

Last time we talked about Sammy we [used a Functional Behavior Assessment](#) to analyze the real cause of his misbehavior. Once we analyzed the Antecedents, Behaviors and Consequences of Sammy's actions we found that he was earning referrals at the end of the day because he was bored during *End of Day Conference* and didn't want to talk about any negative behaviors the teacher had observed during the day.

With this information in our hands, we were able to enact an intervention to help him get what he needed through prosocial behavior. That intervention was to write a [Positive Behavior Contract](#) outlining the parameters Sammy needed to fulfill in order to earn a Positive Office Referral. Keep in mind that Sammy was a part of this conversation all along. His voice and knowledge of this whole process was critical to the success of the intervention as it impacted the degree to which Sammy *bought in* to this intervention. Let's talk more about using a Positive Behavior Contract to establish parameters for earning a Positive Office Referral.



- **Use a Positive Behavior Contract to establish parameters:** A Positive Behavior Contract is a written agreement between the student, teacher and often an administrator outlining a specific positive consequence that a student can earn as well as the parameters required to be met in order for the student to access the established positive consequence. Key elements include: the goal of the contract, the parameters including the contract period or length, and the consequence. Using a Positive Behavior Contract gives structure to how the positive office referral intervention will work. In Sammy's case his contract looked something like this:
  - **Goal:** To increase time spent in class and decrease time spent in the office for referrals.
  - **Parameters:** For the next two weeks Sammy must
    - Stay in class for a full school day with no referral
    - Complete all school work to the teacher's specifications
    - Earn fewer than 10 point losses for the day on his point sheet
  - **Positive Consequence:**
    - For every 1 school day Sammy meets these expectations he can earn a Positive Office Referral with the interventionist, and if the interventionist is unavailable the recreation therapist would fill in as a backup. Sammy can play a card game, sit and talk, play the Nintendo Wii or go outside to throw a ball around.
    - For every 5 consecutive school days Sammy meets these expectations Sammy can have lunch at in the office with the interventionist or recreation therapist.
- **Determine the logistics for the Positive Office Referral:** When utilizing an intervention like Positive Office Referrals and Positive Behavior Contracts you will want to confirm a few logistical details prior to implementation. Some of those details are as follows:
  - **Who?** Who will be in charge of monitoring and tracking the student's progress towards achieving the positive consequences outlined in the contract? We often recommend that this takes place in the classroom. Also who is it that will meet with the student for the positive office referral? It is recommended that there is a secondary person that the student can meet with in the event that the primary person is unable to meet with the student.

- **What?** What is required of the student in order to earn the Positive Office Referral? This is where a Positive Behavior Contract becomes helpful. Also, what happens during the referral? Answering these questions gives predictability and incentive to the student creating an opportunity for the student to give input on what activities he or she can earn.
- **Where?** In the event that the student earns the positive referral, where will he or she report to? The referral is more about the process and the incentive than a particular place.
- **What if?** Have a plan for what to do if the student earns a positive referral and staff is unable to facilitate or allow access to the incentive. It is a good idea to talk with the student about a backup plan so that the student doesn't become discouraged and give up.
- **How long?** Lastly, how long will this intervention be in place? Any time we put an added intervention in place for a student our long term goal is to get the student back off that intervention. This means we should have a targeted end date or a plan for scaling back the intervention. We recommend revisiting the intervention every two weeks and adjusting as necessary.

Well this story has a happy ending! Sammy responded very well to earning Positive Office Referrals and greatly reduced the frequency of his referrals. And in the end it saved staff, me especially, frustrations and probably a few hairs as well!

Hear about the success one principal has had by implementing [Positive Office Referrals](http://www.boystowntraining.org).