Supporting Transitions from Early Intervention to Preschool:

A review of a pilot program to expand teacher expertise teaching children with significant behavior challenges

Presented By

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About Continuum of Colorado, Behavioral Services Department

- Founded by Developmental Pathways in 2012.

- Behavioral Services Department created in 2013.

- Provide services through Early Intervention, HCBS Medicaid Waiver Programs, Health Insurance, and various pilot projects.

- Focus on utilizing behavioral technology, in collaboration with community partners, to improve quality of life for the children and adults we serve.

Our Role in the 3+ Initiative

Targeting needs of children transitioning out of Early Intervention.

Primary Intentions:

- Expand supports for children and families.
- Collaborate with school districts, child care providers, and other community partners.
- Maximize the benefit of already utilized early intervention resources.

Request from Aurora Public Schools

Technical assistance to support *inclusive universal design*, through:

- Professional development training.

- Targeted coaching / consultation with ECE professionals.

- Problem solving specific behavior challenges in preschool classrooms.

- Build parent workshop and support structure aligned with classroom practices.

Why Targeted Classroom Consultation

Research shows early childhood teams typically face several barriers to effective collaboration and teaching, including:

- Designated trainings required by school districts are often not applicable to individual classrooms.
- Special educators do not receive adequate training in supervising and coaching others.
- Schedules of SPED professionals, general education teachers and paras do not allow for adequate teaming and collaboration.
  - » Trautman, M. (2004). Preparing and Managing Paraprofessionals; *Intervention in School and Clinic*. 93(3). 131-138.

Targeted Consultation, School Perspective

Barriers shared by school staff:

- Time to meet as a classroom team.

- District initiatives vs. individual classroom challenges.

- Diversity of background, experience, education.

- Itinerant 'drive-by consultation'.

What Value Can an Outside Behavior Analyst Bring to School Team?

Area of focus: Environment ←→ Behavior

Antecedent A	→	Behavior B	→	Consequence C
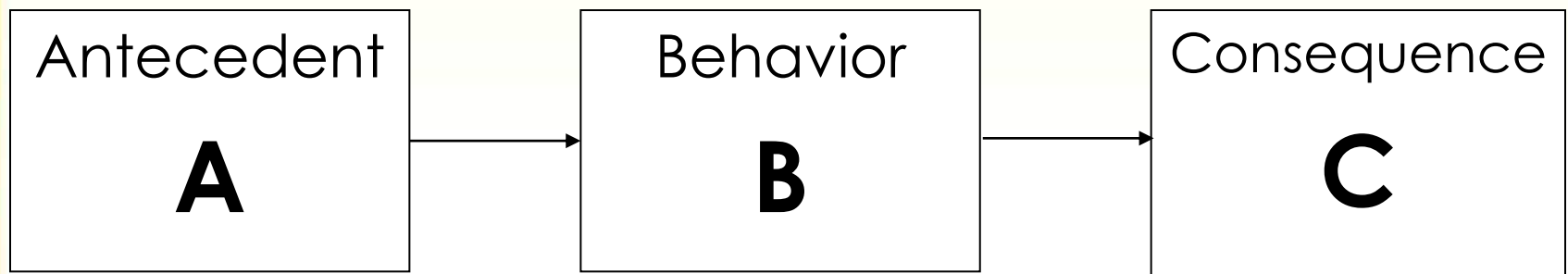
Create behavior change by creating sustainable changes in the environment

Advantage of neutral perspective

Consultation Model

Avoid expert models that may include:

- – Define problem for team.
- – Tell team what they need to do, or…
- – Implement the program ourselves.
- – Ultimately create dependence.

Focus on collaborative, direct behavioral consultation to:

- - Help team define problem for themselves
- - Give relevant information and training, and let them come up with solutions.
- - Focus on building school's internal capacity and independence by helping teachers collaboratively develop solutions and measure results themselves.

Laredo Child Development Center

- Each classroom includes students 3- 5 yrs

- 57.3% of students are English Language Learners

- 65.6% of students meet qualifications for Free and Reduced Lunch

Targeted Classrooms

Self-Contained Special Education Classroom	Side-by-Side Inclusive Classroom
9 students total	16 students total
3:1 student/teacher ratio	8:1 student/teacher ratio
All students on IEPs MH, PT	4 of 16 students on IEPs (12 of 16 students previously met eligibility for the Colorado Preschool Program)
1 ECSE Teacher, 2 Paraprofessionals	1 Facilitator (ECE Teacher), 1 Paraprofessional
Rotating support of SLP, OT,	Rotating additional Special Education Paraprofessional support, ECSE, SLP, OT, MH, PT

Consultation Process – An Overview

1. Classroom observation, including ABC data
2. Informal interviews with teaching staff
3. Created specific objectives
4. Baseline data
5. Intervention
   a) Behavioral Skills Training
   b) Collaborative planning training, followed by bi-weekly team collaboration meetings
   c) Classroom consultation including coaching and modeling
6. Maintenance/Follow-Up

Objectives

#1) Implement an effective collaborative planning process.

#2) Improve environmental arrangement (e.g. proper use of visuals, organization, etc.).

#3) Teach team to deliver prompts correctly in order to promote independence rather than prompt dependence.

#4) Improve child transitions (increase independence, decrease behavior problems).

#5) Create a more enriched and positive environment by increasing ratio of positive interactions and comments to negative comments.

Methodology for Teaching Collaboration

1) Honest conversation:
   - What is it *REALLY?*
   - Why isn't it happening?
   - What does it require?
   - Are we willing to commit?

2) Clearly defined expectations.

3) Model examples of honest communication and disagreement.

4) Training in use of collaborative planning tool.

5) Direct and indirect prompting and feedback during team meetings.

Collaborative Planning Tool

Date: _____   Teacher's name: _____

Child's name: _____

Continuum of Colorado

Write daily sequence of activities down the left column. Write the child's current top learning or behavior objectives across the top row. Fill in the appropriate cells with brief versions of the supports to be used. When completing questions on staff understanding and child level of success, write the date and staff name above the right column. Record questions, comments, and notes on the back side. You may use the cell code in the lower right to indicate the item you are commenting on.

Date completed _____

Staff completing: _____

Objectives / Daily Activities					Do you understand the support strategies to be used for each goal and activity?
	☐ Target (A1)	☐ Target (A2)	☐ Target (A3)	☐ Target (A4)	☐ Target (A5)	☐ No, need help ☐ Yes, need practice ☐ Yes, feel confident
	☐ Target (B1)	☐ Target (B2)	☐ Target (B3)	☐ Target (B4)	☐ Target (B5)	☐ No, need help ☐ Yes, need practice ☐ Yes, feel confident
	☐ Target (C1)	☐ Target (C2)	☐ Target (C3)	☐ Target (C4)	☐ Target (C5)	☐ No, need help ☐ Yes, need practice ☐ Yes, feel confident
	☐ Target (D1)	☐ Target (D2)	☐ Target (D3)	☐ Target (D4)	☐ Target (D5)	☐ No, need help ☐ Yes, need practice ☐ Yes, feel confident
	☐ Target (E1)	☐ Target (E2)	☐ Target (E3)	☐ Target (E4)	☐ Target (E5)	☐ No, need help ☐ Yes, need practice ☐ Yes, feel confident
	☐ Target (F1)	☐ Target (F2)	☐ Target (F3)	☐ Target (F4)	☐ Target (F5)	☐ No, need help ☐ Yes, need practice ☐ Yes, feel confident
	☐ Target (G1)	☐ Target (G2)	☐ Target (G3)	☐ Target (G4)	☐ Target (G5)	☐ No, need help ☐ Yes, need practice ☐ Yes, feel confident
Student Success Level	☐ No success ☐ Success with prompts ☐ Success-Independent	☐ No success ☐ Success with prompts ☐ Success-Independent	☐ No success ☐ Success with prompts ☐ Success-Independent	☐ No success ☐ Success with prompts ☐ Success-Independent	☐ No success ☐ Success with prompts ☐ Success-Independent	

Methodology

Intervention Phase included:

- Behavioral Skills Training:
  - planned ignoring
  - differential reinforcement
  - least-to-most prompting
  - wait time
- Weekly classroom consultation (modeling and coaching)
- Bi-weekly teaming and collaboration

Results – Objective #2
(Environmental Checklist)
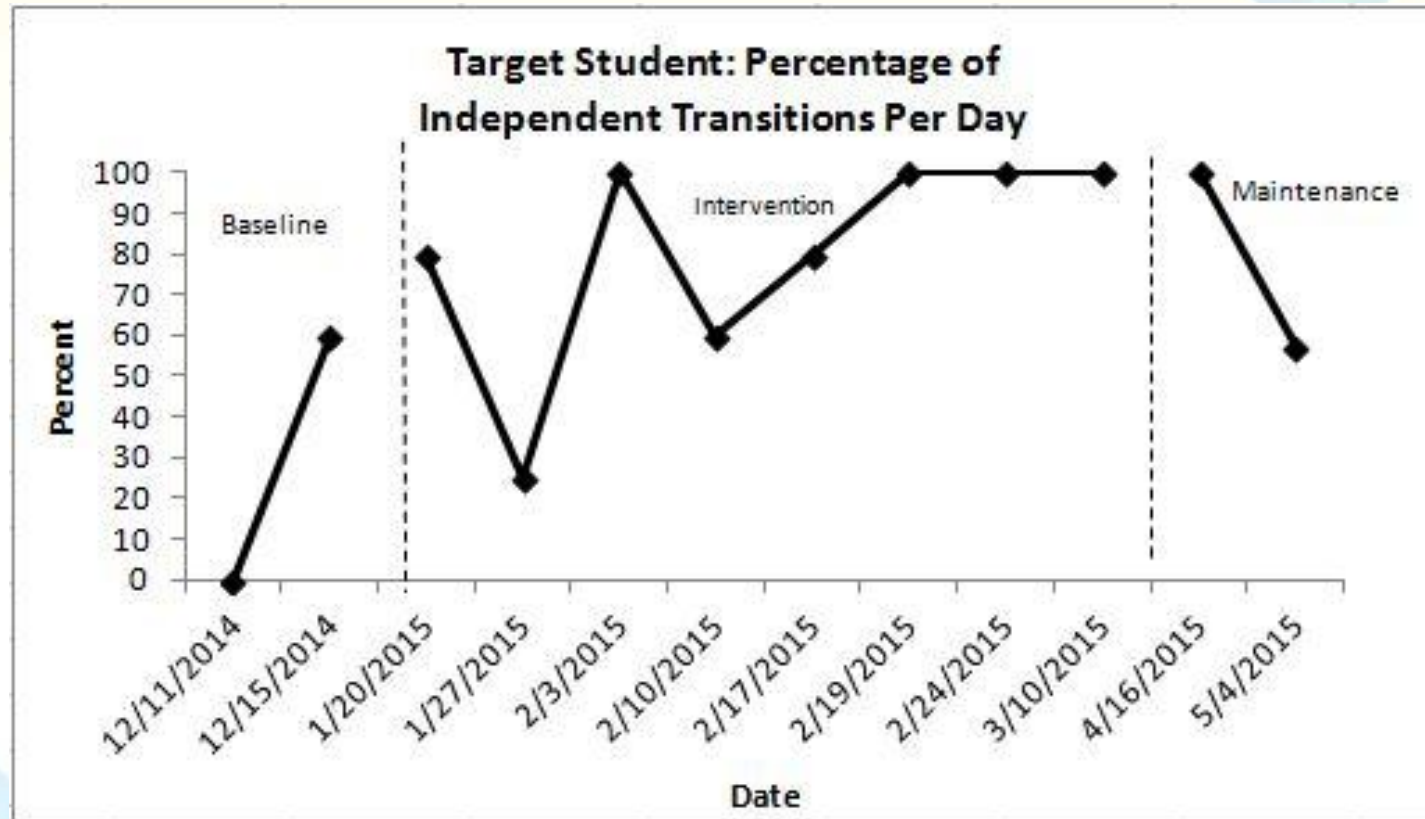

Environmental Modifications Checklist: Percentage of Items Met
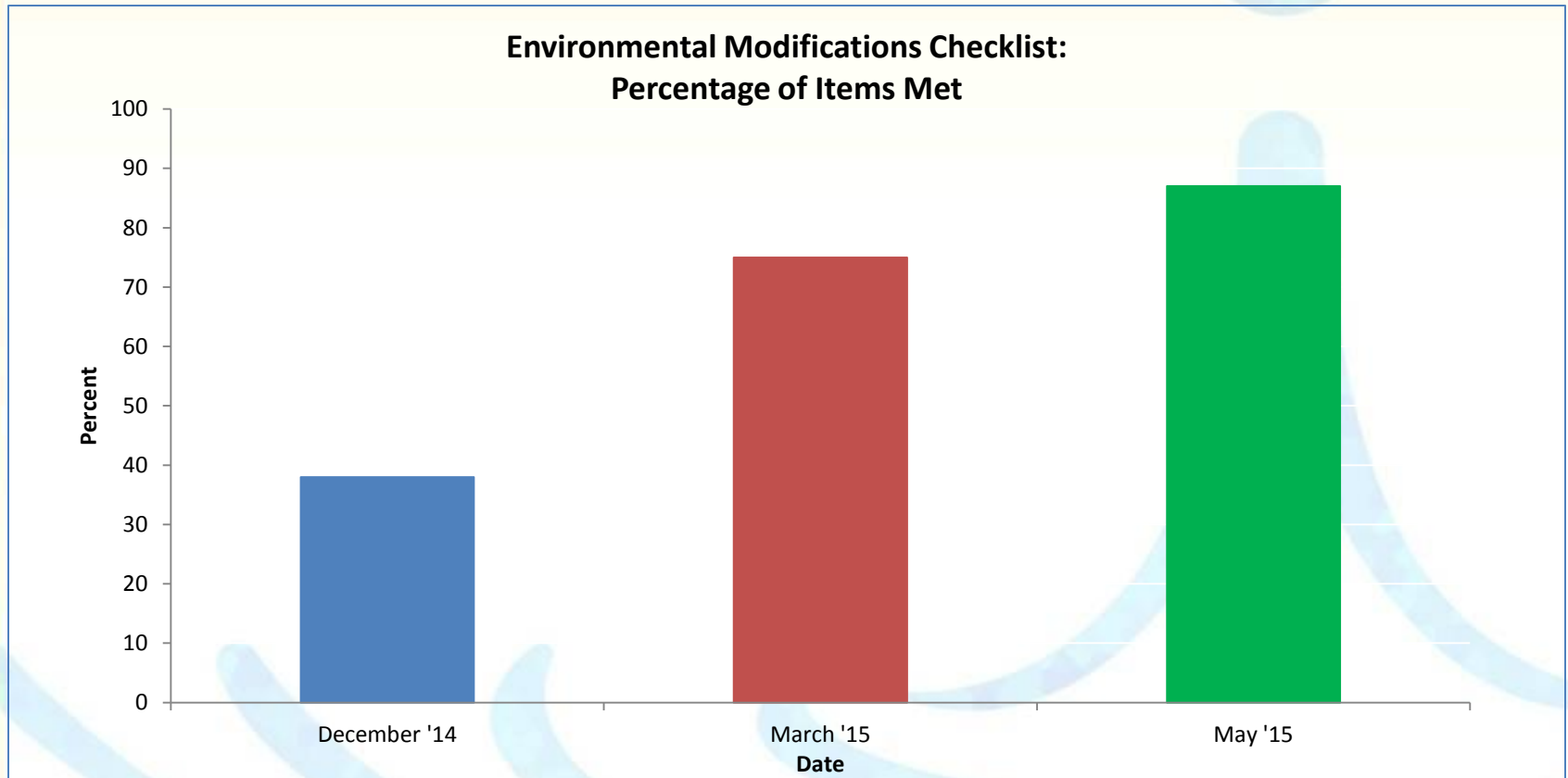
Results – Objective #3
(Teacher Levels of Prompting)
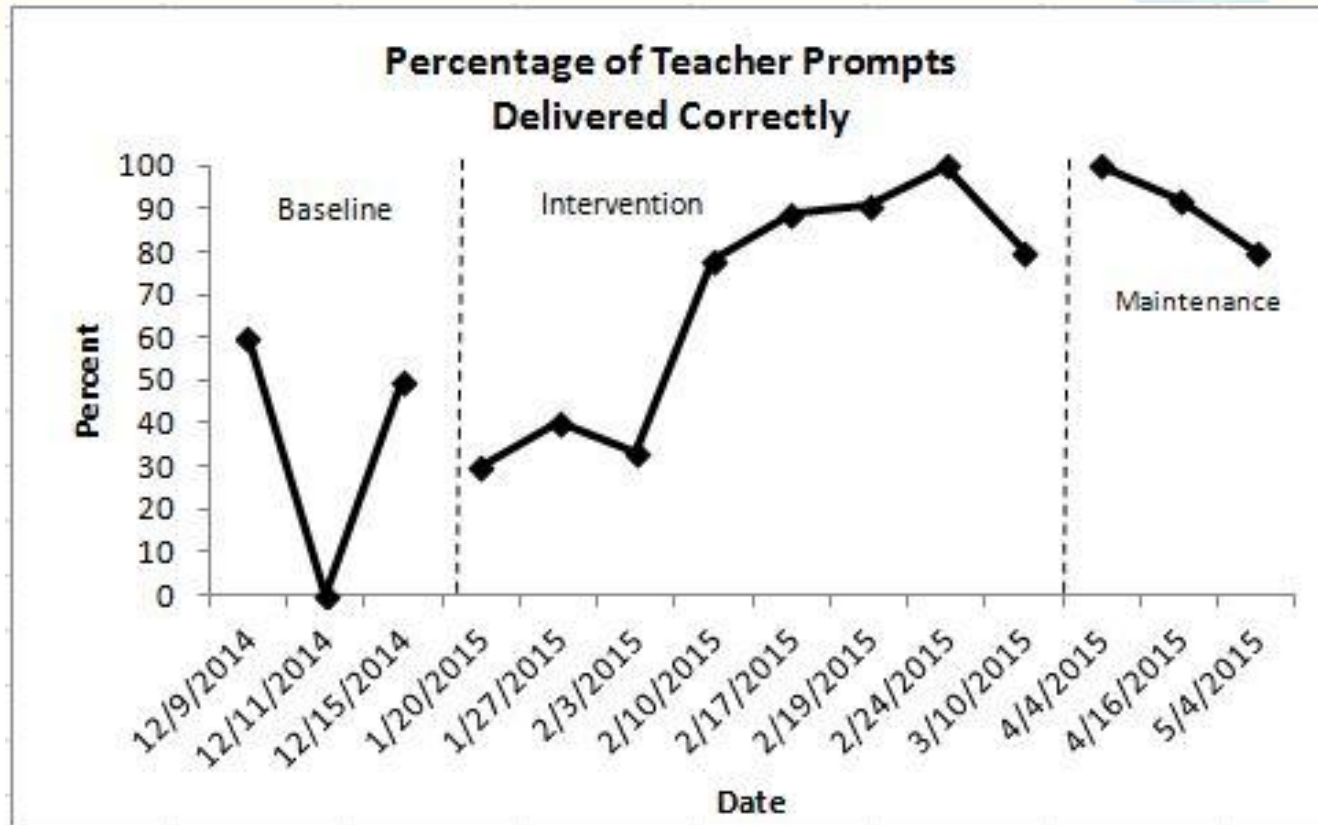
Results – Objective #4
(Target Student's Transitions)

Target Student: Percentage of Independent Transitions Per Day

Results – Objective #5
Delivery of Reinforcement/Social Praise
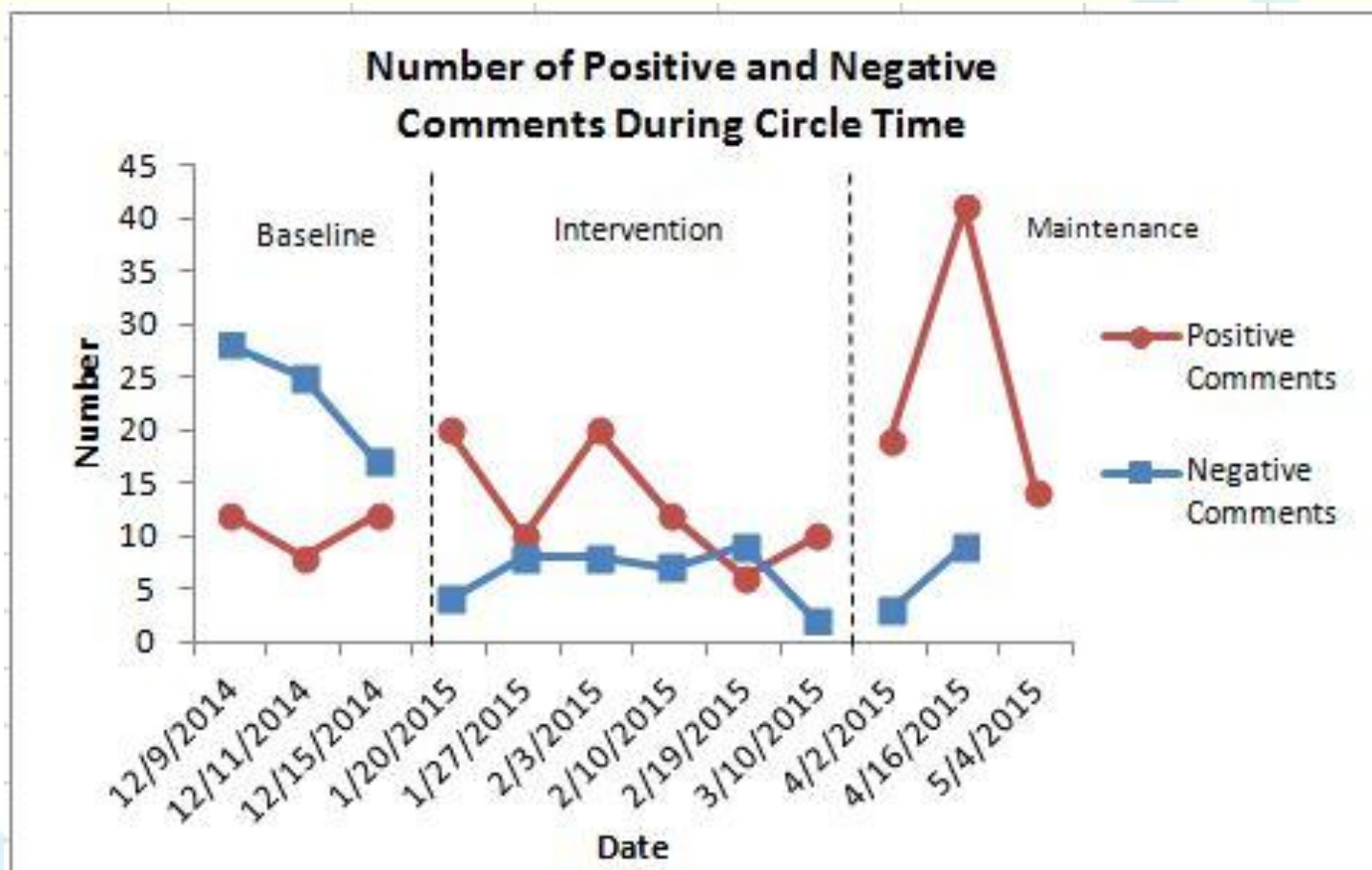
Results, School Perspective

Positive Take-Aways:

- Importance of regularly scheduled weekly team meetings week to week.

- Forum to openly discuss challenging behavior.

- Increased collaborative teaming among staff.

- Decrease in challenging behaviors across both classrooms.

- Increase in student engagement and independence.

- Generalization - staff noticed use of skills in other classrooms.

Anecdotes from Staff/Parent

- "I saw progress with the students, I saw staff changing their relationships with students and loving behaviors." - *ECSE Teacher*

- "Over the course of this project, I have grown to genuinely like and enjoy working with _____, where at first I didn't think I could work with him." - *Classroom Paraprofessional*

- "Being able to brainstorm and talk through behaviors really helped give everyone a voice in the conversation, which from my experience resulted in more buy in/ownership and in the long run accountability." - *ECSE Teacher*

- "His behaviors are more manageable across environments - I can enjoy taking him in public." - *Parent*
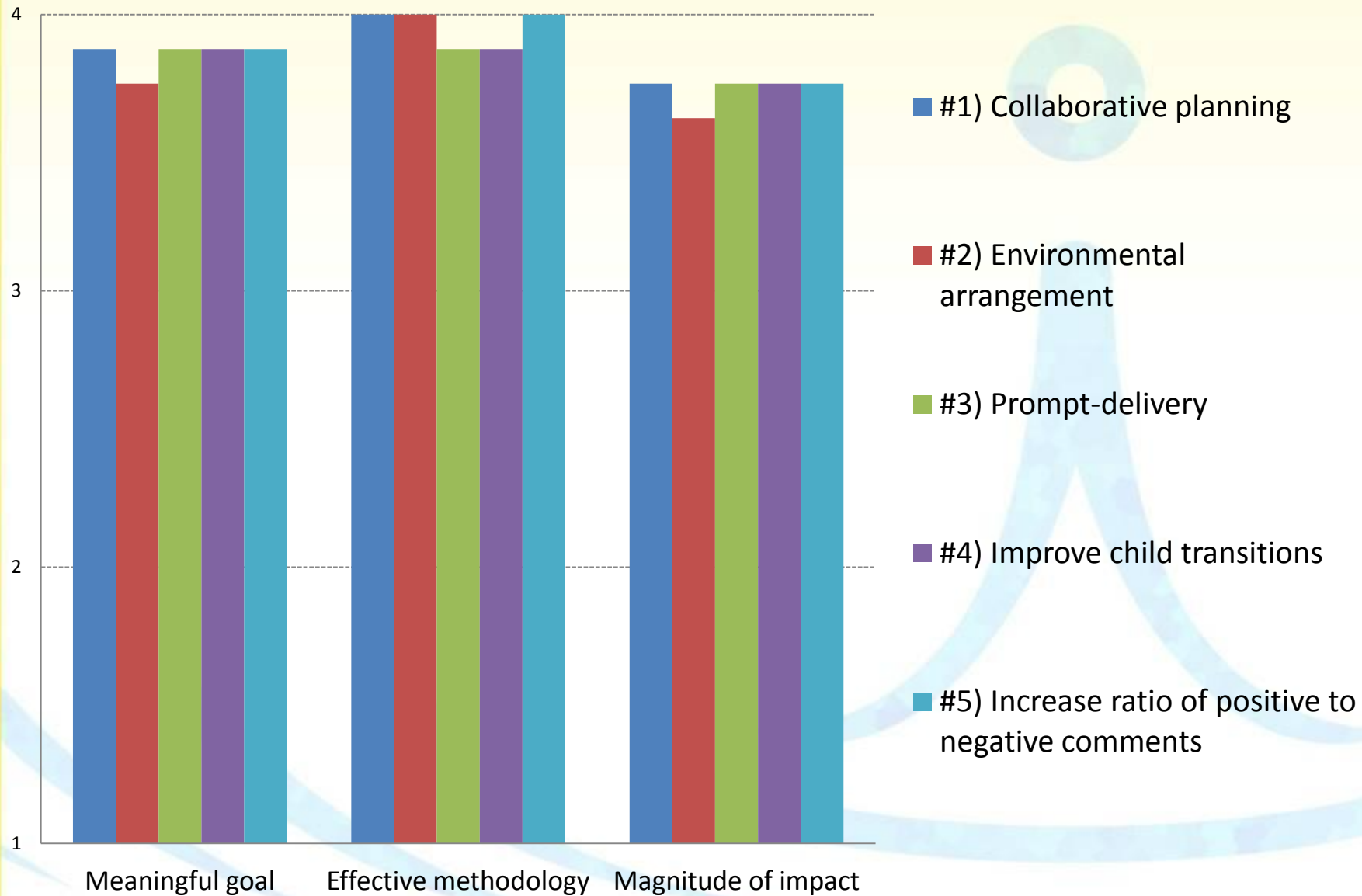
Social Validity

To what degree do teachers and paraprofessionals believe:

- The selected goals were important and relevant.
- Our methodology was effective.
- The outcomes were significant and meaningful to the education of children in the classroom.

Social Validity Results

Legend:
- #1) Collaborative planning
- #2) Environmental arrangement
- #3) Prompt-delivery
- #4) Improve child transitions
- #5) Increase ratio of positive to negative comments

Categories: Meaningful goal, Effective methodology, Magnitude of impact

Limitations

- Consultation schedule pushed into end of school-year resulting in fewer and more questionable follow-up probes; no retraining opportunities based on those probes.

- Unable to regularly include some related service providers.

- Would have spent more time teaching self-management skills to promote maintenance and generalization.

- Have not yet conducted a cost/benefit analysis, and therefore can't answer whether it was a reasonable and efficient use of grant money.

- Could it be replicated or delivered more efficiently? What components can be easily transferred to coaches and delivered internally?

- Reallocation of resources and scheduling challenges meant we did not provide any meaningful parent training as initially planned.

Next Steps

- Conduct cost/benefit analysis.
- Formalize consultation processes and timelines, and match to school calendar.
- Continue new pilot for supporting specific children to whom we have provided EI services, during initial transition to preschool.
- Look at support needs for other grade levels.
- Develop parent education component.
- Offer as a model of support to other schools and districts in our service area.

Questions/Discussion Points

- Reasonable use of limited funds?
- How important is "outside" perspective? Behavior analyst training?
- If school system had been given $10,000 grant to address same needs would there have been a meaningful difference in service model or outcomes?
- Is it appropriate/responsible for districts to have outside non-profits providing this type of support? What role should community agencies such as Continuum play in public education?
- Does this type of model create greater dependence on outside supports, or does it result in increased internal capacity?