Learners with Emotional or Behavioral Disorders

SHANA M. HATZOPOULOS
GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY
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Children with E/BD aren’t good at making friends
  - “If they do develop friendships, it’s often with deviant peers.” (Farmer, 2000)
  - They are often isolated or withdrawn
  - They are unable to establish emotional ties with other people

(Hallahan, Kauffman, & Pullen, 2009)
Some Children with E/BD are isolated because they are aggressive and hostile.

Words used to describe these students:

- Abusive
- Destructive
- Unpredictable
- Irresponsible
- Bossy
- Jealous
- Defiant
- Quarrelsome

(Hallahan, Kauffman, & Pullen, 2009)
Overview of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders

- Students who are disturbing can be disturbed
  - Students who are continuously irritating can often be rejected and become emotionally disturbed
- Students can have an emotional disorder and irritate the teacher
  - Reactions from teachers and students can increase the chances of students developing emotional disorders

(Hallahan, Kauffman, & Pullen, 2009)
Overview of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders

Children with emotional or behavioral disorders **DO NOT** exhibit problematic behaviors 24/7

These disorders tend to be:
- Episodic
- Highly Variable
- Sometimes Situation-Specific

(Hallahan, Kauffman, & Pullen, 2009)
Where Does It Start?

- Behavior that frustrates, angers or irritates other people?
- Social environment so uncomfortable the child can only withdraw or attack?

(Hallahan, Kauffman, & Pullen, 2009)
The Ecological Perspective

- The problem arises because the social interactions and transactions between the child and the environment are inappropriate

- An interpretation of the problem as a negative aspect of the child and the environment in which he/she lives

(Hallahan, Kauffman, & Pullen, 2009)
Flaws in the Ecological Perspective

Assumptions:

- The problem is merely in the child who exhibits inappropriate behavior
- The child’s behavior is not the problem, only the context in which it occurs

(Hallahan, Kauffman, & Pullen, 2009)
Possible Combinations of Terms

Emotional

Behavioral

Personal

Social

Disturbance

Disorder

Disability

Impairment

Emotional Disability

Behavioral Disorder

Personal Disturbance

Social Impairment

(Hallahan, Kauffman, & Pullen, 2009)
What’s In a Name?

- Seriously Emotionally Disturbed - IDEA Prior to 1997
- Emotionally Disturbed - IDEA after 1997
- Behaviorally Disordered – Council for Children with Behavioral Disorders
- Emotional or Behaviorally Disordered – National Mental Health and Special Education Coalition 1990

(Hallahan, Kauffman, & Pullen, 2009)
Problems with Defining Emotional Disorders

- We lack precise definitions of mental health and normal behavior
- There are substantial differences among conceptual models
- Measurement of emotions and behavior is imprecise
- Emotional or behavioral disorders often overlap with other disabilities
- Professionals who diagnose and serve children often disagree

(Hallahan, Kauffman, & Pullen, 2009)
Common Features Among Current Definitions

- Behavior that goes to an extreme
- A problem is chronic
- Behavior that is unacceptable because of social or cultural expectations

(Hallahan, Kauffman, & Pullen, 2009)
IDEA Definition of Emotionally Disturbed

A condition exhibiting one of more of the following characteristics over a long period of time:

1. An inability to learn that cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors
2. An inability to build or maintain satisfactory relationships with peers and teachers
3. Inappropriate types of behavior or feelings under normal circumstances
4. A general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression
5. A tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems

(Hallahan, Kauffman, & Pullen, 2009)
IDEA Definition of Emotionally Disturbed

IDEA also states the following:

The term includes children who **are schizophrenic.** The term **does not include** children who are **socially maladjusted** unless it is determined that they are emotionally disturbed. (45 C.F.R. 121a5[b][8][1978]

(Hallahan, Kauffman, & Pullen, 2009)
Characterized by behavioral or emotional responses in school so different from appropriate age, cultural, or ethnic norms that they adversely affect educational performance.

(Hallahan, Kauffman, & Pullen, 2009)
Two Broad, Pervasive Dimensions of Disordered Behavior

- **Externalizing**
  - Striking out against others

- **Internalizing**
  - Depression or anxiety

(Hallahan, Kauffman, & Pullen, 2009)
Comorbidity

The co-ocurrence of two or more conditions in the same individual

(Hallahan, Kauffman, & Pullen, 2009)
Prevalence

- 6 – 10 % of all students
- Less than 1% are identified
- Very small percentage receive mental health services

(Hallahan, Kauffman, & Pullen, 2009)
Causes

Four Major Factors

- Biological disorders and disease
- Pathological family relationships
- Undesirable experiences at school
- Negative cultural influences

(Hallahan, Kauffman, & Pullen, 2009)
Biological Factors

- Genetic
- Neurological
- Biochemical

(Hallahan, Kauffman, & Pullen, 2009)
Family Factors

- No valid research exists to allow the blame for the children’s problem behavior to be placed primarily on their parents.
- The relationship between parenting and emotional disorders isn’t simple.
- Some parenting practices are definitely better than others.

(Hallahan, Kauffman, & Pullen, 2009)
School Factors

- Damaging experiences in the classroom itself
- A child’s temperament and social competence can interact with the behaviors of classmates and teachers in contributing to emotional or behavioral problems

(Hallahan, Kauffman, & Pullen, 2009)
Cultural Factors

Cultural Standards
- Demands
- Prohibitions
- Models

Influences
- Violence in the media
- Terror as a means of coercion
- Availability of recreational drugs
- Standards of sexual conduct
- Religious demands and restrictions
- Threat of war

(Hallahan, Kauffman, & Pullen, 2009)
It is easier to identify disordered behaviors than to define them
Externalizing behaviors attract immediate attention
Internalizing behaviors can be overlooked
Services are often not available
The younger the child the more difficult to identify the disorder
Some children with emotional disorders don’t exhibit behavioral problems at school

(Hallahan, Kauffman, & Pullen, 2009)
Early Identification

Walker & Severson, 1990

- Teacher lists and ranks students
- Teacher completes two checklists for the 3 highest ranked students
  - Checklist address behaviors exhibited in a month and frequency of behaviors
- Students whose scores exceed established norms are observed

(Hallahan, Kauffman, & Pullen, 2009)
Strategies That Work

- Systematic, data-based interventions
- Continuous assessment and monitoring of progress
- Provision for practice of new skills
- Treatment matched to the problem
- Multi-component treatment
- Programming for transfer and maintenance
- Commitment to sustained intervention

(Hallahan, Kauffman, & Pullen, 2009)
Service Delivery

- **Trends toward inclusion**
  - Requires intensive work
  - Case by case basis

- **Full continuum of placement options**
  - Placement based on design of appropriate program of educational and related services

(Hallahan, Kauffman, & Pullen, 2009)
Instructional Considerations

- Students who don’t acquire academic skills that allow them to compete with their peers are likely to be socially rejected.
- Failure to teach a student to read, write, or do math seriously inhibits his or her ability to be successful in the community.

(Hallahan, Kauffman, & Pullen, 2009)
Skills Necessary for Beginning Teachers of Students with Emotional Disabilities

1. Know prevention and intervention strategies for at-risk students
2. Use non-aversive techniques to control targeted behavior
3. Maintain attention of individuals with emotional or behavioral disorders
4. Plan and implement individualized reinforcement systems and environmental modifications at levels equal to the intensity of the behavior
5. Integrate academic instruction, affective education, and behavior management for individuals and groups
6. Assess appropriate and problematic social behaviors of individuals

(Hallahan, Kauffman, & Pullen, 2009)
Special Considerations

- **Social Skills**
- **Juvenile Delinquents**
  - Definition of delinquent is different from state to state
  - Special schools are often provided for threatening, violent, or disruptive youths
  - Wide variations of instructional practices are found in reform schools and detention centers
- **Special Challenges for Teachers**
  - Tolerant of a great deal of unpleasantness and rejection
  - Confidence in their own teaching and living skills

(Hallahan, Kauffman, & Pullen, 2009)
Disciplinary Considerations

- Uncertainty or controversy surrounds a change in a student’s placement, suspension, or expulsion due to very serious misbehavior.
- IDEA intended to maintain a safe school environment without violating the rights of students with disabilities.
- Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA, 2001)
  - Does not require, but allows schools to discipline students with disabilities as they would other students in regards to suspension or expulsion.

(Hallahan, Kauffman, & Pullen, 2009)
Progress Monitoring

Evaluating the progress and outcomes of behavioral interventions

- Academic learning
  - Curriculum Based Measurement (Math, Reading, & Spelling)
- Interpersonal skills
- Study skills
- Motivation
- Engagement

(Hallahan, Kauffman, & Pullen, 2009)
Academic Competence Evaluation Scales (ACES)

- Measures the Following:
  - Academic Skills
  - Social & Behavioral Skills
  - Motivation
  - Engagement
  - Study Skills
  - Interpersonal Skills

- Appropriate for K-12 and college settings

(Hallahan, Kauffman, & Pullen, 2009)
Testing Accommodations

- Scheduling
  - Extended time
  - Small groups

- Presentation accommodations
  - Directions read aloud

(Hallahan, Kauffman, & Pullen, 2009)
Goals of Early Intervention

- Early Identification
- Prevention
  - Young children’s social-emotional behavior is quite flexible

(Hallahan, Kauffman, & Pullen, 2009)
Access to mental and physical care reduces the risk of behavioral and social problems.

Nurturing and positive parenting is associated with children who have healthy relationships and reduce challenging behavior.

High quality early education environments and caregiver interactions are associated with fewer behavior problems and social competence.

(Hallahan, Kauffman, & Pullen, 2009)
Emotional disabilities often translate into unproductive lives as adults.

Adulthood is complicated by neglectful, abusive, or inadequate family relationships.

Adolescents who have internalized characteristics have a better chance for success as adults.

(Hallahan, Kauffman, & Pullen, 2009)