DIRECT BEHAVIOR RATING (DBR): AN OVERVIEW FOR PARENTS

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What is Direct Behavior Rating (DBR)?

Direct Behavior Rating (DBR) refers to the rating of one or more specified behavior(s) at least daily and the sharing of that information with someone other than the rater. For example, a teacher might use a DBR form to rate how well Johnny paid attention in math class. Then, the teacher might share that rating with Johnny and, as part of an intervention, link a consequence (e.g., a sticker) to that rating. DBR tools have a long history of use as a component of behavior support plans (e.g., self-management, behavior contracts) and are also used to collect information about behavior change over time (e.g., monitoring effects of a behavior intervention). Other common terms for DBR tools have included home-school note, good behavior note, behavior report card, etc.

Why should my child's teacher use DBR?

DBR can offer a simple, inexpensive, and flexible method of providing a frequent and consistent feedback loop about behavior among students, parents, and teachers. Another appealing aspect of DBR is that it takes very little time to use. DBR form completion time has been estimated to be between *10 seconds and slightly less than 1 minute per student*, depending on the number of behaviors being rated*. Thus, DBR is a quick and timely way to provide information about important student behaviors. Another reason for the appeal of DBR relates to the connection between data collection and intervention (making changes in student behavior) – DBR may serve both purposes! When used to communicate information about student behavior across settings, the home environment is an ideal place to provide contingencies (rewards and consequences) for student behaviors at school. Parents may also be interested in applying the same behavioral techniques used at their child's school within the home environment. For example, parents may choose to provide reinforcers (e.g., a movie, a special family outing) depending on if rating goals were met in school over the week. Additionally, DBR can help increase communication between teachers and students, offering an opportunity to teach expected behavior and even have students participate in independent rating (e.g., self-monitoring). In summary, DBR offers opportunities for use in purposes related to assessment, communication, and/or intervention.

Potential Benefits of Using DBR:

➢ Increases communication about behavior among teachers, parents, and students
➢ Provides "quick" way to assess student behavior
➢ Repeated assessments can be used to monitor behavior change over time
➢ Demonstrated effectiveness as part of an intervention package
➢ Efficient given "dual" use in both assessment and intervention purposes

Why is data collection important & what can we do with DBR data?

Given that it can be difficult to predict whether an intervention will work or not, it can be important to have ongoing sources of data to tell us about student behavioral progress. This information can be used to make timely decisions about the kinds of behavior supports that are needed to increase student success. DBR offers potential for collecting "quick" data across a wide variety of situations (e.g., behaviors, age levels), and can be summarized and used in a number of ways. For example, DBR data of Susie's disruptive behavior over the past week could tell us that she is having greatest difficulty going from the bus to the classroom in the morning.

Alternatively, a DBR with smiley-face pictures (☺, ☹) could be used to communicate information about the naptime behavior of a preschool student. The information could be shared daily with the student as part of teaching expected behavior and then is also easily sent home to tell parents about the day!

How is a DBR completed?
Step 1: Complete the top of the DBR form (e.g., Date, Child's Name, Day of Week).
Step 2: Define the observation rating period (e.g., 4:00pm – 4:45pm) and activity (e.g., homework completion).
Step 3: Determine whether to rate an additional behavior (e.g., sleeping, tantrums). If so, complete the "optional behavior" section; this includes defining the behavior and filling in information about the rating scale (i.e., scale anchors, type of rating).
Step 4: Immediately following observation, rate either the proportion of time **OR** total number of times the child displays each of the target behavior(s).

Example 1: Emily's mom is estimating the ***percentage*** of time that Emily displayed disruptive behavior during math homework completion (4 - 4:44pm).

Disruptive Behavior

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
0%					50%					100%
Never					Sometimes					Always
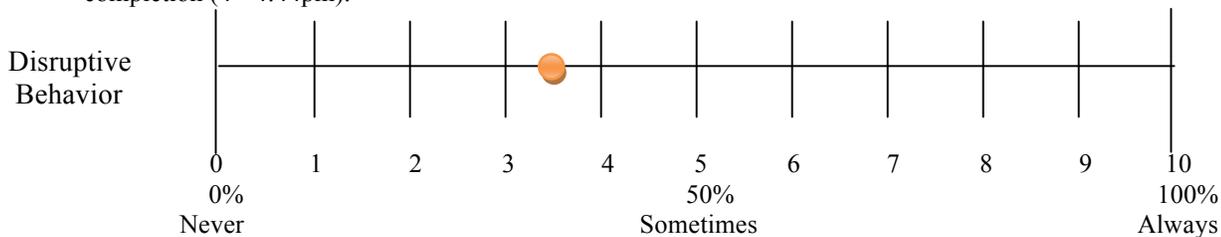
In this example, Emily displayed disruptive behavior 35% of the total observation period.

Example 2: John's dad is estimating the ***intensity*** of disruptive behavior displayed by John during dinner time with family (6:12 - 7:50pm).

Disruptive Behavior

| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| Mild | | | | | Moderate | | | | | Severe |
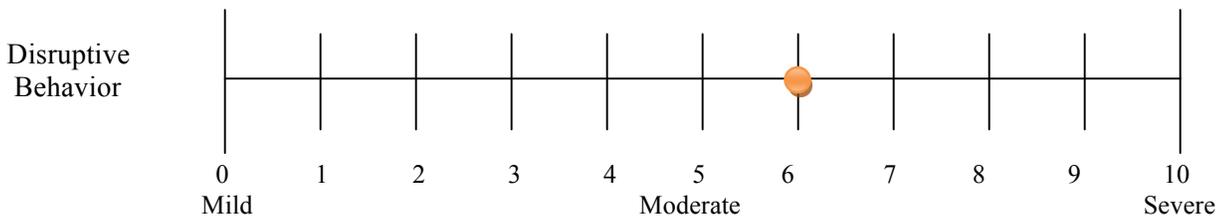
In this example, John's behavior during dinner was rated at 6, which represents moderately disruptive.

Example 3: Sam's mom has chosen to add the behavior of "*Gets along with siblings*", including use of a 3-point smiley face scale to rate how well Sam displayed this behavior during afterschool playtime with his siblings (3:20 – 5:50pm).

Gets along with siblings
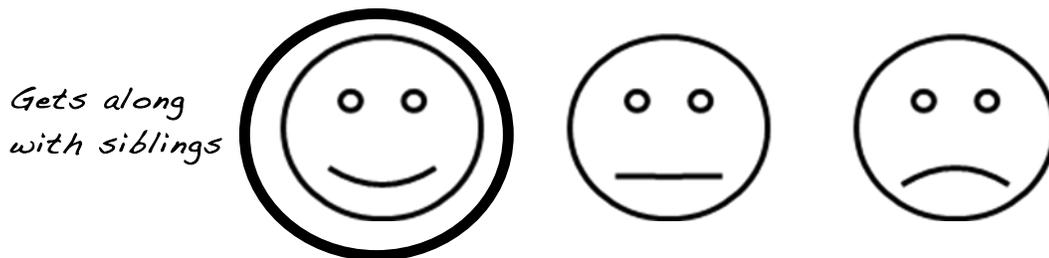
In this example, Sam was rated as getting along very well with his siblings.