

# Active Supervision: Study Guide

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## Active Supervision: Study Guide

This study guide has been created to help you understand and remember the information presented in the accompanying slide presentation.

### What is Active Supervision?

- Active supervision is a proactive approach used in school settings to monitor a large area in order to ensure safety and reduce problem behaviors from occurring.
- It is most commonly used in non-classroom settings such as the cafeteria or playground since these types of settings often have less adult direction and supervision.
- By scanning and moving around the area while interacting with the students, staff members support and reinforce appropriate behavior and correct inappropriate behavior.

### Glossary of Terms Related to Active Supervision

Active supervision - A proactive approach to monitoring large areas of students by;

1. Constantly scanning the entire area looking for problem behaviors or dangerous activity.
2. Continuously moving around the area making sure to travel by areas, activities, and groups that are known to cause problems.
3. Check for appropriate and inappropriate behavior being certain to praise or correct as necessary.

Precorrection - A strategy used to prevent undesirable behaviors from occurring by teaching and reminding students of the rules and routines so that they know what is expected and how to behave.

PBIS - Positive behavioral interventions and supports are school-wide evidence-based academic and behavioral programs that are used to improve outcomes for all students.

## Case Study

### Before:

The staff at West Elementary School just don't know what to do any more about the behavior during second grade recess. There is a lot of hitting, grabbing, and pushing occurring, as well as children being tripped by jump-ropes and hula hoops. The children are warned every day before they go out to recess that if they don't behave appropriately they will not get to play the next day. Still, there are at least three or four of the same children in the principal's office by the time their teacher comes to pick them up from recess every day. There are always two staff members monitoring recess and they sit on a bench on one side of the playground and chat with each other while the children play. These recess monitors blow their whistles and yell when they see inappropriate behavior occurring, but do not often leave the bench unless they need to take a child inside to see the principal. Second grade recess is the time when the most behavior problems and office referrals are occurring and the staff just doesn't know what they can do to improve the students' behavior.

### After:

One of the second grade teachers at West Elementary decided it was time to try something new. She had read about a strategy called active supervision that seemed like it might help with the problem they were having with recess behavior. Everyone concerned agreed that trying active supervision sounded like a good idea, so after researching it further, they began using this strategy. First, before recess every day now, the second grade teachers go over the recess rules with the students to make sure they remember them instead of just warning them not to behave inappropriately. The recess monitors no longer sit on the bench and talk while the children play.

They can now be found walking around the entire playground area. As they walk around they talk to the children, either praising their appropriate behavior or correcting behaviors that are inappropriate. There are many less injuries during the second grade recess now and there are hardly ever any office referrals any more. The children and the adults all seem to enjoy recess a lot more now.

### **Discussion Questions**

- Think about where you work or experiences you've had in educational settings. Is there a time when you have used active supervision or could have improved the outcomes of a certain situation by using active supervision?
- How could a school district or administrator introduce this strategy to teachers and school staff and encourage them to use it on a regular basis?

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

**Q:** What is the objective of active supervision?

**A:** The objective of active supervision is to prevent and correct problems by moving among the students while watching and listening to them carefully and interacting with them in a positive way.

**Q:** What ages does this strategy work best with?

**A:** Active supervision has been found to work with any age of children from preschool up through high school age.

**Q:** What environments are best for using this strategy?

**A:** It is most commonly used in non-classroom settings such as gyms, hallways, and playgrounds where behavior problems arise most often. Active supervision can, however, also be used in a classroom setting such as when the children are working in groups.

**Q:** What are some ways to acknowledge those students who are exhibiting appropriate behavior?

**A:** Praising the students that are behaving appropriately is an important feature of active supervision. There are many different ways in which to praise those students from something as simple as “Good job” or “Thank you” to privately handing them a small note explaining that you are proud of them for doing the right thing.

### **Active Supervision – An Annotated Bibliography**

Here you will find a brief synopsis of a few research articles about active supervision and how it is used.

Haydon, T., & Scott, T. (2008). Using common sense in common settings: Active supervision and precorrection in the morning gym. *Intervention in School and Clinic, 43*(5), 283-290.

This article documents how the staff in one elementary school in southern Illinois implemented various examples of active supervision and pre-correction to supervise the approximately 400 students in the gym before school daily. It describes how an effective instructional setting is developed and then how these steps were applied to the setting described above. The strategies used were found to be effective and were maintained one year later.

Helmke, A., & Schrader, F., W. (2001). Successful student practice during seatwork: Efficient management and active supervision not enough. *Journal of Educational Research*, 82(2), 70-75.

The effectiveness of independent student practice on classroom achievement was studied. This article discusses what it takes for a teacher to make student seatwork effective including the teacher's management, preparation, intensive supervision, and contacts with students. The results of this study found that it is not the amount of time spent on seatwork that influences the effectiveness. Rather, success is more dependent on the previously described conditions.

Johnson-Gros, K., Lyons, E., & Griffin, J. (2008). Active supervision: An intervention to reduce high school tardiness. *Education & Treatment of Children*, 31(1), 39-53.

Active supervision as one form of Positive Behavior Support (PBS) is discussed as an effective strategy for reducing problem behaviors in the hallway of high schools. The three steps of active supervision are defined and discussed in regard to this particular example. These the steps are: scanning the area for students who are following or violating rules; moving around the entire location, especially areas where problems are

more likely to occur; and interacting with the students. Pre-correction is also defined and discussed. The results of this study found that active supervision was effective in decreasing the number of tardies received by the students.

Lewis, T., Colvin, G., & Sugai, G. (2000). The effects of pre-correction and active supervision on the recess behavior of elementary students. *Education & Treatment of Children, 23*(2), 109.

An elementary school playground was the setting for this study of the effectiveness of implementing a pre-correction and active supervision strategy for managing problem behaviors. The rates of problem behavior by the elementary students were studied as well as the rates of active supervision by playground monitors. The results found that although the rates of active supervision did not appear to increase, the rates of problem behavior did, in fact, decrease.

Oswald, K., Safran, S., & Johanson, G. (2005). Preventing trouble: Making schools safer places using positive behavior supports. *Education & Treatment of Children, 28*(3), 265-278.

A multi-component Positive Behavior Support (PBS) intervention was tested in order to find whether this would improve problem hallway behaviors of middle school students. This intervention included positive practice, pre-correction, verbal praise, reinforcement, correction of inappropriate behavior, active supervision, discussion of behavior with students, and on-time dismissal. This study found the multi-component intervention to be an effective way to manage the disruptive behaviors that were targeted.