



Understanding the Assessment and Design of Effective Behavior Support

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Session Purpose



- The purpose of this two part teleconference is to provide a parent friendly introduction to Functional Behavioral Assessment and Behavior Intervention Plans to maximize parent participation in the process.
- Part 1 will focus on developing an understanding of how behavior patterns develop and interpreting the function of behavior.
- Part 2 will illustrate the link between the function of behavior and how to select interventions and supports.
- Suggestions for how parents can be actively involved in the process will be incorporated into both sessions.

Positive Behavior Support in Schools (PBSIS) Initiative



- Partnership between:
 - New Jersey Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs
 - Elizabeth M. Boggs Center at UMDNJ
- Sponsored by the New Jersey Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs in collaboration with the Elizabeth M. Boggs Center on Developmental Disabilities at UMDNJ. This initiative is funded through the I.D.E.A. 2004, Part B Funds and is administered by the New Jersey Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs.

Goal of the PBSIS Initiative



To support the inclusion of students with disabilities within general education programs by developing the capacity of schools to create environments that encourage and support pro-social student behavior at the school wide, classroom, and individual student levels using current, research validated practices in positive behavior support



Linking Function to Interventions

Setting Events (goes across all hypotheses)	Antecedent Triggers	Behaviors (goes across all hypotheses)	Consequences (goes across all hypotheses)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Characteristics of PDD: Some difficulty using and understanding language; Unusual play with toys and other objects; Difficulty with changes in routine or familiar surroundings; Repetitive body movements or behavior patterns • Disruptions to family routines – most notably a visit from her stepbrother and not seeing for father (due to his work schedule) for more than 3 days • When she has not eaten breakfast • Transitions, particularly those that involve her moving locations – even within the classroom • When morning free play is not available • When she wants to be the person in control. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not having a task or activity to engage • Having to wait (e.g., teacher preparing materials) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Excessive motor movements</u>: shaking head back and forth respectively, sliding back and forth in seat, scrunching her face up and squeezing her eyes shut • <u>Aggressive behaviors</u>: scratching, pinching, pushing, hitting • <u>Refuses Direction</u>: will say not, cries, arches her back, and screams. This can escalate to scratching, pinching, pushing, and hitting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal redirection is the most common response. In a typical 25 minute routine, Karen will receive an average of 13 redirections and 1 occurrence of social praise • Physically moving her away from the area • Is engaged in a new activity
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustained periods of time without adult interaction or praise 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When she is unsure of what to do / expectations are unclear • When the task is difficult or challenging. • When told no to something she wants or wants to do 		

- When Karen is without an activity or direction, particularly during transitions or when she has to wait she begins to shake her head back and forth, slides in her seat, and scrunches her face. This can escalate to direction refusals or aggression (e.g., hitting, pinching, etc.). In response staff will redirect her to stop, ask her if something is wrong or to explain why she is shaking her head (etc.). Often, staff will also respond by getting her engaged in another activity. Both responses (verbal interactions and getting her engaged) appear to end the behavior for the moment. It appears that Karen is bored during these “down” times and the interaction she receives from staff serves as entertainment to pass the time. The behavior also serves to get her access to an activity. Thus the function of her behavior is to gain access to attention or an activity.
- During work situations in which Karen has not had teacher interaction for sustained periods (several minutes) she will either begin shaking her head, sliding in seat, or scrunching her face or will scratch, pinch, push, or hit a child in her area. Staff typically respond by telling Karen to stop, that hitting is not okay, will make her apologize to the peer, and/or remove her from the area. It appears that the behavior exhibited under these conditions serve to provide Karen with access to teacher attention when she has been left alone for several minutes.
- When the (a) expectations or directions for the situation are unclear and inconsistent; (b) when tasks are difficult or challenging; or (c) when told no to something she wants to do, Karen will shake her head, slide in her seat, or scrunch her face which escalates to refusing to follow adult directions. Staff typically respond by verbally redirecting her and often will remove her from the situation. It appears, that Karen gets frustrated by not being sure what to do or because she gets a mixed message about what is okay and subsequently uses the behaviors to gain control of the situation.

Using the Function Test



- Examples of Potential Questions for Karen's Plan:
 - How can we help Karen stay engaged during “down time” transitions?
 - How can we ensure that Karen is consistently receiving attention from staff and peers throughout the day?”
 - How can we ensure that directions and tasks have clear directions and within Karen's performance comfort zone?

Linking the Hypothesis and the BIP



To **compete** effectively with the function of behavior interventions must:

1. Be matched to reason why behavior is occurring in the first place
2. Be used in combination to address all four parts of the behavior pattern
3. Be sufficiently powerful to compete with reinforcement the behavior is getting

Interventions Should Address Needs at the:



- **Macro level:** setting event influences that create the context for the problem
 - Medication, counseling, mentoring, academic supports, skill instruction, etc.
- **Micro level:** immediate environmental influences that trigger and reinforce behavior
 - Curriculum modifications, precorrection, offering choices, providing reinforcement, etc.

Figuring out the Function



- Samantha frequently talks to her neighbors during assignments. Every day her teacher has to reprimand her, often having to provide one on one to get started.
- What is Samantha's motivation?
 - To get out of work?
 - To get teacher attention?
 - To talk with her peers?

What Motivates Samantha?



- Samantha, 14, lives with her grandmother. She has limited contact with her parents. Her teachers offer her a source of adult interaction she wouldn't have otherwise.
- Which is more satisfying?
 - Doing your work and nobody noticing you?Or
 - Drawing attention to yourself, even if the attention is negative?

Interventions Should Compliment the Reason for Behavior

Neutralize Setting Events	Modify Antecedent Triggers	Teach a Replacement Behavior	Change How we Respond
<p data-bbox="112 611 504 982">Across home and school use a picture schedule to increase predictability</p> <p data-bbox="131 1053 484 1232">Offer breakfast snack in the morning</p>	<p data-bbox="566 611 946 725">Break tasks into smaller parts</p> <p data-bbox="585 801 929 975">Give a choice of two types of Activities</p> <p data-bbox="585 1053 929 1353">Provide Karen with peer or adult attention during down time</p>	<p data-bbox="1058 896 1325 1003">Request “talk to me”</p>	<p data-bbox="1435 582 1812 761">Social praise during and at the end of tasks</p> <p data-bbox="1435 839 1812 946">Sticker chart for rewards</p> <p data-bbox="1435 1025 1705 1139">Limit verbal Prompts</p> <p data-bbox="1435 1182 1705 1353">Use picture Prompts to redirect</p>

Essential Components of a Behavior Intervention Plan



Every plan must include:

- Antecedent and Setting Event Interventions (PREVENTION)
- Alternative Skills and Instruction for those skills (INSTRUCTION)
- Consequences to reinforce desired behavior (REINFORCEMENT)
- Strategies to diffuse behavior when it occurs

Many plans will also include:

- SAFETY plans
- Logical/natural deterrents



Setting Event Interventions

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Setting Event Interventions



- Purpose: Reduce the NEED for behavior by addressing the underlying reasons why the behavior is occurring in the first place
- While some setting event interventions will work quickly, many typically take time to put in place and be effective
 - Quick working example: reducing demands for the day when the student is sick
 - Slow working example: building a positive relationship with an adult

To Address Setting Events You Can...



- Neutralize the problem
 - Ex: arrange for breakfast
- Compensate for the problem
 - Ex: link with a mentor/positive adult
- Introduce a new dimension
 - Ex: link with therapeutic supports

Antecedent Interventions



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Antecedent Interventions



- Purpose: To prevent behavior from occurring by modifying the environment **BEFORE** behavior occurs:
 - eliminating the trigger
 - neutralizing the effect of the trigger
 - enhancing the environment
- Antecedents are fast acting and typical work as soon as they are put in place

When Developing Antecedent Interventions....



1. Recall function
2. Define the learning/behavioral objective for the situation
3. Consider each trigger in the hypothesis
4. Brainstorm:
 - How can you improve this situation so it makes the problem behavior unnecessary?
 - How can you encourage the student to use desired/positive behaviors?

To Modify Antecedents You Can....



- Improve ease of engagement
- Enhance interest
- Embed reminders or cues
- Offer more control or predictability
- Reduce the difficulty or complexity
- Change how you interact
- Pay more attention

“Transition Time” Examples



- Picture schedule or “first” “then” strip
- Intermittent count down warnings
- Embed a neutral activity as a “soft landing”
- Embed a highly preferred activity as a motivator
- Embed choice statements
- Precorrect with desired response/behavior
- Use a soother (e.g., squeeze toy) to reduce anxiety
- Pair with a partner or buddy



Alternative Skill Instruction

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Alternative/Replacement Skills



- Long term strategy to give the student a socially appropriate and effective way to get their needs met
 - **Functionally equivalent skills:** skills that are a one for one replacement of the problem behavior; results in the same reinforcement as the problem behavior
 - **Functionally relevant skills:** skills that increase the student's overall competence in the situation, but do not necessarily result in the same reinforcement as the problem behavior

Common Alternative Skills



- Escape examples
 - Take a break
 - Ask for help
 - Identify trigger
 - Problem solving
 - Ask for adaptation or modification
- Access examples
 - Request attention
 - Schedule an appropriate time to talk with staff
 - Ask to schedule time for a preferred item
 - Follow and use a schedule
 - Use a social script

To Select an Alternative Skill:



- What is the function(s) of behavior?
 - Select 1 or more functionally equivalent skill(s) to replace the behavior.
 - Select 1 or more functionally relevant skill(s) to enhance the student's ability to handle or more fully participate in the routine.

Skill Selection Example

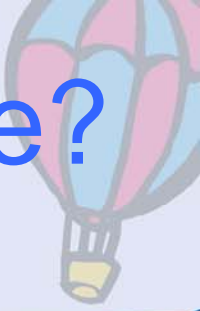


- A student who is disruptive in class because they are not able to do the work:
 - **Escape function:** student has difficulty with sustained attention, task start up, problem solving, and reading.
 - Functionally equivalent skill: Recognize personal signals and ask to go the bathroom
 - Functionally relevant skills: Target reading, self instruction to work problems and activity start up

Reinforcing Desired Behaviors



Why Do We Need to Use Praise?



- High rates of positive praise is one of the “most powerful tools” to prevent problem behaviors and increase learning (Conroy et al., 2009)
- Staff tend to use lower ratios of positive to negative responses with students who have behavior issues.

Social Praise



1. Use social praise to reinforce specific target behaviors
2. Use social praise to improve relationships and association with a setting

Delivery of Social Praise



- Accepted praise – ratio standard: 3:1
- Praise is contingent upon desired behavior – corrective statements compete with reinforcement of praise
- New behavior? Praise approximations frequently.
- Maintenance behavior? Use praise intermittently

Social Praise Considerations



- Social praise is enhanced with attentive body language
- Social praise made need to be shaped by pairing praise with highly preferred reinforcers
- Some students are not use to getting praise, stick with it

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Responding Effectively When Behavior Occurs



Responding Effectively to Behavior

Basics to Keep in Mind



- Look for and attend to precursor signals
- Our response should not be more disruptive than the behavior
- Always respect the dignity of the child when responding
- Keep your response to a minimum- less is more.
- Stay calm, quiet, and neutral



Parent Involvement in the Process

Involvement in the Assessment and Intervention Planning Process



- Link discussions to a future vision
 - Where do you want to see your child in 1 year, 3 years, 5 years – what are the long range outcomes?
 - Remind school personnel of your child's strengths and preferences and those link to the vision
 - Always question (even if just reflectively) the extent to which the interventions are doing more than just “reducing behavior”

Involvement in the Assessment and Intervention Planning Process



- Offer information
 - Complete the parent functional assessment interview tool at www.njpbs.org
 - Provide background information
 - Interpret behaviors to help school personnel understand
 - Share what behaviors you see at home and what strategies have helped

Involvement in the Assessment and Intervention Planning Process



- Always talk (and think) in terms of function and the four components of behavior patterns
 - Always bring discussions back to:
 - What was the antecedent?
 - What setting events might be a problem
 - How is the behavior getting reinforced?
 - What do we think the function is?
 - How are the interventions selected matching the function of behavior?
 - Ask: can we map this out on flip chart?

Wrap Up



- Questions?
- Comments?