

School Refusal or Truancy

School Refusal

- Emotional Distress about attending school
- Parents aware of absence from school
- Lack of antisocial behaviors
- Student remains at home during the school day
- Student will do school work at home

Truancy

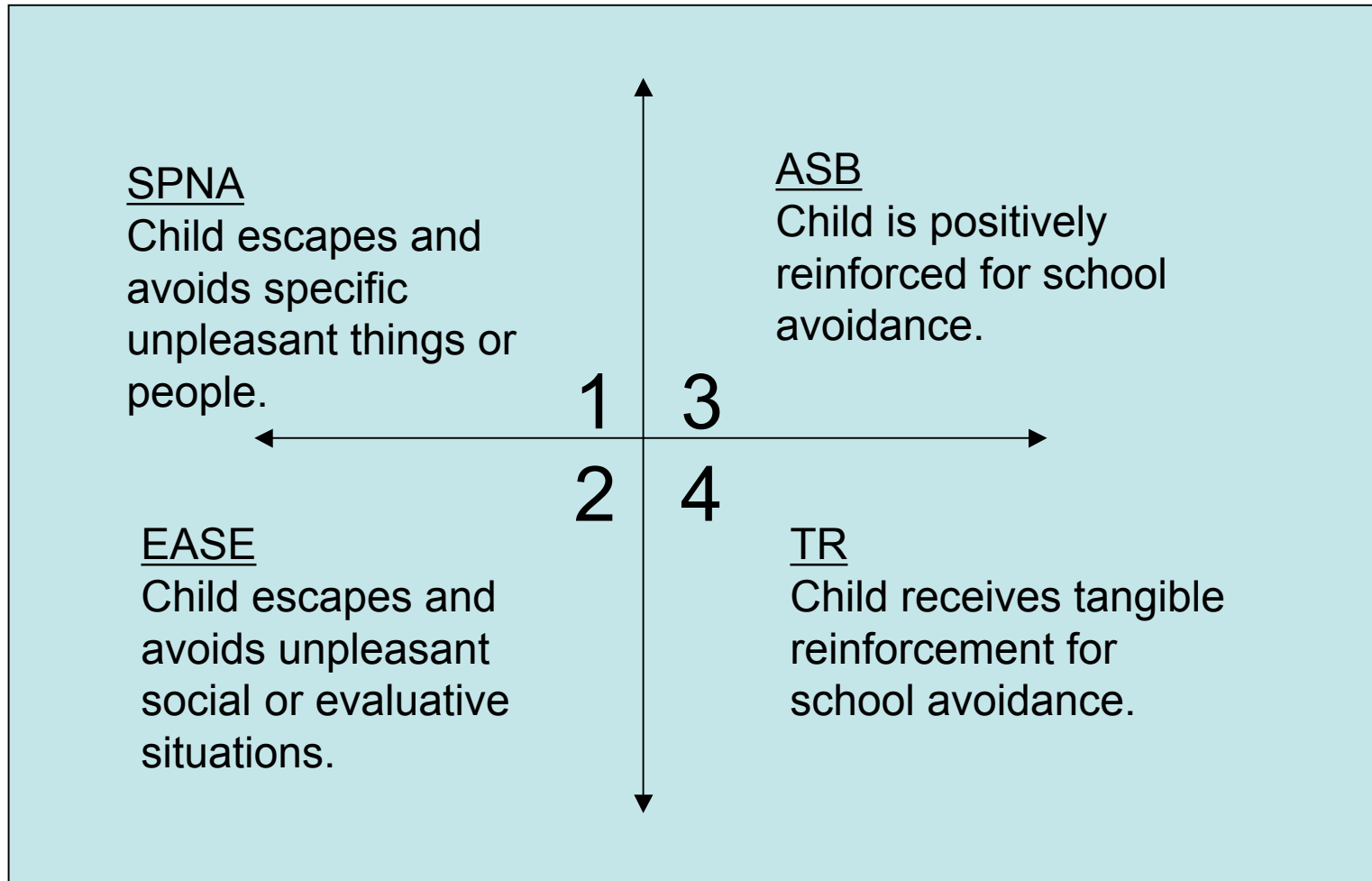
- Lack of emotional stress about attending school
- Absence from school hidden from parents
- Higher incidence of antisocial behaviors
- Student seeks other peers who are not in school
- Student shows little interest in completing school work.

4 Types of School Refusal

Negative Reinforcement
(escape and avoid)

Positive Reinforcement
(rewards)

Individual (singular)
Social (plural)



R- avoidance
Interior Stimuli

R+ reward
Exterior Stimuli

Individual (singular)

SPNA

Stimuli Provoking a Negative Affect
(bus, lunch, fire alarm, restrooms, teacher)

Symptoms: generalized anxiety, depression, phobias, sep anxiety.

Strategies

- Desensitization
- No “forced” attendance
- Gradual re-exposure
- Self-reinforcement
- Positive self-talk

ASB

Attention Seeking Behavior

(tantrums, somatic complaints, non-compliance)

Symptoms: separation anxiety, generalized anxiety, oppositional defiant.

Strategies

- Offer few choices
- Clear messages
- “Forced” attendance
- Parent training
- Routines and consequences

Social (plural)

EASE

Escape from Aversive Social/Evaluative Situations. (public speaking, halls, called on in class, tests)

Symptoms: generalized anxiety, social phobia, depression, avoidance.

Strategies

- Skill building
- Cognitive restructuring
- Role play
- Coping strategies
- Gradual re-exposure to social situations

TR

Tangible Reinforcers outside of school
(sleeping, TV, video games, friends, mall)

Symptoms: generalized anxiety, ODD, conduct disorder, depression.

Strategies:

- Contracts
- Curtail other activities
- Increase rewards for attending
- Decrease rewards for missing
- Family communication skills
- Alternative problem solving strategies