



## Snapshot: Continuum of Strategies to Encourage Appropriate Behavior Benchmarks of Quality 25-32

### Practice: Behavior Specific Praise Statements (BSPS) Ratio 4:1

**Research:**

The research supports the use of behavior specific praise statements to:

- teach new behaviors and support maintenance of acquired behaviors (Mesa, Lewis-Palmer, & Reinke, 2005)
- to increase on-task behavior (Fullerton, Conroy, & Correa, 2009)
- to decrease problem behavior (Hawkins, & Heflin, 2010; Lampi, Fenty, & Beaunae, 2005; Lane, Kalberg, Bruhn, Mahoney, & Driscoll, 2008; Mesa, Lewis-Palmer, & Reinke, 2005; Stormont, Covington Smith, & Lewis, 2007; Sutherland, Wehby, & Copeland, 2000)
- provide increased opportunities for building positive relationships with students
- provide support to students with the most challenging behavior, needing targeted and/or intensive supports, through more frequent behavior specific praise statements delivered contingently for appropriate behavior coupled with less frequent reprimands for inappropriate behavior. Students with the most challenging behavior typically do not receive access to even the average rates of praise that students without challenging behavior receive (Lewis, Hudson, Richter, & Johnson, 2004)

**What is it?**

A behavior specific praise statement is verbal/written feedback that is *descriptive, specific, and delivered contingent* upon student demonstration of expected behavior (Gable, Hester, Rock, & Hughes, 2009; Hawkins & Heflin, 2010)

*Effective Praise*

- "Excellent job listening and following directions the first time."
- "Your eyes are on me and your mouth is quiet. Thank you for being ready to learn."
- "Way to go! You asked for help and followed the steps to complete your math work before the end of class!"
- "Thank you for being on time this morning, that's very responsible."

Less Effective

- "Good job!"
- "Excellent!"
- "Well done!"

(Gable, Hester, Rock, & Hughes, 2009)

**Practice**

- Develop classroom rules aligned with school-wide expectations
- Post and teach classroom rules
- Use 2-3 words from the defined classroom rules to formulate BSPS.
- Deliver BSPS immediately after students demonstrate expected behavior.
- Use prompts to remind you to use BSPS (e.g. notes to self, tally marks, paper clips from one pocket to another, write BSPS on sticky notes to distribute during instruction. (Conroy & Correa, 2009; Sprick, Knight, Reinke, McKale, 2006)
- Note: Praise alone may not be powerful enough to change the behavior of some students and more concrete or tangible reinforcers may need to be paired with praise.
- Note: Deliver in close proximity in a way acceptable to the student (Gable, Hester, Rock, & Hughes, 2009)