



The Els Center of Excellence
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Supporting Positive Behaviors in the Home

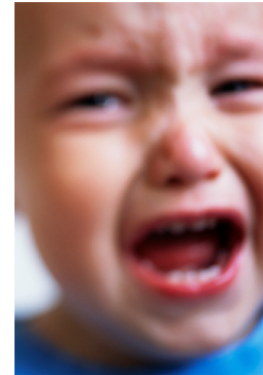
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What is behavior?

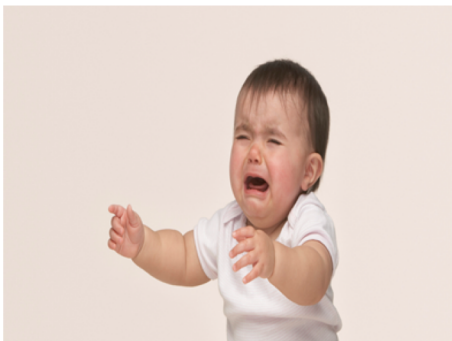
- Anything that we do or say
 - Walking, talking, eating, sleeping, thinking, learning
- We are all born with some behaviors
 - Crying, sucking, etc.
- Other behaviors are learned
- All behaviors are maintained and changed through interaction with our environment
- Adults are the ones in charge of a young child's environment.
- What behaviors should be addressed:
 - Those that interfere with learning or socializing





Communication and Problem Behavior

- We do not behave “appropriately” because we are “good or bad” or simply because we have been told the “right and wrong” way to behave.
- We behave in ways that get our needs and wants met.
- Behavior is a form of communication
- We discontinue behaviors that no longer get our needs and wants met, and replace them with ones that do.





Communication and Problem Behavior

- Almost all problem behavior of children with disabilities represents an effort to communicate.
- The key is to determine what the child is trying to communicate with their problem behavior and then help them find new and better ways to get their needs met.

Understand the
function



Teach new ways to
achieve that
function



Communication and Problem Behavior

- ✓ Challenging Behavior is a form of communication
- ✓ All behavior has a function
- ✓ Behaviors continue when they are reinforced
- ✓ We change behavior by changing what happens before and after behavior occurs
- ✓ If we want a challenging behavior to go away, we need to teach a replacement behavior that serves the same function



Functions of Behavior

- 4 Functions of Behavior
 - Attention
 - Escape/ Avoidance
 - Access
 - Automatic



Functions of Behavior

- Attention- to gain social attention from others
 - What can function as attention
 - Reprimands
 - Eye Contact
 - Touching
 - Saying “No”
- All of these forms of attention can reinforce behavior



Functions of Behavior

- Escape— to avoid something they don't want
 - Any time a child engages in the behavior and the demand is removed
 - Can be accidental
 - The phone rings
 - Parent has to leave the house
 - Or Deliberate
 - “You don't have to.”



Functions of Behavior

- Access to Items– to get something they want
 - The child wants something he/she can't have
 - Something fun is removed and the child wants it back



Functions of Behavior

- Automatic— it feels good to do it - self-stimulation
 - Provides a sensation that is pleasing
 - Rocking
 - Spinning
 - Helps to mask or remove a sensation that is displeasing
 - Toothache
 - Headache

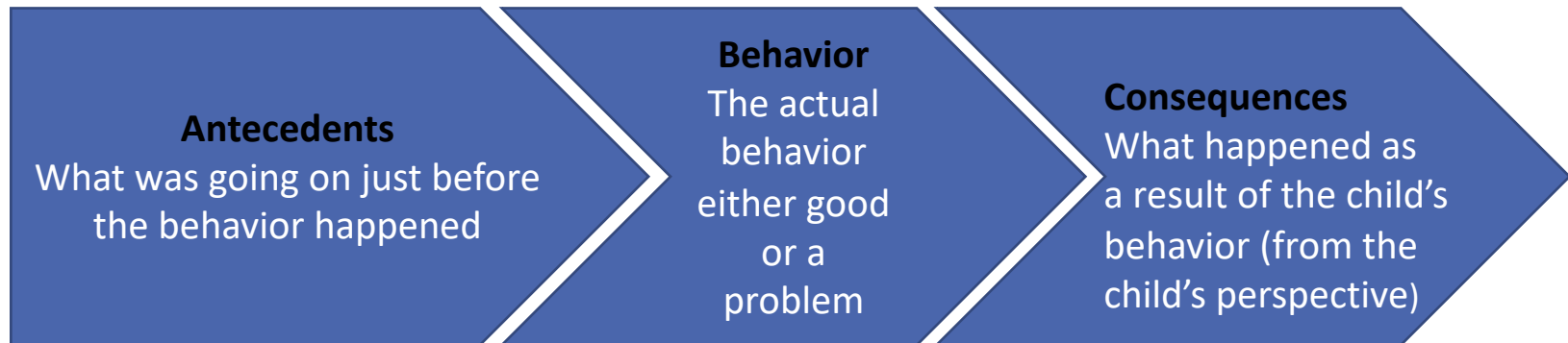


Identifying Function

- Why is this important?
- Functional Behavioral Assessment
 - A-B-C Data
 - Parent Interview/Observation
 - Ask questions such as:
 - What happens after he does that?
 - What do you usually do?
 - When does that usually happen?
 - Does he do that when he's by himself in his room?
 - What does dad do when he does that?



The ABC's of Behavior





A is for Antecedent

- **A- Antecedent**
 - What happens before the behavior
 - These should be observable occurrences
 - Ex. Child fell down, Child banged his head on table, told child “no”
 - These should not be feelings or inferred states
 - Ex. Child is tired, Child is mad
 - Additional information can be recorded separately to determine patterns
 - Ex. Child slept 4 hours last night, Dad is out of town, etc.



B is for Behavior

- **B- Behavior**
 - Describe the child's behavior
 - Should be in observable and measurable terms



C is for Consequence

- **C- Consequence**
 - Something presented or removed immediately following and contingent on a behavior.
 - What happened after the behavior
 - Can include many actions
 - Ex. Parent picked the child up and turned the TV on (attention and access to item)



C- is for Consequence

- Behavior is strengthened or weakened by its consequences
- Consequences can have a:
 - Reinforcing effect
 - Punishing effect
 - No effect



Replacement Behaviors

- Replacement behaviors should be:
 - Socially appropriate
 - Provide the same result as the challenging behavior
 - Be as efficient as the challenging behavior
 - Be as easy to do as the challenging behavior
 - What would another child do in the same situation?



Reinforcement, Reinforcement, Reinforcement

- What is positive reinforcement?
 - 3 part definition
 - Behavior occurs
 - Something is added to the person's environment
 - Behavior is more likely to occur in future



- How do you know if something functioned or worked a positive reinforcer?





Being Proactive: Attention Maintained Behaviors

- Provide lots of attention for appropriate behaviors
 - Focus on behavior that are incompatible when possible
 - Ex. Saying “help” in incompatible with screaming
 - Provide attention after a specified time interval
 - Ex. Parent can set a timer and provide attention every 5 min. while cooking dinner
- Functional Communication Training
 - Teach an appropriate way to gain attention
 - Ex. Tap, “mom,” PECS



Being Proactive: Attention Maintained Behaviors

- Identify low attention times in the day and identify ways to increase attention or reinforcement
 - Have child help while cooking dinner
 - Restrict access to a favorite video and only have it available when attention is low (mom's on the phone, etc.)
- Teach a “wait” response



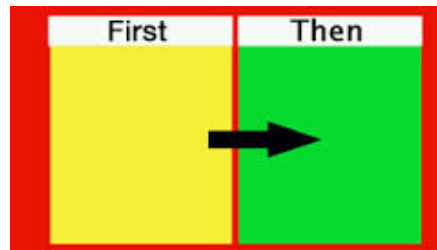
Consequences: Attention

- **Planned Ignoring**
- It only *looks* like your not doing anything!
 - Attention maintained behaviors will often get worse before getting better
 - Extinction
 - Eye Contact and reprimands are attention
 - Important to take data to make sure things are actually getting better
- Be Neutral
- When to use



Being Proactive Escape Maintained Behaviors

- Identify reinforcers for challenging tasks
- Use first-then schedule



- Teach functional communication alternative
 - Ex. “no,” head shake, “all done”
 - When teaching a functional alternative initially all occurrences must be reinforced





Consequences: Escape

- Deliver an effective instruction
 - Command should be given one time
 - Make sure the instruction is developmentally appropriate
 - Help guide completion/compliance
- Reward should be:
 - Great for independent compliance
 - Okay for when the child needs prompting to comply
 - Neutral when the child is engaging in challenging behavior (tantrums, throwing toys, etc.)
- It is important to follow through with instructions



Being Proactive Access to Items

- If something is unavailable try to offer 2 other alternatives
 - Ex. Pool isn't available. We can play with bubbles or on the swing!
- Give warnings before terminating an activity
 - Ex. "One more time with bubbles then it's all done."
- Use a timer to signal the end of an activity
- Make sure the child knows how/when the child can get the specific items
- Break down large challenging tasks into smaller more manageable tasks
 - One puzzle piece vs. 5
- Give Choice
 - For tasks and reinforcers



Being Proactive Escape Maintained Behaviors

- Environmental adjustments/accommodations which may include:
 - Less materials in front of the child
 - Smaller/larger work space
 - Adjust the lighting, noise level, emotion
 - Let child stand instead of sit



Consequences: Access to Items

- Do not allow access to items after challenging behavior occurs
- Play with other fun toys or activities without directly paying attention to the child
- Tell the child **one time** the item is not available
 - Ignore future attempts to access item
- Be consistent!



Being Proactive Automatic Reinforcement

- If function is to get sensory input
 - Increase visual, auditory, kinesthetic, olfactory input in appropriate ways
 - Teach appropriate play and leisure skills



Thank you!

- For information about the virtual program being offered by the Foundation
 - <https://www.elsforautism.org/covid-19-information-and-resources/>
- For on-line free webinars
 - <https://www.elsforautism.org/autism-resources/free-webinars/>
- Any questions contact:
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