

Guide for Conducting Lunch Bunch Groups

Why Lunch Bunch Groups?

Lunch Bunch, as a Tier II or III intervention, provides a valuable opportunity to support students who may be experiencing challenges with emotions, behavior, or interpersonal relationships. These small-group sessions offer a structured yet informal setting where students can practice social skills, build relationships, and develop personal competencies. This guide provides a toolkit for educators and school staff to facilitate Lunch Bunch groups effectively, ensuring a positive and supportive environment for students.

Tips for Conducting Lunch Bunch Groups:

Before the Group

Selecting Students:

- Students may be referred by educators.
- New students can be included to help with social integration.
- Groups should be inclusive and supportive.

Social and Personal Competencies Alignment:

- Social Awareness
- Relationship Skills
- Decision-Making Skills

Logistics:

- Obtain parental permission before including students.
- Be aware of students' allergies to ensure safety.
- Prepare students ahead of time by explaining the purpose and expectations.
- Provide students with a pass to "jump the lunch line" so they can maximize their time in the group.

General Rules:

- Be kind.
- Respect privacy.
- Be on time.

During the Group

A positive and structured environment enhances the effectiveness of Lunch Bunch sessions.

Creating a Supportive Atmosphere:

- Encourage respectful discussions.
- Model and practice emotional regulation strategies.
- Foster peer connections by guiding discussions and activities.

Facilitating Discussion and Activities:

- Focus on targeted skill areas such as conflict resolution, communication, and social interactions.
- Engage students in interactive activities that promote interpersonal growth.
- Encourage personal competency development by reinforcing positive behaviors.

Capturing Feedback:

- Observe and note student interactions and progress.
- Provide gentle guidance to help students navigate challenges.
- Reflect on what strategies worked best and adjust as needed.

After the Group

Following up ensures the effectiveness and continuity of the intervention.

Review and Reflect:

- Assess the impact of the session and make necessary adjustments for future groups.
- Identify key themes and skills that require further development.

Action Steps:

- Use observations to guide future interventions and individualized support.
- Maintain consistent participation from staff to ensure group success.
- End each session on a positive note to reinforce a supportive and encouraging environment.

Other Considerations:

- The ideal group size is four to six students.
- Sessions can be held weekly or bi-weekly.
- Duration may range from four to nine weeks, depending on student needs.
- Ensure students have permission to obtain their lunches beforehand to maximize group time.
- Staff should be fully engaged as facilitators and role models.
- Sessions should be free from interruptions to maintain focus and effectiveness.

By implementing Lunch Bunch groups, schools can create a safe and structured space where students build confidence, develop social skills, and strengthen relationships with peers and adults. A well-facilitated Lunch Bunch group can contribute significantly to a positive school climate and student well-being.