

A Case Study Exploring the Implementation of the Collaborative and Proactive Solutions (CPS) model in an Irish Primary School Context



Caoimhe McCarthy¹ & Louise Fitzsimons²
 1 Trainee Educational Psychologist, MIC, 2 Educational Psychologist, NEPS Ennis



What is Collaborative and Proactive Solutions (CPS)?

- CPS is a cognitive-behavioural approach which aims to reduce behavioural difficulties amongst children and teenagers (Greene, 2014).
- Three options to deal with an Unsolved Problem (USP)
 - Plan A: Solving problems unilaterally by using reward & punishment
 - Plan B: Solving problems collaboratively using;
 - Empathy Step
 - Define the Adult Concern Step
 - Invitation Step
 - Plan C: Setting problems temporarily aside

Kids do well if they can.
 Dr. Ross Greene

Literature Review

- CPS is a 'promising' approach that is supported by research, but there are methodological issues in the current body of literature (Higgins, 2021; California Evidence-Based Clearinghouse for Child Welfare, 2016).
- Stetson & Plog (2016)
 - 86% of teachers reported that CPS was easy to understand
 - 100% of teachers rated consultation and coaching as helpful
 - **52% of teachers reported that CPS was easy to use**

Research Questions (RQ)

- **RQ1:** What are teachers' experiences of using Plan B?
- **RQ2:** What are the facilitators & barriers for implementation of CPS?
- **RQ3:** How does CPS impact on the behaviour management strategies employed by the teachers with this student?
- **RQ4:** How does CPS impact upon the student's thoughts and feelings towards school?

Method

- Time Frame: 4 weeks
- Sample:
 - Third Class Student, SET & Class Teacher
 - RFI for impulsive behaviour & poor social skills.
- Staff offered weekly check-in with Trainee Educational Psychologist
- Measures:
 - RQ1: Weekly Questionnaire (adapted Plan B Checklist)
 - RQ2: Researcher-designed Pre and Post Survey
 - RQ3: Researcher-designed Daily Checklist
 - RQ4: My Thoughts about School

Final Reflections

"The collaborative aspect provided a better understating of the child's views of their behaviour...I need more time to fully observe its value in addressing challenging behaviour."

Class Teacher

"I will definitely use CPS again. It gives the child a sense of ownership...& builds the relationship between child and teacher. It made me rethink the language that I use & my expectations."

SET

Results

RQ1: Teacher Experiences of Plan B



- **USP 1:** Difficulty raising hand & waiting during News.
- **Challenges:** Ensuring wording was correct & recognizing student contribution.
- **Solution:** 15 minutes 1:1 time with teacher & reminders.



- **USP 2:** Difficulty joining in a game of tag at lunch time with two specified students.
- **Challenges:** Specifying USP & 'Drilling' student concerns
- **Solution:** SET & student will first role play how to ask to join in. Student will then ask to join game before leaving classroom to ensure he has support from Class Teacher.

RQ2: Facilitators and Barriers

Predicted Facilitators

Support from NEPS
 Discussion with Other Schools
 Teacher Motivation
 Relationship with student

Predicted Barriers

Large class size
 Time for implementation
 Lack of Parental Support
 Teacher Mindset

Facilitators & Barriers

Actual Facilitators

Structured approach to Plan B
 Support from NEPS
 Relationship with student
 Student was chatty & enthusiastic

Actual Barriers

Time to carry out Plan B & liaise with other teachers
 Lack of Parental Support
 Nuances of Plan B

RQ3: Behaviour Management

- No increase in use of Plan C strategies.
- Use of Plan A strategies reduced by 21% between Week 1 and Week 4.
- Class teacher reflected that Daily Checklist enabled him to analyse & increase his own use of positive behaviour support strategies.

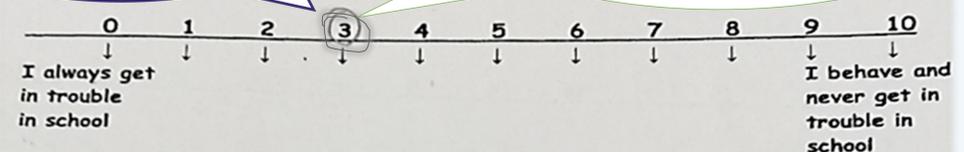
RQ4: Student Voice

Pre

I need to listen more because I'm always talking. I love talking.

Post

I love going out with my SET teacher... Sometimes I get into trouble on the yard.



Future Recommendations

- Continued support from NEPS via CPS peer supervision groups.
- Refine the Plan B Checklist by highlighting key phrases for each step.
- Role play Plan B conversations to practice Drilling strategies and identify and resolve potential difficulties.
- Further exploration and discussion to promote the use of Plan C strategies.

References

- Greene, R. (2014). *The Explosive Child: A New Approach for Understanding and Parenting Easily Frustrated, Chronically Inflexible Children*. HarperCollins Publishers Inc.
- Higgins, E. (2021). The Collaborative and Proactive Solutions (CPS) Model as an Effective Intervention for Youth who Present with Behaviour that Challenges: A Review. *LEARN: The Journal of the Irish Learning Support Association*, 42, 97.
- Stetson, E. A., & Plog, A. E. (2016). Collaborative problem solving in schools: results of a year-long consultation project. *School Social Work Journal*, 40(2), 17-36.
- The California Evidence-Based Clearinghouse for Child Welfare. (Research Evidence Last Reviewed by CEBC: September 2016). *Review of Collaborative Proactive Solutions*. Retrieved 10/03/20 from <https://www.cebc4cw.org/program/collaborative-proactive-solutions/>

Contact details

11117346@micstudent.mic.ul.ie

Acknowledgements

Sincere thanks to the school for facilitating this case study research and to Dr Toby Sachsenmaier for her input and expertise. Thanks also to Louise for her time and support in supervising this research.