

The Color Wheel System: A Class-wide Behavioral Intervention

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Abstract

The Color Wheel System (CWS) is a class-wide behavior management system designed to adapt to a range of activities found within a classroom. In contrast to traditional strategies, the CWS consists of three to four sets of rules that are dependent upon the assigned activity. A comprehensive literature review examining the CWS was completed. The CWS's has shown to be an effective behavior management tool.

Introduction

Effective classroom management is essential to creating an environment conducive to learning by decreasing disruptive student behavior and increasing instructional time (Watson et al., 2016). Traditional class-wide behavior management strategies suggest creating and posting three to five general rules applied across all activities. However, evidence suggests this strategy does not meet the needs of a typical classroom (Blondin, 2012).

The Color Wheel System (CWS) is a class-wide behavior management system designed to adapt to a range of activities found within a classroom. In contrast to traditional strategies, the CWS consists of three to four sets of rules that are dependent upon the assigned activity. Each set of rules is assigned a color and consists of three to five rules that are more specific than general classroom rules and meet the behavioral expectations for all common classroom activities (e.g., transition, group work, independent work). Students are aware of which rules are in effect at any given time by the teacher displaying a color wheel consisting of the three to four colors chosen for the individual classroom.

Table 1

Article	# of Classrooms	Grade	# of Students	IDEA
Aspiranti et al., 2018	2	2 nd & 3 rd	6	AU
Aspiranti et al., 2019	3	K-2 nd (2), 3 rd -5 th (1)	21	AU
Below et al., 2008	1	K	20	N/A, GenEd
Blondin et al., 2012	1	4 th	18	N/A, GenEd
Choate et al., 2008	1	1 st	20	N/A, GenEd
Fudge et al., 2007	1	4 th	19	N/A, GenEd
Fudge et al., 2008	1	2 nd	12	N/A, GenEd
Hautau et al., 2008	1	K	17	N/A, GenEd
Kirk et al., 2010	1	3 rd	20	N/A, GenEd
Saecker et al., 2008	1	5 th	19	N/A, GenEd
Watson et al., 2016	3	K	50	N/A, GenEd

Method

- A comprehensive literature review completed
- PsycArticles, Psychology and Behavioral Sciences Collection, ERIC, Academic Search Complete, PsycInfo, SpringerLink Journals, and Wiley Intersciences
- Search term “color wheel” in titles, abstracts, and full text.
- 408 non-mutually exclusive studies identified.
- To be included, article must report the results of original study using the CWS in school setting.
- 11 studies met inclusion criteria. IRA 100%

Conclusion

Practitioners may use this when consulting with teachers to demonstrate that the intervention is research based and as evidence that it has been used with success in similar settings with the same target behaviors, if the case may be. In general, the color wheel has most often been used with White, Black, and Hispanic students in the K-5 general education setting for minimizing inappropriate vocalizations and reinforcing on-task behaviors (Below et al., 2008; Blondin et al., 2012; Choate et al., 2007; Fudge et al., 2008; Fudge et al., 2017; Hautau et al., 2008; Kirk et al., 2010; Saecker et al., 2008;). It has also been successfully used with students with autism and in self-contained classrooms (Aspiranti, Bebech, & Osiniak, 2018; Aspiranti et al., 2019). Researchers can use the handout to identify and remediate gaps in the research base. The handout is especially useful for practitioners who do not have access to research databases and often lack the time to search databases when they are available.