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Behavior Modification and Alternatives to
Discipline

PBIS Virtual Conference


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6-18-2020

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2020 PBIS Webinar Conference



West Virginia
Behavior/Mental Health
Technical Assistance Center



WEST VIRGINIA
AUTISM TRAINING CENTER
AT MORGAN UNIVERSITY




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Session Objectives

- Know what a behavior is.
- Describe the four functions of behavior.
- Know what ABC data to take and how to interpret it.
- Identify various proactive supports for prevention of inappropriate behavior, as well as strategies and interventions in managing inappropriate behaviors.
- Discover alternatives to discipline and out of school suspensions.



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Remember:

1. Never, ever discuss a child's behavior in front of him/her or others!
2. A child's behavior should only be discussed with those who have an educational interest in the child.
➤ It should not be the topic at lunch, in the lounge, or on social media. Remember FERPA!

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What is a Behavior?

According to behavior theorist B. F. Skinner, the rate at which a certain behavior occurs is determined not by what precedes it, but by the consequence that follows it.

"behavior is shaped and sustained by the environment— by people who respond to behavior in certain ways because of the practices of the group of which they are members. These practices and the resulting interaction of speaker and listener yield the phenomena which are considered under the rubric of verbal behavior." (Skinner, 1957)

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Types of Behaviors

Positive

Definition of a positive behavior:

- Satisfactory, proper, or polite conduct.
- Conduct conformable to law; orderly conduct.
- Proper fulfillment of the duties in a school setting.

Negative

Definition of a negative behavior:

- Expressing or meaning a refusal, denial, or a negative answer
- Lacking positive or affirmative qualities, such as enthusiasm, interest, or optimism
- Showing or tending towards opposition or resistance
- Measured in a direction opposite to that regarded as positive

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Understanding Chronic Misbehavior

- If a student repeatedly engages in a **problem behavior**, he/she is most likely doing it for a reason, because it is **paying off** for the student
 - The behavior is **Functional** or **serves a purpose**
- Behavior is a form of **communication**, **unfortunately** some students learn that **Problem Behavior** is the best way for them to get their needs met



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Understanding Chronic Misbehavior

- Recognize that **recurring misbehavior** occurs for a reason, and take this into account when determining how to respond to misbehavior.
- We can understand how to intervene most effectively with a student by identifying the **function (or purpose)** of their behavior



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The 4 Functions of Behavior

| | | | |
|-----------------------|--|---|--|
| S Sensory | | -Provides sensory experiences -Provides a good feeling or relief | -Happens at any time -Often triggered by anxiety |
| E Escape | | -Avoids undesired assignments, activities, tasks, or assignments | -Happens when task is too hard, easy, boring, or scary |
| A Attention | | -Provides access to people or interaction | -Happens when I want social interaction |
| T Tangibles | | -Provides preferred items or activities | -Happens when I want a preferred item or activity |

Photo Sources: Proactivespeech.wordpress.com,
theautismhelpers.com, bipolarnews.org, aplos.org



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What We Know About Behavior

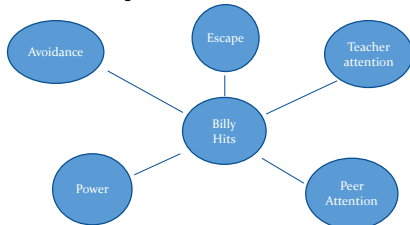
- Problem behaviors serve a function.
 - ✓ To get something (power, attention, approval).
 - ✓ To avoid or escape something (teachers, class work, a situation).
 - ✓ To have control.
- The function of a behavior is not the problem new behaviors that are taught should serve the same function.



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What We Know About Behavior

Problem behaviors have multiple causes. More than one need is often met through one behavior.



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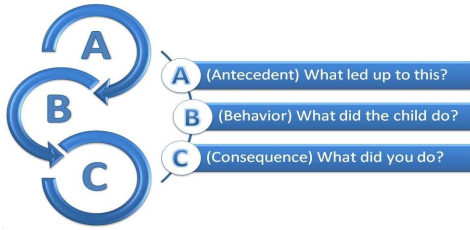
What We Know About Behavior

- Fixing problem does not lead to desired outcomes:
 - "If you stop swearing, you will have a job..."*
 - "Finishing work will get you a friend..."*
- If we do not teach students what to do instead of what they are doing, they will continue to do what they do –and get better at it!



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The ABC'S of Behavior



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Antecedent

Antecedent: A cause, course, or event that influences the development of a behavior or behaviors:

Size of an environment

- ✓ Number of people in it
- ✓ Specific event, time of day, etc.

We can manipulate antecedents in the environment to:

- ✓ Increase positive behavior
- ✓ Reduce misbehavior

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Behavior

• Behavior: What one does in response to the event, cause or condition. Behavior (positive or negative) fulfills a specific need for a student.

For example:

- **Antecedent:** The work is too hard (I don't want to do it).
- **Behavior:** I throw my chair.

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Consequence

- **Consequence:** What happens as a result of a behavior that affects whether it is likely to happen again. If the consequence of a behavior meets a need, the behavior is likely to be repeated.

For example:

- **Antecedent:** The work is too hard.
- **Behavior:** I throw my chair.
- **Consequence:** The teacher gets angry. I get sent to the office. I do not do the work.

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Communication Deficits = Inappropriate Behaviors

What we sometimes see as
a failure to **BEHAVE**
properly.
is actually a failure to
COMMUNICATE
properly.

www.mindshift.net

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Emotions Associated with the Learning Environment

A Positive Environment

- Can Lead to:
- Release of Endorphins
 - Raise of pain threshold
 - Stimulates frontal lobe so that the situation and the learning objective are remembered

A Negative Environment

- Can Lead to:
- Release of Cortisol
 - Shuts down processing
 - Focuses frontal lobe on the causes of the stress so that situation is remembered, not the learning objective

Source: Differentiation and the Brain (2011) by David Sousa and Carol Ann Tomlinson

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Importance of Building a Relationship

- Creates a positive, learning-friendly environment.
- Establishes a place where students feel safe so they develop a feeling of belonging.
- Improves student performance and achievement.
- Decreases inappropriate behaviors among students.

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Strategies to Build Better Relationships:

- Start the day with a smile and warm greeting.
- Refrain from using sarcasm, inappropriate language, talking negatively about the student (or others), and voice-raising.
- Consistently take time to get to know your students. Who are they outside of school? Do you know their likes, dislikes, fears, and motivations?
- Set high, but realistic, expectations.
- Use positive and encouraging verbal and non-verbal communication.



Use student interest inventories to find out more about your student. Option: Share your own with the student.

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More Relationship-Building Strategies

- Teach and demonstrate social and emotional skills.
- Use humor to break the ice or to motivate students to respond in a positive way both socially and academically. Avoid sarcasm and embarrassing the student.
- Praise in public, correct in private.
- Provide opportunities for student successes.
- Let students know you care about them. Tell them and show them!
- Take the time to ask, "What's wrong?" or "Do you want to talk about it?"

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Be Proactive, Not Reactive

Teach, re-teach, and reinforce:

- appropriate behaviors
- expectations
- rules



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Behaviors are Governed by Consequences

- Parents and schools using this approach simply expect children to be "good" and punish them when they are not.
- Adults may feel that punishment is good medicine for bad behavior.
- The intent of punishment is to provide a consequence following a problem behavior that makes it less likely that the behavior will recur in the future.

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Behaviors are Governed by Consequences

- An understanding that most behaviors are governed by their consequences is key to planning interventions.
- A student has a fight (behavior) and is suspended (consequence).
- If the student does not want to be in school, he or she may learn that fighting is a good way to get sent home. If the student wants to gain attention from his peers or the teacher, fighting may be used again as a way to secure attention and status.

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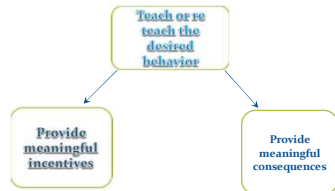
Behaviors are Governed by Consequences

- While most would agree that problem behavior needs a response, often nothing is done to teach, support or sustain appropriate behavior prior to the occurrence of the problem behavior.
- The inherent flaw in this approach is that the student does not develop appropriate skills as a result of the negative consequence (punishment) – the consequence does not teach replacement behaviors.
- If a student is able to learn appropriate behaviors to achieve the same desired outcome as is gained through using inappropriate behaviors, the need for the negative behaviors no longer exists.



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Changing Behavior



- Meaningful: Having significance, meaning or purpose in the student's life (from the student's perspective).



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Children Model Adult Behavior

- In the classroom, the teacher is the model for student behavior. At home, the parents provide the model.
- A teacher who yells, threatens or punishes excessively is setting the standard for the future adult behaviors of students by demonstrating to the students how to respond to the undesirable behaviors of others. The same is true of parents.
- Teachers and parents who rely on punishment as a primary intervention may increase the level of unacceptable behaviors as children begin to copy the behaviors of their models.



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2 Perspectives of Behavior

There are basically two attitudes that people have about the behaviors of children, which are really polarities of thought.

1. The child **IS** a problem.

2. The child **HAS** a problem.



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Negative Perspective of Behavior

The Child **IS** a Problem.

Imagine that Billy, a 12 year old boy, is sitting at desk but refusing to do his schoolwork. He is oppositional and angry when his parents or the teacher remind him of his work, and may swear, spit, or even throw his work on the floor to get the adult "off his back."

How do adults feel when confronted with these behaviors?

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Negative Perspective of Behavior

The Child **IS** a Problem.

If their attitude is that Billy is lazy, unmotivated, deliberately mean or otherwise disrespectful, the likelihood is that adults will become angry, or even feel threatened.

An angry person often responds to negative behaviors negatively, with punishment or with coercion – "Do it or else."

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Negative Perspective of Behavior The Child IS a Problem.

- When a teacher uses punishment frequently, he or she runs the risk of becoming associated with negative consequences, and a student may come to fear or avoid the teacher.
- Or, the student may become angry and try to “get even” by escalating his or her behavior, walking out of the room, or refusing to accept a punishment, such as refusing to go to time-out.
- This cycle of behavior often results in severe consequences to the student.



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Negative Perspective of Behavior The Child IS a Problem.

- But what message is the student receiving? Where is the instruction in this approach?
- When negative behaviors result in excluding a student from his or her classroom, the student may learn that the behavior is successful in helping him or her to avoid doing the required work.
- Exclusion may actually be reinforcing the negative behavior it was designed to correct.



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Positive Perspective of Behavior The Child HAS a Problem.

- Imagine again Billy, the 12 year old discussed in the previous model.
- In this perspective, Billy is still refusing to do his school work, is still oppositional and angry when reminded to get back to work, and has even threatened to punch someone or to run away.
- What is different is that we now have assessment data showing that Billy reads at a 2nd grade level. Before him on the table is 7th grade work. His parents recently divorced and he is dealing with intense anger over being abandoned by his father.



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Positive Perspective of Behavior The Child HAS a Problem

- When adults understand the motivation behind misbehavior, their attitudes often change.
- Billy's behaviors are still not appropriate or acceptable, and they obviously should not be permitted to continue.
- How that problem is addressed, though, will generally be more constructive than in the previous model.
- In this more positive approach resides the opportunity for instruction.



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Positive Perspective of Behavior The Child HAS a Problem.

- What we do:
Teach self regulation, coping, and social skills.
- Use same strategies as for other skills.
- Individualization at school for intensive problems -Section 504 Plan, Individualized Education Program [IEP], Behavior Intervention Plan [BIP], counseling services, and Student Assistance Team (SAT) process.



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Making the Shift to a More Proactive Model for Addressing Behavior

- Adjust staff expectations:
 - Reflect a proactive model
 - Emphasize positive interventions over student removal
 - Use exclusionary discipline as a last resort
 - Increase skills in classroom management and behavior change to decrease classroom disruption, including evidence-based techniques of classroom management, conflict resolution, and de-escalation approaches.
- Provide staff training and professional development on the use of positive behavior interventions and supports.
 - Explore alternative behavior change models and tools
 - Use data to measure progress and reflect on current practice
 - Analyze school and district policies



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Making the Shift to a More Proactive Model for Addressing Behavior

- Provide students with supports such as evidence-based tiered supports and social and emotional learning.
- Establish clear, appropriate, and consistent expectations and consequences.
- Communicate with and engage school communities.

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On an individual student level, IEP teams should take a comprehensive view of addressing behavior.

- Interventions will be more successful when they are consistent with the findings of a FBA and each of the following components are closely aligned:
 - Annual goals;
 - BIP that includes teaching replacement behaviors and utilizes positive behavior interventions and supports;
 - Special education and related services; and
 - Supplementary aids and services.

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Four foundational principles underlie the paradigm shift to more proactive approaches to addressing behavior:

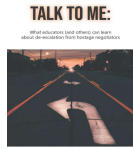
- The student's **behavior** is challenging, not the student.
- Challenging behavior produces a desired outcome for the student.
- Challenging behavior can be changed.
- Challenging behavior can be reduced by changing
 - variables within the current environment that trigger and support the behavior.



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De-escalation Strategies

- Use Calm, Even Voice
- Respond, Don't React; Be Proactive to Help Student
- Don't Engage in a Power Struggle
- Use Positive (and Fewer) Words
- Speak Less, Show More
- Re-direct Attention
- Let the Student "Save Face"
- Take a Break or Walk with Student
- Pre-teach Coping Skills (Ex. Use read alouds.)
- Offer and/or Allow for Scheduled Sensory and/or Movement Breaks
- Provide a Safe Place or Cool Down Area; Use Cool-Off Pass



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Why the Need for Alternative Discipline

- Disciplinary exclusions are largely ineffective in reducing problem behaviors. Suspensions may reinforce the use of problem behaviors for students wishing to escape or avoid school (Sundius and Farneth, 2008)
- Suspending may be inappropriate and ineffective to promote learning or behavioral compliance.
- Similar to academic instruction, schools should not use a one-size-fits-all approach to discipline
- Schools should promote learning and skill development and decrease the future incidents of the problem behavior
- **ASK:** Is the suspension serving as a punishment which will decrease the likelihood of future occurrence of the behavior or is it a reinforcer and actually increasing the likelihood of the behavior's future occurrence?

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10 Examples of Alternative Discipline

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| • Mini Courses | • Restitution |
| • Parent Involvement/Supervision | • Behavior Contracting and Problem Solving |
| • Counseling | • Alternative Programming |
| • Community Service | • Appropriate In-school Suspension |
| • Behavior Monitoring | • Coordinated Behavior Plans |

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A Growth Mindset in Working with Students

Excerpt from: *The Differentiated Instruction Mind-set*

"I have come to the frightening conclusion that I am the decisive element in the classroom. It is my personal approach that creates the climate. It is my daily mood that makes the weather. As a teacher, I possess tremendous power to make a child's life miserable or joyous. I can be a tool of torture or an instrument of inspiration. I can humiliate or humor, hurt, or heal. In all situations it is my response that decides whether or not a crisis will be escalated or de-escalated, and a child humanized or dehumanized. I am part of a team of educators creating a safe, caring and positive learning environment for students and teaching them in a manner that ensures success because all individuals are capable of learning."

-Dr. Haim Ginott (1992)



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Thanks for Listening!



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**Thank you for your time
and dedication to our students!**

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Upcoming Webinars

| | |
|---|---|
| June 4, 2020 – 11am – 12:00pm Michael Powell "Using PBIS to Enhance Learning" | June 16, 2020 – 11am – 12pm Lost Creek Elementary "The Push of a Button: Using Class Dojo to Streamline School Data" |
| June 9, 2020 – 11am – 12pm Meredith Dailor "Big Building, Big Problems, and Big Solutions" | June 16, 2020 – 11am – 12pm Dr. Jason Conway "Alternatives to Suspensions" |
| June 9, 2020 – 1pm – 2pm Educational Managers from Kanawha County "Implementing and Utilizing TPOT in Practice Based Coaching" | June 23, 2020 – 11am – 12pm Clay County High School "Packing 10 Pounds into a 5 Pound Bag" |
| June 11, 2020 – 11am – 12pm Barb Tucker "Connections Matter" | June 25, 2020 – 11am – 12pm JoDenna Burdett "Utilizing PBIS in High Schools and Alternative Settings with Older, Challenging Students" |
| June 11, 2020 – 1pm – 2pm Jeannie Harrison "Yoga and Meditation for a Happy Classroom" | June 30, 2020 – 11am – 12pm Coalton Elementary School "Tier 1 PBIS Model Schools: How We Got Where We Are" |


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