

Juanita lived with her father, mother, and five siblings in a large city in Arizona. She was enrolled in a general education first grade class at her local neighborhood school. Juanita qualified for Title 1 supports, including the free and reduced-price lunch program, but did not receive special education.

Juanita's first grade teacher reported that she was an average student academically. The teacher reported that Juanita generally paid attention and tried hard to complete her seatwork and other academic assignments each day. Juanita's reading and math skills were near grade level and similar to those of most of the other students in her class.

However, her teacher also reported that Juanita had several behavioral challenges at the beginning of first grade. Her teacher indicated that Juanita shy and timid, often refusing to "stand up for herself" when interacting with her peers. She rarely volunteered to participate in group activities in class or on the playground. Instead, Juanita would often avoid or withdraw from social situations, especially those requiring her to work together with other students.

In response to Juanita's behavioral challenges, her first grade teacher referred Juanita to a new behavioral intervention program at her school. The program was based on behavioral studies of young children like Juanita conducted by researchers at Arizona State University.

Juanita's behavioral intervention had two main components:

- ***Social skill instruction.*** Her teacher explicitly taught Juanita specific social skills in targeted areas such as answering questions, controlling her anger, and getting along with others. For each target skill, Juanita learned how to perform the skill effectively as well as when to use the skill in what social situations.
- ***Cooperative learning groups.*** Juanita participated in a small cooperative group with three other students who behaved properly at school. Her cooperative group provided opportunities for Juanita and the other students to model and role-play target social skills.

In addition to her behavioral intervention, her teacher positively reinforced appropriate behavior by Juanita and her classmates. Her teacher also provided opportunities for Juanita to observe and learn how her classmates behaved in different social situations during class, in the hallway, at lunch, and on the playground.

By the end of first grade, Juanita's social behavior had changed dramatically. Juanita had gained self-confidence when interacting with her peers in class, during lunch, or on the playground. She began making friends with other students, including asking her mother to arrange for "play dates" with her friends after school or on weekends. No longer socially isolated, Juanita and her family looked forward to her continued learning and achievement in second grade and beyond.