



ACTIVEMIND SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP CASE STUDY

From Fun and Function

I. Focus on the ActiveMind School Partnership

The ActiveMind School Partnership is a behavioral Response to Intervention (RTI) program that addresses students' needs, and enables them to achieve academic goals. The program is founded upon the principle of empowerment and self regulation: Empowering teachers to enable children to self regulate. Politz Hebrew Academy in Philadelphia, a 33 year-old K-8 school servicing 360 children, engaged with Fun and Function in order to address behavioral challenges that were holding children back from learning to their full ability. Politz Hebrew Academy worked with Fun and Function to create the critical resources and provide training and guidance which have been transformational for the students and the school, and effectively reduced behavioral issues by 50%.

II. School

- A. Politz Hebrew Academy of Philadelphia
- B. Established in 1982
- C. 360 children, grades K-8
- D. Besie Katz-Head of School
- E. The institution's partnership with Fun and Function appeared to be a positive team effort and a learning experience for the school team members. The program implementation resulted in reaching the team's goal of structuring movement breaks that facilitate student performance and participation through use of the sensory rooms.

III. Common Concerns for a Potential New Venture

A. Budgeting

1. Is the school equipped with a sufficient budget or options to obtain the funds to continue with the program?

B. Space

1. What are the location requirements for the proposed ActiveMind solution?



2. Does the school have the appropriate/recommended available space to integrate and support the tools that Fun and Function proposes as a solution for the school's most urgent needs?

C. Staffing

1. Will the proposed ActiveMind solution for the school's needs require any additional staff?
2. If additional staff is required, is this an issue for the school's ability to continue in the program?

D. Effectiveness

1. Did the proposed ActiveMind solution help the school successfully accomplish its mission and reach the set goals?

IV. Observations/ Research

- A. In this school system, there was no pushback received in terms of budgeting. The board of the school was enthusiastic about the program and implementation of the Action Room. A grant was applied for, taking two years to complete, but it was approved. Parents and members of the board thought this was worth it, from a fiscal point of view as well from a public relations point of view.
- B. In this case, the school was already undergoing construction and renovations. The team members were able to relocate the special needs room to another level of the building and construct the Action Room in its prior location.
- C. One new member was added to the school's staff. This staff member's duties include supervising the room and tracking the behaviors that occur in the room.
- D. The effectiveness of this study is reported through findings from observations and the implementation of a tracking system. Of the children who used the Action Room on a consistent, scheduled basis, a 50% improvement in classroom behavior was observed. In some cases this percentage is higher. It was also observed that the Action Room mitigated 50% or more of the targeted behaviors. The principal reported a 100% effectiveness rate in terms of the turn-around of behavior by their students. It is noted that each child who visited the Action Room had his or her needs addressed effectively. When a building flood closed the Action Room, it was clear that the students who most often visited the room were disappointed to lose their energy outlet. These students became aware of the differing modalities that they need to self-regulate and, when taken away, they were aware of this absence.

To measure the effectiveness, the school has put in place a tracking form. This form is filled out for the children who use the room regularly. Data concerning the students' need for time in the Action Room, relating behaviors, and effective behaviors are included in this tracking process.



V. Assessment

- A. The ActiveMind Partnership is a beneficial tool for schools to access in order to diversify their students' learning. The applications of the sensory rooms [Action Room and ChillSpa] are to be used functionally with a classroom.
- B. In this case, the partnership effectively targeted and mitigated behavior issues observed in the classrooms. Reports show that students' targeted behaviors occurred less frequently in the classroom after spending a little as 20 minutes in the Action Room or ChillSpa.
- C. This partnership was beneficial and positive in the eyes of the school staff and community:
 - ***“We have a responsibility to the whole child, not just the intellectual sensibility of the child. I hope that one day, governments will have funding in place for this.” -Bessie Katz, Head of School***
 - ***“I maintain that if a school calls itself a school that cares, it will create an Action Room.” -Bessie Katz, Head of School***
 - ***“It’s a symbiotic relationship in combining the ActiveMind Partnership with the classroom.” -Bessie Katz, Head of School***
 - ***“There is no downside to it if used effectively.” -Bessie Katz, Head of School***
 - ***“I don’t know what I would do without the Action Room. It just makes my brain work better.” –Student of Politz Hebrew Academy of Philadelphia***
 - ***“I wish I had had this [Action Room] as a child.”- Parent of student attending Politz Hebrew Academy of Philadelphia***