five times during a 30-minute teacher instructional period. The intervention that the Problem-Solving Team recommended for Josh's teacher to implement is "rubber band intervention". With this intervention the teacher will put a set of rubber bands on one wrist and each time Josh leaves his seat the teacher will transfer the rubber bands to the other wrist. If after 30 minutes rubber bands remain on the first wrist Josh will receive a check mark for that 30-minute period. After Josh has earned ten check marks, he can select a reward. The teacher will first begin with four rubber bands on her wrist and slowly decrease this number until she only has one rubber band. This reduction in rubber bands will occur over four weeks' time. This intervention will be utilized in the general education classroom by Josh's teacher every day during 30-minute teacher instructional time periods. The general education teacher will collect the data on Josh's progress through a data collection sheet where they will mark if Josh met his goal for the 30-minute time period. This data will be collected for four weeks with each week Josh being expected to leave his seat less during the 30-minute teacher instructional periods. A Problem-Solving Team meeting was set for five weeks after the initial implementation of the intervention to evaluate the effectiveness of the intervention.

#### Plan Implementation:

During the four-week period of intervention implementation the school psychologist did a total of thirteen randomized intervention observations to observe how the intervention was being utilized by the general education teacher and if Josh was making the progress that was expected. The school psychologist documented all observations and believed the intervention plan was being followed appropriately by the general education teacher. Additionally, the general education teacher collected the appropriate data and presented the graphed data points at the Problem-Solving Team meeting.

#### Plan Evaluation:

At the Problem-Solving Team meeting the team determined the intervention plan had been conducted according to the plan and there was a reduction in the undesirable behavior during the implementation of the intervention. The Problem-Solving team determined that the intervention should be continued but modified the duration that Josh would be observed from 30 minutes to 1 hour to further decrease the occurrences of Josh leaving his seat. All team decisions were documented appropriately and filed.