

HENRY CASE STUDY

5th grader in general education AD/HD

Step One - Beginning the Activity:

Read Henry's description below silently to yourself

Henry is a handsome fifth grade general education student whose cognitive ability is in the above average range. His academic achievement is in the average range on standardized testing. He has no learning disabilities. He frequently does not complete or turn in assignments. A diagnosis of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (AD/HD) was made when Henry was small and he takes stimulant medication.



Fictitious picture

Henry is the youngest of three children from a loving extended family who are actively involved and very concerned. His siblings are well-adjusted and successful students. His parents sought help from medical and psychological professionals when he was two because he was aggressive and defiant. His school history is a repetition of: disregarding school rules; aggressive and assaultive behavior; explosive outbursts and rude interactions; low grades due to lack of effort; and poor peer relations. The parent of another student, whom Henry jabbed with a pencil, reported him to the police and he is in a local diversion program for young pre-offenders.

The school psychologist had completed a full assessment and while Henry does not qualify for any special education services, the school staff is willing to assist. However, many teachers, including Henry's primary teacher, use dated methods and materials. Reinforcement, for following school rules or prosocial behavior in general, is inconsistent and most adults are reluctant to challenge Henry. Rarely more than ten minutes pass without Henry needing to be noticed, whether in a group lesson, independent seat work, small group work or any less structured time of the day. The SST and his parents are committed to writing behavior support plans for his most challenging behaviors:

- **Touching others:** He touches others, adults and children, much more frequently than other children his age do. Initially the touch may not be unusual, but it escalates quickly to cause pain
- **Ignoring school rules:** During passing times, he disappears (e.g., goes to the library to play on the computer) and shows up 20 minutes after he is due. He calls out all the time, even when another student has been called on and is talking. He moves around the room whenever he wishes. He sits with his feet on the desk. He takes the teacher's chair when she is walking around the room.
- **Yelling out cruel remarks to embarrass peers,** e.g., "Hey Jack, what were you and Arthur doing together in the bathroom?" Sometimes others will laugh but sometimes the remarks are too cruel or too sophisticated to win peer approval.

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Step Two - Activity Instructions:

1. Quickly pick roles in your team from the list below.
2. Find the role descriptions in your handouts
3. Each player reads his/her part.
4. What to do next is embedded in each person's role description they receive.
5. Henry's parent begins the role-play.

- Henry
- Henry's Parent(s)---can be one or more role players
- Administrator
- Lead BSP collaborative consultant (can be teacher, psychologist, behavior specialist, etc.)
- Henry's Teacher
- Scorer (Advocate or other visitor who checks and scores each section)
- Remaining members of group: Adjunct role players

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Step Three:

Read ONLY your assigned role below. Be ready to play your part. Do your best to make this fun, and accurately communicate to the team your information and perspectives.

The parent(s) will open when everyone has read their roles, written the role on the provided label and put it on

☐ Opening Dialogue, first speaker – Parent(s) Role

You open the role-play by speaking first. Wait until you can tell everyone has read their parts and is ready to begin. Ask everyone to say their first name, and the role they are playing in this meeting. Tell them you are Henry's parent(s).

- After that, tell everyone you are frustrated by his school performance and characterize him as having difficulty from the very first time he went to preschool. You have taken him to see many professionals, but he still has problems with his "temper." You are thrilled the school wants to do something proactive.
- When Henry says he really wants to play soccer at recess, you say, "Young man, if you could just behave you could play soccer, earn back your Play Station at home and get to ride your bike to Steve's house. Why can't you behave!" Wait.
- When the principal says more suspensions may be coming, tell everyone. "I hope we can do something besides suspending him! It is hard to miss work, and he is not safe being left at home alone. Besides, it has never helped much in the past!"

☐ Opening Dialogue, second speaker – principal

- Tell Henry's parents you too are glad we are coming together to talk about Henry's problems in school. You have seen him many times for playground problems and are pretty frustrated. You like Henry, but the problems just keep happening over and over. The, ask Henry what HE thinks about being here.
- After he responds to how he feels about being in the meeting, tell him you want him to tell us as we write the plan to help him, just what all he needs to "remember" the school rules. Wait.
- Wait. After Henry says to the teacher that he "forgot" to come back, tell his parents that he may be getting more suspensions for these rule violations. You're going to be keeping an eye on him.

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☐ Opening dialogue, third speaker – Henry role

- When the principal asks you how you feel about being in this meeting, say “I don’t know!” and laugh. Tell the group you are trying to do better, but you just forget sometimes. Stop.
- When the teacher says you aren’t allowed to go to recess, say, “I really wanna see my friends at recess to play soccer!”
- When the teacher says she doesn’t know if she can trust you, tell everyone, “I don’t know what the big deal is. I just forgot to come back on time!”

☐ Opening dialogue, fourth speaker – Henry’s Teacher role

- After the principal says he wants Henry to tell us what he needs to remember the school rules, you speak. Tell everyone you are having a hard time with Henry. Everyone else is following the school rules pretty well, and yet no matter what punishment you give him, he just does the same thing a day or two later. Tell everyone, you have finally decided he is not allowed to go to recess anymore and must stay in the room with you. Wait.
- After Henry tells everyone he wants to play soccer at recess, tell everyone you have really had trouble with him lately in class. He calls out all the time, even when someone else is talking. Writing his name on the board hasn’t helped one bit! Wait.
- After the parent talks about play station, tell everyone: Last week he went to the library to play computer after you let him take the lunch count to the office! Then he showed up 20 minutes late. “I don’t know if I can trust Henry!” Wait.

☐ Opening dialogue, fifth speaker – Behavior consultant, teacher or psychologist in the role of leading this COLLABORATIVE team effort

After the first four speakers, then you start off: Let everyone know now that “my job is to facilitate everyone working together to understand the problem and find a solution. We have about an hour to write down what we all plan to do to help support Henry in following rules and staying out of trouble. If it takes us longer, we will reschedule to finish on another day.” Offer to record the discussion on the blank BSP. Ask for acknowledgment that this is fine with everyone. Tell them “After we ALL make a decision is made as to what to write, I will check with you on final wording and record it for us. My scorer-assistant will let us know if we are on track, and if not will tell us to try to improve what we are writing.” Then start with Line One: The problem behavior. “So I hear everyone saying that Henry is having many problems. Let’s discuss what we want to do about it and find words to write here.” etc. Praise people for their contributions lavishly as you go through the plan. **Continued, next page**

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Continued:

- Opening dialogue, fifth speaker – Behavior consultant, teacher or psychologist in the role of leading this COLLABORATIVE team effort

You are modeling collaborative behavioral consulting skills. You may only write while YOU are talking, not while THEY are talking. Play Columbo: “Do I have that right? Now what should we write here again?” Your scorer-assistant will whisper to you to remember to write only what the team has agreed if you forget. You may only write when YOU are speaking, not while others are speaking. Your scorer-assistant will remind you by gesturing a hand with an invisible pencil.)

Scorer - Assistant

Your primary duty is to whisper to the behavior consultant to remember to write ONLY if he/she is speaking, not while others are speaking. You cue him/her by gesturing a writing motion with an invisible pencil. He/she knows what that means. After the team determines what they will write for each line, consult your scoring guide. You give your analysis of the points for each response. After lines that must be analyzed together have been written (such as C. linking 5 and 6) stop the group to discuss the score. If you think any response is not a “2” response, suggest rethinking and writing again.

Adjunct Role Players

When you are required to introduce yourself, choose ANY role:

Grandparent, speech language pathologist, district psychologist, school psychology graduate student, ape specialist at the school, another teacher at Henry’s school. You make it up. As the plan is written, play that role. Ask questions whenever you can, ask for more explanation, and above all, express how thrilled you are, praise lavishly!

HENRY CASE STUDY HINTS

Step Four - Key Information and Hints:

EVERYONE: Read as you write each BSP section/line and as you role-play plan development:

1. **Behavior:** Consider addressing all, some or one behavior. If you choose all, list them as “Failure to follow school rules, then give major violations in parentheses”
5. **Predictors:** especially during unsupervised times, but also in class (write this to a 2 pt.)
6. **What is in/missing in:** Nothing has been done so far, Henry has needed reminders of school rules before each major transition, and that hasn’t happened (use “NOT YET” without blaming anyone) Henry has not received reinforcement for doing anything right. (write this to a 2 pt. response)
7. **Environmental:** Write changes that impose a personalized rule list for Henry (Time-Space-Materials-Interactions) Consider points earned for reinforcement at home and at school. Make sure Henry agrees on, or suggests structure to try, with staff assistance and planning.
8. **Function:** Behavior is influenced by not thinking ahead about his behavior. He is getting his desires met for peer and adult attention and getting access to desired materials.
9. **Alternative replacement behavior:** write something that allows Henry to get his needs met (peer and adult positive attention) through a behavior that the teacher will accept (gestures, certain words, etc.)
11. **Reinforcers:** Everyone ask Henry what he really likes to do at home. He loves Play Station. Build realistic contingencies, offer access to stuff he likes (playing basketball with a parent, playing computer games, having a sleep-over, whatever) Be sure to see if there are activities he wants to do with his parents and build that in as well.
12. **Reactive Strategies:** Write multiple steps including reminding Henry of reinforcers for positive choices, switching to replacement behavior, meetings with principal, phone calls, new BSP meetings, and ultimately suspensions if violations harm others.
14. **Communication:** This parent has email. Think of daily reports written on his progress to both Henry and his parents. Henry can also write email from the teacher’s office or school office if you want to involve him.