

INTERVENTION STRATEGIES FOR SCHOOL BUS DRIVERS

REFERENCE GUIDE AND TEST

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INTRODUCTION

Special ed students, as well as regular ed students often exhibit inappropriate behavior. The job of the bus driver is to intervene and prevent inappropriate behavior from escalating out of control. The video will show bus drivers a variety of strategies that can be used to alter inappropriate behavior when it occurs on a school bus.

The video will be divided into 2 sections. Section 1 will introduce special ed bus drivers to the concepts and skills that will be used to modify the behavior of special ed students.

Section II uses role play situations to dramatize how to intervene when inappropriate behavior occurs on a school bus.

Section I

1. Defining the difference between regular ed and special ed students when behavioral issues are present.

- a. Regular ed students can and should be held accountable for their behavior. If continuous behavior is encountered, the bus driver can suspend regular ed students from riding the school bus.
- b. The courts have determined that special ed students must be provided with home to school transportation as part of their school program. Special ed students cannot be permanently suspended from home to school transportation.

2. The IEP - The IEP is an assessment of a student's physical and behavioral needs. This information is invaluable for special ed bus drivers. An IEP report can provide drivers with knowledge that will allow them to be aware of how to work with special ed students. During the video we will cover an IEP conference and also explain the importance of the IEP report and how it impacts special ed drivers.

3. Positive Environment - The bus driver sets the tone of the bus by being positive and greeting students with warmth and enthusiasm.

- a. A student enters the bus withdrawn and non communicative.
- b. The student's home environment is very negative.
- c. The driver engages the student in conversation to let him know that she cares about him.
- d. The student begins to respond to the driver.
- e. The driver sends out an important message to all the students riding the bus. These simple small acts of kindness can set the tone for encouraging students to listen and like their bus driver. This is the first step in getting students with behavioral problems to see the bus driver as a person and friend.

4. Negative/Positive Reinforcement - This example examines the consequence of a bus driver scolding and or correcting several students for standing too close to the bus during bus pick up.

Negative

- a. Students enter the bus and the driver confronts students and berates them.
- b. Neither students nor driver listens to each other.

Positive

- a. Sequence is repeated with the driver calmly explaining to the students why standing too close to the bus poses a danger.
- b. Students listen attentively.
- c. The bottom line is that the bus driver must be both positive and patient. Negative attitudes produce negative results.

5. Following the rules on the bus - Every school district has rules for students to follow while riding the bus. The bus driver, in this example, engages students in a discussion about the rules. Issues that could cause stress are discussed. And the driver has a chance to explain them. A discussion ensues.

6. Sharing Information - Bus drivers are a natural link between parents, students, and their teachers. In this example, a student's mom explains to the driver that her daughter is upset over an incident at home. When the driver arrives at the school site, she lets the teacher know that the student is angry and upset. When this information is properly relayed, it provides all of the team members a chance to intervene at an early stage.

7. Constant Inappropriate Behavior - When a student exhibits constant inappropriate behavior on the school bus, the issue must be dealt with quickly before it escalates out of control. The following examples examine the issue:

- a. A girl gets out of her seat, opens the window, and starts to wave at her friends while the bus is moving.
- b. The driver attempts to get the girl's attention, but is unable to do so.
- c. The driver pulls over to the curb and intervenes getting the girl to return to her seat.

Note:

When this type of inappropriate behavior continues, the bus driver must intervene or she will become stressed out. The driver informs the student's teacher and the teacher decides to call an IEP conference to work out an effective strategy.

8. The IEP Conference - The special needs director along with the special needs teacher, the transportation director, the driver, and other team members assess the

needs of the student. The sequence demonstrates how important it is for all members of the team to participate in the IEP. The bottom line for bus drivers is that if they can be made aware of the behavioral problems of their students, they will then be better prepared to deal with the inappropriate behavior of those students.

9. Proper Record Keeping - Another small but important detail is the significance of keeping accurate records. Keeping accurate records can establish a history and pattern of a student's behavior. When a student causes a disruption and the driver notes it in her records, this information can be an invaluable resource for the school team.

Section II

1. Verbal Intervention Strategy - (ROLE PLAY)

a. (The Wrong Way) The bus driver in a role play situation yells at the students who are wrestling in the back of the school bus. The students momentarily stop. Moments later they are back at it. The driver's intervention strategy worked only for a moment.

b. (The Right Way) In a replay of the same situation, the driver walks over to the students and quietly but firmly tells them this inappropriate behavior must stop. Her body language sends a clear message. She sits directly in front of the students and looks them squarely in the face. Students respond to this quiet, firm, and assertive response from the driver.

c. Body language is extremely important. If you distance yourself from a child, when you talk with him, the message will literally appear distant. Get up close and talk with him face to face, so he clearly understands you care about him and you want him to change his behavior.

d. The long term message to the student is that this type of behavior is unacceptable. The message from the driver is not a short term rebuke, it is a clear statement to the student that he is expected to behave properly and that the bus driver is in charge of the situation.

2. Standard Intervention (ROLE PLAY) - In this role play, a student who often displays anger gets into an angry confrontation with another student. The driver takes appropriate action.

a. She moves the student to another seat on the bus next to a student who is quietly riding on the bus. Soon the "angry" student is talking and interacting with the "quiet student".

b. Keep in mind that the answer to working with students who exhibit inappropriate behavior is to have a number of intervention strategies that can be used. No one technique will

work for all situations, but if you have several strategies, you can choose the strategy that is best suited to your particular situation.

3. Problem Solving (Role Play) - Young students often want to be the center of attention. Frequently they will use negative behavior to achieve this. When a special ed bus driver sees this, her challenge is to redirect their behavior from negative back to positive.

a. Decisions the driver must make in order to redirect the behavior of the student.

(1) Recognize disruptive behavior that could cause harm to other students and distract the bus driver.

(2) Let the student know how disruptive his behavior is and tell him that you want to help him.

(3) Once the bus driver gains the student's confidence, the student may confide in the bus driver and let her know what conditions on the bus are bothering him.

4. Positive Intervention (Role Play) - The lessons in this example are important. Using the problem solving technique allows the driver to engage the student. This fosters cooperation, teamwork, and trust.

a. Example of a student tripping another student and causing an accident.

b. Another example of the same student at a later time frame quietly riding on the school bus.

c. The challenge for the driver in this situation is subtle. Should she take for granted this change in behavior, or should she talk about it?

d. The answer is, praise your students when they exhibit a change in behavior that produces positive results. Many of the students will look forward to this praise. Do not take their good behavior for granted. Praise them each day. By doing this, you are establishing a personal relationship with them. They are learning to trust you and they are not engaging in bad behavior.

Summary - Practice these techniques, when possible, during role play, training sessions, and with other bus drivers. The behavioral modification techniques in this video can be used to modify the needs of individual students. When they are used effectively, they can help bus drivers lessen the chances of inappropriate behavior on the school bus.

TEST QUESTIONS FOR INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

1. Special ed students can be permanently bared from riding school buses if they continuously exhibit misbehavior.

True_____

False_____

2. The behavioral information the IEP may only be shared by the special ed director and the parents of the special ed student.

True_____

False_____

3. Since driving a school bus requires so much concentration, bus drivers should not engage in any conversation and should remain aloof from their students.

True_____

False_____

4. When a bus driver vigorously and aggressively scolds a student that is misbehaving, the likely result is that the student will not repeat his inappropriate conduct again.

True_____

False_____

5. The best way for a bus driver to tell students about the rules of conduct on a bus is to lecture them sternly and make sure they never question the authority of the bus driver.

True_____

False_____

6. When a parent tells a bus driver about a problem her child is having, the bus driver should take the time to relay the information to the child's teacher.

True_____

False_____

7. As long as a "behavioral incident" is reported to your supervisor, it's not necessary to

make a report about it.

True_____

False_____

8. Is it appropriate body language for the bus driver, when talking to a student that misbehaved, to sit down near the student and look directly at the student.

True_____

False_____

9. When a bus driver knows a student is prone to anger and gets into a confrontation with another student, which of the following strategies is appropriate?

- a. Isolate the student in the back of the bus.
- b. Threaten the student with detention or expulsion.
- c. Move the student to another location and seat her with a student that is less likely to cause a confrontation.

10. When a student has a known history of causing trouble, but has started to exhibit more positive behavior, the bus driver should be careful about praising the student's good behavior.

True_____

False_____

ANSWERS

1. FALSE

2. FALSE

3. FALSE

4. FALSE

5. FALSE

6. TRUE

7. FALSE

8. TRUE

9. C

10.FALSE