

What Is the Good Behavior Game?

The Good Behavior Game is an evidence-based classroom behavior management strategy for elementary school proven effective in reducing negative classroom behavior and improving the long-term health and well-being of students. Children work together in teams to master the role of student and successfully meet the key demands of the classroom including sitting still, paying attention, and completing school work.

The Good Behavior Game is a strategy, not a curriculum, and does not compete with instructional time. It provides

teachers with consistent effective language to promote positive student behavior. The strategy is engaging, and students look forward to playing the Game. Students learn teamwork; they receive positive reinforcement for promoting and following classroom rules; and they practice monitoring and regulating their own behavior.

“I am becoming a facilitator rather than a problem-solver.”

— Teacher,
Houston Independent
School District

The Good Behavior Game is one of the few preventive interventions aimed at aggressive and disruptive behavior that has shown both short-term and long-term impact in rigorous randomized field trials. Results have been strongest for the least behaviorally prepared boys entering first grade.

The Good Behavior Game Produces Lasting Success in the Classroom



Research shows that in classrooms implementing the Good Behavior Game:

- Students are more focused on the task at hand.
- There are fewer interruptions from aggressive and disruptive behavior.
- Teachers have more time to devote to teaching.

The AIR Approach

Providing Support so Students Receive the Maximum Benefit of the Good Behavior Game

The Good Behavior Game is a simple method of managing classroom behavior that has dramatic long-term impact when implemented well. But without the right level of support, the results can be hit or miss.

American Institutes for Research (AIR) provides a **comprehensive approach to training, on-site coaching, and program oversight** to realize positive results from the Good Behavior Game.

Our approach draws from our nationally known expertise in:

- Human and social development
- Organizational effectiveness
- Workforce development

We work with district and school staff to build a team to effectively implement the Good Behavior Game. Our staff identify and clearly articulate each role—for the principal, district and school administration, teachers, and support staff—so the Game is fully supported and its components are incorporated into the school and district culture and climate.

We provide onsite coaching so staff receive consistent training. Our coaches listen to staff needs and adjust the training to address specific issues. Our model allows for the training to expand as needed to scale up the program across classrooms and schools within a district.

At AIR, we understand what it takes to effectively incorporate strategies for lasting positive change. We know how adults learn, so our training and oversight are effective. As a result, the Game is administered consistently, with fidelity to the research-proven model, so children and teachers can experience its known positive effects.

“My students like to be in teams; they help each other during the Game and at other times.

— Teacher,
Houston Independent
School District

Students introduced to the Good Behavior Game in first and second grade show less aggressive and disruptive behavior through middle school.

By sixth grade, students from Good Behavior Game classrooms were rated by teachers as having fewer behavior problems and were significantly less likely to be diagnosed with conduct disorders or to have been suspended

from school compared to students who did not participate in the Good Behavior Game.

The Good Behavior Game Promotes Students’ Long-Term Health and Well-Being

Research published in the journal of *Drug & Alcohol Dependence* (2008) found that students who had participated in the Good Behavior Game in early elementary school experienced more physical and mental health benefits in early adulthood compared to students from the same elementary schools who were not exposed to the Game.

Male participants entering first grade with disruptive and aggressive behavior were:

- **100 percent less likely to smoke regularly.**
Good Behavior Game participants aged 19 to 21 did not report smoking 10 or more cigarettes per day compared to 40 percent of their peers.
- **65 percent less likely to abuse drugs.**
29 percent reported abusing illicit drugs compared to 83 percent of males who did not participate in the Good Behavior Game.
- **52 percent less likely to suffer from antisocial personality disorder (APD).**
41 percent reported suffering from APD compared to 86 percent not exposed to the Good Behavior Game.

In addition, the Good Behavior Game decreased the likelihood of alcohol abuse. Male and female participants were:

- **35 percent less likely to abuse alcohol.**
13 percent of Good Behavior Game participants reported alcohol abuse compared to 20 percent of their peers.

Source: Kellam, S. G., Reid, J., & Balster, R. L. (Eds.). (2008). Effects of a universal classroom behavior program in first and second grades on young adult outcomes. *Drug and Alcohol Dependence*, 95(Supplement 1), S1–S104.

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AIR’s model of training and support and implementation materials for the Good Behavior Game received the highest possible rating in SAMHSA’s registry of evidence-based programs and practices.

Contact us for more information about how AIR can help your district successfully implement the Good Behavior Game.



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