
A stack of white papers with blue lines, slightly blurred, set against a light blue background.A close-up of a clock face with black numbers and hands, set against a purple and blue background.

Welcome!

A stack of white papers with blue lines, slightly blurred, set against a light green background.A close-up of a clock face with black numbers and hands, set against a yellow and orange background.

Angela Perry
Kevin Murdock



Why are we
here today?

A stack of papers with a blue tint, located in the top-left quadrant of the slide.A globe with a purple tint, located in the top-right quadrant of the slide.

Behavior Leadership Team Van Buren Middle School

A stack of papers with a green tint, located in the bottom-left quadrant of the slide.A clock with a yellow face and red border, located in the bottom-right quadrant of the slide.

2008 – 2009

Behavior Change Pilot Project

Behavior Leadership Team Objectives

- Increase teacher satisfaction and retention
- Increase student active engagement in instruction
- Reduce student fights
- Use data to make decisions and drive interventions at these levels:
 - Schoolwide
 - Classroom
 - Individual student (i.e., via STAT or IEP teams)



**Data-based
decision making:
Faculty survey**

Data Analysis - September 2008: BLT FACULTY & STAFF SURVEY

- First survey of this type
- Anonymous responses
- Low return rate: 17 of 90

Data Analysis - September 2008: BLT FACULTY & STAFF SURVEY

- What are your primary concerns about student behavior at Van Buren? 1a. What would you like to see regarding student behavior?
- What are the top five (most intense or difficult) problem behaviors among students? Please rank them in order of intensity, if possible.
- Describe any factors that you see as obstacles to the behavioral success of our students? You may also list any barriers to addressing the behavior problems from a staff member's perspective.
- What behavior management strategies have gone well or have generated some measure of positive response from students?

Data Analysis - September 2008: BLT FACULTY & STAFF SURVEY

Primary concerns

- Need for staff/faculty (regular and substitute) **fairness and 100% consistency** in rules, procedures, and consequences for inappropriate behaviors, including major and minor behaviors.
- Some inappropriate behaviors are reinforced by staff/faculty.
- Some inappropriate behaviors are ignored by staff/faculty. ALL staff should intervene with inappropriate behavior of ALL students, including those who are not familiar.

Data Analysis - September 2008: BLT FACULTY & STAFF SURVEY

Primary concerns

- Need for **alternative disciplinary methods** (some students welcome suspensions)
- When moved from a class for disciplinary actions, **students are not motivated to return to class**
- **Insufficient reinforcement for positive behaviors**
- Staff/faculty need **more skill training**

Data Analysis - September 2008: BLT FACULTY & STAFF SURVEY

Primary concerns

- “Frequent flyers,” the **same students cause repeated disruptions**, roam halls without passes, etc.
- **Students need:**
 - (re)training in rules, procedures, and consequences
 - problem solving, anger management, and communication skills
 - to value education more. To be less apathetic and complacent
- **Parents need to be more involved and accountable**

Data Analysis - September 2008: BLT FACULTY & STAFF SURVEY

Most intense or difficult problem behaviors

- Student **disrespect** toward authority figures, adults, and peers (e.g., in your face confrontations, posturing, arguing). *Highest ranked problem behavior by a majority of survey respondents.*
- **Violent/aggressive disruptions** (e.g., fighting). *2nd ranked problem behavior.*
- **Unsafe transition behaviors** (e.g., run, hit, yell). *3rd ranked problem behavior.*

Data Analysis - September 2008: BLT FACULTY & STAFF SURVEY

Most intense or difficult problem behaviors

- **Inappropriate language** (e.g., profanity, name calling)
- **Classroom disruptions** (e.g., out of seat, talk out, loud –sing, clown around, horseplay, “ride”/make fun, bully, throw objects, shoot rubber bands)
- **Refusal to do assignments or participate in class**
- **Misplacing, damaging or destroying instructional materials**
- **Inappropriate dress** (e.g., wearing hoods, indecent exposure)
- **Gum or edibles in class** (e.g., candy, nuts)



**Data-based
decision making:
Discipline referrals**

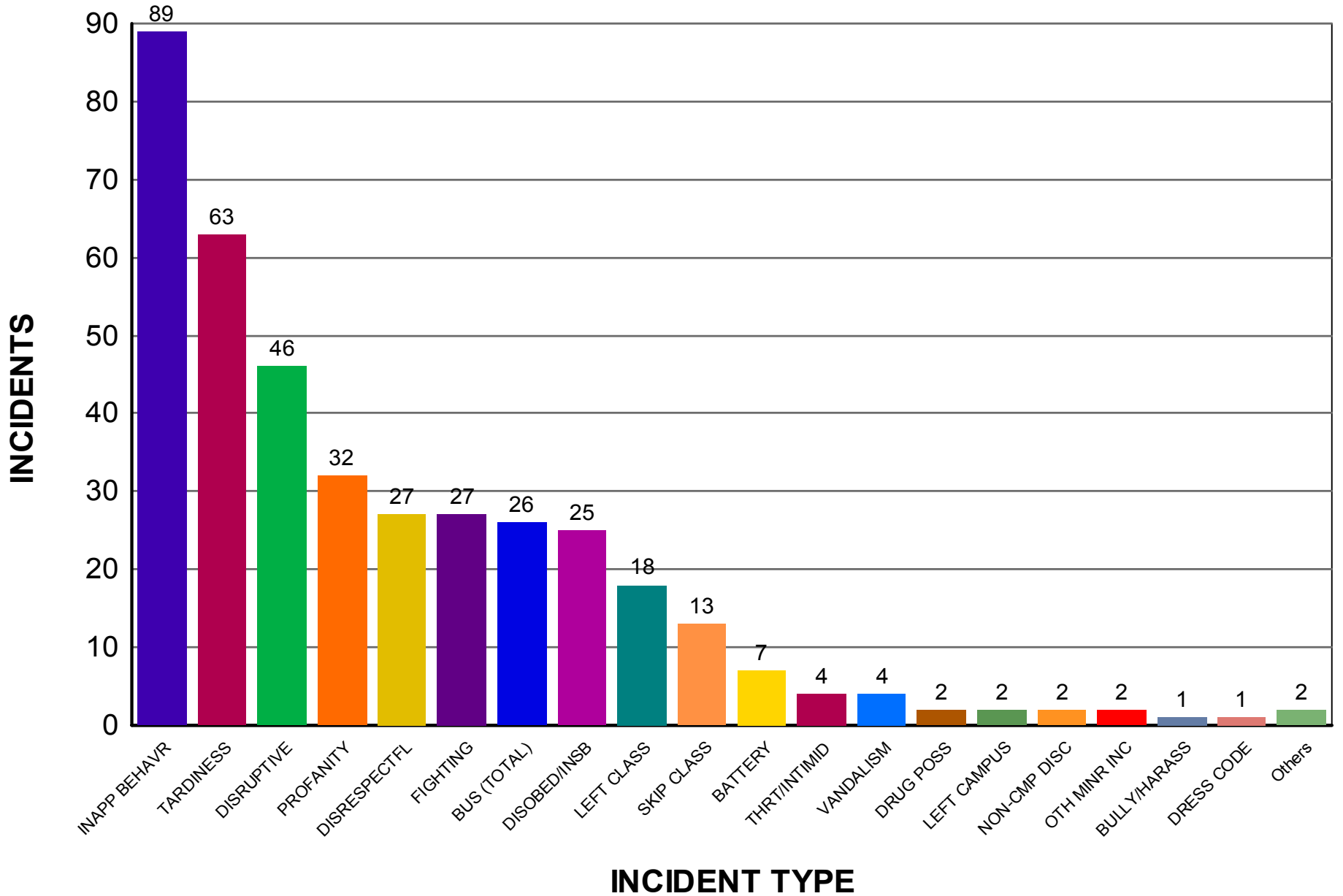
Frequent Flyers: Students

| Student | # Ref | Student | # Ref |
|----------------|--------------|----------------|--------------|
| D. Brookins | 9 | M. Marcia | 6 |
| Allen Jenkins | 9 | T. Waddy | 6 |
| K. Gaillard | 8 | E. Grier | 6 |
| M. Scott | 8 | D. Stevenson | 5 |
| J. Coston | 7 | Y. Casseide | 5 |
| R. Tolliver | 7 | Ashley Jenkins | 5 |
| A. Allen | 6 | Eric Smith | 5 |
| R. Wingfield | 6 | | |

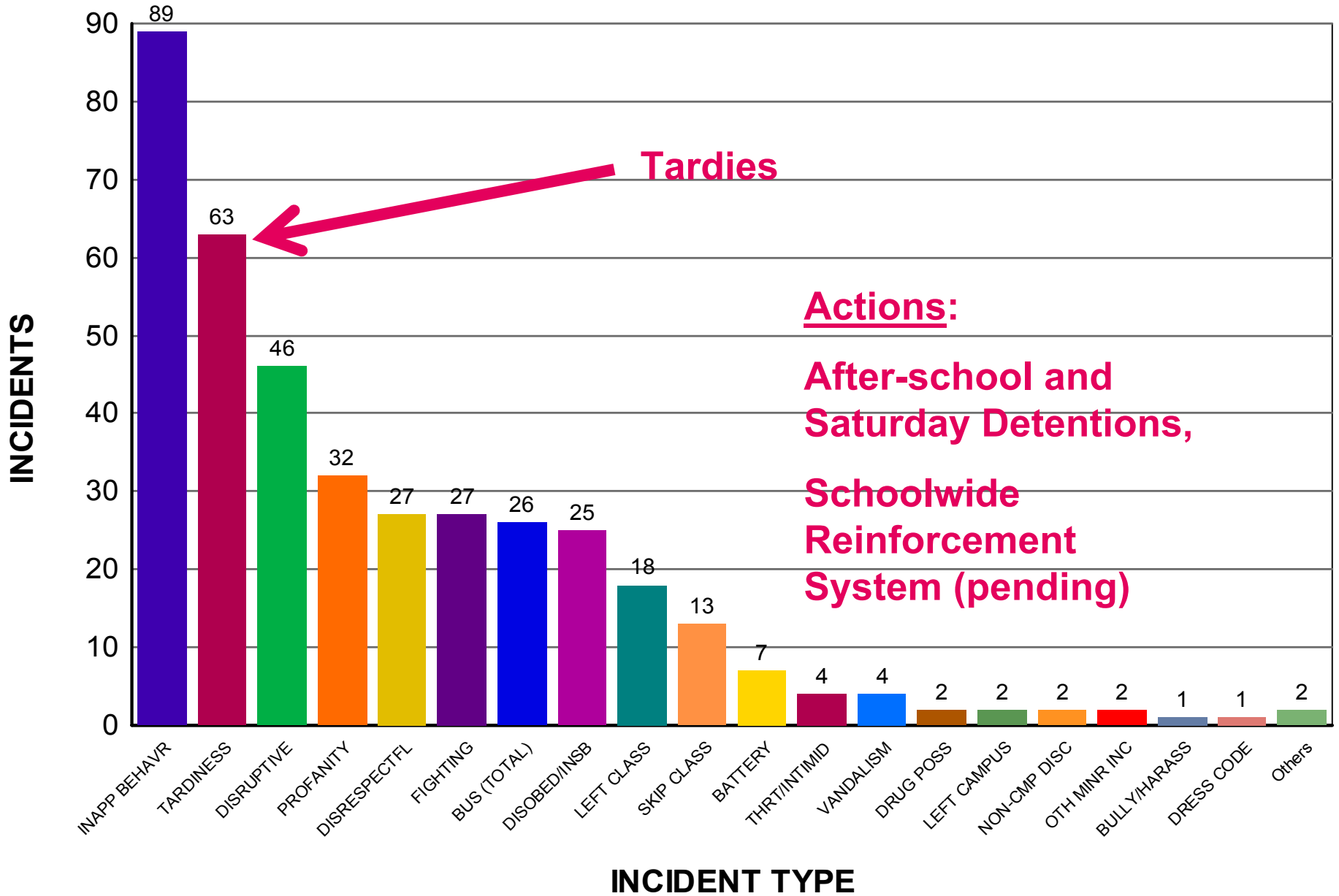
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**Action: Enhanced problem-solving and intervention by
STAT or IEP team (pending)**



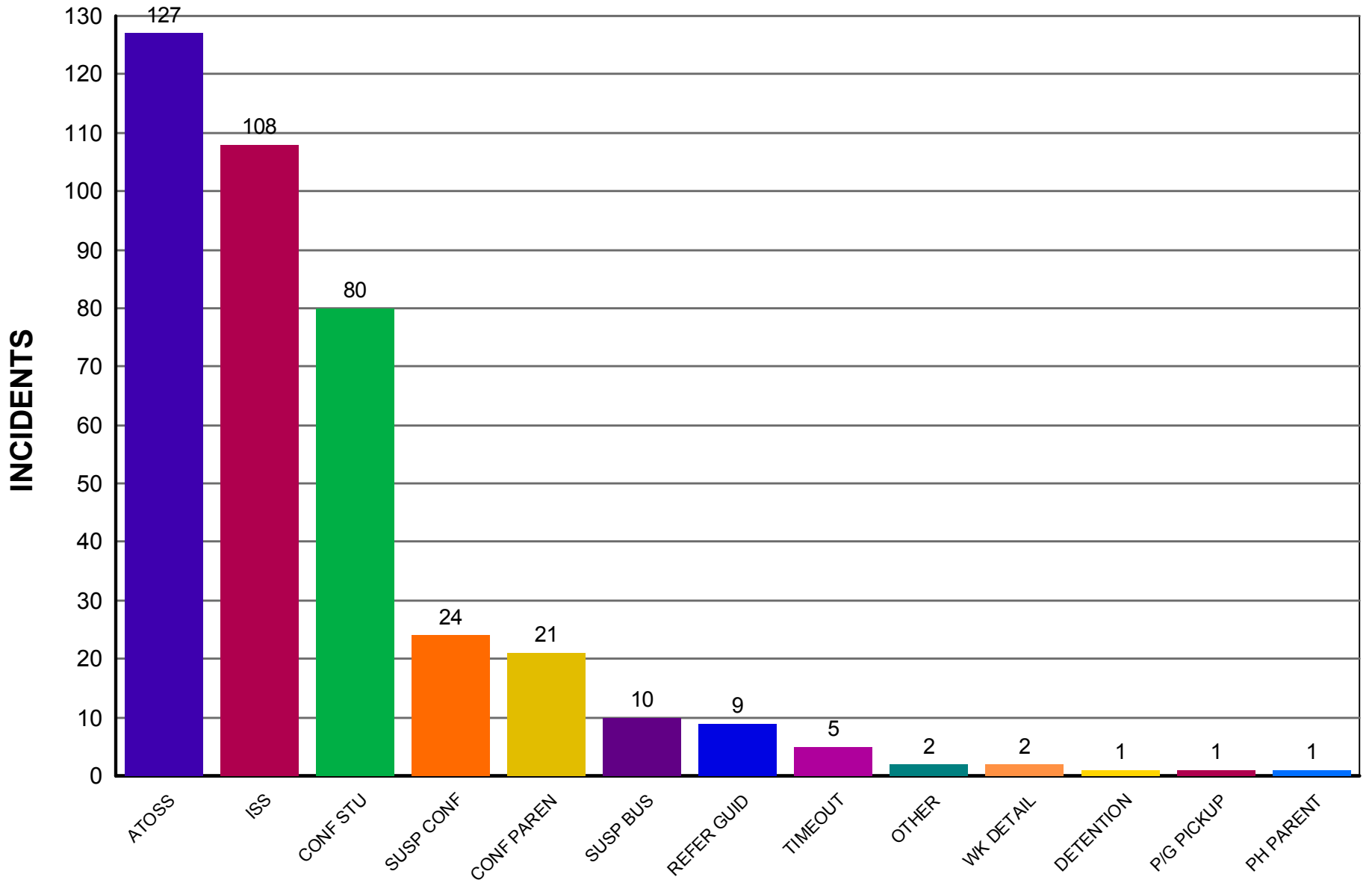
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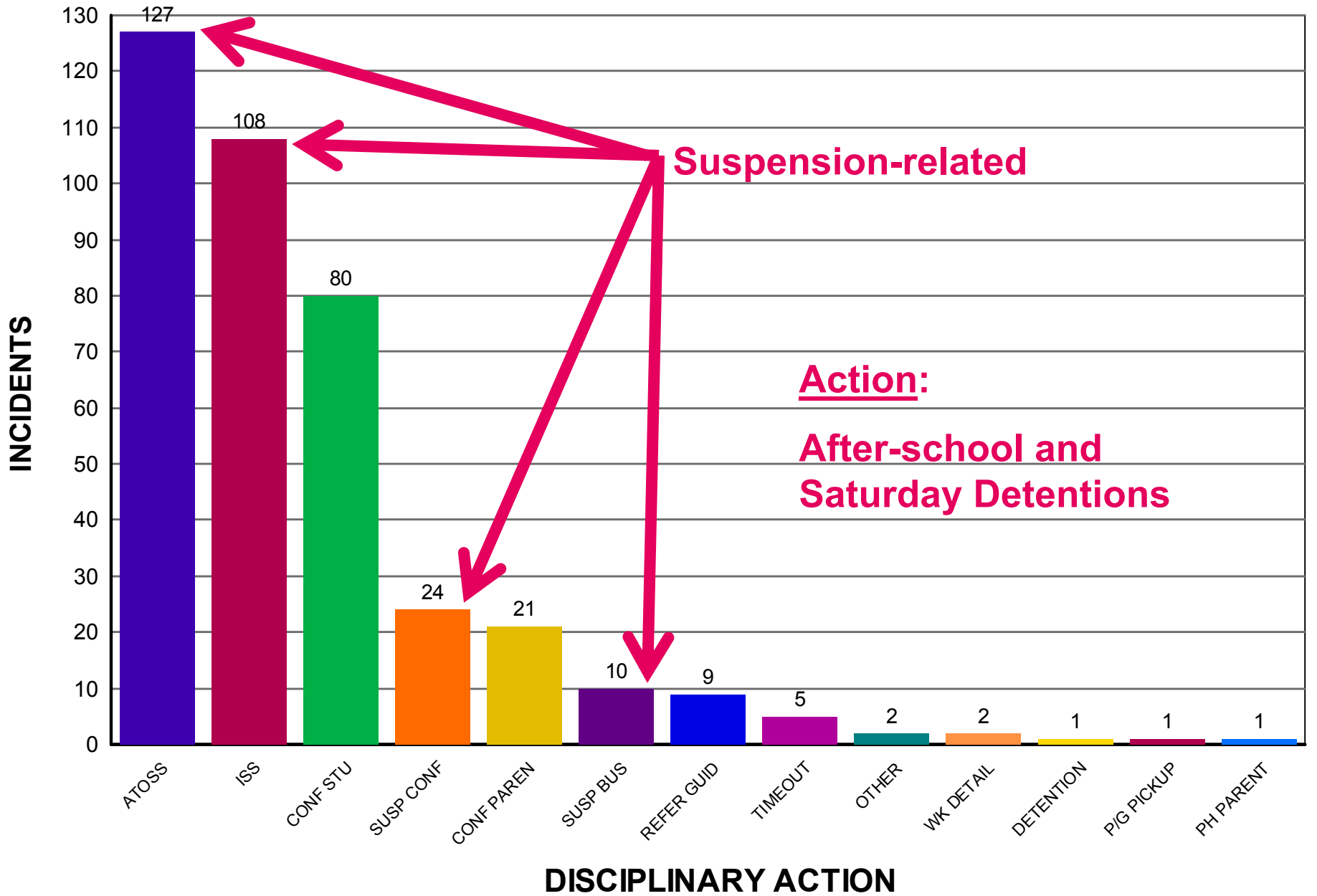
Reinforcers Identified by Students

- **Adult Approval**
 - Teacher talks kindly to you
- **Items and Consumables**
 - Food, Candy, and Drinks
 - \$ or Gift Card
 - Prize Box
 - Shoes
- **Competitive Approval**
 - 1st to finish work
 - Teacher posts only your paper
- **Activities – group or independent:**
 - Playing games
 - Dances with food
 - Dance Competitions
 - Block party
 - Field Trips
 - Free Time
 - Computer Time
 - Video Games
 - Grade (level)
 - Class Outside
 - Picnic Lunch



DISCIPLINARY ACTION

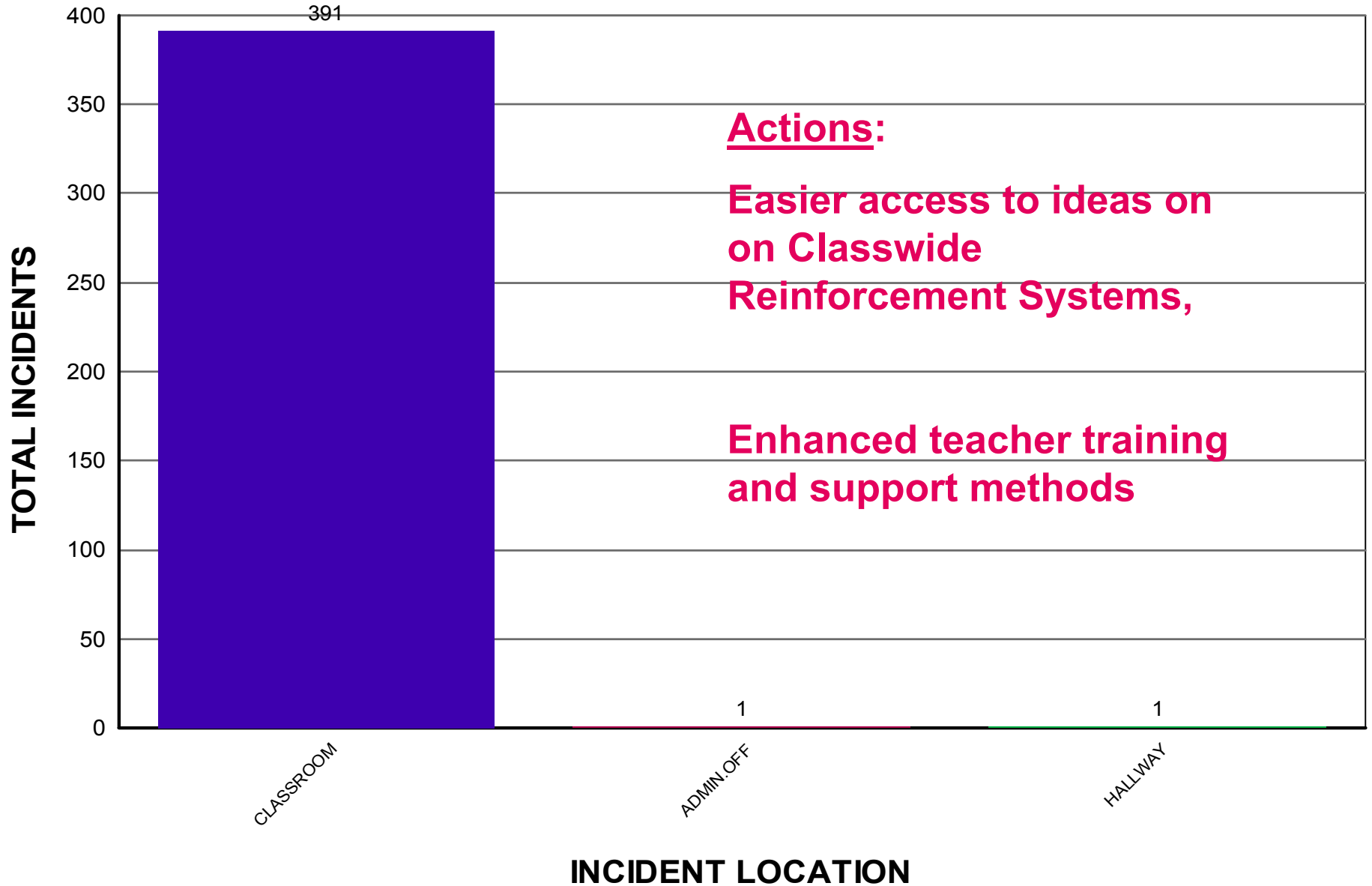
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Why are we
here today?

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**Welcome to the
“Behavior Success Group”**

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“Success is the Only Option”

Objectives for the Van Buren “Behavior Success Group”

- Explore issues related to student disruptive behaviors and their impact on:
 - student learning, safety, and life-long success
 - teachers and other staff at Van Buren
 - Note: We’ll avoid spending excess time on “admiring the problem”
- Experience and give feedback on training materials
 - “Make it real” for HCPS school settings & students
 - Enhance materials for use throughout HCPS

Successful behavior management is:

- Knowing the basic purposes of problem behaviors (keeping it simple)

Basic purposes of behavior

Parsimony....

- When a simple explanation works, why bother with complex explanations?

Common Hypotheses That Can Be Complex and Have High Levels of Inference

- Power
- Revenge
- Impulse control problem
- Anger, Rage
- Low Self Esteem, Feelings of inadequacy
- Socially withdrawn
- Delinquent
- Conduct disorder
- Personality disorder
- Internal processes (e.g., thought disorder)
- Psychopathology (e.g., depression, anxiety)
- Neuro-electrical
- Neuro-chemical

Chandler & Dahlquist's

5 Faulty Explanations:

Challenging behavior occurs because of:

- Child's personality
- Child's disability
- Child's family, poor parenting, discipline practices
- Poor home circumstances
- Previous trauma or bad experiences

The causes of problem behaviors are often described as hypothetical constructs about the mind and mental life

Explanatory fictions or mentalisms
can never be:

- Measured
- Controlled or manipulated for research purposes
- Scientifically proven or disproven

Prevalent Psychological Beliefs

- How the brain affects behavior...
- All behavior comes from the brain, it is the biological basis for all behavior
- How behavior affects the brain...

Some hypotheses about the causes of problem behaviors rely on “underlying causes”

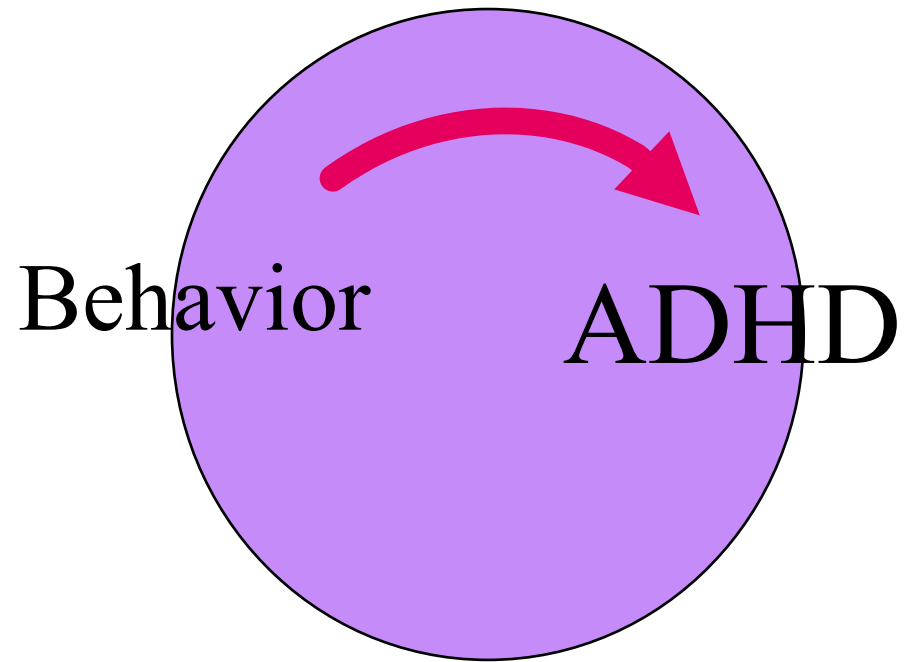
Circular explanations

can never be:

- Measured
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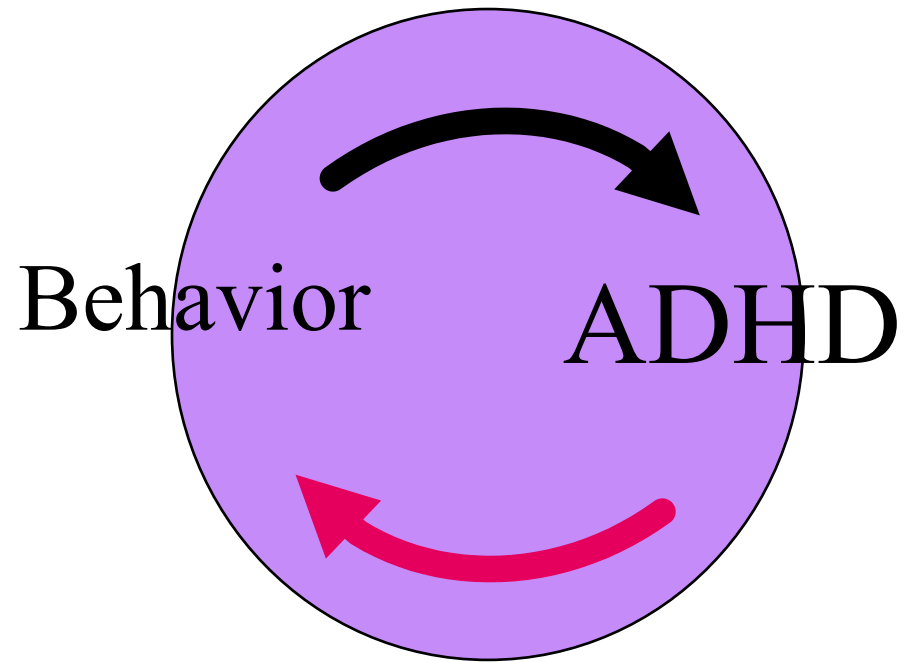
Circular explanations

- Because of his (distractible) behavior he appears to be ADHD



Circular explanations

- Due to his ADHD he has (distractible) behavior



Explanatory Fictions, Mentalisms, and Circular Explanations

- May inappropriately shift the focus of the intervention away from the behavior
- May blame the entire problem on the “inner pathology” of the child.
“What could I possibly do to help him?
After all, he has a personality disorder?”

Explanatory Fictions, Mentalisms, and Circular Explanations

- May result in over-reliance on medication as the sole treatment
- May cause other potentially effective treatments to be abandoned

- We are not ruling out the impact of thoughts, feelings, and emotions (aka “private events”).
- However, explanatory fictions, mentalisms, and circular explanations are complex explanations of the purposes of behavior.
- It is also important to know and consider the basic purposes of behavior.

Some basic purposes of behavior

Good examples:

- To get something:
 - Attention
 - Preferred activity or object
 - Sensory feedback (e.g., oral stimulation)

Some basic purposes of behavior

Good examples:

- To get something:
 - Attention
 - Preferred activity or object
 - Sensory feedback (e.g., oral stimulation)
- To get out of (avoid or escape) something:
 - Hard or undesired classwork
 - Painful condition

Multiple purposes of behavior:

Many behaviors have **more than one purpose:**

- Example: “Shut up, you’re not my momma. I don’t wanna do the worksheet. Get me away from your stink.”
- To get something:
 - Teacher Attention (frown and redirection “Just do your assignment”) and
 - Peer attention and
 - Preferred activity (walk to, hang out, in office) and
 - Staff Attention in office (“Why do you act that way?”)

Multiple purposes of behavior:

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- and
- To get out of (avoid or escape) something:
 - Undesired classwork

Purposes of behavior – Let's Get Technical

The **purpose** of behavior is also known as:

- the “**function**” of the behavior
- (That's why we call it
Functional Behavior Assessment)

Purposes of behavior – Let's Get Technical

Good examples:

- To get something: **Positive Reinforcement**
 - Attention
 - Preferred activity or object
 - Sensory feedback (e.g., oral stimulation)

Purposes of behavior – Let's Get Technical

Good examples:

- To get something:
 - Attention
 - Preferred activity or object
 - Sensory feedback (e.g., oral stimulation)
- To get out of (avoid or escape) something:

Negative Reinforcement

- Hard or undesired classwork
- Painful condition

Successful behavior management is:

- Knowing the basic purposes of problem behaviors (keeping it simple)
- Understanding the environment within which behavior occurs

Understand the Environment

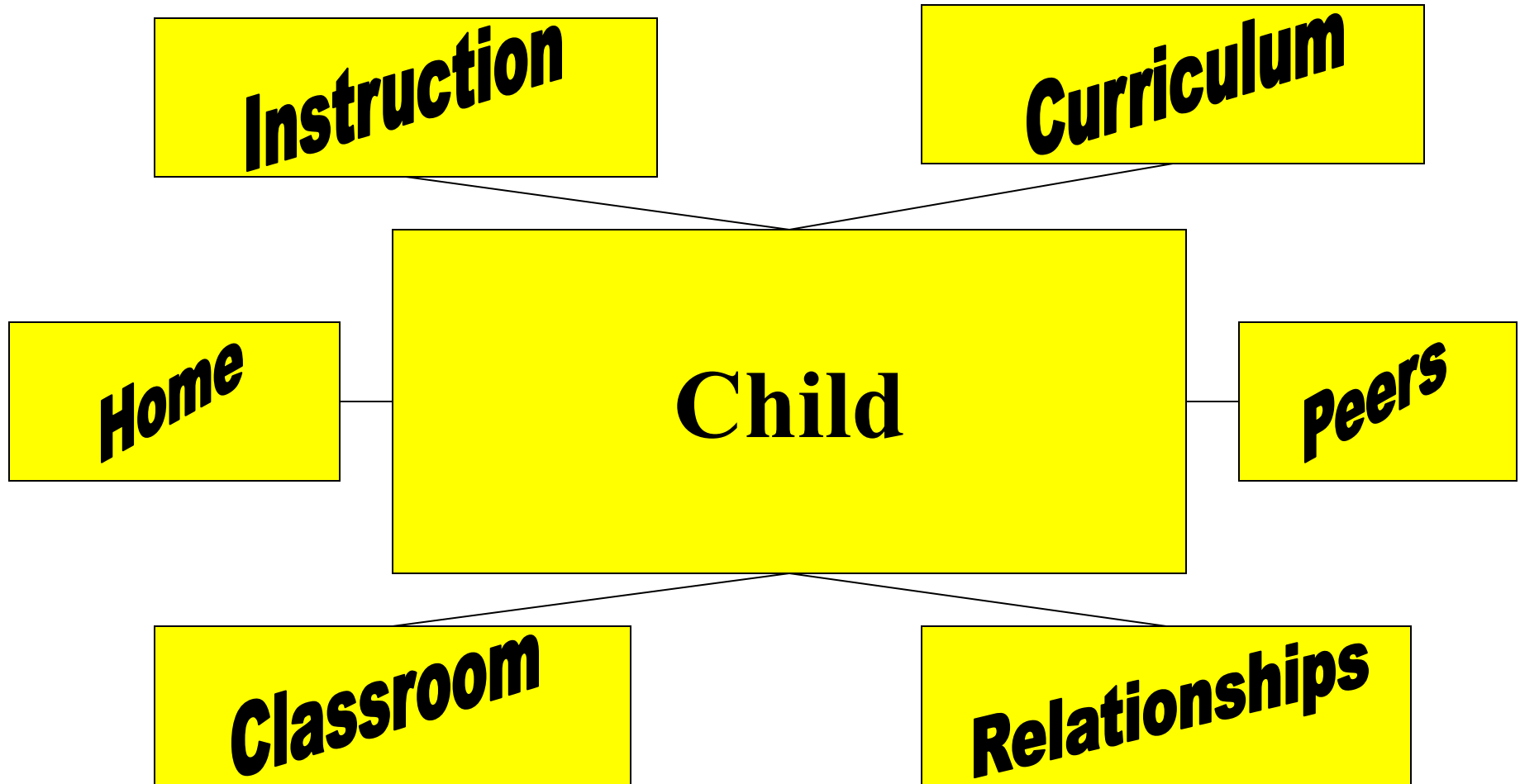
- Behavior management is all about understanding and modifying functional relationships between Behavior and the current Environment
- In simple terms, its about knowing and changing the Antecedents & Consequences.
- We do not place emphasis on the distant past. (A student's "ancient" history may provide some useful info, but it cannot be changed through a classroom or school intervention.)

Many hypotheses assume the cause of problem behavior is within the child...



Child

But, many other boxes (environmental factors) should be explored...



Knowing the Environment Leads To

More effective antecedent conditions, such as:

- Modifying conditions that frequently precede problem behaviors
- Scheduling instructional time
- Arranging physical spaces & flows
- Signals to get immediate quiet and full attention
- Procedures to start and end class
- Methods for assigning, monitoring, and collecting assignments

Knowing the Environment Leads To

More effective use of consequences for:

■ Desired behaviors

- Clarified rules for active engagement
- Clear expectations for regular activities and transitions
- Giving positive feedback

■ Problem behaviors

- Redirecting early stage problem behaviors
- Giving corrective feedback
- Delivering effective consequences for serious rule violations

Successful behavior management is:

- Knowing the basic purposes of problem behaviors (keeping it simple)
- Understanding the environment within which behavior occurs
- Not taking it personally

Sound familiar...

- That boy just wears me out
- She rubs me the wrong way
- He really got on my last good nerve
- Maybe she'll be absent so we can have a good day
- She is pushing me to my wit's end
- Why does he hate me that way?
- She just makes me sick (cringe)

Student perceptions

- Doesn't care
 - Doesn't like me
 - Holds a grudge against me
 - Is always mean to me
-
- May result in worse “counter-control” behaviors

Beware of unwanted outcomes

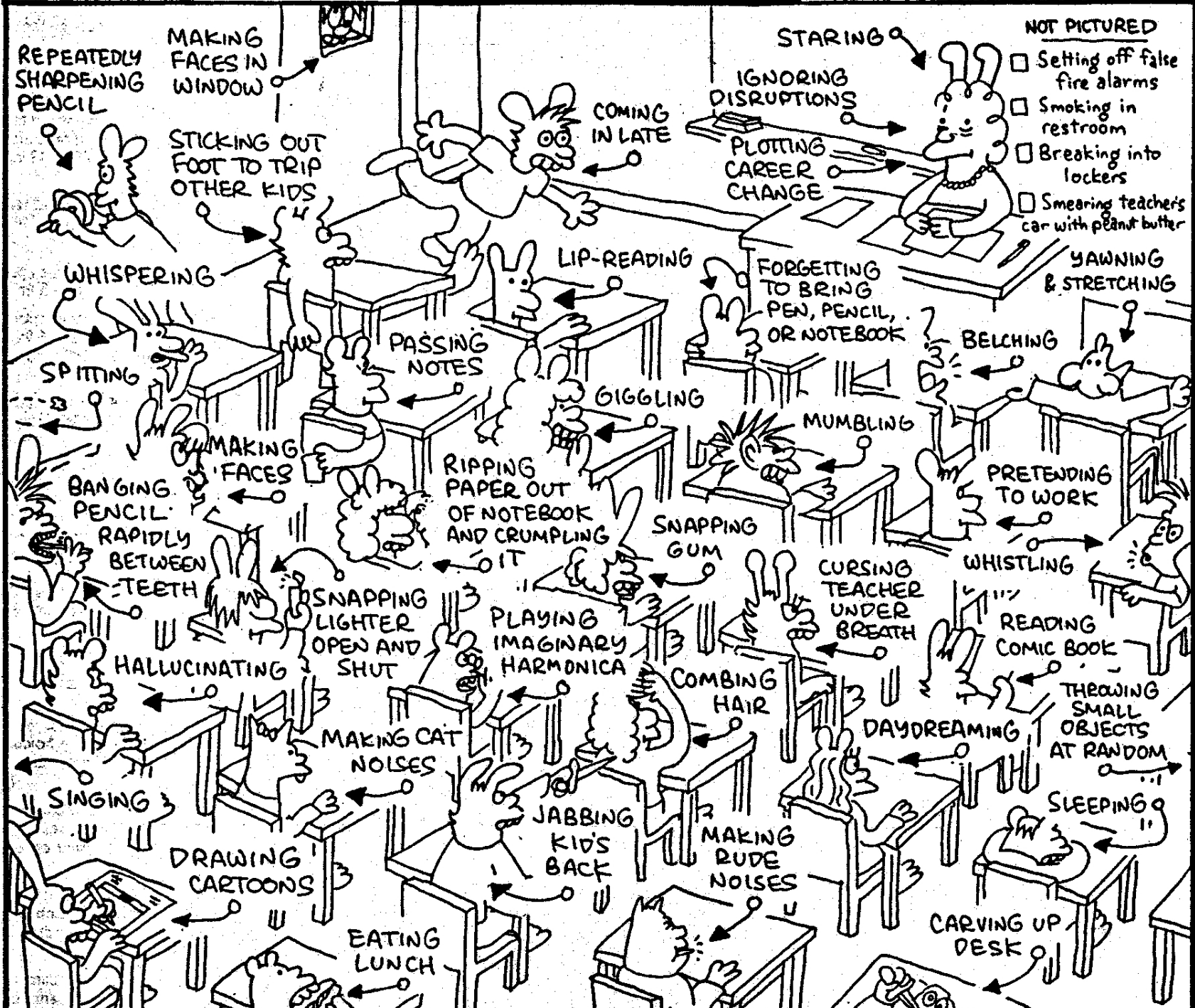
- If the purpose (function) of the student behavior is to get attention, beware of reactions that may inadvertently shape and maintain (reinforce) the problem behaviors
- Words
- Facial expression
- Body language
- Disciplinary actions

Alternatives...

- Making a fresh start every day
- Greeting students positively at the door
- Earning an Academy Award for Best Actor

Successful behavior management is:

- Knowing the basic purposes of problem behaviors (keeping it simple)
- Understanding the environment within which behavior occurs
- Not taking it personally
- Categorizing the type of behavior



REPEATEDLY SHARPENING PENCIL

MAKING FACES IN WINDOW

STICKING OUT FOOT TO TRIP OTHER KIDS

COMING IN LATE

STARING

IGNORING DISRUPTIONS

PLOTTING CAREER CHANGE

NOT PICTURED

- Setting off false fire alarms
- Smoking in restroom
- Breaking into lockers
- Smearing teachers car with peanut butter

WHISPERING

LIP-READING

FORGETTING TO BRING PEN, PENCIL, OR NOTEBOOK

YAWNING & STRETCHING

SPITTING

PASSING NOTES

GIGGLING

BELCHING

BANGING PENCIL RAPIDLY BETWEEN TEETH

MAKING FACES

RIPPING PAPER OUT OF NOTEBOOK AND CRUMPLING IT

SNAPPING GUM

MUMBLING

PRETENDING TO WORK

SNAPPING LIGHTER OPEN AND SHUT

PLAYING IMAGINARY HARMONICA

CURSING TEACHER UNDER BREATH

WHISTLING

HALLUCINATING

MAKING CAT NOISES

COMBING HAIR

READING COMIC BOOK

THROWING SMALL OBJECTS AT RANDOM

SINGING

DRAWING CARTOONS

JABBING KID'S BACK

MAKING RUDE NOISES

DAYDREAMING

SLEEPING

EATING LUNCH

CARVING UP DESK

3 categories

- Annoying
- Interfering
- Dangerous

Homework

- Download and print this presentation as your “handout”
- Email me: kevin.murdock@sdhc.k12.fl.us
- Describe 10 behaviors you’ve observed (no student names)
 - Be specific (modify spelling if needed (f - - k))
 - Categorize as:
 - Annoying
 - Interfering
 - Dangerous
- Send feedback on improving the training content or methods