THE USE OF THINKING ERRORS INSTRUCTION IN TEXAS DAEPS

AS A MEANS TO IMPROVE STUDENT BEHAVIOR

A Dissertation

by

KAREN TERESA TURNER

Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies of
Texas A&M University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

August 2010

Major Subject: Educational Psychology

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Approved by:

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ABSTRACT

The Use of Thinking Errors Instruction in Texas DAEPs as a Means to Improve

Student Behavior. (August 2010)

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The use of disciplinary measures to deal with student behavior brings with it the responsibility to educate the student, not only academically, but socially. It is the social or behavioral component of education that is lacking in most Texas Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP) settings. The current DAEP model does not provide the means nor the method by which students' behavior can be remediated, so students' need for learning positive behaviors goes unmet.

The Texas Education Code (TEC Chap. 37) mandates that DAEPs provide instruction in "self-discipline," but it does not specify how this instruction is to be delivered. In addition, it does not provide for oversight or evaluation, so these requirements may be inconsistently fulfilled, or not fulfilled at all. Many of the students who attend DAEPs have behavioral and emotional difficulties, and are considered at risk for academic failure. Although there have been programs to compensate for and remediate academic skill deficits, there is not one comprehensive program to help students learn appropriate behaviors and overcome risk factors.

The Thinking Errors program was developed to help students become aware that the choices they make every day are influenced by poor patterns of thinking. It is designed to help students correct these thinking patterns and learn to take responsibility for their own decisions and behaviors. The purpose of this study is to evaluate the effectiveness of the Thinking Errors program in helping students change their behavior.

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this work to two people:

To my mom who encouraged me to go back to college in the first place. Actually it started long before that, when you suggested that I become a substitute teacher. In fact, every good thing that happened in my life usually started with something you said or did for me. You have given me hope and confidence all along the way. Thank you for everything.

To Dr. Pat Lynch. (And to the unnamed person who gave me the best advice: "You've GOT to go see Pat Lynch—she will help you!") From even before I started at Texas A&M until now, you always answered all my questions. No matter how frustrated, confused, or discouraged I became, no matter what the reason, you would calmly explain, direct, counsel, or console. I know you have done the very same thing for hundreds of students. Thank you for being there.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

One of the effective schools correlates is a safe and orderly environment.

"There is an orderly, purposeful, business-like atmosphere, which is free from the

threat of physical harm. The school climate is not oppressive and is conducive to

teaching and learning" (Lezotte, 2001, p. 6).

In the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) (Public Law 107–110), Title I

(Improving the academic achievement of the disadvantaged) states, "The

purpose of this title is to ensure that all children have a fair, equal, and significant

opportunity to obtain a high-quality education and reach, at a minimum,

proficiency on challenging state academic achievement standards and state

academic assessments" (20 USC 6301). NCLB Title IV, Part A, (Safe and Drug-

Free Schools and Communities Act) (20 USC 710), states that all children

should have a safe environment in which to learn, an environment free from

guns, alcohol, drugs, and violence.

Disciplinary Alternative Education Programs (DAEPs) were established

with two purposes: (a) to remove serious discipline problems from the classroom

and (b) to continue providing all students with a public education, including those

who are separated from their home campus for discipline reasons, "even those

_____

This dissertation follows the style of *Exceptional Children.*

who are disruptive and potentially violent" (Randle, 2008, 1). In Texas, statewide school reports do not include DAEP students as a separate population group, so very little information is available to describe student outcomes in these settings. This lack of information makes it difficult to address the effectiveness of DAEPs in light of what they were created to accomplish (Levin, 2006, 2). "High recidivism and dropout rates underscore the failure of Disciplinary Alternative Education Programs (DAEPs) to meet the needs of large numbers of students— a problem compounded by the lack of state oversight" (Levin, 2006).

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) (2006-2007) reports that Texas DAEP students have a drop-out rate twice as high as the state wide rate (5.9% compared to 2.7% for all students statewide in grades 7-12) (TEA, 2008). The reports, which provide the length of DAEP placement (1-30 days, 31-60 days, and more than 60 days), show that the percentage of students meeting the TAKS standards decreases with longer DAEP placements. DAEP students also score substantially lower on the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) test than students statewide. DAEP students, according to the latest available TEA reports (2003-2007), met TAKS standards at the following rates (see Table 1) compared to all Texas students.

TABLE 1
Percentage of Students Meeting TAKS Standards 2003-2007

School year	Texas DAEP students	All Texas students
2006-2007	31%	64%
2005-2006	29%	61%
2004-2005	26%	58%
2003-2004	33%	63%

Source: TEA, 2008

Statement of the problem

A report published by The North Central Region Educational Laboratory (NCREL) cites the increasing challenges facing students in our schools. Our students come from dysfunctional homes and/or live in poverty. Some of them have parents who are still teenagers, and some are special education students. These students need a safe, secure, and positive environment that does not condone violence in any form, and that provides for their emotional development. "At the same time, however, the school provides firm and consistent rules and guidelines for appropriate student behavior" (NCREL, 1996).

Traditionally, responsibility for behavior management in the regular classroom is appropriated to the teacher, who sets up a system of rules and consequences within the parameters of the school district's student code of

conduct. Expectations for student behavior are clearly outlined, as are the consequences for violations. Interventions or consequences are aimed at eliminating behavior that is inappropriate for school.

Students who exhibit maladaptive behaviors are disciplined in a variety of ways, depending on the seriousness of the violation. Ideally, the intervention for mild misbehavior may be minimal, while more serious violations are met with suspension or expulsion from school, sometimes there is little relationship between the offense and the punishment (Christle, 2004; Skiba, Peterson, & Williams, 1997). DAEP placement is an option for consideration when classroom and building administrator interventions have been unsuccessful in remediating the problem behavior.

While SB 1 provided classrooms a respite from disruptive or potentially dangerous students, its benefits were, and are, largely directed toward those classrooms and not to the misbehaving student. Inherent in the use of disciplinary measures to deal with student behavior is the responsibility to educate that student, not only academically, but socially. It is this component of education that is lacking in most Texas DAEP settings.

Many of the students who attend DAEPs have behavioral and emotional issues, and are considered at risk for academic failure (Randle, 2008). The current DAEP model does not provide the means or the method by which students can be remediated for their behavior problems, so the students' need for learning appropriate behaviors goes unmet. The TEC has mandated

programs to remediate and compensate for lack of academic skills (TEC

29.081), but there are few comprehensive programs to help students overcome

risk factors and learn appropriate behaviors, and they are only sporadically used

across the state. For example, School-wide Positive Behavior Support (SWPBS)

is a systems approach that has been effective in teaching students the behaviors

needed to be successful in school (Turnbull et al, 2002, 377). However, no

wording in TEC Chapter 37 requires schools to implement programs like

SWPBS.

While DAEP discipline management measures are sufficient to manage

classroom behavior *in* the DAEP setting, they do little to effectively replace the

negative behaviors that caused the student to be assigned there in the first

place. Thus the student remains unable to navigate the environment in which the

original offense occurred (M. J. Bartos, personal communication, September,

2005). Students' attitudes and ways of thinking are not changed by DAEP

procedures. Many students who fulfill their DAEP placement still lack adequate

behavior skills to behave appropriately in the regular classroom setting, and, if

their old behaviors are not changed, are likely to be placed in DAEP again.

State of Texas definition of 'At-risk'

The TEC (29, § 81) states that students who have "been placed in an

alternative education program in accordance with TEC §37.006 during the

preceding or current school year" are *at risk* of dropping out of school. The law

designates 12 additional categories of characteristics of students who are at-risk

for not graduating from high school within four years of beginning the ninth grade (see Appendix 1). Students who are placed in DAEP are automatically designated at-risk. Many students already have one or more at-risk characteristics, although there is no data to indicate which risk factors students arriving at DAEP already have. However, according to Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) reports for school years 2003-2008, an average of 79% of students placed in DAEP were designated at-risk by factors other than DAEP placement.

There are several ways students assigned to DAEP may be designated at-risk. Some may have not passed the required readiness or standardized tests for the current year, while others have been retained in a grade. In addition, it is common for DAEP students to have failed to maintain an average of 70 or above in two or more subjects. Some students may even have all of the risk factors mentioned in this paragraph, in addition to the risk factor designated by placement in a DAEP.

Purpose of the study

The Thinking Errors (TE) program is a curriculum developed to help students learn to take responsibility for their own decisions and behaviors. Its purpose is to make students aware that the choices they make every day are influenced by poor thinking patterns (Bartos, 2003). The curriculum includes group activities, one-on-one conferences, and guided practice sessions, both verbal and written. The purpose of this study is to evaluate the efficacy of TE in

enabling students to make decisions that lead to lasting changes in their

behavior.

Research questions

      In Table 2 are the two questions this study addressed. Listed next to each

question is the data source used to answer that question.

TABLE 2
Research Questions

Question	Data used to answer question
Does the use of the Thinking Errors program treatment improve student behavior during DAEP placement?	Daily point sheet weekly averages
Does the use of the Thinking Errors program treatment improve student behavior after completion of DAEP placement?	Discipline referrals from home campus during 2 months post-placement

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Definition and description of a DAEP

In 1995, the Texas Education Code (TEC) was amended to require that school districts provide off-campus facilities for students who must be separated from their home campus for disciplinary reasons (TEC, 1995). A Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP) is an off-campus program for students with discipline problems that require the student's removal from the home campus. A DAEP is required to provide students their constitutionally-guaranteed right to a public education, with emphasis on maintaining the appropriate grade level in English language arts, mathematics, science, and history, as well as instruction in self-discipline. This chapter will examine procedures along the path from the classroom to the DAEP setting, and the effectiveness of interventions used.

Cortez and Cortez (2009) list the following ways DAEPs differ from regular campuses:

- different instructional arrangements
- direct, teacher-oriented classroom instruction
- instruction with self-paced, computer-assisted programs
- behavior interventions - "boot camp" systems, "point" systems
- highly structured
- metal detectors

- uniforms
- small student-to-teacher ratios
- students escorted from one area of campus to another
- housed on home campuses or in separate, dedicated facilities
- small, rural districts are involved in cooperative arrangements with other districts (Cortez & Cortez).

School districts that do not have the funds or the need to serve large numbers of students may enter into a shared services agreement with other small school districts that allows them to pay a share of the financial burden of operating such a cooperative campus. The salary of the staff of the campus, as well as the other expenses, may be shared on a per-student or other basis. The cooperative DAEP may be centrally located among the partnering districts (Cortez & Cortez, 2009). To understand how these programs work, it is important to see how typical classroom management fits into the process. The next section describes a typical classroom management system and the role the DAEP plays in it.

Classroom behavior management

Classroom rules are essential in order for all students to understand teacher expectations. At the classroom level, rules are set in place by teachers to help facilitate optimal learning environments and to keep order. These rules are usually very general and are presented in positive terms. Rules should define the appropriate behavior instead of prohibiting the inappropriate

(http://www.education.ky.gov/) (Figure 1). "Effective school safety strategies should include a continuum of options that allow responses to be tailored to the severity of the behavior" (Bumbarger, 1999).

FIGURE 1
Sample Classroom Rules

Elementary level	Secondary level
Be polite and helpful	Bring all needed materials to class
Take care of your school	Be in your seat and ready to work when the bell rings
Behave in the cafeteria	Obtain permission before speaking or leaving your seat
Do not hit, shove or hurt others	Respect and be polite to all people
Keep the bathroom clean	Respect other people's property

Source: Huitt, W. (1997).

Classroom rules typically provide corresponding consequences for compliance as well as violations, as exemplified in Figure 2. The continuum of consequences is designed to reinforce appropriate behavior and decrease inappropriate behavior; students who consistently behave appropriately receive increasing rewards. Students who persist in inappropriate behavior experience increasing penalties.

FIGURE 2
Typical Consequences Associated with Classroom Rules

Level of significance	Reward	Penalty
Minor	Smile Compliment Cheery note on assignment Small amount of tokens traded for a small reward	Eye contact Have student state rule broken Change Seat Isolation Confiscation of forbidden objects or notes
Moderate	Posting Good Work Positive note to parents Special privileges	Staying After School Loss of privileges Call to parents
Extensive	Field Trips Large amount of tokens traded for large reward	Visit with principal Loss of special trip, event, etc.

Source: Huitt, W. (1997).

Behavioral intervention

Despite teachers' best interventions in the classroom, some students'

behavior does not change, but worsens over time. Disciplinary problems that

result in DAEP placement may develop over several years or grade levels. "In

the traditional school setting, at-risk students at the high school level have

experienced about a decade of school failure, humiliation, despair, and defeat"

(Barr & Parrett, as cited in DuCloux, 2009, 5). Typically, minor violations of

classroom rules at the regular campus have escalated to more serious violations

(Bumbarger, 1999, Padilla, personal communication, October 2009; Vann,

personal communication, November 2009). Minor infractions of classroom rules

(see Figure 1), such as throwing paper on the bathroom floor instead of in the

waste basket, may result in redirection by the teacher, followed by student

compliance (i.e., picking up the paper and placing it in the appropriate place).

Repeated similar infractions after teacher redirection could result in a weightier

sanction such as staying after class (see Figure 2).

Placement of students in DAEP

Each school district is mandated by state law to have a Student Code of

Conduct, which contains all rules and policies for its schools (TEC § 37.001).

The Student Code of Conduct must:

- specify whether consideration was given to self defense, intent or
  lack of intent at the time the student engaged in the conduct,
  a student's disciplinary history or a disability that substantially
  impairs the student's capacity to appreciate the wrongfulness of his
  or her conduct as factors in a decision to order suspension,
  removal to a DAEP, or expulsion;
- provide guidelines for setting the length of a term of removal to a
  DAEP under TEC §37.006 or expulsion under TEC §37.007;
- address the notification of a student's parent or guardian of a
  violation of the student code of conduct by the student that results
  in suspension, removal to a DAEP or expulsion. (TEC § 37.001, as
  cited in Cortez & Cortez, 2009).

An excerpt from the Student Code of Conduct from a central Texas school

district, including four levels of offense and the disciplinary options at each of

those levels, is presented in Appendix 2. The TEC designates which behaviors merit mandatory placement in a DAEP (TEC § 37.006), and which are at the discretion of school administration. Due process requirements when placing a student in DAEP are also prescribed in the code (TEC § 37.001 and 37.002).

If the behavior of students who began with lower level infractions (e.g., talking in class, not listening, not following directions) does not improve with the corresponding intervention (levels I and II), it may escalate to the more serious levels. DAEP placement is an option at levels III and IV.

Behaviors that require DAEP placement

Public schools serve all students whether they exhibit the best behavior, the worst, or somewhere in between. One contingency for students whose behavior is not positively influenced by more moderate sanctions such as staying after school or a phone call to parents, is placement in a DAEP.

Part of chapter 37 of the TEC designates behaviors that warrant mandatory removal to a DAEP and those that *may* result in placement. TEC 37.006 provides for mandatory removal of students from the classroom for the following behaviors:

- conduct punishable as a felony;
- possessed, sold, used or under the influence of marihuana or other controlled substance
- possessed, sold, used, or was under the influence of an alcoholic beverage; abuse of a volatile chemical;
- public lewdness or indecent exposure;

- retaliation against a school employee;
- for felony offenses based on conduct occurring off campus and while the student is not in attendance at a school-sponsored or school-related activity;
- used, exhibited, or possessed a firearm and/or brings a firearm to school;
- used, exhibited, or possessed an illegal knife;
- used, exhibited, or possessed an illegal club;
- used, exhibited, or possessed a prohibited weapon;
- terroristic threat;
- assault against a school district employee or volunteer;
- assault against someone other than a school district employee or volunteer;
- false alarm/false report (TEC 37.006)

Discretionary placements may be made for the following:

- permanent removal by a teacher from class (TEC 37.003 has been invoked)
- violation of student code of conduct;
- criminal mischief;
- emergency placement/expulsion;
- possessed, purchased, used or accepted a cigarette or tobacco product;
- school-related gang violence;
- fighting/mutual combat;
- truancy;
- engaging in deadly conduct;

- used, exhibited, or possessed a non-illegal knife as defined by the district's student code of conduct (knife length equal to or less than 5.5 inches) (TEC 37.006).

Being in trouble with law enforcement authorities is common to both at-risk and DAEP populations. Several of the violations listed above coincide with the at-risk factors used by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) (Appendix 1). For example, a student who is placed in DAEP for conduct punishable as a felony is at risk, according to two TEA-recognized factors, being placed in an alternative education program, and being under conditions of release. Reasons for DAEP placement, whether mandatory or discretionary, are sometimes risk factors in and of themselves.

DAEPs meeting the needs of at-risk students

In 1984, the Texas Legislature passed House Bill (HB) 72 which included mandatory compensatory and remedial programs for students deemed "at risk" for not graduating from high school four years after entering the ninth grade (TEC 29.000). The purpose of HB 72 was to provide for implementation of early intervention, sometimes as early as kindergarten, Pre-K, or Early Childhood (EC), to improve graduation rates. The TEC (29 §81) designates 13 categories of characteristics of these students. A list of the categories is shown in Appendix 1. Students who are placed in DAEP are considered at-risk based on that placement (TEC 29 §81). Many DAEP students already have one or more at-risk factors, although there are no data to indicate which additional risk factors

DAEP students have. During the 2003-2008 school years, the yearly average

number of students placed in Texas DAEPs was 73,229. About 79% of those

students were designated at-risk by factors other than being placed in a DAEP.

This statistic is in contrast to the general student population, which has an at-risk

rate of 48.4%. Table 3 includes the at-risk percentages for school years 2004-

2009.

TABLE 3
Percentage of Students Placed in Texas DAEPs Who
Were Labeled At-risk

REPORT YEAR	AT-RISK PERCENTAGE
2008-2009	79.7%
2007-2008	80.0%
2006-2007	78.5%
2005-2006	78.3%
2004-2005	74.7%

*Source: Academic Excellence Indicator System (*AEIS) report

Demographics of DAEP students

The ethnic proportions of DAEP students statewide are: 26.1% African

American, 49.2% Hispanic, 23.4% White, .34% Native American, and .79%

Asian (TEA, 2008). Students who are placed in DAEPs have some of the most

serious academic, social, emotional, and economic deficits (Noguera, 2003).

Kleiner, Porch, and Ferris (2002) cited risk factors commonly seen in students

placed in DAEPs: disruptive behavior, poor grades, suspension, and truancy. In fact, current research shows that disciplinary exclusion (suspension, expulsion, or placement in DAEP) is associated with "further poor outcomes such as delinquency, substance abuse, and school dropout (Bumbarger, 1999). Students who are served in the DAEP setting are also more likely to come from dysfunctional homes (e.g., a home where drug use is permitted) (Padilla, 2009).

Behavior characteristics of DAEP populations

During the 2004-2008 school years, the majority of mandatory DAEP placements in Texas fell in the following categories: controlled substance/drugs, conduct punishable as a felony, assault, terroristic threat, public lewdness/indecent exposure, and weapons (AEIS, 2008). The two reasons most cited for discretionary placement were serious or persistent misconduct (2,062,940 placements in 2007-2008) and violation of student code of conduct (21,458 placements in 2007-2008). Three-fourths of Texas DAEP placements were discretionary in the 2007-2008 school year (TEA. 2008,).

Need for instruction in behavior

One common characteristic in this at-risk population is the lack of social and emotional skills, the "skills needed to recognize and manage emotions, form positive relationships, solve problems, become motivated to accomplish a goal, make responsible decisions, and avoid risky behavior" (Beland 2007, 68). These students lack the social behaviors required to interact with peers and adults in

social situations that are vital for academic success (graduation) and maintaining

employment (Randle, 2008). In the absence of these positive social skills,

frustrated students may develop maladaptive or antisocial behaviors. These

students are identified by impulsivity, lack of supportive relationships with family

and peers, family turmoil, drug addictions, pregnancies, and other issues that

prevent them from participating successfully in school (McCreight, 1999). In

order to help students with maladaptive or antisocial behaviors succeed in

school, DAEPs should teach positive skills to replace those negative ones

(Gottfredson & Gottfredson, 2001). Interventions should be based on the need

demonstrated by the behavior, and focus on replacing the inappropriate behavior

with an appropriate one (Padilla, personal communication, 2009; Damico & Roth

1993; Raebeck 1993). We need "a cognitive rationale for behavior intervention"

including a "discussion of potentially maladaptive behavior coping strategies, and

the modification of dysfunctional coping responses and the acquisition of more

effective responses" (Clark & Beck, 2009).

A common but risky assumption seems to be that students *should know*

how to behave appropriately (Padilla, 2009). Lezotte (1991) emphasizes the

necessity of teaching students the necessary behaviors to make the school "safe

and orderly." Teachers must also model these desirable behaviors. An Austin,

Texas, school district program coordinator, Jane Nethercut, was quoted:

> In the past, educators have assumed that all children know appropriate
> behavior and that they simply chose not to display it. Now, school leaders
> spend time teaching students how to act. We would not dream of having a
> kid take the math [Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills] without

first having defined, taught and monitored their progress on the skills they need. It's the same thing with the behavior expectation: clearly define, actively teach, and model those behaviors as adults. And we have to reinforce them when they are doing them well" (Austin American-Statesman, August 4, 2007, by Raven L. Hill).

Programs are needed not only to address behaviors, but to mitigate their causes (Benard, 1991), to change the behavior while preventing development of new negative ones, and to prevent the development of additional factors due to being part of a risk group. "Within the 'at-risk' category is a sub-group of students who experience serious behavioral or disciplinary problems forcing them out of traditional schools" (Fine, 1986 as cited in DuCloux, 2009, 2). Interventions designed to address these concerns should help students develop positive interpersonal behaviors, academic or achievement-related behaviors, and behaviors that promote growth and learning (Calvert 1999). Andrews, Zinger, Hoge, Bonta, Gendreau, and Cullen (1990) show that pro-social skills training in self-control, evaluating maladaptive thoughts, and self management are effective in replacing antisocial skills (lying, stealing, aggression) and reducing criminality (as cited in Golden, 2002).

Sharp (2005) points out that the behavior of criminal offenders differs from that of people with pro-social skills; criminal offenders see themselves as good people, minimize the seriousness of their behavior, and avoid responsibility for their actions. This way of thinking perpetuates inappropriate or criminal behaviors that excludes the development of non-criminal thinking and behavior (Sharp, 2005). In the school setting, this same pervasive system of thinking

errors prevents students from assuming responsibility for their own behavior and from improving their behavior, thereby setting them up for both academic and social failure.

> Students learn anti-social behavior patterns from their environment and persist in what is familiar to them; new ways of thinking and new ways of behavior are threatening to them. To counteract this resistance to behavioral change, the student must be made aware that 1) there is a pro-social pattern of behavior and 2) the attitudes and beliefs the student currently holds are not conducive to attaining his or her desires and goals. Educators must teach students to be aware of the thinking errors that all human beings make, and enable them to make appropriate decisions based on correct thinking (Bartos, personal communication, 2009).

Students must be provided with opportunities to practice this new skill and take it with them to their home campuses. A large number of students need instruction in appropriate behavior as well as clear and consistently applied discipline policies (Bartos, personal communication, 2009). A paradigm shift is needed; the focus must be on teaching all students self-discipline instead of on punishment (Fitzsimmons, 1997). "If kids don't presently possess a desired classroom behavior, teach it to them" (Canter, 1993). For example, teachers can help students learn to listen, calm themselves, and choose their words. "Ideally children should have the chance to work on these skills from the time they are very young." (Kohn, 1996), p. 123). It is just as important for students to be taught social and communication skills as it is for them to learn academic or technology skills (Bumbarger, 1999, Knoff, 1987). "To move schools beyond overreliance on punishment and social control strategies, there is ongoing advocacy for social skills *training* and new agendas for *emotional 'intelligence'*

training and *character education"* (http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/behprob.htm

[4/28/2010]).

DAEP policies and procedures

DAEP placements may not exceed one school year (180 days) unless 1)

a review is held, and 2) it is determined that the student's return to the regular

educational setting poses a threat to the safety and well-being of other students

and/or district employees (TEC, Chapter 37.008). Students may be placed in a

DAEP more than one time during the school year, and may be placed in a DAEP

and be expelled from school in the same year (Intercultural Development

Research Association, 1999).

The school district is responsible for setting guidelines for length of

placement. Sending schools must schedule, within three days, a conference with

the parent or guardian of the student who has been removed from the regular

educational setting. Parents must be informed of the reason for the placement

and length of placement.

Best practices in DAEPs

 "Best practices include program structures, procedures, and activities

determined to be successful in programs or schools serving students in

disciplinary settings" (TEA, 2007, p.6). In 1999, the McCreight study found nine

categories of best practices at DAEPs: program characteristics, curriculum and

instruction, teachers and staff, teacher and staff training, discipline, transitional

component, parent involvement, community services, and counseling. The

following eight best practices were found in 60% of the schools that participated

in the McCreight study:

- use of one-on-one instruction with the teacher

- parent involvement in the entrance or exit conference for the
  program

- goal of success in the mainstream program after return to the home
  campus

- goal of no return trip to the alternative program

- establishment of individual student goals for program planning

- staff development for teachers in conflict resolution

- goal of improved academic achievement; and

- provision of academic program at each student's functional reading
  level (McCreight, 1999).

While many DAEPs have implemented one or more of the elements, most

of them may be unable to employ all eight. For example, small rural districts that

share a cooperative DAEP are likely to have fewer teachers, so providing one-

on-one teaching is not always possible. School districts with limited budgets may

be forced to choose between spending their funds on students in the regular

classroom and those in disciplinary settings.

Texas DAEP data

Districts report all DAEP placement data to the TEA. State and district DAEP placement data are published annually by AEIS (Williams, 2009). According to AEIS statistics, the recidivism rate for DAEPs in Texas from 2005-2007 ranged from 11 to 19 percent (Table 4). These recidivism rates indicate that the DAEP model commonly used in Texas, (i.e., highly structured, negative attention, punishment-based) (Vann, personal communication, November 2009) is largely ineffective for managing problem behavior (Cortez & Cortez, 2009).

TABLE 4
Recidivism Rates for DAEPs in Texas

Year	DAEP enrollment	Repeat offenders	Percent
2005	3101	465	15
2006	3383	367	11
2007	2883	505	19

Source: PEIMS Discipline Data, Texas Education Agency, 2005-2007.

The self-discipline approach to behavior improvement

Legislation that mandated the creation of DAEPs also required that students be instructed in self-discipline. The education code allows school districts the freedom of selecting the method of delivery of the self-discipline component. One of the approaches to self-discipline is cognitive behavior intervention.

Cognitive behavior intervention is based on the principle that thinking controls actions. Cognitive behavioral treatments are used to help children "identify unhelpful thoughts, understand why the thoughts are unhelpful, and replace them with helpful thoughts that result in positive emotional experiences" Bloomquist, 2006). DAEP students with challenging behaviors may benefit from the cognitive behavior approach to treat thinking errors, or cognitive distortion.

Cognitive distortion, as defined by Beck (1979), is the tendency to misconstrue or distort the significance of events in a way that is consistent with a negative view of the self, the environment, and the future (as cited in Hayley et al, 1985). In the thinking error approach, students may be taught to recognize the distortions, or misperceptions, they may have that affect their choices (e.g., feeling that the rules do not apply to them). Students who are placed in a DAEP may state that the reason they were sent to such a setting is that someone "lied about me," or the teacher "doesn't like me." This is an example of "blaming others," one of the most common thinking errors.

This review of the literature revealed several concerns involving students placed in Texas DAEPs and the outcomes of those students. Inconsistency in applying placement standards, failure to require reporting of DAEP students' standardized test scores as a subset of student population statewide, and the small percentage of DAEPs implementing a majority of research-backed best practices are some of those concerns. In order for the outcomes of Texas DAEP

students to improve, there must first be a change in thinking, in the students as well as in DAEP administrators and staff.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the efficacy of the Thinking Errors (TE) program in enabling students in a small rural Texas DAEP cooperative change their behavior. Since one of the goals of the DAEP is to help the student improve his or her behavior, data on the efficacy of the TE program was collected and analyzed. Results of this study will be used to refine or improve the TE program.

Setting

Students in a small rural cooperative DAEP participated in this study. The DAEP program is housed in a modified metal building previously used as a gymnasium for elementary students. There is one classroom, with carrels or cubicles around the outside of the room, and one teacher.

The DAEP enrolls students in grades 6-12 who have disciplinary placements from one of three rural school districts in the surrounding area. Students are provided with a highly structured environment where they can work at their own pace, catch up on courses in which they are behind, and develop good behavior skills. It is a protected setting where distractions are minimized and interactions with peers are virtually non-existent.

Student behavior is recorded on daily point sheets (Appendix 3). The daily point sheet form used by the DAEP in the study was adapted from the Boys' Town Educational Model (BTEM). In the motivational component of the BTEM, teachers use a system of points to track daily behavior. The point system assumes that the student *wants* to return to the regular campus as soon as possible, and, therefore, does not want to incur point penalties. This system applies immediate consequences to decrease inappropriate social behaviors and to motivate students via external measures that will lead to the development of intrinsic motivation in students (Randle, 2008).

Participants

Data from the school years 2003-2009 yielded 226 students in grades 6-12 who were included in this study. Of this group, 79 (35.0%) were African-American, 44 (19.5 %) were Hispanic, and 103 (45.6%) were Anglo. Approximately 73% of the participants were male; 27% were female. All students listed English as their home language. One hundred one (43.2%) lived in a single parent household or with a single guardian. (Living arrangements are shown in Appendix 4.) All participating students are designated "at-risk" (for not graduating within four years of entering high school) according to the State of Texas' Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS).

Description of sample

Students were included in this study if their student record file contained daily point sheet data for 20 school days (4 weeks) or more. Of the 226 students, 186 were in the treatment group (TG) and 40 were in the comparison group (CG). The two groups were similar in demographic composition.

The difference between the numbers of males and females was not significant (Chi Square 1.129, *p*=.29). The ethnic composition of the CG was similar to that of the TG (Chi Square .135, *p*=.94). The mean grade level for both groups was grade 9. The demographic frequencies of the study sample are shown in Table 5.

TABLE 5
Demographics of Study Sample

	Treatment Group		Comparison Group	
	Number of students	% of students	Number of Students	% of students
Gender				
Male	135	71.8	32	80.0
Female	53	28.2	8	20.0
Ethnicity				
Black	66	35.1	15	37.5
Hispanic	37	19.7	7	17.5
White	85	45.2	18	45.0
Grade Level				
6	15	8.1	3	7.5
7	25	13.4	4	10.0
8	34	18.3	7	17.5
9	41	22.0	14	35.0
10	31	16.7	4	10.0
11	19	10.2	6	15.0
12	21	11.3	2	5.0

Descriptive statistics relative to DAEP placement are given in Table 5. The mean

length of placement was 47.02 days. The mean number of referrals students had

prior to DAEP placement was .54. After placement, students tended to have

fewer referrals (m=.25, SD=.43). Also included in Table 6 are repeat placements

during the current year (m=.14) and during other school years (m=.25). The

mean number of weeks attended was 6.89.

TABLE 6
Mean (and Standard Deviation) of Placement and Referral Variables

	Mean	SD
Length of placement	47.02	25.31
2 months pre-placement referrals	.54	.50
2 months post-placement referrals	.25	.43
Repeat placement(s) during current school year?	.14	.35
Placements multiple school years	.25	.43
Number of weeks attended	6.89	1.30

Forty-seven percent of the sample had no discipline referrals in the two

months prior to placement in the DAEP. However, there was no significant

difference in the two groups' rates of pre-placement discipline referrals (Chi

Square .185, p=.67). In the sample group, more than 75% had no discipline

referrals in the two months following release from the DAEP. Details of these

data are provided in Table 7.

TABLE 7
Number of Referrals in 2 Months Prior to Placement

		TG	CG	Total
0	Number of cases	86	17	105
	%	46.2	42.5%	46.1%
1 or more	Number of cases	100	23	123
	%	53.8	57.5%	53.9%
	Total	186	40	226
	%	100	100.0%	100.0%

There are sixteen placement offenses (reasons for placement) represented in the sample. The most common placement offense was multiple referrals (41.2%). Multiple referrals means the student has been referred to the principal's office for discipline more than once during the school year. The placement offenses included in this study are listed in Appendix 5.

The number of days students are placed in the DAEP is determined in the district's Student Code of Conduct according to three factors: the severity of the offense, whether self-defense was involved, and if the student has had prior placements in DAEP. The three school districts involved in the current study use the same guidelines for length of placement. Length of placement in this study ranged from 20 days to 95 days; the most common length of placement (28.4%) was 30 days. The CG placements (m=49.73) were generally longer than the TG placements (m=45.01).

Data collection

Five types of placement data were collected for this study: discipline history for two months prior to placement (PR2), daily point sheet data during the placement (WK*n*), discipline referrals for two months after release (PO2), and additional DAEP placements (RC and MY). Data describing each student's disciplinary history two months prior to placement as well as two months following release from the DAEP was extracted from the sending school's PEIMS Data Report. For tracking behavior while in placement, the DAEP uses a system of points (see Appendix 3) to determine whether the student has fulfilled his or her assigned days of placement in its program.

Behavior in the classroom was observed and documented by teachers and staff and recorded on the daily point sheet. Each time a student engaged in maladaptive behaviors (e.g., noncompliant with teacher instruction, defiant, off-task) the behaviors were recorded along with the time of day and the intervention applied. Each student's behavior was noted on the student's daily point sheet (Appendix 3). The daily point sheet, completed for each student every day while in the DAEP, recorded the number of points earned, student behaviors, and any interventions or redirections applied. Students began the day with a perfect 16 points, with points being deducted by the teacher for violations of classroom procedures and rules; students whose scores fell below 12 (75%) were not given credit for the day (e.g., a student with a 30 day placement, whose first day score is 11, still has 30 days left to serve).

A copy of the daily point sheet was sent home with the student each day. The student was required to return the daily point sheet, signed by the parent or guardian the following day. Daily point sheet data were collected on all students who were enrolled at the DAEP for 20 days (four weeks) or more. The number of disciplinary referrals each student in the study received was recorded for the two months prior to placement and for the two months after release to home campus.

Procedures

The Thinking Errors (TE) program was developed from an adaptation of cognitive behavior group strategy (CBGS) used in the Texas Department of Criminal Justice by counselor Michael Bartos, LPC. Bartos began working with individual students at the DAEP in 2003, using the thinking errors approach. During that time, Mr. Bartos helped the DAEP staff adapt the program to fit all DAEP students.

The Thinking Errors (TE) program, consisting of a series of four weekly classes, each about one hour long, was provided to participants in a group setting. Students were introduced to categories of thinking errors, thinking errors we all make, how to recognize thinking errors in themselves and others, and how to correct their thinking (see Appendix 6). Class sessions consisted of direct instruction, modeling, role-playing, and group forum (see Appendix 7). The students were made aware of the mistakes they were choosing to make and were taught to examine the motives behind those choices and their consequences.

Analysis

Descriptive statistics, frequencies, repeated measures, ANOVA, MANCOVA, k-means cluster analysis, and Poisson regression were utilized in analyzing the data to answer the research questions. Ancillary questions were answered using k-means cluster analysis. The level of acceptable significance for this study was set at .05.

Design

The comparison group was comprised of 38 students from the 2003-04 school year who did not receive the intervention. The treatment group consisted of student data from the school years 2004-2005 through 2008-2009. Each student in the TG received the intervention for at least four weeks. The maximum time student in the study received treatment was eight weeks.

The quasi-experimental design had an initial pre-treatment phase, one treatment phase, and one follow-up phase. The pre-treatment phase contained the number of discipline referrals the student received in the two months prior to DAEP placement. The treatment phase was the time a student was in DAEP. The follow-up phase was the two months following return to campus, during which discipline referrals were counted.

The data from the baseline, or pretreatment phase, will be compared to the follow-up phase to see if students received fewer discipline referrals for two months after release from DAEP. The data from the treatment phase will be

examined to see if behavior improves while in DAEP. The results of the data

analysis are presented in Chapter IV.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Research question one

The first research question was: *Does the use of the Thinking Errors program improve student behavior during DAEP placement?*

The initial analysis examined group differences in weekly point averages by week. Daily point sheet scores were averaged to get a weekly point average for each student for each week that student attended. The means of the pre-placement referrals, weekly point averages, and post-placement referrals for the two groups are shown in Table 8. Differences between the treatment group (TG) and the comparison group (CG) were examined on a week by week basis. The eight ANOVAs (shown in Table 9) revealed no statistically significant differences between the two groups.

TABLE 8
Mean Weekly Point Averages, Pre-placement Referrals, and Post-placement Referrals by Group

Group		WK1	WK2	WK3	WK4	WK5	WK6	WK7	WK8	PR2	PO2
TG	Mean	14.59	13.83	13.56	13.60	13.56	13.43	13.63	12.73	1.33	.51
	SD	1.82	2.46	3.21	3.24	3.33	3.44	3.04	4.30	1.78	1.25
CG	Mean	14.76	14.46	14.33	13.89	14.06	14.13	13.73	13.12	1.50	.80
	SD	1.92	2.22	1.72	2.17	2.29	2.08	3.15	3.63	1.74	1.40

TG=Treatment group; CG=Comparison group.

TABLE 9
ANOVA: Weekly Point Averages by Group

Week	Differences	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
WK1 * GR	Between Groups	1	1.05	.31	.57
	Within Groups	224	3.38		
WK2 * GR	Between Groups	1	13.05	2.23	.14
	Within Groups	224	5.87		
WK3 * GR	Between Groups	1	19.54	2.16	.14
	Within Groups	224	9.05		
WK4 * GR	Between Groups	1	2.77	.29	.59
	Within Groups	224	9.51		
WK5 * GR	Between Groups	1	8.26	.83	.36
	Within Groups	211	9.98		
WK6 * GR	Between Groups	1	12.53	1.18	.28
	Within Groups	182	10.60		
WK7 * GR	Between Groups	1	.19	.02	.89
	Within Groups	142	9.32		
WK8 * GR	Between Groups	1	2.26	.13	.72
	Within Groups	109	17.66		

To examine potential change in student behaviors over time, a repeated measures MANCOVA was run with weekly point averages at week 1, week 3, and week 5, with the number of pre-placement referrals (PR2) as a covariate.

One main effect (time) was statistically significant, Wilks' Lambda = .871, F

(2,209) = 15.413, p<.01, Eta sq. = .13. This means that of all the variables, time

spent in DAEP was the only factor that had any effect on the behavior, as

reported by the weekly point sheet averages, of DAEP students.

The majority of participants attended at least five weeks, but to see if the

results changed when looking at students who attended eight weeks, the same

analysis was run using weeks 1, 4, and 8. The results were similar: Wilks'

Lambda = .731, F(2,107) = 19.66, p<.01, Eta sq. = .27. This suggests that both

groups changed over time (they lost about one point on average) but this change

was probably not clinically or practically significant.

Research question two

Does the treatment (Thinking Errors program) improve student behavior

after completion of DAEP placement?

To answer this question, Poisson regression was used. Two variables,

number of referrals during the two months before placement (PR2) and number

of referrals for a two month period after returning to their home campus (PO2)

were both specified as count data which follows a Poisson distribution. A

grouping variable (treatment group or comparison group) was also included as

an independent variable. Thus, the complete model was: number of referrals

before placement (IV1) and group (treatment or control) (IV2) predicting number

of referrals after returning to home campus (DV).

The results are shown in Table 10, which indicates that the number referrals before placement predicted the number of referrals after returning to their home campus and that the group variable (treatment or comparison group) was not a statistically significant predictor of number of referrals post-placement. The fact that the group variable does not make a difference means that group membership was not predictive of post-placement referrals.

TABLE 10
Poisson Regression: Pre-placement Referrals and Group Predicting Number of Post-placement Referrals

Variable	Estimate	S.E.	Estimate/S.E.	P
Pre-placement referrals	.23	.06	3.90	.01
Group	.36	.32	1.12	.26

Ancillary questions

Does the number of weeks attended predict the number of post-placement referrals?

To answer this question, a Poisson regression was run using the number of referrals during the two months before placement (PR2) and number of weeks attended (NW) as independent variables and the number of referrals for a two month period after returning to their home campus (PO2) as the dependent variable. The results are shown in Table 11, which indicates that the number of

weeks attended is not a statistically significant predictor of the number of

referrals post placement. This implies that there was not any difference in post-

placement referrals based on how long the student attended DAEP.

TABLE 11
Poisson Regression: Pre-placement Referrals and Number of Weeks Attended Predicting Number of Post-placement Referrals

Variable	Estimate	S.E.	Estimate/S.E.	P
Pre-placement Referrals	.222	.057	3.873	0.01
Number of weeks attended	-0.062	0.100	-0.622	0.534

Are there identifiable groups of students, according to their weekly point averages, pre-placement referrals, and post-placement referrals, who have different outcomes in DAEP and after release?

 K-mean cluster analysis was performed on the whole sample as well as

on the TG and the CG separately. The following variables were analyzed: weekly

point averages for weeks 1, 4, and 8, and the number of pre- and post-

placement referrals. Two-, three-, and four-cluster solutions were run.

Three criteria were used to determine how many clusters to produce: 1)

sufficient number of cases in each cluster, 2) interpretable results, and 3)

parsimony—the smallest number of clusters that will still allow for group differences. Using these criteria, two clusters were justifiable. Two patterns emerged that were consistent across the sample as a whole as well as the TG and the CG separately.

Cluster 1 students (N=188, 83.2%) had an average of one pre-placement referral and weekly point averages that were high and stable (between 14.52 and 15.11). Cluster 2 students (N=38, 16.8%) had an average of 3 pre-placement referrals and weekly point averages that tended to decline (12.17 for WK1 falling to 5.8 for WK8). Both clusters averaged one post-placement referral.

Based on the cluster analysis, there are two identifiable groups of students who attend DAEP. Cluster 1 students had weekly point averages (weeks 1, 4, and 8) that ranged from 14.52 to 15.11; Cluster 2 weekly point averages ranged from 5.8 to 12.17. Students in Cluster 1 had an average of 1.24 pre-placement referrals and .56 post-placement referrals. For Cluster 2 students, pre- and post-placement referrals were 1.95 and .53 respectively. Both clusters averaged just less than 7 weeks of DAEP attendance. The two clusters are similar in demographic makeup in all demographic variables except gender and on probation. Cluster 2 is 90% male and 25% on probation. The sample (n=226) was 73% male and 20.8% on probation. There was no other variability between clusters.

The intervention (TE) given to students in this study did not have any statistically significant effect on student behavior either while in DAEP or for two

months after their return to the home campus. However, two factors emerged

that were found to predict the number of post-placement referrals: the number of

pre-placement referrals a student received and a pattern of behavior while in

DAEP found in the cluster analyses.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION AND SUMMARY

Introduction

The purpose of this research was to investigate the effectiveness

of a cognitive behavioral intervention, Thinking Errors (TE) program, in changing

the behavior of Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP) students in a

small cooperative DAEP in Central Texas. A review of the literature was

conducted to form a basis for this study, and to describe current research within

the DAEP context. This chapter will provide discussion of the results, limitations,

and implications for further research, as well as recommendations for DAEP

reform.

Students who were given the TE intervention (TG) were compared with

data from students in a previous year who were not given the TE intervention

(CG). Data was collected from the school years 2003-04 through 2008-09. The

study focused on potential change in behavior during two time periods: during

DAEP placement and for two months following the students' return to their home

campuses.

Results

The first research question addressed was: Does the use of the Thinking

Errors (TE) program improve student behavior during DAEP placement? Using

weekly point averages as a benchmark for student behavior while in DAEP, the

current study found that mean scores from both groups were fairly stable across the eight weeks. These results revealed no statistically significant differences between the treatment group and the comparison group on behavior in the DAEP week by week.

Both the TG and the CG had similar behavior trends while in DAEP. The scores of both groups averaged a drop of about 1 point from week 1 through week 8, indicating that behavior while in DAEP stayed the same or got slightly worse. Technically, a drop of one point replicated the results of the Randle (2008) study, in which student behavior during placement in a DAEP worsened. However, the scores in the present study were more stable.

These findings indicate that the TE program did not improve student behavior during DAEP placement. This lack of improvement could likely be due to the specific characteristics of the DAEP population, such as being academically below grade level, or the structure of the DAEP program. DAEP facilities are set up to minimize student interaction. The atmosphere in a DAEP is also very quiet, with only the white noise provided by the hum of a network server or air conditioning system. These conditions may be calming to some students, but a student who acts out in such an environment is likely to disrupt everyone in the room.

Students in DAEPs are placed there because of discipline problems, so the typical DAEP student generally does not respond positively to classroom rules. In fact, 41.2% of DAEP placements in this study were made for persistent

or repeated discipline problems. It would seem natural for such a student population to continue to have behavior problems in a new setting.

The abrupt change from the regular campus where there is freedom of movement to the DAEP where students are not allowed to get out of their chair or speak without permission gives occasion for some students to resist or challenge the new constraints. The highly structured DAEP with its detailed procedures leaves little margin for error in behavior without redirection. Every behavior and problem is documented; not much goes unnoticed as might happen in the regular classroom where there are a lot more students.

The next question this study addressed was: Does the treatment (TE) improve student behavior after completion of DAEP placement? Group membership (treatment or comparison) did not predict number of post-placement referrals. This suggests that the TE program did not change student behavior in the two months following return to their home campus. In contrast, the only variable found to be predictive of post-placement referrals was pre-placement referrals.

The lack of effect of the TE program on behavior implies three possibilities. The first is that the TE program was either not long enough in duration or was provided too infrequently. One hour given once a week may not have been enough, especially for students who stayed in DAEP for only four weeks. The second possibility is that the environment in which the intervention was given was so different from the regular classroom that the effects, if any, did

not generalize to the new setting. A third implication is that the study sample was so variable that it was difficult to obtain good outcomes using one treatment for all students.

There were two follow up questions. These questions were explored using the entire sample, because no differences were found comparing the TG and the CG. The first question examined whether there was a dose response effect - that is, does more time at the DAEP predict better outcomes? So the question asked was: Does the number of weeks attended predict the number of post-placement referrals? The results of the analysis indicated that the number of weeks students attended the DAEP did not predict the number of referrals post-placement.

The second follow up question was: Are there identifiable groups of students, according to their weekly point averages, pre-placement referrals, and post-placement referrals? This analysis produced two clusters that were consistent across the whole sample, as well as both the TG and the CG when analyzed separately.

The first cluster consisted of students who behaved better while in DAEP, but averaged the same number of post-placement referrals as pre-placement. The typical Cluster 1 student is compliant while in DAEP and earns the required points and days, but returns to campus to receive referrals at the same rate as he or she did before placement. Cluster 1 students may have learned how comply with DAEP rules and procedures well enough to complete the placement

and return to campus, but their behavior improvements did not generalize to the regular classroom. These would be the students whose weekly point averages were between 14 and 15, and who had one or more post-placement referrals. If behavior improvements did not carry over to the regular classroom, the placement only had a temporary effect—that of respite for the teacher and classroom.

Students in the second cluster had lower weekly point averages while in DAEP, indicating that the Cluster 2 student generally had difficulty following the rules in DAEP. Behavior problems in DAEP may include repeatedly turning to look around the classroom, or other violation of procedures, or it could be arguing with the teacher about whether or not the student was off task. These behaviors would likely prevent the student from receiving credit for the day. In other words, the student came to school and stayed all day, but did not receive credit for it. This experience, while frustrating for the student, may have reduced some resistance the student had to the authority of teachers. For some students, just the fact that they lose the freedom to get up and move around and the freedom to talk whenever they wish is enough to help them make better behavior choices once they do return to their regular campus. The negative experience of being in DAEP, and not doing well there, made the regular classroom routine, by contrast, easier to cope with without getting into trouble (medicine-ball or ankle weights effect). Any or all of these experiences could account for Cluster 2 students averaging fewer referrals after placement than

before. If the goal of DAEP is improving behavior once back on the home campus, the goal was met in the Cluster 2 student.

In this analysis, demographic composition of Cluster 2 differed from Cluster 1 and the study sample population in terms of gender, and whether the student was on probation. Cluster 2 contained a higher percentage (90%) of male students than either Cluster 1 (81.9%) or the study sample (73%). Students on probation comprised 25% of Cluster 2, 18.1% of Cluster 1, and 20.8% of the study sample. Cluster 2 also had a higher percentage of students being placed in DAEP in multiple years. These differences will need further investigation.

In order to determine if other factors had significant impact on the formation of these student cluster groups, different combinations of variables were used in the cluster analysis. Using only the number of post-placement referrals resulted in 205 students who averaged 0 post-placement referrals and 21 students in a cluster who averaged 4. Classifying by using pre- and post-placement referrals, and weekly point averages from weeks 1, 4, 8, resulted in 188 students with weekly point averages in the 14-15 range and a net referral change of 1 (from 1 pre to 0 post) and 38 with lower weekly point averages and a net referral change of 1 (from 2 pre to 1 post). Classifying by only the pre- to post-placement referral difference produced 168 students with no net change in the number of referrals and 58 students who had an average of 3 referrals before placement and 0 referrals when returning to the home campus.

The cluster analyses could be helpful in designing interventions better suited to meeting the needs of different kinds of students. In order to do that, all variables that differ between clusters should be investigated. These results merit further study to determine why males and probationers are more likely to fit this profile, and whether students following the Cluster 2 profile are more likely to have repeated DAEP placements.

Limitations

The current study was limited in size and scope. The sole source of data was one small DAEP; follow up data was limited to two months before and after placement. Results may have limited generalizability because of group composition, inefficient instrumentation, differential treatment, and inconsistently applied placement criteria.

Results may have limited generalizability in other settings because of the unique qualities of the sample group. The study sample was from a small rural DAEP located in an area of low socio-economic status. A small study sample may not point out generalized behavior as well as a larger group.

The point system that does little more than encouraging rule-following may not be the best way for tracking behavior while in DAEP. Count data from pre-placement referrals is not sufficient for use as a baseline, and measuring behavior after return to campus with only count data (number of referrals) is not practical for documenting successful outcomes. A more specific variable, perhaps scores from the mental health screening and/or a behavior rating scale

used as a pre-test and a post-test, would be useful in determining if improvement has been made.

This study does not account for teachers or administrators who differentiate between their students who have been served at the DAEP and those who have not. There seems to be a group of students who are placed in DAEP every year one or more times. Once a student has been placed in DAEP, and returns to his or her home campus, there could be an expectation in the minds of teachers and administrators for this student to continue to have behavior problems. Under these expectations, given equal behavior of a former-DAEP student and a student who has never been to DAEP, the former-DAEP student may be more likely to receive discipline referrals for behavior violations.

A factor that may contribute to the problem of differential treatment of students is the ambiguity of placement policy. The decision whether to place, as well as length of placement can be subjective and vague. Variability in guidelines for sending students to DAEP makes it difficult to match the treatment to the student.

School districts involved in the DAEP cooperative had varying placement policies. For example, some schools placed students in DAEP after the first fight, and some after the second fight. In addition, it is not known if any placement guidelines were consistently applied to all students.

Recommendations

The results of this study revealed potential for program improvements and implications for further studies. In addition, findings may serve to direct researchers to more appropriate methods of data analysis. This section will present recommendations for program reform and future research and data analysis.

Implications for program reform

Several changes in DAEP standards, policies, and programs could prove helpful in positively affecting the behavior and outcomes of DAEP students. Lack of consistency in the state requirements for reporting DAEP student data, outdated, obsolete, non-research-based programs models and methods of behavior tracking seem to be pointing to the need for DAEP program reform. Possible changes to state DAEP reporting standards, DAEP structure, and methods of tracking the behavior and outcomes of DAEP students need to be explored.

It would be helpful in the analysis of Texas DAEP data if the state of Texas would adopt statewide standards involving placement, test score reporting and long term follow up. Legislation requiring more uniform reporting of DAEP data would allow future research that could better track DAEP student outcomes. Better tracking could lead to the development of DAEP programs that have a more positive impact on student behaviors.

A change in the way DAEPs track daily student behavior is needed. Baseline behavior scales may be obtained from screening instruments used in the intake that screen for variables such as social skill deficits and depression. Different outcome variables may be better able to track behavioral progress. Maybe a composite variable consisting of behavior points as a foundation, a score for amount of work and grades, and an attitude/social skills rating could be used for evaluating placement days served and for tracking behavior progress. More qualitative data producing a numeric "virtual portfolio" for each student may increase the validity of student as well as intervention success.

The stark difference between the DAEP setting and the regular classroom makes for an abrupt change when students return to campus. A transition period is needed during the first days or weeks after the student returns to the home campus. Careful supervision by DAEP and regular campus staff could help solidify new or improved behaviors. Newly established behavior improvements could also reduce the incidence of differential treatment of former DAEP students.

Another change that deserves attention is the potential for involving the student's family in the DAEP process. The student's family should be involved in the whole DAEP placement. Like any new academic skill, newly acquired behavior skills need to be practiced at home in order to become established. Efforts to change behaviors that have been established for perhaps years must be supported by the home environment.

One way that schools involve families is by having an evening meeting that provides the evening meal and on-site babysitting. At such a meeting, there may be a discussion that focuses on student behavior in school. The topic could include thinking errors that most people make and how to correct them. There are many different ways to include families, but any method that helps the family to become involved may benefit the student as well as the family.

The issue of differential treatment of students is a critical issue that needs immediate attention. Professional and paraprofessional staff should receive training aimed at promoting equitable treatment of students in classroom behavior issues and limiting the risk of having lower expectations for at-risk students (e.g., "He's been to AEP twice already. He will probably end up dropping out."). Reducing the number of students being "pushed out" by differential treatment or having their risk factors compounded could pay big dividends in student achievement and graduation rates.

Implications for future research

The current study revealed several topics for future research that may prove useful in the outcomes of DAEP students. Larger study samples, longer pre-placement behavior history windows of time and post-placement follow-up may be needed. The use of some type of clustering analyses on DAEP populations may also lead to the development of interventions that are more suited to individual DAEP students.

A larger study sample could provide sufficient cases for disaggregation of data by population demographics. Future studies could include data from a larger variety of DAEP settings. Urban, suburban, and rural areas, areas of affluence as well as poorer areas, and different regions of Texas could be included.

The pre-placement window of time could be expanded to 6 months or more in order to identify possible antecedents of behavior problems. Academic progress of students who have attended DAEPs should be compared with their pre-placement progress. Standardized test scores of DAEP students should be analyzed and compared with those of students who have not been placed in DAEP. DAEP students should be followed until graduation where possible in order to measure the effect of DAEP placement on graduation/dropout rates.

Cluster analysis could be helpful as a way to study this population. If clusters can be replicated using differing criteria (non-general) in future studies, it would suggest that some students could benefit from a different placement or treatment. Clustering may also reveal significant data about the student for whom the present model of DAEP is not helpful. By obtaining this data, interventions and placements can be designed to better serve each student.

Identification of definitive placement criteria is a critical challenge for future researchers. More clearly defined criteria can lead to better outcomes for students and for schools and resulting data could be better interpreted to improve programs and services. More specific guidelines and more adequate

tracking data will also help avoid over-representation among minority, special education, at-risk, and economically disadvantaged students.

One of the elements of the placement process that needs to be clarified is the definition of persistent misbehavior. There are as many different criteria for determining what persistent misbehavior is as there are campuses. One school state in the student code of conduct that students will be placed in DAEP on the fifth discipline referral in a grading period, while others allow only three, while still others do not specify a number of referrals. Since persistent misbehavior is the most common reason for placement in DAEPs, tightening the criteria for placement for this reason alone would be beneficial.

Alternately, DAEP placements could be made more uniform across the state if schools would commit to sending *only* the mandatory placements. This commitment would also serve another purpose. It would be using DAEP placements for the purpose that they were originally intended, that is, to remove violent or dangerous students from the classroom. All other behavior problems would be handled at the campus level, and since research shows that exclusionary disciplinary methods (suspension, expulsion, or DAEP placement) actually make a student even more likely to become violent, be incarcerated, or drop out of school, the dropout rate could be reduced (Donoghue, 2004).

Another question that should be asked is, is attempting to correct behavior in one setting by placing a student in a completely different setting counterproductive? Even if a student's behavior improves while in DAEP, what

benefit is there if his or her behavior back on campus remains problematic? Yet that is exactly what happened in cluster one students.

As mentioned earlier, this study replicated the results of the Randle (2008) study. In that study, all subjects had an increase in behavior problems *during* placement in DAEPs using the Boys' Town Educational Model (BTEM) point system of measuring behavior. So the next question is, why did student behavior worsen during placement in DAEP? Is it because DAEP rules are stricter or regular school rules are less strict or less clear? Do we need different rules for both settings? If not, then why are they different? Why are we trying to teach one set of skills (for getting along in regular school) by sending them to learn and practice a completely different set of skills in a totally different setting?

Are some students "pushed out" based on at-risk factors or behavior? Are some students "marked" with low behavioral and social expectations from the earliest grades (by administrators, principals, and teachers) as the "student most likely" to go to DAEP/drop out/go to prison? How do these low expectations manifest in teacher behavior, and how do they influence student behavior? These questions are not answerable in this study, but should be examined in future research.

Future research needs

In this study, it was noted that the point system and the number of pre- and post-placement referrals were crude indicators of behavior before, during,

and after DAEP placement. Additional variables should be tracked to see what other characteristics or specific behaviors influence student success in school.

When the State of Texas first addressed the issue of students "at-risk" of not graduating from high school, academic remediation programs were developed, with additional funding coming from state and federal governments. Pre-kindergarten was extended to full day and its eligibility expanded. Summer school programs were provided free for those who did not pass standardized tests. However, none of these interventions targeted the *causes* or the *effects* of these risk factors, nor did they prevent differential treatment in schools from *compounding* the risk factors a student already had.

Since research shows that separating students from their regular classroom, either by suspension, expulsion, or placement in DAEP, actually increases the likelihood that the student will drop out of school, become violent, or go to jail (Donoghue, 2004). Are these implications for restructuring high schools to meet the needs of these students? It is a possibility that the current structure of public secondary school (i.e., one classroom for each subject taught, and one teacher to stand and lecture) must be examined. Maybe high schools should have alternative schools on their campuses.

Some risk factors occurring primarily in the lower grades, such as performing unsatisfactorily on a readiness or assessment test, being retained in a grade one or more school year, or having limited English proficiency should be aggressively addressed by collaboration between the school and the family.

Risk factors occurring more at the secondary level (failing two or more foundation subjects, being pregnant or a parent, or being on parole or probation), on the other hand may be mitigated by alternative schools and community programs. No child being labeled "at-risk" needs to have other risk factors piled on just because nothing was done to compensate for the "original" risk factor.

While using clustering to find trends in DAEP student characteristics, it became apparent that some students could benefit from a different intervention than the program (TE) in the current study. If so, then students could receive different interventions that may be more suited to their individual needs, such as learning pro-social skills or anger management.   Screening instruments for use in placement interviews could guide placement decisions or intervention selection. For instance, a rubric that rates hostility to authority may be helpful in designing interventions more suited to the individual student. Future studies may need to evaluate other outcome variables.

DAEP best practices cited by McCreight (1999) include a transitional component, counseling, and the goal of success in the mainstream program after return to the home campus. Future research should look at transition programs for students re-entering the home campus population. When students are placed back in the regular setting, which is very different from the DAEP, the skills they have acquired in the highly structured setting may not readily generalize to the home campus. For example, at the home campus there are times of movement between classes where students are not closely supervised

by teachers, whereas at the DAEP, movement is restricted, and always closely monitored (external controls). Students who have not developed an internal locus of control could conceivably do well in a structured DAEP, but not on the home campus. There is a need for a transition time to bridge the gap going from strict and structured to more relaxed and loosely structured in order for students to further establish their new behavior skills.

Some students may not fare well in the "mix" at regular school because of lack of self-confidence, poverty, ADD, immaturity, impulsivity, or distractibility issues that are ignored by school administrators. If these students' behavior and academics improve in the DAEP setting, maybe the regular classroom is not the best place for them to learn. These students may need a protected, structured environment on a more permanent basis. Maybe failure in the regular classroom is a cause, and not a result, of behavior problems.

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APPENDIX 1

AT-RISK FACTORS

1. Is a pre-kindergarten, kindergarten or 1st, 2nd or 3rd grade student who did not perform satisfactorily on a readiness test or assessment instrument administered during the current school year;

2. Is in grade 7-12 and did not maintain an average equivalent to 70 on a scale of 100 in two or more subjects in the foundation curriculum during a semester in the preceding or current school year or is not maintaining such an average in two or more subjects in the foundation curriculum in the current semester;

3. Was not advanced from one grade level to the next for one or more school years;

4. Did not perform satisfactorily on an assessment instrument administered to the student under Subchapter B, Chapter 39 and who has not in the previous or current school year subsequently performed on that instrument or another appropriate instrument at a level to at least 110 percent of the level of satisfactory performance on the instrument;

5. Is pregnant or is a parent;

6. Has been placed in an alternative education program in accordance with Section 37.006 during the preceding or current school year;

7. Has been expelled in accordance with Section 37.007 during the current or preceding school year;

8. Is currently on parole, probation, deferred prosecution, or other conditional release;

9. Was previously reported through the PEIMS to have dropped out of school;

10. Is a student of limited English proficiency;

11. Is in the custody of care of the Department of Protective and Regulatory Services or has during the current school year, been referred to the department by a school official, officer of the juvenile court, or law enforcement official;

12. Is homeless as defined by 42 U.S.C. Section 11302 or

13. Resided in the preceding school year or resides in the current school year in a residential placement facility in the district including a detention facility, substance abuse facility, emergency shelter, psychiatric hospital, halfway house or foster group home.

APPENDIX 2

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP) Placement
A student who is expelled for an offense that otherwise would have resulted in a DAEP placement does not have to be placed in DAEP in addition to the expulsion. In deciding whether to order placement in a DAEP, the district will take into consideration:
1. Self-defense,
2. Intent or lack of intent at the time the student engaged in the conduct, and
3. The student's disciplinary history.

Discretionary Placement That May Result in DAEP Placement
A student **may** be placed in a DAEP for behaviors prohibited in the General Conduct Violations section of this Code.

Misconduct Identified in State Law
In accordance with state law, a student **may** be placed in a DAEP for any one of the following offenses:
- Involvement in a public school fraternity, sorority, or secret society, including participating as a member or pledge, or soliciting another person to become a pledge or member of a public school fraternity, sorority, or secret society, or gang.
- Involvement in criminal street gang activity.
- Any criminal mischief, including a felony.

In accordance with state law, a student **may** be placed in a DAEP if the superintendent or the superintendent's designee has reasonable belief that the student has engaged in conduct punishable as a felony, other than those listed as offenses involving injury to a person in Title 5 of the Texas Penal Code, that occurs off school property and not at a school-sponsored or school-related event, if the student's presence in the regular classroom threatens the safety of other students or teachers or will be detrimental to the educational process. The appropriate administrator **may**, but is not required to, place a student in a DAEP for off-campus conduct for which DAEP placement is required by state law if the administrator does not have knowledge of the conduct before the first anniversary of the date the conduct occurred.

General Guidelines for Assessing Discipline

Level I Offenses

Level I acts of misconduct include repeated infractions of classroom management procedures or rules, or other misconduct that disrupts the educational process to the extent that the classroom teacher needs administrative support to correct the problem.

The following is a nonexclusive list of behavior infractions:
a.   Being tardy to class.
b.   Refusing to follow classroom rules.
c.   Refusing to participate in classroom activities or fulfill assignments.
d.   Failure to bring appropriate material to class.
e.   Possessing and/or using nuisance items.
f.   Eating, drinking, or gum chewing in an undesignated area.
g.   Disruption of the orderly classroom process (minor).
h.   Running, making excessive noise, or other disruptions in halls, buildings, classrooms, or other supervised settings.
i.   Public Display of Affection (PDA).

Level I Disciplinary Options

Any one or any combination of consequences may be used:
a.   Teacher/student or administrator/student conference.
b.   Parent conference or call.
c.   In-class disciplinary action or assignment.
d.   Withdrawal of student privileges.
e.   Detention.
f.   Counselor/student conference
g.   Confiscation of nuisance items or materials.
h.   Supervised campus service assignment.
i.   Corporal Punishment

Level II Offenses

When a student's behavior does not change as a result of action taken on Level I, and the student is being seen in the principal's office for repeated Level I infractions, the student is moved to Level II for discipline purposes.

Level II Disciplinary Options

Any one or any combination may be applied:
a.   Any combination of teacher, principal or appropriate administrator, parent and student conference.
b.   Any discipline technique outlined in Level I.
c.   In-school suspension

Level III Offenses

Level III acts of misconduct include those student infractions, which are somewhat more serious than those in Levels I and II in their effect on the orderly process of the school program. Examples of misconduct include but are not limited to the following:

a. Cheating or copying the work of another student.
b. Leaving the classroom, building, grounds, or assigned activity without permission.
c. Cutting class or other scheduled activity.
d. Violation of the dress code.
e. Using profane, obscene, indecent, or racially or ethnically offensive language and/or physical gestures to other students.
f. Failure to comply with directives given by school personnel.
g. Truancy.
h. Altering school records or documents, or forgery of a name on school documents.
i. Vandalism to or defacing school property.
j. Excessive absences or tardies.
k. Inappropriately engaging in acts of familiarity with other students.
l. Use or display of electronic paging device(s), cellular telephones or laser pointers.
m. Throwing or irresponsible use of objects that can cause bodily injury or damage to property.
n. Possession or use of tobacco products.
o. Exhibiting any unacceptable or unwanted physical contract that could but does not result injury.
p. Recklessness in an automobile.
q. Possessing material that is pornographic.
r. Possession of a paint gun.
s. Using the Internet to threaten students, employees, or cause disruption to the educational program.
t. Sending or posting messages that are abusive, obscene, sexually oriented, threatening, harassing, damaging, to another's reputation, or illegal.
u. Disruption of the orderly classroom process (severe).

Level III Disciplinary Options

Any one or any combination of the following may be applied:

a. Any combination of teacher, principal or appropriate administrator, student and parent conference.
b. Grade penalty for copying or cheating.
c. Detention.
d. Exclusion from extracurricular activities.
e. In-school suspension.

f. Corporal Punishment
g. Restoration and/or restitution as applicable.
h. Withdrawal of selected student privileges.
i. Supervised campus service assignment.
j. Saturday School.
k. Citation by law enforcement personnel.
l. Alternative Education Placement (DAEP).

Level IV Offenses

Level IV offenses include those acts of misconduct that seriously disrupt the educational process, endanger or seriously affect other students, and perhaps violate the law. Examples include but are not limited to the following:

a. Any repeated offense of Level III, or a new violation while being disciplined for a Level III offense.
b. Repeated acts of disobedience or disorderly behavior, which may prove to be detrimental to the school, harmful to health and safety, or inhibiting to the rights of others.
c. Being disrespectful toward school personnel or refusing to comply with lawful request or directions of school personnel.
d. Threats, oral or written, to do bodily harm to another, or to the property of the school district.
e. Interfering with school authorities or school programs through boycotts, sit-ins, or trespassing.
f. Fighting, which is defined as physical conflict between two or more individuals. A fight has occurred if a student who is attacked strikes back. To avoid penalty, a student under attack should seek to detach himself/herself from the situation and get school personnel or adult help.
g. Stealing, robbery, extortion, gambling, or arson.
h. Using profane, obscene, indecent, immoral, or offensive language and/or gestures directed toward school personnel.
i. Failure to comply with assigned disciplinary consequences.
j. Possessing a device, object, or substance that could cause bodily harm to individuals in any school setting.
k. Failure to report to school personnel the knowledge of an event, device, object, or substances that could cause bodily harm to individuals in any school setting, or that could cause destruction to school property.
l. Possession, use, or distribution of any substances represented to be a drug or alcohol.
m. Possession, or use of tobacco products.
n. Indecent exposure, sexual misconduct, and/or sexual harassment.
o. Hazing.
p. Gang-related behavior or activity, or gang membership.

q. Possession of drug paraphernalia.
r. Burglary of a school facility or major vandalism to District property.
s. Posting or distributing unauthorized communicative materials on school premises.
t. Assault.
u. Placing or discharging fireworks.
v. Pledges to join, solicit membership in a public school fraternity, sorority, secret society, or gang as defined in TEC 37.121.

Level IV Disciplinary Options
Any one or any combination of the following may be applied:
a. Any discipline technique outlined in Level III.
b. Citation by law enforcement personnel.
c. Alternative education placement.
d. Reassignment of classes.
e. A student 10 years of age or older may be expelled if the student:
1. Continues to engage in serious or persistent misbehavior that violates the code of conduct or DAEP classroom rules while placed in a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program for disciplinary reasons.
2. Engages in criminal mischief under Penal Code 28.03, if the conduct is punishable as a felony, whether committed on or off of school property or at a school-related activity, (intentional or knowing damage to school property resulting in a loss of $1,500 or more).
3. Sells, gives, delivers to another person, uses or is under the influence of any amount of marijuana, a controlled substance, a dangerous drug or alcohol, at school or a school sponsored event.
4. Engages in conduct that contains the elements of an offense relating to abusable glue or aerosol paint or volatile chemical while at school or a school sponsored event.

APPENDIX 3

DAILY POINT SHEET

Student Name_____**Date**_____

Red Level Day ____   **Yellow Level Day** ____   **Green Level Day** ____
(MUST HAVE AT LEAST 12 PTS.)   (MUST HAVE AT LEAST 13 PTS.)   (MUST HAVE AT LEAST 14 PTS.)

DAILY SCHEDULE	RR TIMES	POINTS EARNED	COMMENTS
Check-in Procedures	DC PR PS NR OT SW		
8:00 am – 9:00 am			
9:00 am -- 10:00 am			
10:00 am – 11:00 am			
11:00 am - 12:00 pm			
12:00 pm – 1:00 pm			
1:00 pm - 2:00 pm			
2:00 pm - 3:00 pm			
DAILY TOTALS			

DC-dress code PR-procedure PS-point sheet NR-not ready OT-off task   SW-sidewalk

BCDAEP staff comments: _____

Parent Signature_____

Point deductions from release time yesterday_____

APPENDIX 4

LIVING ARRANGEMENTS OF SAMPLE GROUP

Lives with		group		
		TG	CG	Total
Extended family	Count	1	0	1
	%	.5%	.0%	.4%
Father and mother	Count	51	15	66
		27.4%	37.5%	29.2%
Father only	Count	11	3	14
	%	5.9%	7.5%	6.2%
Father and step-mother	Count	15	2	17
	%	8.0%	5.0%	7.5%
Grandfather	Count	3	0	3
	%	1.6%	.0%	1.3%
Grandmother	Count	2	0	2
	%	1.1%	.0%	.9%
Grandparents	Count	4	1	5
	%	2.1%	2.5%	2.2%
Guardian	Count	3	1	4
	%	1.6%	2.5%	1.8%
Mother only	Count	61	14	75
	%	32.4%	35.0%	33.1%
Sibling	Count	1	0	1
	%	.5%	.0%	.4%
Step-father and mother	Count	36	4	40
	%	19.1%	10.0%	17.5%
Total	Count	186	40	226
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

APPENDIX 5

PLACEMENT OFFENSES REPRESENTED IN CURRENT STUDY

Placement offense	Number of Students	Percent
alcohol	9	3.9
arson	1	.4
assault	11	4.8
drugs	24	10.5
felony	18	7.9
fighting	15	6.6
gang-related	4	1.8
sexual misconduct	7	3.1
multiple referrals	94	41.2
possession of pornography	1	.4
theft	10	4.4
tobacco	1	.4
truancy	2	.9
vandalism	6	2.6
threat	18	7.9
weapon	7	3.1

APPENDIX 6

THINKING ERRORS PROGRAM OUTLINE

I.　　Introduction to the nine thinking errors
　　　A. Avoiding the truth
　　　　　1. Deceiving
　　　　　2. Downplaying
　　　　　3. Avoiding
　　　B. Avoiding responsibility for your actions
　　　　　1. Blaming others
　　　　　2. Making excuses
　　　　　3. Acting helpless
　　　　　4. Feeling Special
　　　C. Responding to yourself or others inappropriately
　　　　　1. Jumping to conclusions
　　　　　2. Overreacting

II.　　Recognizing thinking errors
　　　A. In others
　　　B. In yourself

III.　　Recognizing thinking errors in yourself
　　　A. What are the reasons for the thinking error?
　　　B. Did it accomplish what it was meant to do? (get out of trouble,
　　　　　make yourself look good, etc.)

IV.　　Correcting faulty ways of thinking
　　　A. Tell the truth
　　　B. Take responsibility
　　　C. Respond appropriately
　　　D. Evaluate – did you get what you want?

APPENDIX 7

SAMPLE LESSON: INTRODUCTION

Everyone makes errors in thinking. It is human nature to try to make yourself feel better when you make a mistake or do something wrong. However, using one of the thinking errors instead of taking responsibility for your actions takes your focus away from what needs to be changed.

We may call them:	Or:	Some examples:
Deceiving	lying by omission	telling half of the truth
Downplaying	minimizing	"it was just once, no big deal"
Avoiding	deflecting	changing the subject
Blaming others	playing the victim	"everyone is out to get me"
Making excuses	justifying	"it's not my fault the train made me late"
Jumping to conclusions	assuming	mind-reading
Acting helpless	not taking responsibility	"I couldn't help it"
Overreacting	responding disproportionately	"blowing up" at someone
Feeling special	entitlement thinking; "the world owes me"	"the rules don't apply to me"

Worksheet: Daily use of thinking errors (Appendix 8)

Activity:

Write a one-paragraph story using as many thinking errors as you can. Label each thinking error. Choose one of the story starters below:

<u>The reason I missed the bus is….</u>
<u>I don't have my homework because…..</u>
<u>My room is a mess because….</u>
<u>(Or invent your own story starter with the teacher's approval)</u>

Be prepared to share your story with the class. Ask the class to identify the thinking errors you put in your story.

Group discussion: Topics

Why are you here?
Are all your teachers fair?
Why is it so hard to say, "I'm sorry"?
How does your behavior help you get what you want?

Following group rules, discuss the topic, and point out each other's thinking errors during the discussion.

APPENDIX 8

WORKSHEET: DAILY USE OF THINKING ERRORS

After each statement, write in the blank which thinking error you see in them. Some statements may have more than one thinking error in them.

1. It is cold and rainy today. My mom had to scrape ice off the windshield, and she had a hard time getting the car started. That is why I am late. _____

2. You'd be late too if your dad got home from the nightshift at 7:00 in the morning! _____

3. I am here because I need to work on my credits. I am not in trouble, so why should I have to copy the handbook? _____

4. I cannot do this math. I have always been bad at math. I just can't do it._____

5. I was only 1 minute late, so why do I get 2 points off? _____

6. This food is so horrible, if you don't take it away right now, I am going to throw it on the floor! _____

7. I just closed my eyes for a few minutes. I wasn't sleeping._____

8. (When the teacher redirects you from being off task) I was just about to put my tag up and ask a question._____

9. My mom didn't remind me to bring my point sheet today. _____

10. I wasn't sleeping—you can ask that other teacher. _____

11. (Write your own thinking error and tell which type it is.)

APPENDIX 9

NOMENCLATURE

AEIS	Academic Excellence Indicator System
BTEM	Boys' Town Educational Model
CG	Comparison group
DAEP	Disciplinary Alternative Education Program
NCLB	No Child Left Behind Act
PEIMS	Public Education Information Management System
TEA	Texas Education Agency
TEC	Texas Education Code
TG	Treatment group

VITA

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