Chapter 9
Emotional and Behavioral Disorders Students Using Computer-Assisted Devices

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Paul was a 12 year old 6th grader diagnosed as Bipolar, ADHD, and having difficulty controlling impulses. He attended a public school and remained all day in the general education classroom. After trying multiple research-based interventions over a period of weeks, Paul's teacher and the behavior specialist decided to try computer software designed to help him reflect on his behaviors and how his behaviors made others feel.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The presence of students with behavioral disorders is becoming more common in the general education classroom. These students present a challenge to the school and the teacher. EBD is diagnosed in 1% of school age children. The National Research Council and Institute of Medicine of the National Academies published the numbers in Table 1 in 2009.

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Table 1.

DISORDER	PERCENTAGE OF YOUNG PEOPLE AFFECTED
Learning Disorder:	5.0%
Substance use / addiction disorder:	10.3%
Conduct Disorder:	3.5%
Oppositional Defiant Disorder:	2.8%
Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder:	4.5%
Anxiety Disorders (various):	8.0%
Unipolar Disorder:	5.2%
One or more disorders:	17.0%

With laws such as IDEA focusing on the least restrictive environment for these children, teachers who are not trained in working with EBD students face major obstacles, such as students' behavior and finding instructional strategies that work with EBD children. One of the instructional and behavioral strategies that has been scarcely researched, but has shown good results, is using technology such as hand-held computers and computer software developed specifically for EBD children to help them self monitor their behavior.

Many teachers are not trained on how to work with these students. While there are many research-based behavioral interventions available to implement in the classroom, technology has now afforded educators the ability to incorporate innovative interventions using hand-held devices, computers, and computer software. Using these resources to help EBD students self-monitor their behavior in and out of the general education classroom will allow the teacher to teach and the students to learn.

Implementing hand-held devices and computer-assisted instruction will be very beneficial for EBD students, schools, and teachers. Beginning the process can be challenging, but with a few simple adjustments this behavioral and instructional intervention can be integrated into the regular education classroom quickly and efficiently.

Funding for hand-held devices and computer-assisted instruction can come from the school's technology budget. If needed, schools can apply for grants to acquire funds. If the funds are planned into the budget the year prior, it will be easier to purchase hand-held devices; the costs of which can range between $200 to $700 apiece. Typically, schools do not need more than a few hand-held devices.

The devices and other software would be managed by the Special Education department or campus behavior specialists. Students would be trained on the device and/or software. The Special Education department and classroom teacher could