Welcome to the sixth issue of *New Developments*, a quarterly e-newsletter from SRI International’s Center for Education and Human Services. Earlier issues are available on our website. In this issue, we highlight important findings from an IES practice guide, authored by a panel of experts including researchers from SRI, which offers strategies to reduce problematic behavior that interferes with elementary school students’ abilities to fully engage in instructional activities.

**SRI Coauthors an IES Practice Guide: What Works to Reduce Behavior Problems in the Elementary School Classroom**

Researchers from SRI International recently collaborated on the development of an Institute of Education Sciences (IES) practice guide, *Reducing Behavior Problems in the Elementary School Classroom*, with other national experts in the field. SRI convened the panel of experts, facilitated discussions, compiled and rated evidence according to What Works Clearinghouse standards, and authored all chapters. The practice guide offers high-quality evidence and actionable recommendations to help general education elementary school teachers and school and district administrators develop and implement effective prevention and intervention strategies that promote positive behavior and reduce the frequency of children’s common behavior problems. Similar to other IES practice guides, the guide brings the best available expertise and evidence to bear on addressing multifaceted challenges in classrooms and schools.

**Key Recommendations**

*Reducing Behavior Problems in the Elementary School Classroom* focuses on strategies teachers can use on their own initiative within their own classrooms, while at the same time recognizing their occasional need for the support of other professionals within the school or the community. In summary, the five recommendations are as follows:

1. **Identify the specifics of the problem behavior and the conditions that prompt and reinforce it.** This recommendation emphasizes the importance of teachers compiling information about when, where, and how often a problem behavior occurs. This information can provide important clues about the underlying purpose of the behavior and a foundation for developing effective approaches to mitigating it.

2. **Modify the classroom learning environment to decrease problem behavior.** Teachers can alter or adapt classroom “hot spots” to reduce the frequency or intensity of problem behaviors, for example, by changing the seating plan or the order or pace of instruction.

3. **Teach and reinforce new skills to increase appropriate behavior and preserve a positive classroom climate.** Just as direct instruction can help students overcome academic deficits, students can benefit from teachers explicitly teaching the positive behaviors and skills expected of them at school.

4. **Draw on relationships with professional colleagues and students’ families for guidance and support.** Recognizing the collective wisdom and problem-solving abilities of school staff and family members, this recommendation encourages teachers to reach out to their colleagues and family members to understand better their students’ behavior issues and develop allies in intervening to help students succeed.

5. **Assess whether schoolwide behavior problems warrant adopting schoolwide strategies or programs and, if so, implement ones shown to reduce negative and foster positive interactions.** The last recommendation reflects an understanding that a teacher may be more successful in creating a positive classroom environment when schoolwide efforts also are underway to create such an environment.