



Using a Home-School Log to Facilitate Communication between Educators and Parents

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April 30, 2010



Background

- Public schools are required to use evidence-based practices and involve parents in those practices (IDEA 2004)
- Home-school logs are an evidence-based practice that have been used in schools for many years (Chafouleas, Riley-Tillman, & Sassu, 2006)
- Communication between home and school has been associated with improved parent-educator relationships and student outcomes (Bruder, 1996).
- Interventions involving parents and consistent two-way messages between home and school can improve student outcomes (Christenson & Carlson, 2005; Esler et al, 2002)



Purpose of Current Project

- **Problem:** Schools need a way to facilitate two-way communication between educators and parents. Using a tool that also collects data on relevant student behaviors would be efficient and useful for all parties.
- **Objective:** To provide educators and parents with a Home-School Log that they can use to facilitate communication between parents and educators, and also to enhance parent-educator collaboration and data-based decision-making.
- **Hypothesis:** Using the Home-School Log for four weeks will result in improved parent-educator communication, collaboration, and data-based decision-making as measured by parent and educator report.



Method

Participants

- Student 1
 - Parent
 - Regular Classroom Teacher
 - Speech/Language Pathologist
 - School Psychology intern
 - Paraprofessional
- Student 2
 - Parent
 - Regular Classroom Teacher
 - Paraprofessional
 - School Psychology intern



Method

Measures/Instruments

- Home-School Log binder
 - Paper
 - Binders
 - Dividers to organize pages within each binder
 - School calendar, Instructions page, Behavior Rating pages, and Suggested Home Activity pages for each binder



Method

Procedures

- I met with each student's team of educators to talk about the requirements of the project
- We discussed each student's problem behaviors that they would like to monitor, and the activities in which they are most likely to occur
- We created operational definitions of each behavior and examples of each to ensure that each educator using the home-school log is rating in the same way

Method

Procedures (cont.)

- Each day each teacher rated each student's target behaviors (e.g., Participating in Activity), during those pre-specified activities (e.g., Circle Time).
- The other educators that the student saw throughout the week, also rated the student's behaviors during the activities in which they see them (e.g., speech session, in-class social skills support).
- At the end of each day, the student brought the log home for the parents to review and sign. They could then fill out a Suggested Home Activity page if desired.

Daily Rating Page

Home-School Log - Daily Rating Page

Student ID: 2

Date: _____

Day of Week: M T W Th F

Check if no ratings today → Reason: Student was absent No School Other: _____

Rater: _____

Position: _____

Activity

Description:

Circle Time

Observation Time:

Start: _____

End: _____

Check if no rating today

Reason for no rating:

Unable to observe student sufficiently

Unable to rate behavior immediately following observation

% of Time Student Was

Participating in Activity



Following Directions



Following Rules



Comments:

Suggested Home Activity Page



Suggested Home Activity:

Look over the daily note and talk about your child's day....



Behaviors Observed At Home

Parent Concerns or Questions

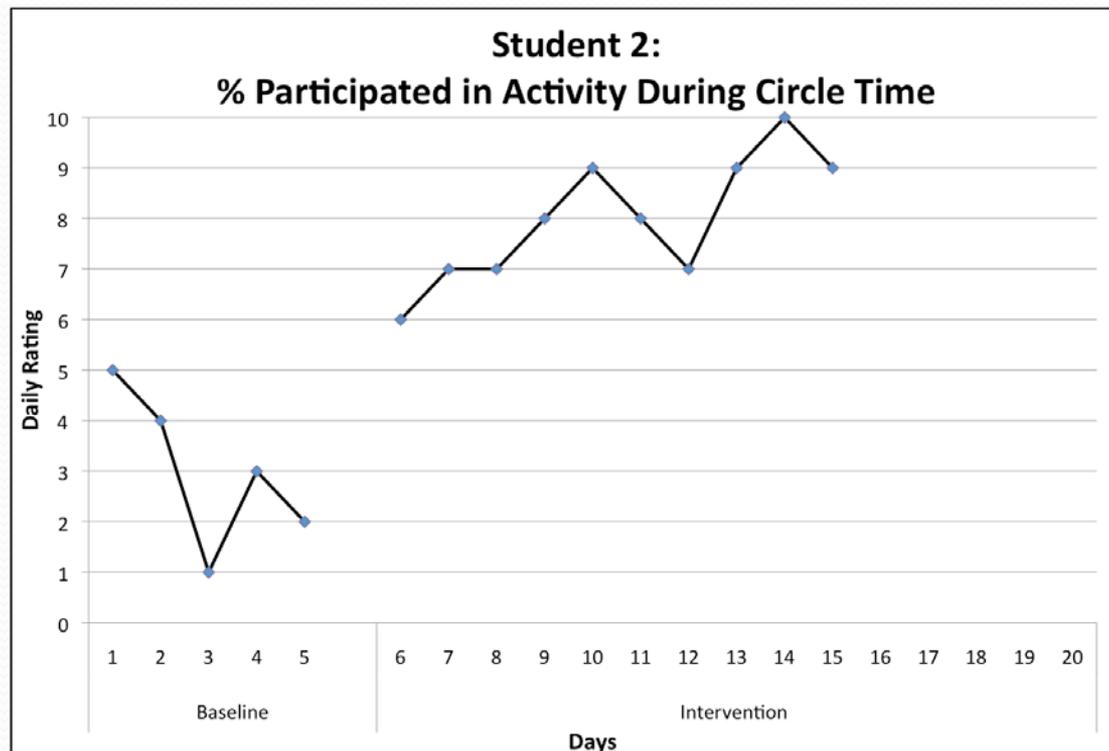
Please complete in the morning, before school

At home my child ...

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Slept all night | <input type="checkbox"/> Did not sleep well | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ate all my breakfast | <input type="checkbox"/> Ate some of my breakfast | <input type="checkbox"/> Did not eat breakfast |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Had a good morning | <input type="checkbox"/> Was not feeling well | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Had a change in routine: | _____ | |

Student Data

- Each week, I provided the educators with a graph summarizing their student's data on the daily ratings.
- This could be helpful for progress monitoring and making data-based decisions about modifying supports





Data Collection

- After they used the Home-School Log for 4-5 weeks, I informally spoke with parents and educators to see what their opinion of the tool's feasibility and helpfulness was for facilitating parent-educator communication, collaboration and data-based decision making.
- This was necessary for helping the teams determine whether or not to continue using the Home-School Log with each student.

Analysis/Results

- I identified common responses to the interview questions:
 - Common barriers, issues, and positive aspects of the home-school log both as a communication tool and a progress monitoring tool
- I found that the Home-School Log was:
 - Useful for data collection
 - Useful for progress monitoring
 - Useful for communicating between educators and parents
 - Easy for most participants to use

Analysis/Results (cont.)

- Student 1
 - Educators found the log to be very helpful for tracking the student's progress and for influencing his parents to spend more time with him, which in turn helped to improve the student's behavior in school
 - Student 1's mother felt that her relationship with the school greatly improved
- Student 2
 - Educators found the log to be helpful for tracking his behavior which was useful for placement planning
 - Student 2's parents did not often complete the home activity and were unavailable to be interviewed

Suggestions for Improvement

- Home-School Log
 - Include options on Home Activity page for “Did not have a good morning” and “Did/did not take his medication”
 - Include universal behaviors (e.g., academically engaged, non-disruptive) along with specific behaviors
- Parent participation in the process
 - Introduce the Home-School Log at a team meeting between the educators and parents
 - Explicit incentives for participation
 - Improved family-school partnership
 - Improved student outcomes
 - Weekly reports of the child’s behavior
 - Monetary incentive (e.g., gift card)

Implications/Future Research

- The proposed log can make collecting and **communicating data** much easier to do, improve **family-school partnership** and improve coordination of **interdisciplinary care**, as these students often receive a variety of services within the regular classroom setting as well as in sessions with the special education teacher, SLP, school psychologist, and paraprofessional, among others.
- I plan to use what I learned from this pilot study to further test the effectiveness of the log's ability to improve home-school communication, interdisciplinary collaboration, and student outcomes.

References

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- Individual with Disabilities Education improvement Act (2004)

Acknowledgements

- LEND Director: Mary Beth Bruder
- LEND Program Coordinator: Tierney Giannotti
- LEND Family Faculty: Aneka Hendy, Tesha Imperati, Darlene Borre, and Mona Tremblay
- My fellow LEND Fellows
- The various educators in nearby towns that gave input
- All of the participating students, parents, and educators

Thank You!

