

The Salem Public Schools City of Salem

Salem Prep Program
Dr. Cheryl Kelly, Director

114 Derby Street •Salem, Massachusetts 01970
Tel./Fax: (978) 740-1171
E-Mail: cherylkelly@salemk12.org

BEHAVIORAL MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Philosophy

Philosophy of the Salem Prep High School is to reinforce positive social and academic behaviors using a number of various approaches including teaching prosocial skills, individual and school-wide positive behavior plans, and therapeutic counseling interventions. Salem Prep High School believes that the following is the mantra by which all staff and students live by:

- **S**afety and trust
- **A**nti-bullying
- **L**earning to live independently
- **E**xceeding expectations
- **M**ilieu - working as a community
- **P**reparing for the tomorrow
- **R**espect for property, self, and others
- **E**xpectations in school and future
- **P**ositive peer interactions

Teaching Prosocial Skills

The Salem Prep High School changes challenging behaviors through prosocial skills approach throughout the school day implemented by all staff. Through the use of modeling, verbal prompts, cues, verbal praise, relationship building, and classroom instruction strengthens the students' knowledge of appropriate behavior and reinforces the student practicing these new behavior. While most students pick up on positive skills through their everyday interactions with adults and peers, students with emotional or behavioral disabilities need to learn these skills through direct and indirect instruction. There are many causes related to social skills deficits including: lack of knowledge (acquisition deficits); inconsistent behavior despite knowledge (performance deficits); lack of sufficient degree or level of strength (fluency deficits), and competing skill deficits or behaviors, e.g., internal or external factors interfere with the child demonstrating a learned skill appropriately.

Prosocial skills enable students to know what to say, how to make better choices, and how to behave in diverse situations. The extent to which students possess good social skills can influence their academic performance, behavior, social and family relationships, and involvement in extracurricular activities outside of the school day. Positive social skills are also linked to the quality of the school environment and school safety. Specific techniques in prosocial skills training helps students with:

- Anger management
- Recognizing/understanding others' point of view
- Social problem solving
- Peer negotiation
- Conflict management
- Peer resistance skills
- Active listening
- Effective communication
- Increased acceptance and tolerance of diverse groups

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Conflict Resolution Program

Salem Prep High School staff builds on developing positive behavioral repertoire through the use of coaching, prompting, modeling, and cueing students to engage in socially acceptable behavior between one another and between student and staff. This has been accomplished through development of a conflict resolution program where selected students (one junior and one senior) are asked to participate in student conflicts with staff. Students first participate in conflict resolution training with the adjustment counselor and one educator. After successful completion of the training students are allowed to be actively involved in conflict resolution meetings between student and student or student and staff.

Community Meetings

Additionally, all students are encouraged to participate and voice their concerns in regularly held Community Meetings where issues are openly discussed and resolved in a community format. Community meetings promote and emphasize working together, increasing respect for one another, and allowing others to have a different opinion, even if you do not agree. Consistent expectations, teaching appropriate social interactions and problem solving strategies in a large group setting develop more empathy, independence, self-control, and responsibility for self and others. Additionally Community meetings also enhance building trust and self-respect while developing skills needed for life's success.

School-Wide Positive Behavior Support Plan

Salem Prep High School also has a school-wide positive behavior support plan that incorporates daily point sheets. The points are earned each block for both appropriate behavior and completion of academic tasks. Students can earn 0-4 points for coming to class prepared, completing classwork and displaying appropriate behavior in class response to teacher requests, not acting out, and showing respect for others (see point sheet). Students use these points to earn "Fun Friday" and monthly field trips. Additionally students at varying point levels can trade them in for additional privileges such as:

- Gym time beyond PE class
- Outdoor break at lunch
- Outside to play basketball
- Going for a walk
- Individual kitchen activity and cooking
- Purchasing lunch to be delivered to school
- Walking to the candy store
- Purchasing a soda or snack at local variety story
- Going to the ice cream store
- Computer or video games
- Use of free computer time to download music or visit fun sites (not blocked sites).
- Free time to do what they want (within reason)
- 1-to-1 time with staff
- Lunch with staff
- Lunch with one other student

Each activity requires a specific number of points to be earned in order to have the additional privileges. Cumulative points for the week are still used to earn "Fun Friday" or monthly field trips (70%). Fun Friday activities include various activities as listed above and others that are creatively developed by staff. For example, the Friday before April vacation there was a scavenger hunt down at Derby Wharf. Teachers submitted various historical questions about Derby Wharf using clues to help the students figure out what the answer to the question was. Students would find the object, take a

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picture of it, and bring the pictures to the Scavenger Hunt Coordinator. The first team of 4 students to find all 12 objects and answer the questions won \$5.00 gift cards.

Individual Behavior Intervention Plan

Some students do not buy into the school-wide positive behavior plan nor earn sufficient points. Or they display more challenging behaviors that require a more individualized systematic positive behavioral plan. These plans are designed with the adjustment counselor, director, teachers, and student. All individualized plans are written and provided to all staff, the student, and the parent.(See sample individualized Behavior Intervention Plan).

Individualized Safety Plan

On occasion a student may display unsafe behaviors that require an individualized school safety plan. These plans are designed to address unsafe or potentially dangerous behaviors and provide all staff with the knowledge of what they need to do if a student displays unsafe behaviors at school. These plans include emergency numbers for parents, therapists, and emergency personnel. All personnel are provided with copies of Safety Plans and are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Students who refrain from unsafe behaviors can earn additional points for their “personal goal”. (See sample of individualized Safety Plan).

Counseling (Individual)

All students are provided with the opportunity to engage in weekly individualized therapeutic counseling sessions with the school adjustment counselor. These 30 minute weekly sessions provide the student with a caring, nurturing, and therapeutic environment to share their feelings and build trust. While the program provides consistent expectations, teaching appropriate social interactions, and problem solving strategies develop toward becoming more empathy and caring of others, individual counseling sessions are student focused on pressing or troubling issues in their school or home life. The therapeutic approaches are Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) or Rational Emotive Therapy (RET). Cognitive-behavioral intervention strategies that can be used effectively with adolescents in school settings to help treat anxiety, school refusal, depression, ADHD, aggression, and traumatic stress. The school is an excellent setting to provide comprehensive services for these children because it can be a safe, secure, and predictable environment. The particular RET cognitive change methods (philosophical disputation; disputation of irrational beliefs in specific situations; disputing of inferences; rational self-statements) are also used.

The school adjustment counselor and the director, who is a licensed school psychologist and educational psychologist, work together to address issues such as bullying education, sexual harassment, establishing behavioral plans, and developing strategies to promote positive behavioral change and feeling of well-being.