Behavior Count – Description, Procedures, & Example

When the behavior that you are looking at can be easily counted Behavior Count may be the best method to use, as it does not require too much effort and may not interfere with ongoing activities. A behavior can be easily counted when:

- The behavior has a clear beginning and end so that you can easily tell when the behavior starts and when it ends, <u>and</u>
- It does not happen at such a high rate that it is hard to keep track of.

There are several ways to keep track of behaviors as they occur: You can use a wrist counter; put paperclips, pennies, or buttons in one pocket and move them to a different "target" pocket as each behavior occurs; or make tally marks on a piece of paper. To obtain the total number of times that the behavior occurred, at the end of your observation time, you would either look at your wrist counter or add up the number of items in the "target" pocket, or the number of tally marks. This form uses tally marks. However, you can choose a different method to keep track of behaviors as they occur.

Examples of behaviors that you can measure by counting include leaving one's seat, raising one's hand, yelling out an answer, asking to go to the bathroom, being late or being on time to class, ….

Procedures
<u>At the meeting</u>:
*   Write down the behavior that you will be looking for and its definition
*   If the team decides on an intervention (meetings 2 or 3), enter it in the box provided (p. 2)
<u>After the meeting</u>:
*   Every time that you are "on the look out" for the behavior:
- Write down the date
- Make a tally mark every time that the behavior occurs
- At the end of your observation period, total the number of tally marks for that day (if using a different method to keep track of behavior, enter the total in the Total column) **(This is what you graph)**

Example
<u>Behavior</u>: Leaving seat during class time
<u>Behavior Definition</u>: Being at least one foot away from desk/seat during class, anytime after tardy bell rings. Includes times when has asked for permission to leave seat.

Date	Tally every time that the behavior occurs	Total number of times behavior occurred
11/5		7
11/6		4
11/7		6
11/8		5
11/9		8

Tieghi-Benet, M. C., Miller, K., Reiners, J., Robinett, B. E. Freeman, R. L., Smith, C. L., Baer, D., Palmer, A. (2003). *Encouraging Student Progress (ESP), Student/ team book.* Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas.