



HOW DO WE HELP CHILDREN CONTROL THEMSELVES? EXERCISE BEHAVIOUR IS AN INNOVATIVE APPROACH THAT HAS REDUCED EXCLUSIONS BY 61%.

Between 2016 and 2017, 45 secondary schools in England handed permanent exclusions to at least one in five pupils.

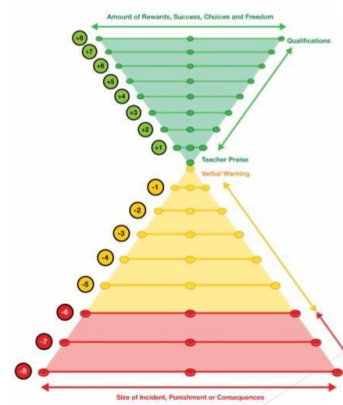
The main reason for this was persistent disruptive behaviour. This naturally comes as disturbing news to us all - the fact that the number of exclusions is already high and still growing leaves us with a bleak view of the future generation as we may know it. For instance, did you know that 60% of prisoners have been excluded from school? Did you know that the average yearly cost of a prisoner in the UK is £40,000?

Now that we know this, it is very clear that something definitely needs to change. For years, we have been using the same old counterproductive measures of dealing with the behavioural incidents of children. We need to stop telling children what they are doing wrong. We need to help children find their own answers by encouraging an open-minded approach to their actions. Nowadays, there are teachers and parents across the country that are understandably worried that their children will be suspended. However, if we can teach children how to suspend negatively impactful risk-taking behaviour by making the correct choices, could success then simply come down to which suspension you would like to experience?

The most effective solution to the current state of this crisis is early intervention. This means embedding support systems into primary and secondary schools, as well as implementing the three key factors that lead to a wholesome education:

Achievement, attendance, and attainment. This will be the start of sparking a passionate, positive change within the education system, and this is exactly what the Exercise Behaviour programme sets out to achieve.

Exercise Behaviour is a unique behaviour intervention method focused on the improvement of individual student behaviour. The end goal is to teach students how to better control their behaviour, along with other vital life skills such as decision making, self-control, teamwork, and coordination. This method enables students to discover themselves through adopting sustainable lifestyle changes, along with the attitude of continuously improving through incremental progression. These skills are delivered through a wide range of practical and multi-sport activities, all of which are conducted within a 'behaviour scale'.



The behaviour scale is a visual illustration that represents the benefits and successes that students can achieve by dedicating their thoughts and their energy towards carrying out positive actions.

The behaviour scale also clearly depicts the consequences of negative actions, which result in less freedom and choice in life. Above all, this programme teaches students the valuable lesson of turning a deaf ear to life's negative influences, thus encouraging them to take on a more positive attitude which will ultimately lead to the betterment of their own lives.

The students typically start the programme by constructing the behaviour scale themselves with green, red, and yellow cones, and collectively take part in exercises and movement challenges within the scale. The students also engage in multi-sports within the behaviour scale, and these sports serve as distinct metaphors representing how controlling the game within the behaviour scale will lead to success, and how a lack of control coupled with poor decision-making leads to a loss in the game.



What makes the programme even more relevant to the lives of the students involved is that the sessions are based around specific details of their own behaviour incidents. As these incidents are integrated into the game, the students thus have more of an incentive to confront their mistakes and make a conscious effort to understand themselves in dealing with their previous decisions, whilst learning how to make the right decisions in the future.

Overall, this aids students in understanding how negative behaviour will lead to restrictions, and how positive behaviour will grant them more freedom. Upon grasping this concept, the students then learn how their actions can directly affect others around them, which in turn encourages a more thoughtful and mindful approach to their behaviour. This model is a whole school approach, which means that it can easily be embedded into the culture of the school. This is achieved by providing staff

training programmes, which allows Exercise Behaviour to grow within the school culture and gradually spread, thus lending itself as a wholistic behavioural support method within the education system.

So far, it has been extremely moving to see the positive effects the Exercise Behaviour method is having on children in schools. There has been a notable decrease in exclusions and detentions in the schools where the behaviour scale has been implemented, and what is perhaps even more moving is witnessing first-hand how these positive changes will ultimately encourage students to pave their own ways into a successful and balanced life as adults. The children of now are the adults of the future, so let us band together in a collective effort to adopt this refreshingly unique and fun method of helping children get the support they deserve. After all, it takes a village to raise a child.

Peter Thompson
Founder of Exercise Behaviour
Sports and Culture (BA Hons)



"I feel more confident with going into my lessons and being positive."

"I liked doing the programme because it helped me control my anger and improve my behaviour."

"Exercise Behaviour has been embedded in our school by Peter's dedication & commitment, alongside his ability to meet each student's needs. The language used around exercise behaviour is now commonly used by staff and students alike in our school, giving all of our young people an opportunity to take responsibility for their behaviour & make positive changes."

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