

## BEHAVIOURAL MOMENTUM FOR STUDENTS WHO ARE NON-COMPLIANT

JENNIFER STEPHENSON

### STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Students may be non-compliant to teacher direction, even to the most basic of instructions. Some of these students do not have a hearing impairment, do comprehend the instructions and are able to perform the behaviours requested, but remain noncompliant. Severe non-compliance can make it impossible to teach a child and can lead to, or be associated with serious antisocial behaviour.

### PROPOSED SOLUTION/ INTERVENTION

The teacher identifies requests that the student is likely to comply with, as well as those that the child is likely to refuse. The teacher then promotes compliance by embedding instructions where the student is likely to be non-compliant in a sequence of instructions or requests that they student is very likely to follow. For example "Tell me what did you did at recess," "Check out the goldfish," "Tell me if you would like a drink," and then "Come and sit down for story." The teacher praises or otherwise rewards compliance with ALL instructions. It is helpful to have an assortment of requests the child is likely to comply with and to use different requests and sequences each time.

### THE THEORETICAL RATIONALE – HOW DOES IT WORK?

This intervention is one that changes the antecedents or context of a problem behaviour. By delivering a sequence of requests, the teacher provides the child with multiple opportunities to respond. By choosing instructions that the child is

very likely to comply with, the teacher provides the student with the opportunity to receive a preferred reinforcer. Delivering appropriate, reinforcing consequences for compliance to multiple requests, primes the child to continue to comply. When the problem request is delivered the "momentum" will carry the child through compliance with a previously refused request.

### WHAT DOES THE RESEARCH SAY? WHAT IS THE EVIDENCE FOR ITS EFFICACY?

A number of single subject studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of the procedures with students with and without disabilities in pre-school and school settings. Requests have been delivered by both adults and peers.

### CONCLUSIONS

This is a reasonably simple procedure that is positive, proactive, unobtrusive, and flexible. It is likely to be successful if the requests are things the students can easily do.

### THE MUSEC VERDICT: WORTH A TRY

Key references may be found at:  
[www.aces.mq.edu.au/musec\\_co\\_brief.asp](http://www.aces.mq.edu.au/musec_co_brief.asp)

MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY SPECIAL EDUCATION CENTRE  
BUILDING X5A, MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY NSW 2109  
PH: 9850 8691 FAX: 9850 8254



© JENNIFER STEPHENSON, 2005

MUSEC BRIEFINGS ARE OFFERED IN GOOD FAITH AS A SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY BY  
MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY SPECIAL EDUCATION CENTRE

THIS MUSEC BRIEFING MAY BE COPIED OR OTHERWISE REPRODUCED FOR NOT FOR PROFIT PURPOSES  
BY INDIVIDUALS OR ORGANISATIONS ON THE UNDERSTANDING THAT IT IS REPRODUCED IN ITS ENTIRETY  
AND THAT MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY SPECIAL EDUCATION CENTRE IS CLEARLY INDICATED AS THE SOURCE.