Introducing Breaks are Better to Parents

**Intervention Overview:**

We want to talk to you about putting **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(insert student name)** in a program called Breaks are Better. This is a plan for us to help **him/her** do better in class by cutting down on problem behavior. The idea is that **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_’s (insert student name)** problem behavior is due to a motivation to avoid doing **his/her** work. Breaks are Better gives **him/her** the chance to take three short breaks each class. This lets **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(insert student name)** step away from **his/her** work in an appropriate way. Also, **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(insert student name)** will have the chance to earn points during the day for being **respectful, responsible, and safe. He/She** can also earn points for taking breaks the right way. Then **he/she** will get to use those points for**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(insert incentive system)**. This point system will encourage **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(insert student name)** to only take **his/her** three short breaks and to take them the right way instead of acting out. The program consists of a few key parts: check-in and check-out with **\_\_\_\_\_\_(insert BrB coordinator name)**, breaks, teacher feedback, a point system, and a home component. Basically, **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(insert student name)** will check-in each morning and receive a point card. During the day **he/she** will use that card to track **his/her** breaks and to get feedback from teachers. **He/She** will get points based on that feedback, and at the end of the day **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(insert BrB coordinator name)** will look over the card with **him/her** at check-out. Finally, **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(insert student name)** will bring the card home for you to see and sign.

**Bringing the Point Card Home**

Now let’s talk about your role in Breaks are Better. Most of the work is done in school. Your only job is to look over **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_’s (insert student name)** Point Card when **he/she** comes home from school. Then you will sign it to show that you have seen it. The Point Card looks like this: [show Point Card]. After **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (insert student name)** shows it to you and you have seen if **he/she** did **his/her** homework, you will sign on the line in this box [indicate parent signature box on Point Card].

We have the home component because we want you to be see how **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (insert student name)** is doing. We also want **him/her** to see that you are excited about **his/her** performance. When you are looking over **his/her** Point Card, be sure to keep your comments brief. Also, try to only give positive or neutral feedback. We don’t want **\_\_\_\_\_\_(insert student name)** to feel like **he/she** is being lectured or criticized. This is meant to be a positive program to encourage good behavior! So even if **he/she** didn’t meet his point goal, try to avoid focusing only on **his/her** problem behavior. Instead, encourage **him/her** to work hard and try again the next day. After you have gone over **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_’s (insert student name)** Point Card with **him/her**, please sign it so we know that **he/she** showed it to you.

**School Component**

Let me explain the rest of the Point Card so that you know what **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(insert student name)** will be doing in school. You can see that next to each class period are three columns that say “0 1 2.” These columns are for marking how well **\_\_\_\_\_\_(insert student name)** did on each of the three expectations and how many points **he/she** earned. **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_’s (insert student name)** teacher will circle whichever number best shows **his/her** behavior for that class. The expectations **he/she** is working on are: **(insert student expectations as well as explanation and example of each)**. So if **he/she** met all of the expectations, the teacher would circle the 2 in each of the 3 columns. If **he/she** did really well on **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(insert expectation 1)** and **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(insert expectation 2)** but had to be prompted several times to meet **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(insert expectation 3)**, then the teacher would circle the 2 in the first and second column and circle the 1 in the third column. If **he/she** didn’t meet an expectation at all, the teacher would circle the 0 for that expectation.

You can also see that the column after the expectations is for “breaks taken the right way.” This is where the teacher can give **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(insert student name)** a point for taking breaks the right way. The teacher can also circle the 1 in this column if **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(insert student name)** doesn’t take any breaks and stays on task.

**Fading Criteria and Phases**

The goal of Breaks are Better is to improve **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_’s (insert student name)** behavior to the point that **he/she** no longer needs the program. **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(insert student name)** will be moving through phases of BrB as **he/she** meets point goals [show fading criteria chart]. So in phase 1, “Full BrB,” **he/she** will need to get teacher ratings at the end of each period. After **he/she** has met **his/her** point goal for 18 out of 20 days, **he/she** will move into phase 2, “BrB Self-Management.” In this phase, **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(insert student name)** will get teacher feedback after every period, but **he/she** will also rate **him/herself**. The goal in this phase is for **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(insert student name)** to better understand **his/her** own needs and behaviors. We want **him/her** to try to rate **him/herself** as closely to how the teacher rated **him/her** as possible. At the end of the period, if the ratings don’t match, **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(insert student name)** and the teacher will talk about the differences in the scores. After **\_\_\_\_\_\_(insert student name)** has met **his/her** point goal for two weeks, **he/she** will move into phase 3, “BrB Self-Management with Decreased Check-ins.” During this phase, **\_\_\_\_\_\_(insert student name)** will rate **him/herself** for all **7** periods. H**e/she** will only get a teacher rating for **4** of the periods. This puts more responsibility on **him/her** to self-monitor. Again, **\_\_\_\_\_\_(insert student name)** needs to meet **his/her** point goals for two weeks to move on to the next phase, “Full BrB Self-Management.” In this phase, the fourth and last phase, **\_\_\_\_\_\_(insert student name)** is in charge of all of **his/her** ratings. **He/She** will not need to get any teacher ratings. **He/she** will rate all **7** periods for **him/herself**, and then **he/she** will check-in and check-out with **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(insert BrB coordinator).** At this point, if **\_\_\_\_\_\_(insert student name)** can meet **his/her** point goals for two more weeks, then we will talk about taking him out of BrB.

**Breaks**

I said that the teacher gives **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (insert student name)** a point for taking breaks the right way. Let me explain the breaks and what it means to ask for them the right way. During each period **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(insert student name)** can take up to three two-minute breaks. **He/She** will have a timer to help **him/her** keep track of how much time is left in each break. When **he/she** is taking one of the breaks, **he/she** needs to stay quiet and not distract **his/her** peers. **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(insert student name)** will have a list of options for what **he/she** can do during the breaks.

One of the important parts of the break system is how **he/she** asks for those breaks. The teachers have been told to only allow breaks when the student asks for it the right way. To ask for a break the right way, **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(Insert student name)** will follow the steps on this card [show Break Request Card; point to steps on card as you explain each one].

* First, **he/she** will raise **his/her** hand with a #1 [model action]**/hold up one of his/her laminated “B” cards**
* Then **he/she** will wait patiently and quietly for the teacher to notice **his/her** request. The teacher will respond to the request with either a “thumbs up” or a “thumbs down.”
* If the teacher gives**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(insert student name)** a “thumbs up,” that means **he/she** is allowed to take a break**.** Then **he/she** should mark off one of the “B’s” on his Point Card**/give the teacher one of the laminated “B” cards in exchange for the break**. **He/she** can then start the timer and do one of the approved activities for **his/her** two-minute break. When the timer goes off, **he/she** is expected to go back to work. If the teacher gives a “thumbs down,” it means that now isn’t a good time to take a break, and **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(insert student name)** needs to stay focused for a bit longer. **He/she** is not supposed to ask for another break for at least two minutes. If **he/she** thinks **he/she** will want the break soon, then **he/she** can set the timer for two minutes and ask for a break again when the timer goes off.

We want **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(insert student name)** to use the program and get better at monitoring **his/her** own needs and behaviors. Therefore, we want the teachers to try to allow breaks whenever they can. If they are in the middle of teaching, though, that is not a good time for **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(insert student name)** to take a break. In that case, the teacher would give a “thumbs-down.” But, if the class is working independently, or **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_’s (insert student name)** break wouldn’t disrupt the class, then it is a good time for a break, and the teacher will try to allow it. Again, we really want this to be a positive intervention that makes **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(insert student name)** want to do the right thing, so positive feedback and giving breaks are really important.

**Questions/Concerns/Comments**

So now that we have talked about Breaks are Better, do you have any questions or concerns?

**Consent**

Do we have your permission to start **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(insert student name)** on the Breaks are Better program?