

FBA

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General Considerations Regarding Problem Behavior

- Problem behaviors are communicative
- Problem behaviors are NOT unique to autism
- Problem behaviors occur because they are efficient and effective
- Problem behaviors continue to occur because they are inadvertently reinforced
- Positive Behavior Support (PBS) has advanced scientific technology for dealing with problem behaviors
- Necessary to identify functions of and teach new behaviors

Common Motivating Factors For Problem Behavior

- Attention/Positive consequence
- Escape/Avoidance
- **EFFECTIVE & EFFICIENT**

Reinforcement vs. Punishment

	Deliver	Withdraw
Pleasant	Positive Reinforcement	Punishment
Unpleasant	Punishment	Negative Reinforcement

Reinforcement vs. Punishment

- **Reinforcement** (whether +/-) will increase the strength of a behavior and the likelihood that it will be used again
- **Punishment** *should* decrease the strength of a behavior and the likelihood that it will be used again

Why Conduct a Functional Assessment

- Avoids error-filled speculation
- Identifies the **FUNCTION** of the behavior and **WHY** the behavior is occurring
- Develops efficient and effective behavior plans
- Focus on teaching new behaviors

Conducting the FBA

Four Important Steps

1. Define the Target Behavior

- Observable & measurable
- Poor Example: off-task
- Good Example: out of seat, playing with desk objects, talking out of turn

2. Collect Data

- Direct behavioral observations in the natural environment, across settings/situations
- Compare/contrast to typical peers
- Record behavior (e.g., frequency/rate, duration)
 - Establish a baseline
- Identify antecedent(s) & consequence(s)
- Identify possible setting events
- Find the pattern!

3. Determine the Function

- Understand that 80% of behaviors are communicative in function
 - Self-stimulatory behavior?
- Identify the specific “WHY” or purpose of the target behavior
- Common functions:
 - Attention
 - Access to a desired item/activity
 - Escape/avoid

Sample FBA Datasheet

DATE: _____
 NAME: _____

BEHAVIORS

TIME										
PLACE										

BEFORE:

Told to do something										
Change in activity										
Moved										
Able										
Interrupted										
Told "No"										

AFTER:

Given attention										
Given something										
Lost something										
Removed from area										
Ignored										
Punished										
Request Withdrawn										

WHY:

Get out of...										
Transition										
To obtain...										
Attention										
Avoid (person/object)										
Other: Specify										

NOTES

4. Identify a Replacement Behavior(s)

- Age-appropriate
- Context-appropriate
- Effective & efficient
- Address the same function!

Effective & efficient, functionally equivalent replacement behaviors must be explicitly & systematically taught!

Teaching New Behaviors

- Problem behaviors on extinction
 - Extinction burst
 - Cautions of extinction burst
- Replacement behaviors
 - Functionally equivalent
 - Just as effective and efficient
 - Same function, different behavior
 - Reinforce occurrence of replacement behavior:
 - Contingently, immediately, and directly (Natural reinforcers)
- **Create opportunities**

Issues

- No apparent pattern for problem behavior
- Serves more than one function
- Can't put on extinction
- Difficulty identifying replacement behavior
- Parents/caregiver
- **Severe** behaviors
- Any others??

Additional Behavior Modification Strategies for Targeting Problem Behavior

- Antecedent manipulation
- Consequence manipulation
- Creating opportunities and setting up contingencies

Antecedent Manipulation

- Modify the task
 - Diminish aversive characteristics
 - Simplify, reduce level of difficulty
 - Incorporate child's interest
- Modify instructional presentation
 - Task interspersal
 - Pacing
 - Task size

Consequence Manipulations

- Remove maintaining variables
- Increase use of contingent reinforcement for appropriate behaviors

FBA: Process in Review

1. Identify & define target behavior
2. Gather information across contexts
3. Analyze the ABC's
4. Determine the function
5. Identify replacement behavior(s)
6. Develop intervention plan
7. Implement plan
8. Evaluate