

SECTION 1

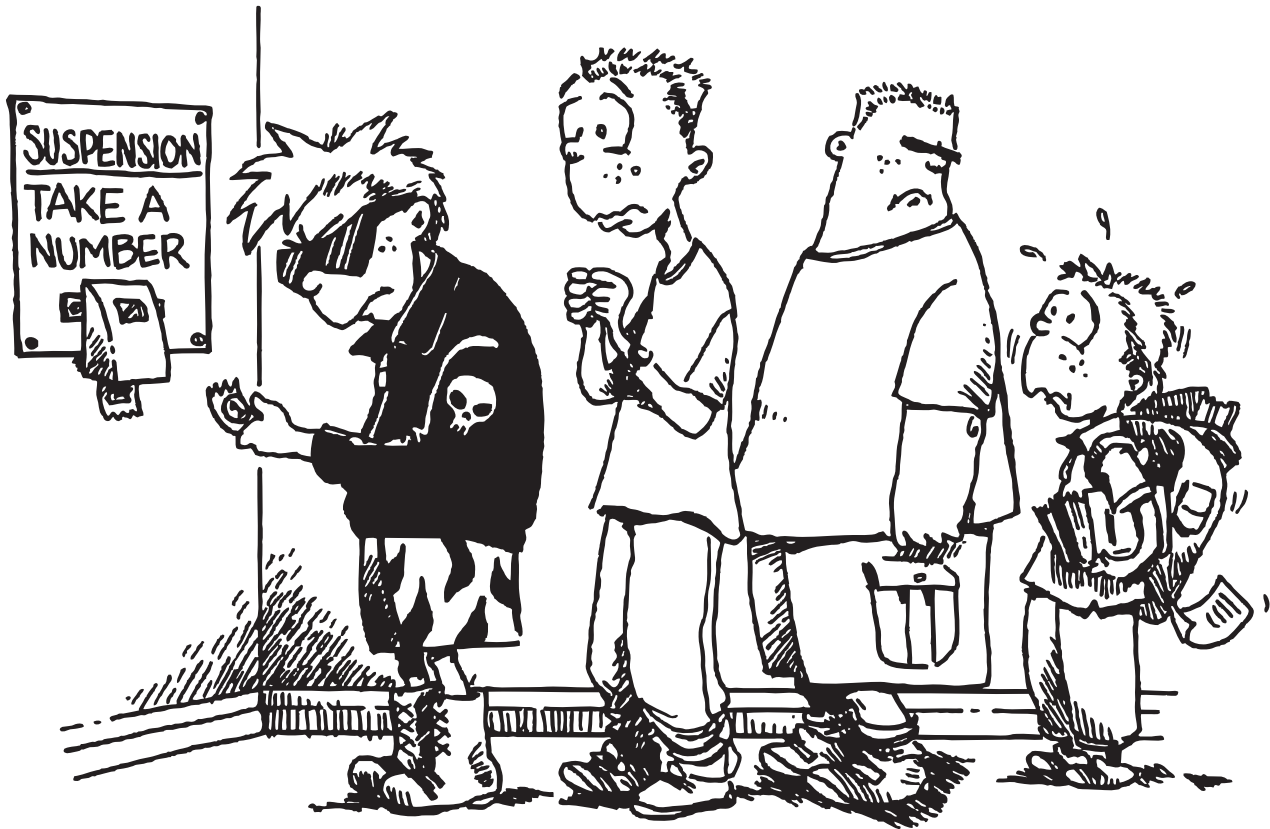
What This Briefcase Will Do for You and Your School

Does any of this sound familiar to you?

- Seven students are waiting for the principal in the main office. They have been sent by their teachers for insubordination and defiance. For four of the seven students, this is the third trip to the principal's office in the past week.
- The number of office referrals has increased dramatically in the school over the past six months, and the principal is not sure why. Out of the 750 students in the school, 304 had at least one referral, 155 had at least five, and 46 had more than 20. One student had 96 referrals.
- The number of expulsions and short-term suspensions in the school has increased more than 185% in the past three years.
- The school's dropout rate is higher than the state average.
- The number of safe school violations involving students and staff has also increased significantly over the past three years.
- The principal is beginning to think that the school's "get tough" zero-tolerance policies are not working.
- Teacher morale is low, and student morale seems even lower. The principal's own morale is not great, either.
- A vocal group of parents on the school's community council have written a letter to the Board of Education about school safety concerns and the need for more effective programs and practices.

We hope that *none* of this sounds familiar to you! Poor school practices greatly increase the likelihood that the kinds of outcomes just described will be all too familiar to the school administrator who is ultimately held accountable for what goes on in the school. Such practices are also likely to cause significant harm to the overall academic, behavioral, social, and emotional climate of the school. Our intention with this Briefcase is





to provide you with the tools you need to *prevent* many of the problems we have described and *deal effectively* with the ones that do occur.

How This Briefcase Can Help

If you have read this far, you are likely a school principal or assistant principal looking for some practical and effective solutions to your school's discipline problems. If this description fits you, we think you will find this Briefcase helpful. The main focus of this Briefcase is the challenge faced by all administrators in our schools today: creating and maintaining a safe, orderly, and positive school environment in which teachers are free to concentrate on teaching and students are able to achieve high academic, behavioral, and social standards.

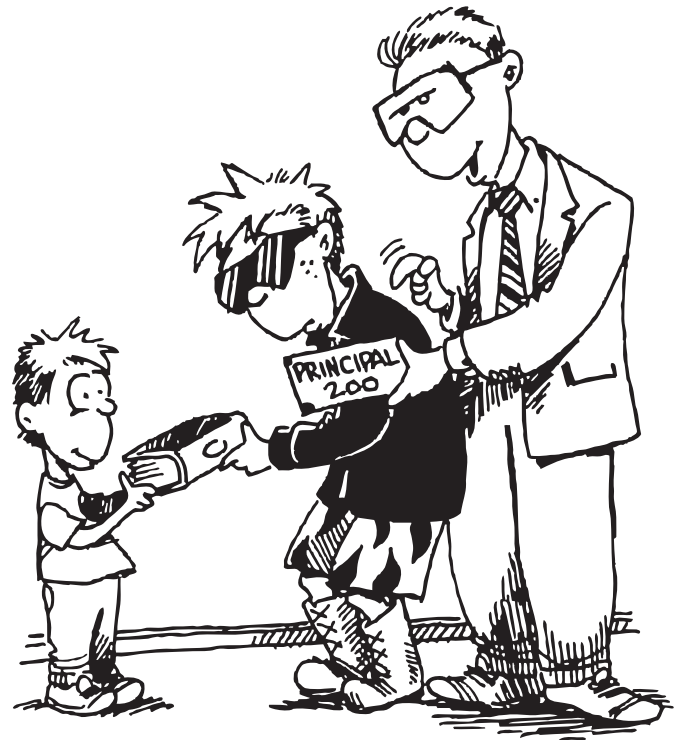
School principals know that concerns about student misconduct are not new. Poll after poll confirms that student behavioral problems, violence, aggression, and general defiance and disrespect of authority are at the top of the public's concerns about our schools (Evans, 1999; Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, 2004; Sprague & Nishiolia, 2003). School discipline is truly everybody's problem, but it is only through the principal's leadership that successful solutions to the problem can be achieved.

Research tells us that principals who assume an effective leadership role in improving school-wide discipline enthusiastically embrace the following responsibilities:

1. Demonstrate a passionate commitment to improving the performance of all students.

2. Challenge all students and their teachers to achieve high academic and behavioral standards.
3. Foster a school culture that is designed to support appropriate student behavior.
4. Establish administrative and instructional strategies and procedures that support appropriate student behavior.
5. Identify, develop, and implement a continuum of interventions for students who are not successful within the school's general discipline program.
6. Insist on the use of research-proven interventions and supports in all schoolwide discipline efforts.
7. Collect and, more importantly, use data for decision-making about a schoolwide discipline program.
8. Put sufficient resources behind all school improvement efforts.

Much has been written about school discipline problems and the principal's role in improving school discipline and climate. This Briefcase provides you with current information about practical, research-based strategies for improving both of these areas in your school. We describe how to both *prevent* many student behavioral problems and *deal effectively* with the ones that do occur. These strategies and procedures are not panaceas, nor are they magical solutions or the latest fads in school discipline. They are, however, well grounded in research, and are practical and ready to use right out of this Briefcase!



What We Believe Works Best

Before we go any further, we want to share our professional viewpoint with you. In planning this Briefcase and in deciding on the strategies and procedures to include, we could have compiled a collection of many different ideas drawn from a variety of sources, with no consistent underlying foundation to them. Some would call this an “eclectic” approach. Although such ideas may be cute, innovative, and politically correct, they might also be seriously lacking in one important way: The missing element is support in scientifically based research.

There is nothing wrong with being eclectic when it has to do with food tastes, clothing styles, movies, music, and so on. When it comes to running a school, however, we believe that being eclectic is risky. Some might define an eclectic person as “one who has his feet planted firmly in mid-air.” We are determined that this will not

be the outcome for the users of *The Tough Kid Principal's Briefcase*. We want you to have your feet planted firmly on the ground, confident in your knowledge of proven behavior management practices and well on your way to using them proficiently.

A positive outgrowth of the public's serious concerns about school discipline and student misconduct has been a significant increase in finding effective answers to the problems we have described. These efforts have resulted in:

- The development of models of prevention and intervention that are *proactive* rather than reactive
- A focus on the *active teaching* of appropriate or desired student behaviors, providing ample practice opportunities and reinforcement for them
- Efforts to create positive and safe learning environments for *all* students

An effective schoolwide discipline program emphasizes an instructional approach that focuses on what students are expected to do, not just on what they are expected not to do. Most importantly, an effective schoolwide discipline program actively and consistently teaches and encourages expected, desired behaviors. *Box 1-1* succinctly summarizes our beliefs about what works best in schoolwide discipline.

We also know quite a bit about some school practices that promote or result in serious schoolwide discipline problems. These are described in *Box 1-2* on the next page.

BOX 1-1

What We Believe Works Best in Schoolwide Discipline

1. Accept the fact that there are no easy answers or “magic bullet” solutions. Sound ideas and proven strategies require time, effort, and commitment.
2. Emphasize what students are expected to *do*, not what they are expected *not to do*.
3. Create a school environment that is committed to supporting appropriate student behavior.
4. Emphasize a *teaching* approach to dealing with problem behavior. Actively teach the desired behavior you expect.
5. Understand that *telling* students how to behave appropriately is not the same as *teaching* them how to behave appropriately.
6. Provide specific, individualized interventions for students who do not respond to the basic schoolwide discipline program.
7. Remember that students have a very difficult time connecting to school if they think that school staff does not like them or want them.
8. Realize that short-term school removals or suspensions produce short-term results. They do not produce permanent or durable changes in student behavior.

BOX 1-2

School Practices That Promote Serious Discipline Problems

1. Unclear rules and expectations regarding behavior
2. Inconsistent and punitive schoolwide, classroom, and individual behavior management practices
3. Failure to correct rule violations as well as to recognize and reward adherence to rules
4. Ineffective instruction that results in academic failure
5. Failure to adapt to individual learner differences and to provide appropriate differentiated instruction options
6. Ineffective overuse of verbal reprimands, restrictions, suspensions, expulsions, and other aversive consequences to “control” student behavior

These are the types of school practices we mentioned at the beginning of this section—practices that cause significant harm to the overall mission, the school climate, and the desired academic, social, and behavioral outcomes.

Organization of This Briefcase

We have organized this Briefcase manual into six main sections. This introductory section has laid some groundwork and explained what you can expect from the remainder of the Briefcase.

Section 2 gives you information about what makes a school successful or unsuccessful. It also lays out the intervention needs of all students in a school, including the toughest ones, and discusses the principal’s role in the school.

Section 3 describes the Principal’s 200 Club, a unique, innovative, and effective component of

a positive discipline program for your school. We describe this program in detail so that you can implement it on a schoolwide basis. The DVD included with this book demonstrates how to implement the Principal’s 200 Club with real-world advice from administrators who have used the program.

Section 4 provides specific details for effectively implementing some widely used, but often poorly implemented, undesired consequence systems for limiting inappropriate behavior. These systems are Other Class Timeout and several kinds of In-School Suspension.

Section 5 offers important information concerning school legal issues as well as tips for staying out of legal trouble.


Finally, **Section 6** summarizes additional schoolwide strategies that may be helpful in dealing with some common but difficult school-related

discipline problems. This section also includes other resources to help you with more difficult behavioral problems.

The Tough Kid Principal's Briefcase DVD contains blank copies of all reproducible forms in this book labeled "Reproducible" and marked with the "See DVD for blank form" icon. To find the forms, load the DVD into a computer DVD drive. When the opening menu of the Principal's 200 Club video appears, press the ESC key to leave full-screen display mode. Click on your computer desktop and look for the Principal's 200 Club DVD icon. Double-click on this icon. Windows Explorer (PC) or Finder (Mac) should open to display the contents of the DVD. You should see a folder for each section in the book that has reproducibles. Click on the desired folder to view all the forms in that section. Forms are provided in PDF format. Where appropriate, they are set up so you can fill them out on your computer using Adobe Reader (see the "Using the Reproducibles" file on the DVD for more information on how to do this).

You may print the reproducible forms from the DVD and use them with students in your school. However, each book and DVD should be used by only one administrator in his or her work.

See DVD for blank form.



ABC-RISS Sheet

Student's Name _____	Date _____
Teacher's Name _____	Date _____

A Antecedent—What was going on before the behavior?

- Time _____
- People _____
- Place _____
- Event(s) _____
- Student's behavior _____
- Down time _____
- Other _____

B Behavior—Describe the problematic behavior very specifically, in objective terms, based on what was observed.

C Consequences—What happened after the problematic behavior occurred? Specifically describe.

- Positive or negative attention from peers or adults _____
- Obtained tangible item _____
- Escaped a person, situation, or place _____
- Avoided a person, situation or place _____
- Other _____

R Replacement Behavior—What does the student need to do instead?

Comments: _____

Form filled out by _____

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The Tough Kid Principal's Briefcase • REPRODUCIBLE 4-8

Reproducible 4-8. ABC-RISS Sheet

In a nutshell

Best of luck to you as you accept the task to carry out the needed work to create a school where teachers can teach and students can learn! There is no doubt that providing the structure and leadership to create such a school is a challenging task at best. However, we urge you to remember that there is no job more important than yours to influence the future for all of us.