PRACTICAL STRATEGIES THAT WORK WITH CHALLENGING BEHAVIOR!

Karen Barineau, Ed. S., Karham@aol.com
Carli Ferris Harrell, M.Ed., cmferris@optonline.net

I Don’t Know, I Don’t Know!!!
- What is the student telling me by misbehaving?
- What is the student getting by acting out?
- What is the student getting out of?
- What appropriate behavior will get the student what he/she needs or wants?

Potential Behavioral Roadblocks
- Delayed processing of behavioral cues and shifting attention
- Difficulty with self-management skills
  - May have difficulty waiting for rewards
  - May act before thinking—impulsive
  - May show little remorse or guilt
  - May not follow rules or foresee consequences
- May demonstrate aggression
  - Tantrums, fights, property destruction, self-injury
- May demonstrate noncompliance
  - Breaks rules, argues, makes excuses, does opposite of what is asked or requested

What do I do Now?
- Define the problem behavior in observable, quantifiable terms.
- Determine the behavior’s function.
  - FBA
- Create a Behavior Improvement Plan.
  - Choose replacement behavior
  - Decide how to teach replacement behavior (intervention)
  - Determine methods and schedules of reinforcement
- Monitor progress with data
- React to the data

Behavior is Communication
- For children who have limited communication skills, challenging behavior serves to communicate wants and needs
- Any challenging behavior that persists over time is “working” for the child.
- Behavior is related to the context within which it occurs.

Determine Function
- Escape
- Tangible
- Attention
- Sensory/Automatic
- Communication
Functional Behavior Assessment

- Describe the behavior (action words)
  - Hit, Spit, Kick, Clear Table
  - Not “pitching a fit”
  - Observable and Measurable
- Collect data and observe the behavior across a broad sample of environments
- Determine the function - why?

Behavior Management

Vs.

Behavior Modification

Direct Measures
Maladaptive Behavior Card

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Action/Behavior</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student (write in)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action/Behavior</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Out of seat</td>
<td>Defiant behavior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taking out</td>
<td>Disruptive behavior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-compliance</td>
<td>Failure to follow instructions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fighting</td>
<td>Physical aggression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal aggression, threat or abuse</td>
<td>Physical or verbal abuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stranger in classroom</td>
<td>Stranger in school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical aggression</td>
<td>Physical abuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Running, chasing, or kicking</td>
<td>Physical abuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hitting, biting, scratching, or hitting with objects</td>
<td>Physical abuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breaking, tearing, or throwing objects</td>
<td>Physical abuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Running, chasing, or kicking</td>
<td>Physical abuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breaking, tearing, or throwing objects</td>
<td>Physical abuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-injurious behavior</td>
<td>Self-harm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Consequences
- What did staff do?
- Physical discomfort - relate
- Not appropriate - relate
- Required to continue - relate
- Timeout duration - relate
- Office referral - relate
- Other - relate

Develop an Intervention Plan

- The focus should be on replacing problem behavior with a desired behavior that serves the same purpose (function) for the child.
- Change for all: staff and family (80%) and student (20%)
- Environment changes are needed
- Skills need to be taught to the student
- Need consistent response of staff to student’s appropriate and inappropriate behaviors

Data Based

I saw...
I counted...
I observed...
This is what s/he did.
This is what I/we did.
s/he said...
The sound s/he made sounded like this...
S/he stood in this place.
S/he made an action that looked like this...

Behavior Action Plan

- Environmental changes needed
- Skills that need to be taught to the student
- Response of parent to child’s appropriate behavior
- Response of parent to child’s inappropriate behavior
**A Note on Time Out**

- Time out is a break from activity
- The reinforcer for escape behavior is a break from work
- Giving a break following behaviors that serve to escape work actually strengthens those behaviors
- Why it might not work
  - If you use this during work or other non-preferred activities
  - If you deliver attention
  - If child can interact with others
  - If there are no clear rules about what leads to time out
  - Inconsistency

**Environmental Changes**

- Preparing your students with changes in routine
- Notify your student 5 minutes before an activity ends
- Provide items or activities to engage your student during difficult situations
- Give your student choices to allow more control over his/her environment

**Is it Working? Am I Delusional? Am I Wasting my Time?**

- This is **NOT** an overnight process.
- Minimum of **ONE MONTH** of intervention to every year behavior has occurred.
- Prepare for the behavior to **GET WORSE** before it gets better
- Monitor the plan for **AT LEAST** 2-3 weeks before changing the intervention.
- **CONTINUE** to collect data to monitor effectiveness.
- **CHANGE THE INTERVENTION** if data collection shows there is no improvement in the problematic behaviors.

**Methods of Intervention**

**Visuals**

- **Visuals are used to strengthen receptive language.**
- **Symbols provide information to the learner and increase understanding of the desired behavior.**
Visuals make abstract concepts into concrete ideas.

Make a class-sized volume chart for the front of the room. If necessary, make a smaller version for students who need visuals right in front of them. Adjust the chart’s level of complexity to match the students’ level of comprehension.

Visuals encourage independence.
Sensory needs must be satisfied for optimal learning to occur.
- Build sensory opportunities into the daily classroom schedule
- Consult with school OT
  - Behavior does not drive the “sensory breaks”
  - Structured
  - Scheduled

Make it manageable! If you plan ahead and simplify as much as possible, you’re more likely to follow through.

Visuals make unstructured time less stressful and more fun and productive.

Direct Instruction of Replacement Behaviors
- Direct and planned instruction that is designed to increase social competence of students
- There is great difficulty with scheduling social skills instruction due to pressure for academic achievement.
- Incorporate teaching social skills into daily class curriculum, and take advantage of “teachable moments.”
Ways to Directly Teach Social Skills
- Direct instruction
- Tell, Show, Do, Prompt, Reward
- Use visuals
- Video modeling
- Educational software
- Social skills curricula
- Lunch Bunch
- Star Program
- Interview a friend
- Social scripts
- Social Stories
- Comic Strip
- Conversation
- Power Cards
- Peer modeling
- Social Autopsies

Educational Software
- Brainpop.com
- Teachtown Program
- Educreations.com
- Toontastic app

Peer Mentors Need Specific Roles
- Recess companions
- Bus companions
- Transition buddies
- Physical education buddies
- Computer buddies
- Library buddies
- Lunchtime buddies
- Homework companions
- After school friends

Superflex Social Thinking Curriculum
- Personal Space Camp by Julia Cook
- Read and do book activities
- Superflex’s Space Invader lessons
- Watch video, do lessons’ activities
- Identification practice with figurines, drawings, people...Work up to student practicing it himself!
- Reminders via visual cues

Social Scripts
Interview a Friend
Chapter 4 1:36
- Models can be other people, characters in videos, or objects.
- “Alex’s” personal space instruction
- Personal Space Camp by Julia Cook
- Read and do book activities
- Superflex’s Space Invader lessons
- Watch video, do lessons’ activities
- Identification practice with figurines, drawings, people...Work up to student practicing it himself!
- Reminders via visual cues
Reinforcement

- Reinforcement should be given only after a desired, or good, behavior.
- Behavior is maintained by reinforcement, or what follows/results from the behavior.
- If you’re doing it correctly, think of reinforcement as rewarding good behavior, as opposed to a bribe rewarding bad behavior.
- Reinforcement can lead to positive, long-term behavior modification and skill acquisition.

Reinforcement vs. Bribery

- A bribe is something which is unacceptable or inappropriate.
- Although the bribe can produce short-term results - stopping temper tantrums or getting a kid to do homework-it can also “up the ante”.
- This sets up a continuous cycle of crying, whining, and bad behavior.

- Think of a bribe being given AFTER a negative behavior is shown. It’s like rewarding bad behavior.

Types of Reinforcers

- Privilege/activity reinforcers
  - (be team captain, help custodian, free time to use specific equipment/supplies, sit next to a friend)
- Edible reinforcement
  - (candy, ice cream, pop, pizza, “Baha Chips”, Hot Cheetos)
- Material/tangible reinforcement
  - (crayons, key chains, stuffed animals, wax lips & teeth, yo-yos)
- Social reinforcement- Aim for this one!
  - (e.g., smile, a comment on a job well done, ATTENTION!)
  - Specific praise- Good job Becky you are talking SLOWLY!

Reinforcement/Reward System

- What is being rewarded has to be concrete and specific.
- It has to be clear what the individual should do, not what he/she should not do to earn the reward.
- Focusing on failures and inadequacies can make people feel worse rather than better.
- Timing
  - Avoid interrupting play
  - Comment immediately after play
  - Describe skills used
  - Be specific

ASK the student what he wants to earn!

- Privilege/activity reinforcers
- Edible reinforcement
- Material/tangible reinforcement
- Social reinforcement

Update students’ desired reinforcers every so often. Rotate them so the students don’t get bored.
Using Positive Behavior Charts/Point Sheets

- Positive behavior charts allow the child to see how close they are to earning a reward.
- Instead of getting the reward straight away they get a puzzle piece, color a box, or receive points. When they fill up their chart they can exchange it for a reward.

www.freeprintablebehaviorcharts.com
**Consistent Response from ALL Staff**

- Required. Necessary.
- Pertains to both appropriate AND inappropriate behaviors

---

**Set Classroom Expectations: Band-Aid Lesson**

- Ask students to create a definition of “fair” on the board.
- Have each student come up with a fake injury.
- In front of the class, ask a student what is wrong. Place a Band-Aid on that student’s injury.
- Ask each remaining student what is hurt. No matter the injury, place a Band-Aid wherever the first student’s Band-Aid was placed.
- When the class says, “That won’t work!”, reply that you’ve got to be fair and treat everyone the same.
- At the end, ask if everyone got what they needed (NO). Ask if giving everyone the same treatment was fair (NO).
- Have the class revise their definition of fair. Hang the definition poster on the wall using Band-Aids.

---

**Educate Peers About SWD**

- “The practice of inclusion rests primarily on unaffected schoolmates rather than teachers…The children whose diagnosis was fully disclosed enjoyed more consistent social support in the classroom and on the school playground.” – Ochs, Kremer-Sadlik, Solomon, & Sirola, 2001
- Obtain written and signed parent permission for disclosure of a specific student’s disability!
- Peers must have an understanding of the child’s strengths and challenges; this leads to an acceptance of the child as a person.

---

**Informed Peers**

- Peers need to understand what they can do to assist the child with autism. The more knowledgeable they are, the more helpful they will be.
- Select partners with care and rotate assignments.
- Structure and lead their interaction opportunities.
- Training within the classroom
  - General information about the disability/disabilities
  - Specific information about an individual student
  - Highlight similarities b/t student and peers
  - Highlight “why” some behavior occurs

---

**Responsive Classroom: Morning Meeting**

- Stop Greeting
- Carpool sitting
- Lettering greeting
- End Name
- Butt Plug greeting
School-Wide Incentive Programs

- PBIS system
- Oak Grove Elementary
- SOAR cards
- Student/Character Traits of the Month

References


http://www.education.com/reference/article/Ref_Modifications/


