CHAPTER 1

Introduction to Check-In, Check-Out

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS BOOK?

The purpose of this book is to describe a targeted system of positive behavior support called Check-In, Check-Out (CICO): what it is, how it works, who can benefit from it, how it is implemented in a school, and how it can be adapted to meet the needs of certain groups or individuals. The goal of the book is to provide the reader with the rationale, procedures, and tools to (1) determine if the CICO intervention is appropriate for your school and (2) implement a variation of CICO that fits the needs of your school.

The CICO intervention is intended to be one piece of the larger positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS) effort in a school. On a schoolwide level, PBIS is a systematic approach to managing behavior that prioritizes the establishment of a positive school culture to prevent problem behaviors, the efficient and timely implementation of research-based interventions to respond to problem behaviors, the accessibility of a continuum of comprehensive interventions and supports to meet students' needs, and the use of data to guide decision making (Sugai & Horner, 2008). Research conducted on PBIS has found that schools are able to implement PBIS effectively, and that PBIS improves school climate, reduces the occurrence of problem behaviors, and improves students' academic and social outcomes (Sugai & Horner, 2008). Schools that have effective and complete systems of PBIS in place address three levels of behavioral need:

1. *Tier 1: Universal support.* All students must be taught the schoolwide behavioral expectations, and teachers must have proactive classroom behavioral instruction procedures in place.
2. *Tier 2: Targeted support.* Students who are at risk of developing patterns of problem

behavior must be able to access an efficient and well-articulated system for reducing problem behavior before it becomes worse over time.

3. *Tier 3: Individualized support.* Students with serious problem behavior must receive intensive, individualized behavior support.

The basic CICO intervention addresses the second level (Tier 2) of behavioral need. (For resources on Tier 1 and Tier 3, refer to the Resources section at the end of Chapter 2.) CICO is designed for students who demonstrate persistent problem behavior, but not dangerous or violent behavior, in classroom settings. They are students who need more practice and feedback to follow schoolwide behavioral expectations and benefit from preventative classroom management practices. They are *not* students with serious, chronic behavior problems who require comprehensive, individualized interventions. *A primary function of CICO is to improve the overall efficiency of the Tier 1 schoolwide procedures, while reducing the number of individualized interventions that are needed.*

A large portion of this book will be dedicated to describing what we call "basic CICO." This is the proactive Tier 2 intervention meant to be implemented with students who are at risk but not currently engaging in problem behavior. This book also details how basic CICO can be adapted to support students with more significant behavioral needs and for different behavioral concerns, such as those students who have internalizing behaviors (e.g., shyness, anxiety, depression; see Chapter 12). Additionally, the book details how CICO can be adapted for special populations, such as students in high school and alternative educational settings (see Chapters 11 and 13).

Access to adequate resources has long been an issue and challenge in schools. At the same time, schools are expected to do more to support students with diverse academic, emotional, and behavioral needs. This book provides teachers, administrators, school psychologists, educational assistants, and other school personnel with the tools to implement an *efficient* and *cost-effective* system of PBIS in schools. The book details the logic, procedures, administrative systems, and forms needed to build a CICO intervention. Tools for ongoing evaluation and improvement of the system are also provided. A list of abbreviations and definitions appears in Appendix A.1 for a quick review of terms, as needed.

WHAT IS CICO?

CICO, is a school-based intervention for providing daily support and monitoring to students who are at risk for developing serious or chronic problem behavior. It should be noted here that CICO is also known as the Behavior Education Program or BEP. Students who fail to respond to schoolwide and classroom preventative approaches and who receive several office discipline referrals (ODRs) per year may benefit from a Tier 2 intervention like CICO. It is based on a daily check-in/check-out system that provides the student with immediate feedback on their behavior (via teacher rating on a Daily Progress Report [DPR]) and increased positive adult attention. Behavioral expectations are clearly defined, and students are given both immediate and delayed reinforcement for meeting those expectations. Collaboration between the school and the families of identified students is encouraged by sending home each day a copy of the DPR to be signed by the parents or caregivers and returned the next school day. We detail ways of adapting

parental collaboration if daily signing is not possible for the families in your school. A critical feature of CICO is the use of data to evaluate its effectiveness in changing student behavior. Percentages of points earned on the DPR are recorded on a summary graph for each student. These data are reviewed by the school's behavior support team, at least every 2 weeks, and are used to make decisions about whether to continue, modify, or fade the CICO intervention.

CICO incorporates several core principles of PBIS, including (1) clearly defined expectations, (2) instruction on appropriate social skills, (3) increased positive reinforcement for following expectations, (4) contingent consequences for problem behavior, (5) increased positive contact with an adult in the school, (6) improved opportunities for self-regulation and self-management, and (7) increased home–school collaboration.

The CICO intervention goes beyond its impact on a single student. It provides the school with a proactive, preventative approach for addressing recurrent problem behavior. In addition, the CICO intervention enhances communication among teachers, improves school climate, increases consistency among staff, and helps teachers to feel supported.

HOW EFFICIENT AND COST-EFFECTIVE IS CICO?

The CICO intervention is continuously available and can be implemented within 3–5 days following baseline data collection and identification of a problem. CICO typically requires no more than 5–10 minutes per teacher per day. Although additional coordination time is required, this intervention places low demands on time by all teachers and staff in a school. The entire staff are trained to implement CICO, which is available for students who need additional positive behavior support. Unlike intensive, individualized interventions (i.e., those requiring a functional behavioral assessment [FBA] and an intensive behavior support plan), no lengthy assessment process is conducted prior to the student receiving CICO support. A student who is referred for the CICO intervention can be deemed an appropriate candidate and begin to receive support following 3–5 school days of baseline DPR data collection. Personnel time required to implement the intervention is minimal (see Chapter 4 for resource and time requirements), and many students (20–30) can be supported on the intervention at the same time. Implementation and maintenance costs are low (see Figure 4.5 in Chapter 4 for an example middle school budget).

WHY ARE TIER 2 INTERVENTIONS LIKE CICO NECESSARY?

Most schools do not have the time nor resources to provide comprehensive individualized behavior support for *all* students who need varying levels of extra support. For example, in a school with a population of 500 students, it is estimated that approximately 15–20%, or 75–100 students, will need more support than what schoolwide and classroom prevention efforts provide. Conducting intensive, individualized interventions with all of these students would be unmanageable and would tax school resources beyond capacity. Many students will successfully respond to simple interventions, like CICO, that are less time intensive and more cost-efficient to implement. Thus, utilizing an intervention like CICO will reduce the overall number of students who need individualized support.

Implementing CICO in your school does not negate the need to provide intensive, indi-

vidualized interventions to some students. There will be students for whom CICO will not be adequate to produce significant reductions in problem behavior. For those students, an FBA should be conducted, and data from the assessment should be used to develop an individualized behavior support plan. (For more information on intensive, individualized positive behavior support, refer to Crone, Hawken, & Horner, 2015.)

WHICH SCHOOLS SHOULD CONSIDER IMPLEMENTING CICO?

Schools that are implementing Tier 1 schoolwide and classroom PBIS (Lewis & Sugai, 1999; Sugai & Horner, 1999) with fidelity and that still have 10 or more students in need of extra support should consider implementing CICO. Tier 1 schoolwide and classroom prevention efforts clarify expectations both for the students and the staff, thus reducing the overall number of students engaging in problem behavior. If schools do not have Tier 1 support in place, it is recommended that they work on that level of support first prior to implementing CICO. Schools that do not have effective Tier 1 supports in place will likely have too many students who will require Tier 2 interventions like CICO. If Tier 1 prevention efforts are used and there are fewer than 10 students who engage in problem behavior, a school may be able to simply implement individualized behavior supports for each of them, rather than invest in CICO.

Although CICO is cost-effective and requires minimal staff time, the sincere commitment of *all* staff members and the support of the building administrator are crucial to the success of the intervention. Administrator support includes the allocation of personnel time and resources to the implementation, coordination, and ongoing evaluation of the intervention. Chapter 4 details the steps necessary to get CICO started in your school, and includes a self-assessment checklist to determine readiness for implementing the intervention.

"IF MY SCHOOL IS ALREADY IMPLEMENTING AN INTERVENTION LIKE CICO FOR AT-RISK STUDENTS, WILL I STILL BENEFIT FROM READING THIS BOOK?"

Yes! This book may help you improve the efficiency of your CICO-type intervention, or help you impose an organizing structure that you may currently lack. If your CICO intervention is being implemented with fidelity (see Chapter 7 on how to assess CICO fidelity) and is effectively supporting students who are at risk, you will learn how to address other problem behaviors, such as attendance issues, academic and/or organizational deficits, and students who have problem behaviors during unstructured times, such as recess. Additionally, in Chapters 8 and 9, we discuss adaptations and elaborations of the CICO intervention that may help you identify effective modifications that can be used when basic CICO is inadequate for a particular student. We provide schools with step-by-step details of how to layer additional interventions onto CICO when the basic intervention is not sufficient.

"ARE THERE ADDITIONAL RESOURCES TO AID IMPLEMENTATION OF CICO IN MY SCHOOL?"

Yes. A primary resource that schools use in tandem with this book is a DVD titled *Check-In, Check-Out: A Tier 2 Intervention for Students at Risk, Second Edition* (Hawken & Breen, 2017), which is available for purchase at *www.guilford.com*. This DVD outlines the essential features of CICO and provides video examples of effective CICO implementation. Chapter 4 describes how and when the CICO DVD could be used as a training resource for your school staff. In addition, interactive e-learning modules to train staff and faculty on CICO are available for subscription at *https://evokeschools.com.* Finally, additional resources are recommended at the end of some chapters throughout this book.