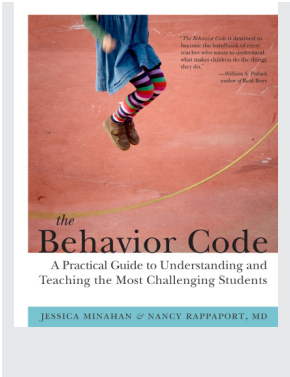
CONTACT ROSE ANN MILLER, HARVARD EDUCATION PRESS
PHONE: 617-496-2998, FAX: 617-496-3584
roseann_miller@harvard.edu
www.harvardeducationpress.org

Harvard Education Press

PRESS RELEASE



Providing the Tools to Decode Challenging Student Behavior

CAMBRIDGE, MA, MARCH 23, 2012--Children with behavioral challenges often fail in school, wasting too much time in detention and suspensions and falling behind in academics, never mastering the skills they need to make adequate progress. Classroom teachers encounter these challenging students on a daily basis, and they can be highly disruptive to a classroom, interfering with other students' learning as well as draining a teacher's energy and time. In *The Behavior Code* (Harvard Education Press; Publication date: April 19, 2012), Jessica Minahan and Nancy Rappaport, M.D. provide effective strategies to prevent inappropriate behavior from occurring from some of the most challenging students in Kindergarten through sixth grade. In this book, the authors provide the conceptual background for "breaking the code" of four of the most challenging students in the classroom: students with anxious, oppositional, withdrawn and sexualized behaviors.

Minahan and Rappaport take their deep clinical understanding and knowledge of multidisciplinary research and best practices for the students they discuss in this book and apply it within a behavioral construct. Their behavioral approach is flexible, empathetic, and practical, with an emphasis on preventative interventions. They provide a framework for a different kind of behavioral intervention plan that they call the FAIR Plan. The four components of a FAIR behavior intervention plan are *Functional Hypothesis*, where teachers document behaviors and make a hypothesis about what the student is communicating through his or her behavior; *Accommodations* that need to be in place to help the student function better; *Interaction strategies* that will promote desired behavior; and *Response strategies* that may be considered if prevention efforts fail. The authors spell out the best ways to intervene and support students with varying presentations as well as provide behavior support plans for teachers to tailor for the hardest to reach students in their classroom.

About the Authors:

Jessica Minahan is a board-certified behavior analyst and special educator who is currently employed in the Newton (Mass.) public school system as a district-wide behavior analyst. **Nancy Rappaport** is an assistant professor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School and author of *In Her Wake: A Child Psychiatrist Explores the Mystery of Her Mother's Suicide* (Basic Books, 2009).