FOCUS ON EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

The Emotionally Disturbed Adolescent: Development of Program Alternatives in Secondary Education

Richard L. McDowell and Gweneth Blacklock Brown

A major dilemma confronting public education today is how to provide an appro-priate education for adolescents who exhibit a variety of behavior disorders. The Education for All Handicapped Children Act (Public Law 94-142) has the potential to dramatically change the educational prospects of this previously neglected second-ary level group. University personnel, state directors of special education, public school administrators, and teachers have begun to direct attention toward discovering and developing educational procedures that will be effective with disturbed and troubled youth. The time when these youth can be rejected by or expelled from the public schools is passing.

Although the law states that all children must be served by the public schools, the "how to's" of an appropriate education for secondary age handicapped youth are in the beginning stages of development and, in all likelihood, will take many more years to evolve. In the meantime, educators charged with the responsibility of developing and establishing programs for adolescents with behavior disorders need to take stock of where the field has been and what is currently known. Until more relevant research is forthcoming, sharing of information pertaining to successful programming strategies is critical if the full potential of the law is to be realized.

Throughout most of man's history, individuals with physical or behavioral dif-ferences were systematically abused, neglected, and excluded from important seg-ments of society. Efforts to provide services for what we now term exceptional or handicapped persons began in Europe approximately 150 years ago. The first real efforts in the United States to educate exceptional persons occurred in the latter half of the nineteenth century with the establishment of residential schools. A majority of these schools, however, did not address the needs of emotionally or behaviorally disordered children.

Dr. McDowell is Professor of Education at the University of New Mexico; Dr. Brown is with the Bureau of Education for the Handicapped, where she is an Advocate for Emotionally Disturbed Children.

By the late 1960s and early 1970s, public educational services for select categories and age groups of handicapped children were provided in most local community schools but, unfortunately, children and youth with emotional and behavioral disorders all too frequently were still neglected by the schools. Expulsion was the most commonly used practice in dealing with the emotionally or behaviorally disordered child — especially youth at the secondary school level. As late as 1976, the National Advisory Committee for the Handicapped estimated that 81 percent of the nation's emotionally disturbed children were not being served by the nation's public schools. Of those served, most fell in the mild to moderate range, and almost all were of elementary age.

With so few schools providing adequate educational programs for emotionally or behaviorally disordered youth, college and university special educational personnel interested in children with behavior disorders began to focus their attention and energies on the mild to moderately disturbed elementary age child. Nelson and Kauffman (1977) found a paucity of published information on the secondary level student. Similarly, in a review of the Bureau of Education for the Handicapped's personnel preparation programs in emotional disturbance, Brown and Palmer (1977) found that only 10 of the 118 projects, in their request for funds, demonstrated an attempt to provide teachers with the skills and competencies necessary for working with the secondary level student. Even among the 10 projects providing some experiences at the secondary level, most focused on the elementary child and paid only limited attention to the secondary level.

In their review, Brown and Palmer (1977) state that "of all the age groups, the education of the secondary level emotionally disturbed child appears to be the most neglected by special education. Programs focused on the skills and competencies necessary for setting up quality educational programs at the secondary level simply do not exist in most areas of the country" (p. 173). It is no wonder, then, that with so little published information available and with so few teachers having received educational experiences related to teaching this population, that school administrators find it difficult to locate and hire teachers with the skills and "know how" to appropriately educate the disordered secondary level student. Until systematic programming and research efforts can be conducted at the secondary level, much of what gets implemented will be adapted from techniques found to be successful with students at the elementary level.

THE POPULATION

Identification and Classification

Every teacher, when given the task of identifying emotional or behavioral disorders in children, can think immediately of some child they have taught whom they believed to have been behaviorally disordered. If pressed to elaborate on what caused them to believe that a child was behaviorally disordered, many would identify aggressive behavior, others might indicate the child's inappropriate verbalization, and still others might point to withdrawing behavior. The point is that emotional or behavioral disorders come in many forms. Attempts to classify or categorize emotional or behavioral disorders have been of little value in developing educational programs. Classification has implied that there is a preferred or prescribed method of treatment for specific categories — but, this has not been the case. Those who have worked with disordered children know from experience that each case must be studied individually and that a treatment plan must be designed to meet the child's

specific needs without regard to the assigned classification. Classification, however, does allow us to make generalizations with regard to the similarities found in certain groupings, as well as to provide us with a rather standardized method of communication.

Some professionals believe that some type of homogeneous grouping is necessary when designing educational programs; others advocate some type of heterogeneous grouping so that, for example, you don't end up with eight highly aggressive, acting out boys in one classroom. There are pros and cons for each view. Before accepting either position, three questions should be considered:

1. How will such placement affect the child?
2. How will the behavior of the identified child affect the other children in the program?
3. How will the behavior of this child affect the teacher's interactions with all the children in the program?

These three factors are listed in order of priority. The major concern always should be the effect upon the individual child being considered for placement. Placement in a special program should be made with the primary purpose of benefiting the individual child — not simply to provide convenience for the teacher or the school system.

Definitions and Descriptions

Defining the emotionally or behaviorally disordered child is a difficult task that becomes even more difficult and complex when applied to an adolescent population. The problem of definition is compounded by normal deviations in behavior during the period referred to as adolescence. Typical crises, for example, might be the stress that occurs when the adolescent attempts to establish autonomy or when relationships with the opposite sex are redefined. These crises are experienced by everyone. How they are handled determines the comfort or stress the individual feels when confronted with situations that require resolution of the issues involved.

Some individuals handle adolescent crises easily and are able to resolve such issues with limited effort. For these individuals, adolescence is largely an enjoyable experience. For others who have more difficulty in dealing with and finding solutions to their crisis situations, adolescence is a time of stress and pain. The behavior they exhibit in their attempt to resolve issues often exceeds the limits society has established for behavior variability. Depending upon the extent to which the behavior exceeds the limits, the behavior may be excused as being normal adolescent behavior or punished, if it infringes upon adult society. *Any definition of behavior disorders that is to be applied to an adolescent population must approach the fine line separating accepted behavior variance and behavior viewed as being deviant.*

Definitions presently in use by educators were written with the elementary age child in mind. The easiest of these definitions to adapt to the secondary age child is the classical list of characteristics developed by Bower (1960) for use in identifying the emotionally disturbed child. Bower believed that, to be considered emotionally disturbed, a child was to exhibit one or more of the following characteristics, either to a marked extent or over a period of time.

1. An inability to learn which cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors.
2. An inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers.
3. Inappropriate types of behavior or feelings under normal conditions.
4. A general, pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression.
5. A tendency to develop physical symptoms, pains or fears associated with personal or school problems (pp. 9-10).

Another definition that begins to recognize not only degrees of severity but differences in educational programming was developed by Kauffman (1977). It was written for educators, and apparently with the elementary age child in mind. With a little effort, however, the reader should be able to adjust it for an adolescent population.

Children with behavior disorders are those who chronically and markedly respond to their environment in socially unacceptable and/or personally unsatisfying ways but who can be taught more socially acceptable and personally gratifying behavior. Children with mild and moderate behavior disorders can be taught effectively with their normal peers (if their teachers receive appropriate consultive help) or in special resource or self-contained classes with reasonable hope of quiet reintegration with their normal peers. Children with severe and profound behavior disorders require intensive and prolonged intervention and must be taught at home or in special classes, special schools, or residential institutions (p. 23).

The commonalities between Bower's definition and Kauffman's, as well as others (Pate, 1963; Hewett, 1968;

McDowell, 1975), seem to rest on two major points: (1) the inability to establish appropriate satisfying relationships with others; and (2) demonstration of behavior which either fails to meet or exceeds the expectations of those with whom the individual comes in contact.

Given the earlier statement pertaining to normal adolescent crises, great care must be taken in determining whether the behavior being considered is within a normal development pattern and is progressing toward a satisfying solution, or whether it is a behavior pattern resulting in conflict and stress and is making little or no progress toward more acceptable and rewarding ways of behaving. If, in fact, definitions do establish the parameter for conducting identification, screening, and diagnostic procedures, care must be taken, on an individual basis, to assure that special services are indeed a necessary step in assisting the adolescent's development. Then, if such a program is warranted, the public schools have a responsibility to provide it.

Continuum of Behavior Disorders

Kauffman (1977), in his definition of behaviorally disordered children, suggests a continuum of behavior disorders ranging from mild to profound. He appears to divide this continuum into two major segments — mild-to-moderate and severe-to-profound. Admittedly, to separate mild disorders from moderate disorders and severe disorders from profound disorders is often difficult. For program purposes, however, more of a distinction can be made between mild and moderate. The child or adolescent with a mild disorder can in all likelihood be provided assistance and remain within the regular educational program. Mild disorders tend to be more transient in nature than do the other levels of the continuum.

Moderate disorders tend to last longer and usually require some type of special placement. Length of placement, however, tends to reflect school policy rather than the condition of the child (McDowell, 1969). Schools have a tendency to think in terms of school year with regard to placement. In fact, within a majority of public school programs, the appraisal and review procedure is designed to function within that time framework. It appears to be an accepted belief, and practice, that movement of a child from one program to another is easier on the child and everyone else concerned if that movement takes place at the end of the nine-month term. In reality, of course, behavior disorder is not

designed around the school year. With appropriate intervention, and many times without any intervention, the behavior may change or improve in a much shorter time period, such as in the case of an acute situational stress. The child or adolescent may need only to be shown an alternative method or behavior for dealing with the stress even though at the time the stress was introduced, the individual's behavior was disturbed to the extent that special services were required.

The distinction between moderate disorders and severe disorders usually is made on the basis of the amount of contact with reality maintained by the individual. Children or adolescents in the moderate category tend to have problem behaviors but retain relatively intact contact with reality and, with the exception of the specific problem area, are able to function fairly well. (We, of course, recognize that behavior problems can generalize and interfere to a great extent with the individual's ability to function in many aspects of living.) The moderately disordered individual usually will require some type of special intervention program. To date, these individuals have been served through either the resource room or the self-contained classroom.

The severely disordered child or adolescent, because of the exaggerated state of his or her behavior, has required a special self-contained class. A majority of these children have yet to be served by the public schools. Instead, they are found in residential schools, institutions, or at home. A distinction is not made here between the severely disordered and the profoundly disordered in that both require essentially the same type of placement and services. To many professionals in the field, the two terms are used interchangeably, although a case can be made for separating the two groups. Present technology, however, does not make it expedient to do so.

Juvenile Offenders

Another type of behavior disorder overlaps to a certain extent with the above described continuum but, at the same time, is treated as if it were a separate entity. The label given to this problem is *juvenile delinquency* or a *juvenile offender*. Since such labels are attached through a legal process rather than through a diagnostic process, educators have attempted to ignore this problem, for the most part. If the individual so labelled creates problems for the school, he or she usually is passed back to the juvenile justice system to resolve the problem.

In a majority of these cases, the school problem is truancy — a situation many schools choose to ignore. The typical comment pertaining to such a situation is that to do anything other than ignore it would be more trouble than it's worth. Schools are having to face the fact, nevertheless, that state laws dictate the age at which students can terminate their school experience. Also, the juvenile justice system is emphasizing, as part of its conditions for probation or parole, that youth return to school. This gives the school another population of students who, because of their behavior, have been identified as being "different" and, as such, may require special attention and/or special programs.

Children and adolescents from each of the described categories exist and can be found in every school district. Public Law 94-142 has mandated that appropriate educational programs be provided for them. Each state education agency is responsible for developing programs at the local level to provide for these needs.

THE ROLE OF EDUCATION

The role of secondary education in America today is somewhat unclear because of the generalized expectations placed upon it by the community. Secondary education is expected to produce graduates who are capable of entering the world of work or of continuing their education at a higher level, as well as becoming responsible members of society. Limitations as to how this is to be accomplished have been imposed under the guise of economic prudence; and the result of such a stance has been the development of large high schools which appear incapable of keeping track of their students on a daily basis, much less on a period-to-period basis. An agency or system that is unable to determine where its clients are at a given time is not able to enforce effective management procedures or provide effective leadership.

An increase in student population decreases the probability that its members will have a feeling of involvement with the program. If experience has taught us anything, it is that for optimal learning to occur, the student must have a feeling of belonging and involvement. Without these conditions, pride and accomplishment are lacking. Many of the students who are experiencing this lack merely go through the motions of learning. The relevancy of the available curriculum also may contribute to this lack of involvement. A curriculum presented in a format that does not allow for generalization to the students' everyday environment runs the risk of being perceived as not relevant and not worthy of the time or investment of self on the part of students to acquire that particular piece of knowledge. Certain areas within a curriculum do not lend themselves to immediate application to the individual student's environment but, hopefully, a majority of students are able to experience relevancy in most of what they study and to develop self control that allows them to handle nonrelevant material in an appropriate manner.

For a growing percentage of the student population, the traditional curriculum does not appear to be relevant or even appropriate. For years, America's secondary education was geared to produce graduates who were expected to enter college. This emphasis led to development of the college preparatory curriculum to the point that it became almost the only way a student could earn a high school diploma. Educators closed their eyes to alternatives to the college preparatory curriculum. Anything less was looked upon as having little value. This was a time when the high school diploma was viewed as a prerequisite for a successful career. Next, it was the college degree. Today, even the college degree does not guarantee its holder a job, much less any success. Is the next step or basic requirement a graduate degree? Such a proposal would not be realistically possible nor even reasonable.

The obvious alternative to the questions posed here is reassessment of the secondary curriculum to determine alternative routes a student may choose to reach graduation. Because of court rulings pertaining to the tracking of secondary students, it would be necessary to devise a mechanism whereby students would be able to shift from one route to another should they change their mind with regard to the desired outcome. The point of entry into an alternative would have to be established. Core areas common to all alternatives would need to be identified. Desired competencies for each alternative also would need to be identified, along with establishment of criteria for determining attainment of those competencies. This would be a massive undertaking, not only in redesigning the curriculum but in convincing many educators and a large segment of the general population that such an endeavor would be worthwhile and beneficial. The flexibility that such a program could allow, nevertheless, would permit the development of individualized educational planning. Such planning is necessary if we are to provide for the individual needs of students. Only

through such flexibility can we approach the concept of an "appropriate education" as proposed in Public Law 94-142.

In the past, special education programs for the emotionally or behaviorally disordered adolescent have been tied to the traditional curriculum. Educators didn't necessarily want to prepare this student for college, but if the student was to earn a high school diploma rather than a certificate of attendance, he or she must do it in the traditional manner. That meant accumulating an established number of units of credit in various academic areas. Some educators operated from the position that these units could be earned only in the regular classroom — which had the effect of excluding the special education student who for any reason was unable to function in the regular classroom, regardless of whether or not he or she could demonstrate the competencies being taught. Other educators interpreted the regulations pertaining to these units of credit to mean that if the student could demonstrate the required competencies of an academic area, whether in the special classroom or in the regular classroom, the student earned the credit toward graduation and the high school diploma. This matter of administrative interpretation is an issue that should be resolved. A resolution supporting the concept of competency demonstration would not cheapen the high school diploma but, rather, could serve to strengthen it for all students. The diploma would represent acquired skills rather than attendance and minimal performance.

Acquiring a high school diploma may not be an appropriate goal for some adolescents with emotional or behavioral disorders. Goals or objectives may need to be varied depending upon the severity of the disorder and the way in which it manifests itself. Students with mild disorders probably would be able to complete the requirements for an academic diploma in the regular program if that were the direction or alternative they chose to pursue. Decisions pertaining to terminal outcomes or goals should be made on a case-by-case basis and should be flexible enough that, should the adolescent's disorder improve or deteriorate, the individual plan could be revised so as to be appropriate.

Alternatives available to the educator for working with the emotionally or behaviorally disordered adolescent should range from (1) a self-help program that might include motor training, language training, social skills, and survival skills, to (2) a vocational program that might include training in survival academics as they apply to vocational areas, social skills, vocational skills, on-the-job training and workstudy activities, to (3) an academic program. Program alternatives should not operate in isolation from each other but should serve to support each other, each an integral part of the total education program.

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

Successful implementation of any new program is contingent upon the thoroughness with which its designers develop the total plan for operation. Such planning should begin with establishment of a number of statements or principles that reflect the population to be served, the purpose of the program, and the philosophical base upon which the program is to be built. A secondary public school program for emotionally or behaviorally disordered adolescents has the purpose of assisting students in their academic and social growth in a way that will allow them to function successfully within their environment. This statement encompasses the belief that every child or adolescent, regardless of the severity of any disorder, is capable of learning something; and that, through learning, positive change can occur within the individual. Also included in this statement is the belief that each student should have the opportunity to develop his or her potentials to the best ability.

Given appropriate curriculum alternatives, the development of an individual educational plan provides the student the best chance to accomplish this. Here, the educational environment is seen as supportive to the adolescent. Success on assigned tasks assists in developing a positive self-concept. Disordered behavior is viewed as the result of faulty learning experiences. The educational environment is structured so as to support the introduction of order and consistency into the student's daily life. Through the use of order and consistency, the student learns what to expect from the environment and to develop self-control. The ability to appropriately exercise self-control is a major goal of this program.

Program planners should recognize the importance of administrative support in the operation of any project. Administrative support for a program should be obtained prior to introducing the program within the system. Too many special educators have learned the hard way that special classes cannot be operated in the

manner in which they were designed if the administrator of the facility in which they are located is not supportive of the program. Further, such a program can be damaged even if the administrator does not take a position with regard to it; simply by allowing it to exist with no active involvement either way is perceived by many as lack of support. The administrator does set the model which a majority of employees will follow. An informed administrator is usually a supportive administrator — this should be taken as a cue to involve the selected building administrator in early stages of planning. If the administrator is unable to take an active role in the planning process, he or she should be kept informed of its progress, preferably through direct communication. If this is not possible, his or her appointed representative should be included, with periodic direct contacts to help determine if the administrator is receiving the correct information.

At the appropriate time, the entire building staff should be included in the planning process. The more staff members know about a program and what it is trying to accomplish, the greater the likelihood that they will become actively involved in it. Carefully planned inservice meetings pertaining to the special program can facilitate establishment of cooperative arrangements between regular programs and the special program. Once a special program has been implemented, some type of continuing dialogue should be established with the regular program. One method of doing this is through formation of an advisory committee to the program. One of the functions of the program advisory committee should be to involve the community and maintain contact. In many instances, state and community resources can be called upon to provide some program funding, as well as to provide outside expertise pertaining to various aspects of the program.

Environmental Arrangement

The educational environment is designed to provide support to the students as they work with assigned tasks. The amount of structure is determined, for the most part, by the severity of the student's disorder. One way of conceptualizing this is to consider the student and his or her relationship to these three dimensions (see Figure 1).
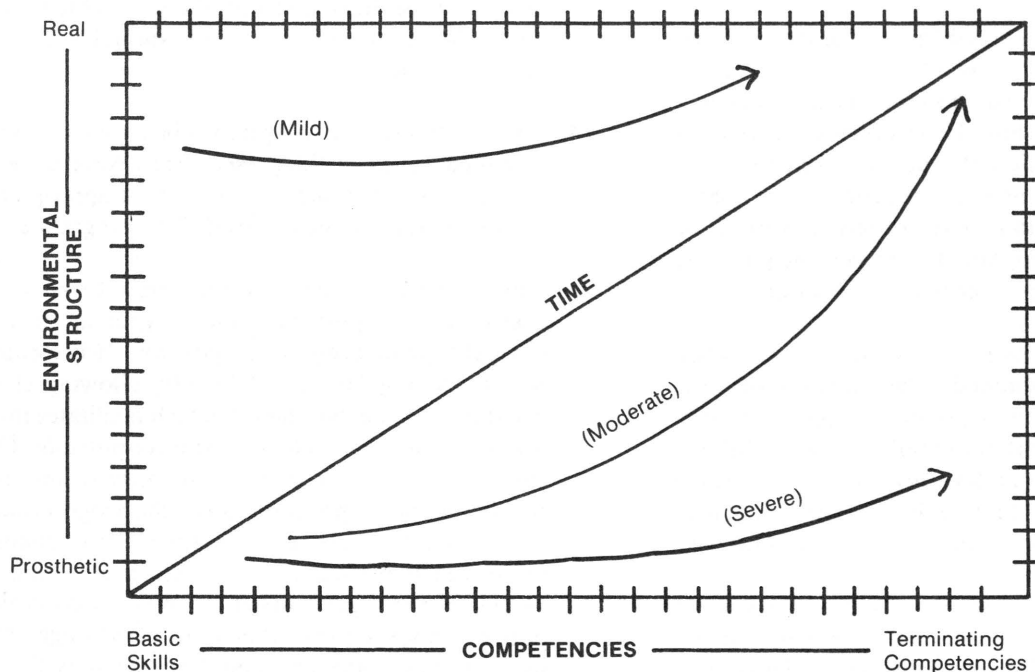

Figure 1. The relationship between environmental structure and the acquisition of competencies across time.

The first dimension is the extent of *environmental structure* required to provide the optimum learning environment. For moderately and severely disordered students, this represents a high degree of structure. The educational environment may be regarded as a prosthetic environment in that it contains controls not usually found in the classroom. As the student gains in self-control, the prosthetic environment is gradually faded so that the classroom structure approximates that found in the regular classroom.

The second dimension pertains to acquisition of desired *competencies*. Basic skills in a given area may need to be taught before entering other areas. As the student progresses, he or she moves closer and closer to the terminating competencies established.

The third dimension is *time*. As the student moves from the prosthetic environment and gains in the successful acquisition of competencies, time in the program becomes a factor. Time represents the interval necessary for the student to acquire the ability to function within the real environment, and at the same time move toward the acquisition of terminating competencies. These two processes are not separated for treatment purposes. They work in harmony, but not necessarily at the same rate.

The lines in Figure 1 marked "mild," "moderate," and "severe" are approximations of how each of those categories might be represented as the student progresses across the three dimensions. These dimensions serve as the underlying organization of educational environment.

At least four environmental arrangements are appropriate for use in secondary level programs within the school. Selection of program for placement purposes usually is determined by severity of the disorder.

1. *Regular Class Placement.* This option is used when the disorder is considered to be mild and when the regular class teacher is provided supportive assistance in working with the child's problem. Multiple teachers at the secondary level can create some problems with this approach. The strong point in favor of this option is that the student remains with his or her peers.

2. *Resource Room Model.* In this option the student goes to the resource room or teacher for limited periods each day. The rest of the school day is spent in regular classes. This approach is recommended primarily for students with mild behavior disorders and has the advantage, like the first option, of integrating the student with peers.

3. *Special Class Placement.* This option is usually a self-contained classroom where the student may remain with one teacher for most, if not all, of the school day. An advantage with this type of arrangement is that it allows the teacher to control the amount of structure necessary for each student. This is the traditional type of program that has been used extensively in the past. It has been used primarily with students who are in the moderate to severe categories. Students in this program are integrated into the regular program whenever such a move is deemed feasible and desirable; unfortunately, though, such integration has met with only limited support from regular class teachers. A major limitation to this type of arrangement at the secondary level is that it inhibits certain types of movement on the part of the students. Movement from one classroom to another between periods is the normal state of affairs in secondary programs, and lack of this type of movement many times is seen by the special student as something that makes him or her different from the rest of the student body. If possible, some form of comparable movement should be built into the special student's daily schedule.

4. *Special Program.* This option is being used to only a limited extent at the present time. Nevertheless, it is a model that appears to be most appropriate for use at the secondary level. The program consists of multiple classes organized into an integrated unit to provide students with as near a normal type of program as possible. It is located within the regular school facility, allowing close proximity to regular classes, which facilitates integration of special students whenever possible. The special student may spend a majority of the day within the special program. Since the program consists of multiple classes, the student may change classes each period, allowing movement similar to that of the regular program. When used in the public school setting, this type of arrangement seems to best serve the moderate to mildly disordered student. It also works quite well with the adjudicated student. It does not segregate him or

her from the student body or mark the student as different in the same way the self-contained class does, yet it provides an educational environment that offers an opportunity to be successful with learning.

Selection of a particular environmental arrangement for use in a secondary program may be determined by factors including the availability of space, program funds, and trained staff. A comprehensive approach to working with the emotionally or behaviorally disordered student at the secondary level would include all four options described. Such a continuum would provide services for all levels of severity.

Behavior Management

Behavior management is just as important at the secondary level as at any other level. The teacher's ability to manage the behavior of students determines the smoothness of flow through the daily schedule. The secondary teacher is in a somewhat different position than his or her elementary counterpart. The secondary teacher is not as naturally reinforcing, and teacher praise may work just the opposite from what is expected.

Peer reinforcement has a larger role among adolescents. Educators need to learn or develop effective ways of using the peer group to reinforce desired behaviors in students. One effective technique of behavior management with secondary students uses the Premack Principle in the form of contingency contracting (Homme, Csanyi, Gonzales, & Rechs, 1969). This procedure allows for student participation in selecting reinforcers and establishing procedures or criteria to be met before receiving reinforcement. Essentially, it is represented by a written agreement between student and teacher that spells out what the student is expected to do, what the teacher is expected to do, and the consequences for meeting the agreed upon expectations.

Long and Newman (1976), in their article on managing surface behavior, described several techniques that can be used to influence ongoing classroom behavior. These range from "planned ignoring" to physical restraint. Most of these techniques would be appropriate for use at the secondary level. Caution should be used with regard to physical restraint; most of us have found this technique to be an unsatisfactory alternative with secondary students. Most adolescents have sufficient language skills to

allow the teacher to use words as a means of defusing conflict situations that have the potential of developing into physical aggression. A teacher should learn to talk with students and watch for clues of student frustration that might result in a conflict situation. One of the best skills a teacher can develop in regard to behavior management is the ability to plan ahead for behaviors that might occur and the resulting consequences for the individual student.

Sound behavior management is based on four major components:

1. Planning.
2. Arranging the classroom to be conducive to the desired activities.
3. Selecting appropriate educational tasks.
4. Selecting appropriate consequences to behavior.

If these four components are taken into consideration and the teacher remembers to place the major emphasis on positive behavior, a solid foundation will be established from which to manage the student's behavior in the classroom.

Curriculum

The curriculum serving the secondary level emotionally or behaviorally disordered student should be multifaceted to encompass needs identified at various degrees of severity. For a number of these students, adaptation of the traditional curriculum is sufficient. For others, the traditional curriculum has been inefficient in assisting them to gain basic skills. Remedial teaching based on a watered down version of this curriculum also has shown itself to be an ineffective technique. The time for traditional remediation has passed. Curriculum at the secondary level needs to be made relevent to the student. A curriculum should be allowed to evolve from functional life skills and organized in a manner that allows the student to utilize his or her life experiences. The curriculum must be relevant to the student's everyday needs. Basic concepts should be taught through the use of such topics as money management, job applications, bus schedules, obtaining a driver's license, home management, etc.

A teacher must be realistic in assessing the student's assets and deficits and understand that some of these

students have been in special classes most of their school career. They probably have been exposed to many of the typical remedial techniques such as math programs that use the standard gimmicks of blocks, rods, chips, or money to teach number concepts. At this point, it may be more important that the student be taught to use a pocket calculator to carry out mathematical functions correctly. The teacher maybe should be more concerned with survival reading than with pleasure reading. A quick assessment should let the teacher know if the student can best use a phonetic approach to reading or a sight-say method. The format of any material used with adolescents should be geared to their age level. Reading and language skills might be approached by using newspapers, magazines, or high interest material like a driver's instruction manual.

Secondary curricula breaks out functionally into five general training areas: (1) Social Curriculum; (2) Academic Curriculum; (3) Vocational Curriculum; (4) Vocational Training; and (5) Workstudy Experiences. The social curriculum's purpose is to assist the student in developing skills necessary for successful and appropriate interaction with others. A major component of this area is helping the student learn self-control. Many approaches are available to help the student achieve this, two of which will be mentioned here. The first is a program that should be on the market by early 1979. Goldstein (1974) has developed a social learning curriculum for use at the elementary level; the kit contains many helpful ideas and activities sequenced for the user. The secondary version, soon to be available, will provide the secondary teacher with an organized program for approaching the area of self-control. The second technique is the "Class Meeting," as described by Glasser (1969). The Class Meeting gives students an opportunity to learn problem solving skills through group interaction.

The academic curriculum may involve both the regular school curriculum and the special class curriculum. Students who are capable of handling the regular program should be encouraged to do so, and supported in their efforts. Students who are unable to function successfully with the regular curriculum should receive an individual educational plan, devised to incorporate methods and techniques of special education to present academic areas in which the student is capable of being successful.

The vocational curriculum includes pre-vocational training as well as assessment of vocational aptitudes. Its purpose is to provide the student with the basic skills necessary to function successfully in a vocational training program. The vocational curriculum must be modernized to reflect the changes in the job market if it is to provide a meaningful experience for the student. The vocational training area is concerned with developing competencies in a particular job area.

The workstudy area is a continuation of vocational training, with the student receiving on-the-job experience and, in most cases, receiving a salary for this work. While participating in the workstudy program, the student may return to the school for a portion of the day to complete additional training or to earn additional credits toward graduation.

Each of the five areas described above interacts with the others. They are mutually supportive as the student moves toward independence.

Parent Involvement

Parent participation in programs for the secondary level emotionally or behaviorally disordered student is a positive addition to the program. Too many parents of adolescent students have given up on trying to effect positive change in their child's behavior. They have tried every technique they know and some that others have suggested, with the hope of getting their child to behave in a manner acceptable to them. If these efforts have failed, by the time the child reaches high school they probably are ready to throw up their hands, and usually make some comment like, "He's yours now! I've tried everything I know and it hasn't helped a bit." Actions and remarks like these illustrate the frustrations parents feel in raising a child, particularly a child with behavior problems.

Kroth (1975) emphasizes the importance of establishing clear and direct lines of communication with parents. Such communication opens the door to a real team approach for working with behavior problems. Communication permits a sharing of ideas for working with behavior, as well as a support system for both the parent and the teacher. Parents who are knowledgeable about their child's program and who feel comfortable talking with the teacher tend to be supportive of the program. When questions arise, they feel free to contact the teacher and seek some type of resolution.

In-person conferences should be held between teacher and parents prior to a child's entering a special program.

These initial meetings usually are of an informative nature. Regularly scheduled meetings, or even parent group meetings, should be established once the student has entered the program. These meetings serve to continue to provide information about the student's progress, to provide instruction on alternative techniques of working with the student, and to help in the problem solving process. Educators need to place more emphasis on developing new procedures for interacting with parents. Parents can be a formidable foe, but they also can be a strong ally. At this stage in the development of secondary programs, school personnel are well advised to seek parent support and find ways to maintain it.

PROPOSED PROGRAM ALTERNATIVE

Following is a brief description of one type of program alternative. It includes basic rationale, staff considerations, program objectives, and plans for implementation. It does not represent the only alternative but is a logical starting point based on the needs of secondary students in programs for the emotionally and behaviorally disordered.

Career and vocational education provide an alternative to the traditional (college preparatory) curriculum (Brolin, 1976). This alternative is logical when one considers that the major purpose of formal education is to prepare the student to become a productive member of society. Employability has become the primary factor by which this goal is measured. Then, our high schools have a responsibility to provide students with an appropriate program that assists in attaining skills necessary to successfully enter the job market.

Career and vocational programs for the regular student are not new (Brolin, 1976). Such programs to serve handicapped students within the public schools, however, are relatively new. Special education programs at the secondary level have given limited assistance in prevocational training and workstudy experiences. Although these programs have helped to revise existing curricula to make subject matter more usable and have introduced a broader use of individualized instruction, they have been limited in their ability to develop extensive training models for career and vocational education.

Program Description

This model, for vocational/occupational experiences for handicapped students, relies upon full cooperation of the school administration, the state department of education, and the parents of students participating in the program. All must agree that career and vocational education is a suitable and realistic alternative to the standard curriculum. Through joint agreement of these parties, successful completion of the program should result in High School graduation and a diploma. A solid commitment of facilities, personnel, equipment, and materials is a must. This commitment is necessary to guarantee continuation of the program and to protect the students participating in the program. Further, the model presented here is not meant to stand in isolation but is to be an integral part of the total educational program. It provides tasks and activities specific to the handicapped student and integrates where feasible with the regular program.

The vocational program model requires a minimum of three self-contained classroom areas in close proximity. These accommodations should be part of the regular physical plant to assist in integration of the special students into appropriate components of the regular program. Two of the classrooms are used for academic activities; one is identified as the *Math Room,* and the other is the *Language Arts Room.* The third classroom should be twice the size of a standard classroom; this room is used for vocational preparation activities.

Personnel for the program include a program director to administer the program, one math teacher, one language arts teacher, one industrial arts teacher, one home economics teacher, one workstudy coordinator, and two teacher aides. All teachers are to be certified in their identified area of speciality and in special education (preferably, in either behavioral disorders, learning disabilities, or mental retardation).

The program director's responsibilities include: (1) writing and evaluating objectives, (2) scheduling, (3) communications and coordination, (4) assisting the other teachers when necessary, (5) keeping records on student progress, (6) consulting with counselors, vocational teachers, regular staff, and appropriate district specialists, and (7) organizing and conducting inservice training. The program director is responsible to the building principal and the director of special education.

The math teachers and language arts teachers are responsible for their respective fields. The industrial arts teacher and the home economics teacher work together in the vocational preparation room and are assisted by two teacher aides. The workstudy coordinator is responsible to the program director. He or she works closely with the business community to arrange student job placements and to provide for supervision and evaluation of on-the-job performance.

The program's overall objective is to assist the student in attaining identified competencies which will provide a firm foundation for entering the world of work. The specific program objectives are:

1. To provide for social, vocational, and academic skill development that will aid students in formulating the basic competencies for employment and entrance into society.
2. To continually evaluate the students' skill performance and attitude, to determine the areas of skill strengths and weaknesses, and to provide occupational guidance based upon interest and areas of vocational strength.
3. To assist in the development and practice of good safety habits necessary in a working environment.
4. To assist students in developing positive feelings toward self and task performance.
5. To perform satisfactorily the assigned vocational tasks and to make related social attitude adjustments.
6. To present an occupational orientation related to relevant community employment.
7. To reduce the drop-out rate of handicapped students.
8. To develop an awareness of the responsibilities of being productive, self-supporting citizens.

Most of the above objectives are written as general statements and, as such, need to be broken into component parts and rewritten in behavioral terms to allow for clearer measurement and evaluation.

Prior to entering the program, the student and parents meet with the program director. A questionnaire designed around the vocational areas available in the program is completed by the student and parents with assistance by the program director. The purpose of this questionnaire is to identify hobbies, areas of interest, and aptitudes a student may have for given vocational areas.

This information is used in assigning the student to a vocational task area. Students perform better when their initial experience in a new program involves a familiar task at which they can be successful. High interest, coupled with a task that is within the student's range of abilities, is a strong motivator.

The program itself is comprised of two phases. An entering student is placed in Phase I, where he or she receives a general orientation to the program, and is administered a battery of interest and aptitude tests (Kolstoe & Frey, 1965). Test results are used in planning the areas of vocational concentration. Programs of study are individualized for the students; they are geared toward the student's areas of identified potential.

During Phase I, the student enters both the general education sequence and the vocational preparation area. The general education sequence contains the math program, the language arts program (reading, writing, and spelling) and the social economics program. The student's present level of functioning in each of these areas is determined by testing conducted by the teacher. The individual educational plan for each student begins at a level where there is a high probability of success (Vogel, 1974).

In the vocational preparation area, the student is assigned to one of the 25 available task work areas — an area identified as having a high success probability for the student. The vocational preparation area is located in the largest of the three rooms and is supervised by the two vocational teachers assisted by the two aides. The room is arranged so that each vocational task area is located in a work station. In addition, an open crafts area and a closed storage area are provided. Instructional units in the work stations include:

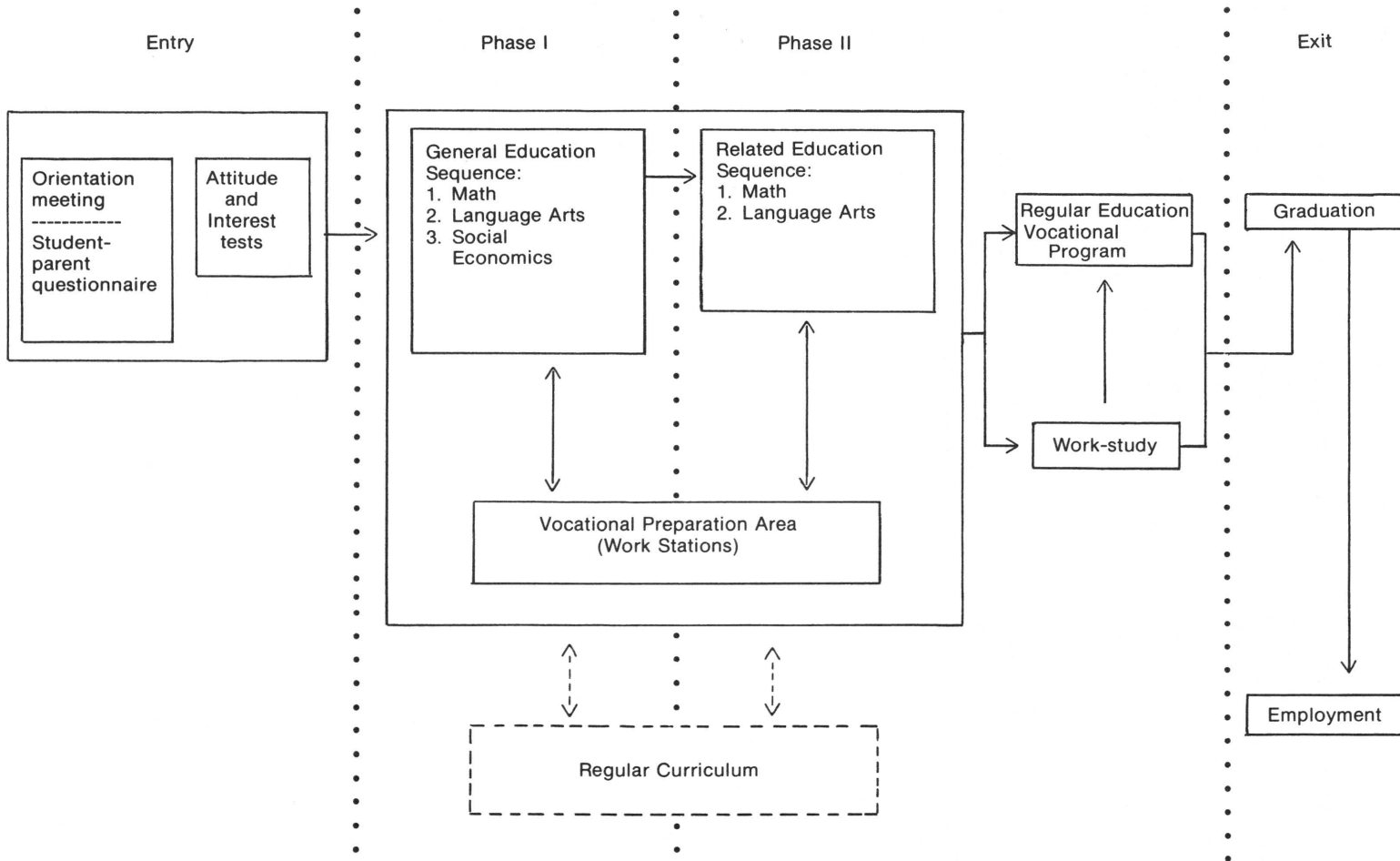|	
1. Tool Usage	14. Window Repair
2. Soldering	15. Pipe Fitting
3. Lawnmower Repair	16. Adding Machine
4. Electrical Wiring	17. Cash Register
5. Gear Assembly	18. Filing
6. Automotive	19. Typing
7. Engraving	20. Sewing
8. Jewelry	21. Baby Care
9. Leather Crafts	22. Ironing
10. Book Binding	23. Mail Sorting
11. Upholstery	24. Telephone
12. Dexterity	25. Appliance Repair
13. Bicycle Repair	

Figure 2. Secondary vocational program for handicapped adolescents.

When the student enters the vocational preparation area, he or she goes to the assigned work station, located in a closed carrel which opens into a work area. The work station contains a programmed instruction manual pertaining to the assigned tasks, a cassette tape player, and a cassette tape which is a recording of the instruction manual. If a student should have difficulty reading the manual, the tape usually provides enough assistance so the student can continue the work. If more assistance is needed, the teachers and teacher aides are readily available.

The manual includes a list of materials and tools needed to complete the assigned task. The student must go to the closed storage area and check out the needed items. When the class period ends, the student must check the tools back in at the closed storage area; the project does not have to be dismantled. In a few areas such as electrical wiring and pipe fitting, where tampering or dismantling would be particularly detrimental, work stations are locked when not being used by the student. These stations rarely are assigned to more than one student at a time. Each assigned task at the work station must be performed with a certain degree of accuracy and approved by the teacher before the student is allowed to move on to the next task. Each student eventually will work in all of the 25 work stations.

A student enters Phase II when a predetermined level of proficiency has been reached in the academic areas (math, language arts, and social economics). At this time, he or she enters the "Related Education" sequence, meanwhile continuing to work in the vocational preparation area. The related education sequence consists of applied math and language arts. Math instruction is directed toward a specific vocational area, such as the math required for auto mechanics. The same is true for language arts. Spelling might relate to unique vocabulary of the upholstery field.

Upon satisfactory demonstration of certain competencies, the student may be mainstreamed into the regular education vocational program. He or she also may be placed in a work experience either on or off campus. By the senior year, the student should be working fulltime within the community, but with continued supervision from the work-study coordinator. The student earns credits for work experiences which are recognized by both the school and the state. The student accumulates these credits and, by the end of the senior year, should have the required number for graduation.

IMPLICATIONS

The immediate challenge to educators with regard to providing appropriate services for secondary level emotionally or behaviorally disordered students focuses on four major concerns. Each requires creativity in thinking and planning, not only to re-assess the importance or value of present practices, but to design innovative programs to realistically meet the needs of students as they prepare to enter adult society.

1. Re-evaluate the purpose and goals of secondary education for the emotionally or behaviorally disordered student. The curriculum needs to be clarified and expanded to provide alternatives for reaching those goals.

2. Identify and evaluate community resources to determine the ways in which they may be utilized appropriately.

3. Develop an organized and systematic approach to train teachers for these secondary level programs. Most states already provide guidelines for certification, but specific training to work with disordered students at the secondary level is lacking. Decisions need to be made regarding the appropriateness of pre-service training, in-service training, and graduate training, as well as content to be included in the preferred model.

4. Identify or develop sources of funding sufficient for programs to operate in the manner in which they were designed. Funding also needs to be made available at the university level to support training programs.

The requirement for developing individualized education programs (IEPs) for students to meet the intent of an "appropriate education" dictates that regular education and special education work in close harmony. Service delivery systems for the emotionally or behaviorally disordered student must be designed and implemented, and also evaluated to determine their effectiveness in providing a relevant education. This is a task that cannot be assigned to tomorrow; it is one that should have been completed yesterday. Today is the time for action.

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CLASSROOM FORUM

Beverly Dexter
Assistant Professor
Lynchburg College, Virginia

As a new volunteer in the special education classroom, I am curious as to how the teacher knows what to expect from the students and what happens when the children go back to the regular classroom. Is there any way I can help make this transition easier for both the teachers and the children?

Levels of expectation within the special education classroom depend upon several factors. The teacher first must consider where the child is functioning now and where the teacher wants the child to be functioning within a specified time period. Related to this are the child's attention span, level of frustration, and the content material to be taught.

For example, the major goal of the special education teacher initially might be to have the child learn to attend to a specific task for a minimum of five minutes. This will require beginning with materials and methods that allow the youngster to experience success without getting bored. If the child has met with constant failure in arithmetic, the teacher may begin with activities such as simple puzzles, that appear superficially to be unrelated to math concepts. Through the use of puzzles, however, the child may learn size and shape relationships which are an integral part of the concepts dealing with measurement and other related math activities.

Formulas have been devised to help the teacher develop expectancy levels in reading, but are these realistic when the child has spent four years coloring while the rest of the class has been doing reading activities? By using such formulas, false ceilings may be placed on an individual child's levels of expectancy in the academic areas.
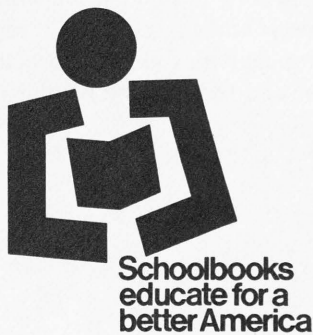
Short-term goals should be developed realistically on a gradual, step-by-step basis. This often is done through use of contracts or contingency management techniques. The teacher and the child develop the goals together, which are written into an agreement or contract, clearly stating the activities expected to be completed within specified time periods. Both signers (teacher and child) are responsible for certain portions of the agreement, and the consequences of the contract are honored much the same way that two adults might honor a legal contract.

The use of contracts or other type of signed agreement helps place the responsibility where it belongs — on both signers. By putting an agreement into writing, both parties know the specific conditions and exactly what is expected of each signer. Such contracts should be flexible in that some form of negotiation should be possible if the conditions are not met by either or both parties. The student or teacher should be allowed to add to or delete specific assignments if he or she can show just cause for such a request.

For example, a student might contract on Monday to complete a certain number of workbook pages by Wednesday. But once the assignment is begun, the student discovers that the work is too difficult and he or she will need extra time to complete the original assignment. At this point the student should be able to discuss this development with the teacher and renegotiate the contract terms.

This type of situation may occur frequently during initial stages of contracting. Until the teacher and the student are able to develop realistic goals, based on their knowledge of each other and the assignments involved, contracts should be written on a daily basis for each subject area to be covered. After this has been successfully accomplished over a period of time, the contracts will become easier for the teacher and student to initiate and complete. Only through practice and experience will they be able to develop appropriate and successful contracts on a weekly basis.

No matter what method is used for obtaining the ultimate goal of successful completion of assignments, one thing should *not* be expected of any child in a special education class: No child should be expected to immediately transfer what he or she has learned in the resource room into the regular classroom situation. When a child is going to the resource room to receive instruction at the readiness level in reading, he or she should not be expected to begin reading at grade level in the regular classroom after only a few weeks.

Too often, the resource room is seen as a "cure-all" that somehow should catch the child up from a four-year lag in reading to grade level within only weeks. If the child hasn't been able to read at grade level during the past four years of instruction in the classroom, he or she should not be expected to make such a jump after only a few weeks of intensive work in the resource room.

By the same token, a youngster who has been placed in the resource room should not be excluded from all classroom activities. The child may prove to be an active, contributing member of many learning activities if allowed to participate on the appropriate level of competency. If unable to read a story about building a soap box derby car, perhaps the child can share personal experiences of trying to build a similar car by telling the class about it. He or she might be encouraged to draw a picture of that car or even bring it to school to show the class.

This is one area in which the volunteer can utilize skill — helping the youngster develop alternative learning situations related to various classroom activities. Based on the teacher's sharing of specific information concerning the child's learning style and current level of achievement, these activities may be developed during specified time periods when volunteers with special talents in these areas can help the youngster develop his or her own talent to a fuller extent. Keeping the above considerations in mind while working with each youngster, the volunteer can help bridge the gap between learning activities in the special education or resource room and those in the regular classroom.