

Let's face it; people do not select education as a career choice for the salary. When was the last time you heard someone say, "I really want to make big bucks, I think I'll become a teacher?" Joking aside, we are educators because we want to teach essential skills and make a difference in the lives and futures of children and families. A roadblock to accomplishing this worthwhile goal often is unruly student behavior.

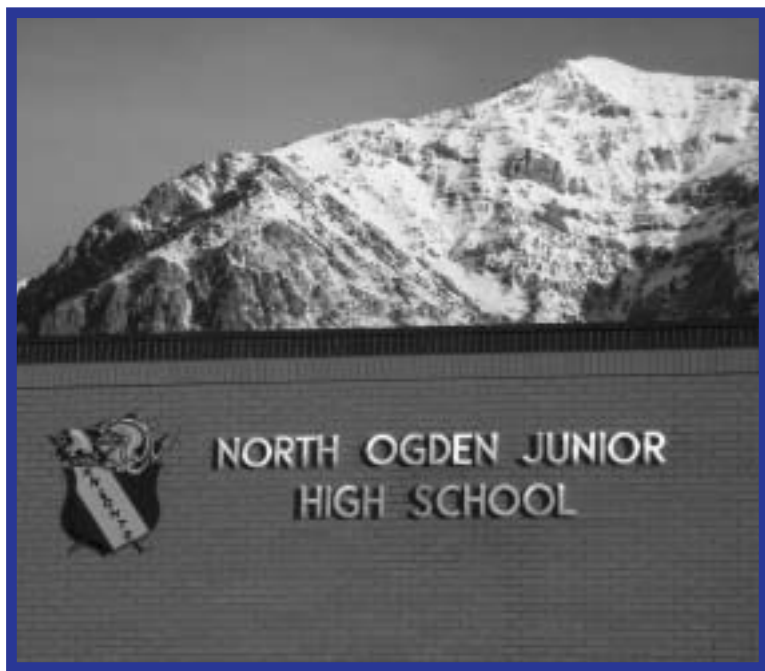
Research suggests that the number of students who demonstrate serious emotional and behavioral problems in school is increasing. Aggressive and antisocial behaviors are widespread among school students from kindergarten through high school. A very small percentage of these students receive services directly from outpatient, community-based mental health settings; therefore, the only available treatment for most struggling students is in the school. Research suggests that neither general education nor special education teachers feel equipped to effectively educate these difficult students. Not providing teachers the support and training in classroom management as well as academic interventions is an injustice to teachers.

to prepare each school team to serve four main functions: (1) actively connect teachers to facilitate a uniform approach to behavior management which builds upon the shared knowledge of the school staff, (2) gain behavioral expertise by attending trainings, visiting model programs and perusing current research literature, (3) share learned behavioral information and interventions with faculty and staff (i.e. report-outs at faculty meetings), and (4) help their school collect, share, and analyze data to make informed decisions about behavior.

UBI teams know that behavior has two components: (1) academic behavior and (2) social behavior. Academic gains and positive social behaviors are related. Research has demonstrated that the effective use of valid instructional approaches is associated with a concomitant decline in certain problem behaviors (e.g., refusing to work, throwing tantrums). In addition to instructional strategies, literature is available which identifies teaching practices for improving social and adaptive functioning. For example, meta-analyses involving students with the most difficult and challenging behavior show the largest effect sizes for behavioral intervention. Some examples of behavioral interventions include: effective teacher praise and teaching social behavioral expectations similar to how one teaches academic behavioral expectations.

# Supporting

## Positive Academic and Social Behavior



An example of a UBI school that understands the concept of working smart is North Ogden Junior High. This year their UBI team, with the support and assistance of the staff, Weber School District, and the community coordinated a school wide effort that WORKS for teachers. All teachers and staff taught the students school-wide rules and expectations during the first week of school. This was NOT the typical "here's the student planner, make sure that you go over it in class" approach to junior high/middle school rules teaching. This involved effective instructional practices, such as modeling and practicing examples and non-examples of rules and procedures. Here are examples of some of the things that they did:

1. Practiced loading and unloading from the bus (in an actual Weber School District bus)
2. Practiced the procedures for lunch (i.e. where to line up and how to behave while in the lunchroom)
3. Demonstrated the difference between on-time behavior and tardy behavior
4. Practiced appropriate assembly behavior

Social routines and procedures are necessary in today's society. Proactive teaching of rules and procedures increases the chances that both components of behavior will be optimally poised for student and school success. Has this WORKED for teachers? North Ogden's data demonstrates that the school-wide system is working. Teachers are experiencing fewer behavioral problems in the classroom as evidenced by a reduction in teacher generated office referrals. The effect on test scores remains to be seen, but Craig Jessop, Assistant Principal, feels that teachers have been able to teach essential skills and impact the lives of families and children in their school community. He believes that the school-wide efforts have helped teachers to feel effective at what they do best: **TEACH! BEING ABLE TO TEACH-WORKS FOR TEACHERS. ■**

Utah's Behavioral Initiative (UBI) provides training to schools in strategies to reduce and manage behavior. The UBI model requires participating schools to maintain a core behavior team. The reason for a team approach is simple; schools gain the expertise, and linking the essential individuals in a school is a way to work smarter, not harder. Only 5% of teachers nation-wide credit their teacher preparation program as a source of their instructional and behavioral management strategies. Most teachers report that other teachers are more helpful in influencing their use of specific teaching strategies. Knowing this, UBI aims

**Hollie Petterson, Specialist, Utah Personnel Development Center**