

## Good Behavior Game

The Good Behavior Game (GBG) is a classroom behavioral intervention that rewards students who demonstrate appropriate on-task behaviors. According to several studies, the use of this intervention led to reductions in student's off-task, aggressive, and antisocial behaviors (Dolan et al., 1993; Lannie & McCurdy, 2007). This intervention can be used on an entire classroom (broken up into groups by the teacher) or on a subgroup of students in the class.

The game uses an interdependent group contingency technique in which a group of students earns points based on the group's performance as a whole. These points are recorded on the board and can later be exchanged for privileges or rewards. Although teams will often compete with one another, all teams can earn the total number of predetermined points for following the rules. The particular rules and number of points to be earned can vary depending on teacher preference and the behaviors he or she wants to target.

Below is a brief synopsis of how to implement the game. These steps are taken from *School Discipline and Self-Discipline* by George Bear. To learn more about the game, please refer to Chapter 8 of the book.

Here's a brief synopsis of how to implement the game:

1. Divide the class into two or more teams. It is usually recommended that teams consist of 4-7 players, although this may vary. Teams should be fairly balanced with regards to students' academic and behavioral skills. If one student is continually disruptive (and thereby causing his or her whole team difficulty earning points), considering making this one student a separate team.
2. Determine the rules of the game (typically around 3-5 rules) and provide students with examples to clearly define expectations.
3. Indicate what the rewards will be and when they will be provided. Consider asking students what they would prefer.
4. Divide the class time into a set number of intervals (usually around 5-10 minutes). If the class displays more problematic behavior, consider shortening the length of the intervals.
5. Decide the scoring process and how many points are necessary for students to earn the reward. At the end of each interval, groups could be awarded based on the following criteria:

- 5 = Perfect behavior. The team followed all rules during 100% of the interval.
- 4 = Excellent behavior. The team only had one minor problem during the interval.
- 3 = Good behavior. The team had two to three infractions during the interval.
- 2 = Needs much practice. The team tried, but had three to five infractions of the rules.
- 1 = Team problems. The team had more than five minor infractions.
- 0 = Major violation. One or more major rule violations occurred.

6. In order to receive the reward, the teacher may determine that the group must earn 80% of the possible points or 40 out of 50 points (10 5-minute intervals). A bonus may also be used. For instance, if a team earns 90% of the possible points, the members also get a homework pass.
7. At the end of every interval, determine each group's points by writing the number on the board or chart. Total the points across intervals at the end of every period so students can see their progress. At the end of the game, compute and record each team's standing.
8. To the greatest extent possible, incorporate student feedback on goals, rules, and rewards. Encourage students to help monitor and record points and totals and emphasize teamwork and cooperation.

#### References

- Bear, G. G. (2010). *School discipline and self-discipline*. New York: The Guilford Press.
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- Lannie, A. L., & McCurdy, B. L. (2007). Preventing disruptive behavior in the urban classroom: Effects of the good behavior game on student and teacher behavior. *Education and Treatment of Children, 30*, 85-98.