Data Collection and Debriefing

# Purpose

To increase positive behavior or decrease negative behavior with any behavioral goal through observation, as well as to use a systematic approach of recording data to gauge the effectiveness of subsequent interventions.

# Types of behavior that may be positively affected

* Any chronic behavior or motivational problem

# Rationale

* Gathering data often solves the problem all by itself. Why? There are several possible reasons: placebo effect, the student wasn’t aware of the problem, it is part of human nature to “shape up” when we know we are being watched, conveys that the teacher is serious, increases the amount of attention from the teacher, and communicates the teacher’s concern and care for the student.
* Effective teachers collect data as illustrated by the “O” in STOIC—defines the problem in measurable terms.
* Data will form the basis for planning any subsequent more intensive intervention.
* Use of data is the only way to determine objectively whether interventions are working.

# Summary of intervention steps

**Step 1:** *Choose an objective data collection method. Data can be collected using any of the following methods and related forms:*

* Weekly Misbehavior Recording Sheet
* Advanced frequency count
* Public posting used in special settings for younger students
* Duration recording
* Interval recording/scatterplot
* Rating scale

**TIP:** If it is difficult to determine what the focus of the intervention should be or how to measure the problem, keep a daily anecdotal log in which you note what occurred that day. Usually, anecdotal notes will help you define the nature of the problem in a more objective manner.

**Step 2:** *Select a way to display the data visually on one page*.

Think about whether a table, bar graph, pie chart, or scatterplot will make trends and patterns apparent to you as well as to the student.

**Step 3:** *Meet with the student (and parents if appropriate).*

* Explain the data you plan to collect before starting. Ensuring that the student understands data collection will help both you and the student recognize the significance of the problem, and what everyone involved might do to make things better. Explain how you will inform the student of the data as you are collecting it—neither your actions nor the data should be a secret.
* Meet regularly (at least once a week) with the student to share and discuss the one-page visual summary of the data, review trends (remember it is not unusual for a behavior to get worst before it gets better), set improvement targets, discuss ideas for improving the situation, and celebrate progress.