

Positive Behavior Supports for Young Children with Autism

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Session Objectives

- Provide an overview of effective research based interventions for professionals working with young students with challenging behaviors and their families.
- The information reflects a commitment to the following:
 - 1) interventions and supports should be appropriate for the developmental level of the student and student-centered,
 - 2) early intervention services and supports must be delivered with consideration of the unique and diverse cultures of the student,
 - 3) professional should seek to implement and understand evidence-based practices,
 - 4) behavioral interventions should use positive practices,
 - 5) a collaborative, problem-solving approach should be used to ensure all people involved are actively involved in the development and implementation of support strategies that will promote the development of the student.

Let's Get Started

- Let's first start with the diagnostic considerations
- Then move to skills assessments
- Interventions
- The environment
- And last but not least behavior

DSM – V (updated)

Currently, or by history, must meet criteria A, B, C, and D

A. Persistent deficits in social communication and social interaction across contexts, not accounted for by general developmental delays, and manifest by all 3 of the following:

B. Restricted, repetitive patterns of behavior, interests, or activities as manifested by at least two of the following:

C. Symptoms must be present in early childhood (but may not become fully manifest until social demands exceed limited capacities)

D. Symptoms together limit and impair everyday functioning.

Autism

◉ Diagnostic Criteria:

- Social Impairment (i.e. social skills deficits)
- Speech/Communication Deficits
- Repetitive Behavior and Restrictive Interests

Skills Assessments

- How would we measure skills in the areas affected by autism?
 - **Social communication and social interaction**
 - **Restricted, repetitive patterns of behavior, interests, or activities**
- **Checklists**
- **Direct Observations**
- **Actual hands on activities**
- **Combination of the above?**

Some Assessments

- **The Assessment of Basic Language and Learning Skills - Revised (ABLLS-R)**
- **The Verbal Behavior Milestones Assessment and Placement Program (VB-MAPP)**
- **CARD Curriculum**

Areas of Functioning Assessed

- Communication – mands, tacts, echoics, imitation, listener, interverbal
- Social skills
- Gross motor
- Fine motor
- Pre-academic and/or Academic
- Cognition
- Social interaction (social skills)
- Self-help

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- Additionally, each of the assessments includes a progress monitoring tool to track progress in each of the areas of functioning

Teaching methods

- ◉ Natural Environmental Training (NET)
- ◉ Incidental Teaching
- ◉ Natural Language Paradigm (NLP)
 - Pivotal Response Training
- ◉ Mand Model
- ◉ Applied Verbal Behavior
- ◉ Discrete Trial Training

◎ Natural Environmental Training (NET)

- Child directed interactions
- Techniques to increase motivation to respond
- Focus on generalization of skills
- Uses natural establishing operations (hunger, thirst, “wants”, etc.)
- Incorporates choice making, frequent preference assessment, variation of reinforcement
- Goal – to establish functional relationship between emitting vocalizations and getting reinforcers
- Multiple exemplars, training across settings & people, use of intermittent reinforcement to promote generalization

◎ Incidental Teaching –

- Unstructured settings
- Child directed
- Teaching is to train the child to emit language spontaneously in response to multiple cues in the natural environment
- Limited variation in prompting to assist in learning the cue that reinforcement is available

○ Natural Language Paradigm (NLP)

- Teaching strategies combined into the play opportunities to make learning fun
- Child directed
- Procedures include Model, Shaping, Graduated time delay

◎ Mand Model –

- Teaches children to increase difficulty and length of utterances
- Teaches turn taking, joint attention, respond to prompts, respond to directions.

● Applied Verbal Behavior-

- Language is described in terms of purpose of the words rather than the words used
 - Mand, tact, echoic, intraverbal
- Begin working on mands (requests) rather than tacts (labels).

○ Discrete Trial Training –

- Teaching strategy in which a stimulus is presented
- Behavior occurs and is followed by response (reinforcement or correction)
- Skills are broken down into smaller units of behavior and taught to mastery
- Each learning opportunity is a trial; several trials per session (drills).

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- Many similarities between models
 - Some differences (child directed, teacher directed, labeling items, requesting or manding items)

Preference Assessment

- Completed frequently so that the student's unique interests can be used as reinforcers
- A number of ways to complete a preference assessment
 - Checklists
 - Observations
 - Direct assessments

Evidence-Based Interventions

○ Features


1. Research and theory to support the intervention (i.e., similar population, demographics, setting, etc.)
2. Method for progress monitoring
3. Ongoing evaluation of intervention fidelity
4. Validated by systematic data collection

○ Avoid

1. “I think it might work” (opinion) strategies
2. Interventions with few studies/data to support them
3. Studies with inconsistent results

Evidence-Based Interventions

○ Levels of Evidence

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1. Randomized control group designs
 2. Experimental studies
 - a. Quantitative: Intervention vs. non-intervention group
 - b. Single subject
 3. Non-Experimental studies
 - a. Qualitative: Interviews, surveys, focus groups
 4. Student outcomes/successes

○ Resources

1. <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/>
2. <http://www.promisingpractices.net/>
3. http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/pdf/practiceguides/behavior_pg_092308.pdf

Evidence-Based Interventions

1. Evidence-Based Behavioral Practices

- <http://www.ebbp.org/>

2. SAMHSA Registry of Evidence-Based Program and Practices

- <http://nrepp.samhsa.gov/Index.aspx>

3. Collaborative on Academic, Social and Emotional Learning

- www.casel.org

Established Interventions

- Antecedent Package
- Behavioral Package
- Comprehensive Behavioral Treatment for Young Children
- Joint Attention Intervention
- Modeling
- Naturalistic Teaching Strategies
- Peer Training Package
- Pivotal Response Treatment
- Schedules
- Self-management
- Story-based Intervention Package

EFFECTIVE ASD INTERVENTIONS

- Comprehensive Interventions: Programs or sets of procedures that address a broad array of skills or behaviors.
 - Comprehensive Behavioral Intervention Programs for Young Children
 - Structured Teaching

◎ **Focused Interventions:** Individual strategies used alone or in combination to address a specific skill or behavior.

- Antecedent Package
- Prompting
- Stimulus Control/Environmental Modification
- Time Delay
- Behavioral Package
- Differential Reinforcement

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- Discrete Trial Training
 - Extinction
 - Functional Behavioral Assessment
 - Functional Communication Training
 - Reinforcement
 - Response Interruption/Redirection
 - Task Analysis and Chaining
 - Cognitive Behavioral Interventions
 - Joint Attention Intervention

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- Modeling
 - Video Modeling
 - Multi-component Package
 - Naturalistic Interventions
 - Parent Implemented Interventions
 - Peer Mediated Interventions
 - Picture Exchange Communication System™
 - Pivotal Response Training

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- Schedules
 - Self-management
 - Social Communication Intervention
 - Social Narratives
 - Social Skills Intervention
 - Speech Generating Devices
 - Structured Work Systems
 - Supported Employment
 - Technology-based Treatment
 - Computer-aided Instruction
 - Visual Supports

Interventions or Curricular Manuals

- Lovaas (Teaching Developmentally Disabled Children: The ME Book)
- Leaf & McEachin (several books by Autism Partnership)
- Sundberg & Partington (Teaching Language to Children with Autism or Other Developmental Disabilities)
- Maurice (Behavioral Intervention for Young Children with Autism A Manual for Parents and Professionals)

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- Each of these books/materials lists the skills and ways to teach the skills
 - Data collection is a critical piece of the programming
 - Data graphing and review occurs frequently so that changes to the programming can occur when needed

The Environment

- The environment should be an inviting and engaging location.
- High rates of positive comments to negative (redirections) comments.
- Schedules, routines and activities are appropriately taught and reviewed.
- Transitions between activities are appropriate.

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- Teachers engage in supportive conversations with students.
 - Teachers promote student engagement.
 - Directions are short and concise, tell what to do, and describes the activity.
 - Collaborative teaming occurs between teacher and with the family.


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- Teachers teach the behavioral expectations.
 - Teachers teach social skills and emotional competencies.

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- ⦿ Consistency in training of skills is critical.
 - ⦿ Family support required.

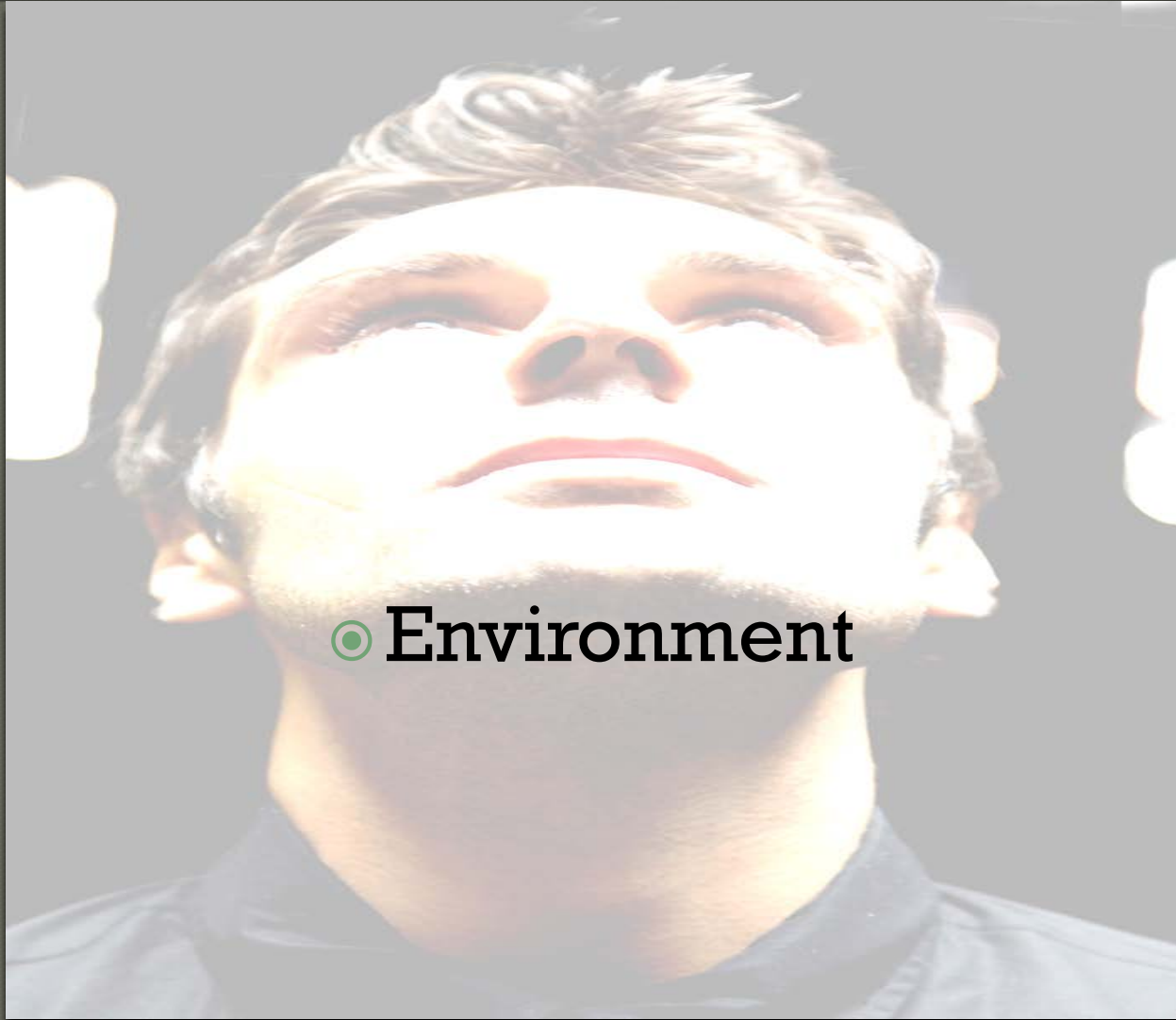
Let's Transition to a New Topic (Behavior) with a Quiz....

- Well not really.
- Write down all the reasons you think a student misbehaves in the classroom.
- Write down all the reactions to this “misbehavior” that you can give to that student.

Why do people do the things they do?

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- A faded, grayscale image of a man's face, looking slightly upwards and to the right. The image is semi-transparent, allowing text to be overlaid on it. The text consists of four bullet points, each with a green circular icon containing a white dot.
- **Personality**
 - **Disability**
 - **Genetics**
 - **Environment**

What can YOU change?



● Environment

How can you change an environment?

- ⦿ Classroom is always the same
- ⦿ Students in the class are always the same
- ⦿ You have the same problems day after day
- ⦿ You don't have authority to make change happen
- ⦿ The students you are working with don't like change

YOU are the best agent of change!

- You are the primary person that the student interacts with each and every day.
- Your actions and reactions ARE the environment that the student encounters all the time.
- You don't need to be the teacher or administrator. Or wait for the administrator or teacher to tell you what to do.
 - You can do it yourself.



A blue, oval-shaped button with a gradient and a slight shadow, containing the word "REPLAY" in white, uppercase, sans-serif font.

REPLAY

Take a Look Back...

- Think back to a time last year, or a couple of years ago, that you did something just a little different than normal, and it made a big impact on a student's behavior.....
 - What made you do this “something” different?
 - What was the original problem with the student, and how did you solve it?

Doing Something Different

● Example 1:

- Bobby tends to throw his materials during art class on a regular basis.
- You respond and tell him “Please do not throw your things Bobby or you will not get to go outside for gym.”
- **DIFFERENT Response**
 - You attend to Bobby more than regular due to another student being sick that day and Bobby does not throw anything.

Doing Something Different

○ Example 2:

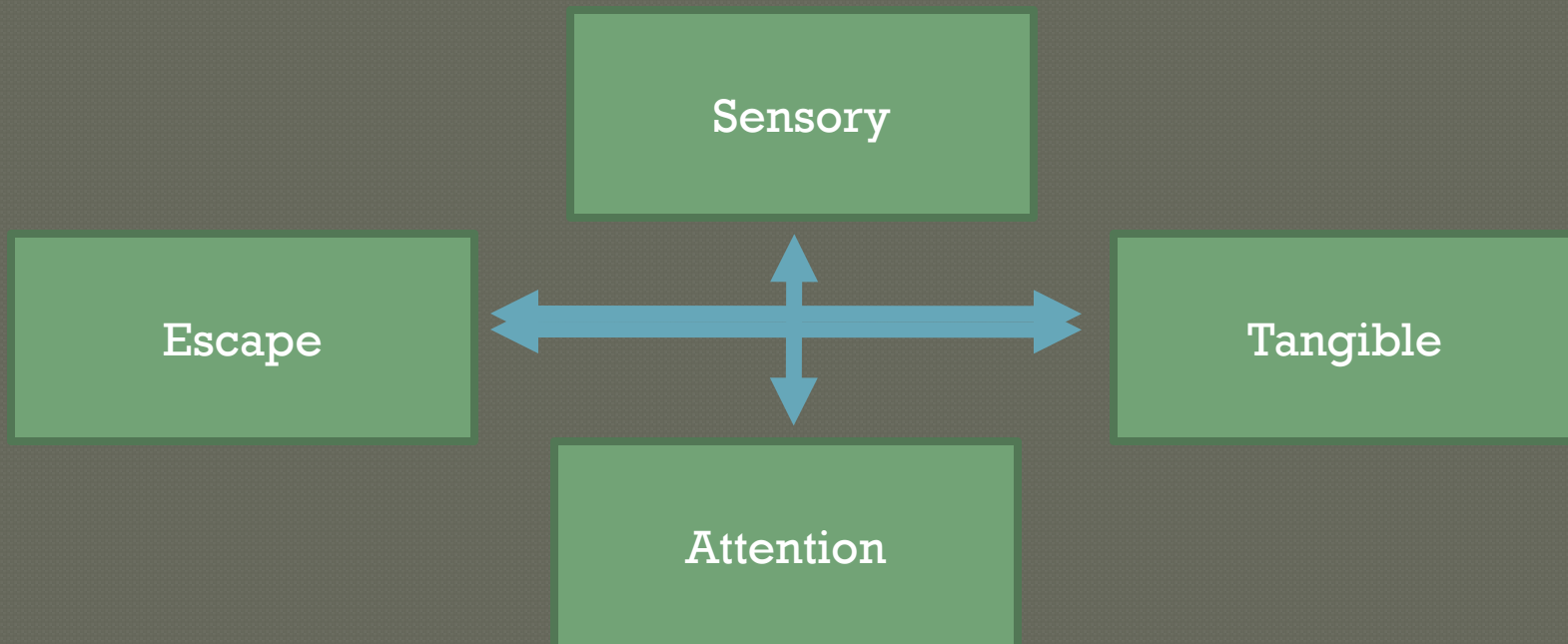
- Mary always seems to get out of her seat. She always stands up and likes to flap her hands.
- You tell her to sit down and put her hands at her side. It works for a few minutes....
- **DIFFERENT Response**
 - You provided Mary a couple of items to manipulate at her desk. She didn't seem to stand up or hand flap that day at all.

Finding Out the Reason Why

- ◉ Look back at your list of why a student might misbehave in the classroom.
- ◉ Now, think about the reasons why you either behave or misbehave in your own life.
 - Are they the same or are they different?

Functions of Behavior

- The primary reasons why we do the things we do can be summed up into 4 main categories.



Reason 1: Attention

- Getting Attention is a primary reason why a student may do the things they do.
 - Throwing toys across room when no one is attending to him.
 - Yelling at other students gets you to come over and “reprimand” the student.
 - Going to the bathroom in pants allows you to spend one on one time with the student putting new clothes on, talking to her and so on.
 - Hitting oneself results in you dropping everything and coming to console the student.

Reason 2: Escape

- Getting to avoid things is a primary reason why a student may do the things they do.
 - Throwing toys across room when asked to put toys away. You respond by having the student go pickup the toys and thus prolonging contact with them.
 - Yelling at other students gets the student to stay inside at gym time – an activity they do not like at all.
 - Going to the bathroom in pants allows the student to be removed from the classroom – as they are bored and uninterested in activity.
 - Hitting oneself results in you from stopping placing demands on the student to do his lesson plan.

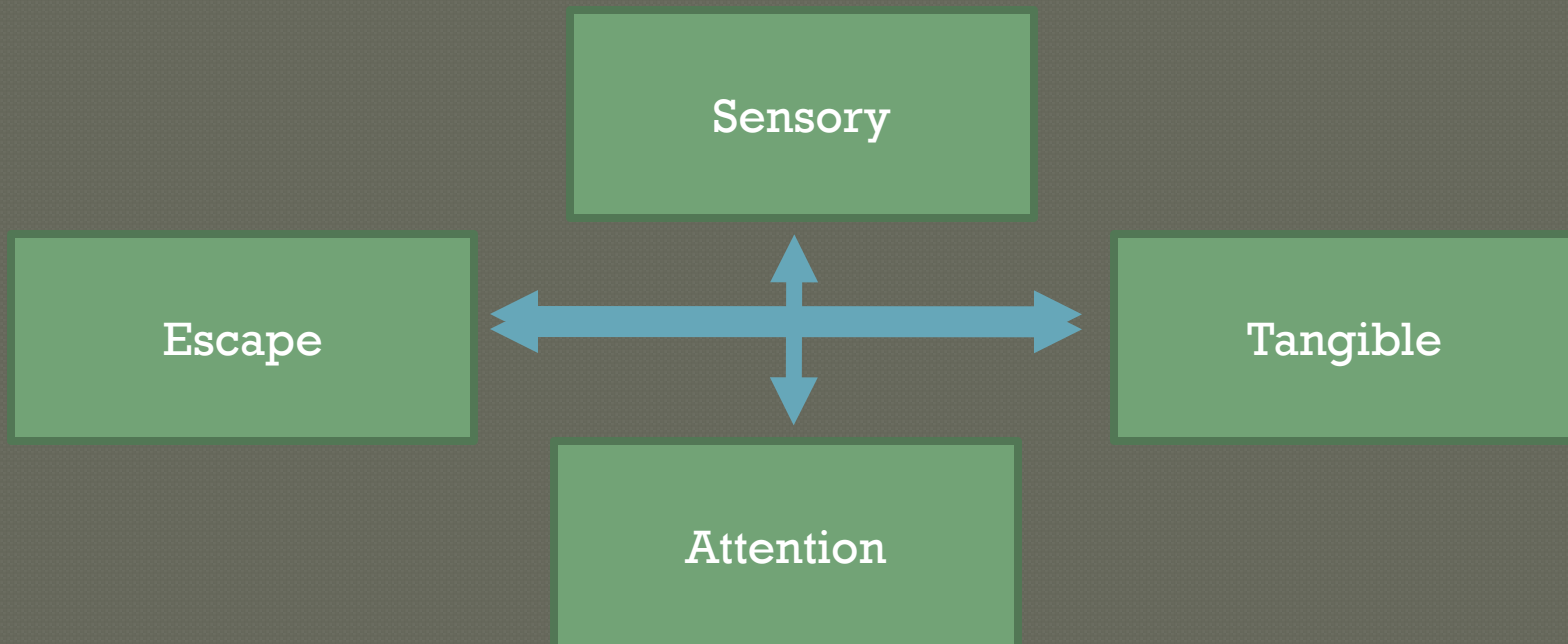
Reason 3: Tangible

- Getting access to “stuff” is a primary reason why a student may do the things they do.
 - Throwing toys across room results in you getting the student a different toy.
 - Yelling at other students gets you to come over and soothe the student with a reassuring soothing pat on the back (it will be ok)
 - Going to the bathroom in pants results in you putting the student in a comfortable pair of sweatpants.
 - Hitting oneself results in you putting helmet on student or protective hand mitts.

Reason 4: Sensory

- Getting sensory stimulation is a primary reason why a student may do the things they do.
 - Throwing toys across room makes a loud noise and makes other kids laugh
 - Yelling at other kids results in student hearing his own voice and production of speech sounds.
 - Going to the bathroom in pants allows student to feel warm, get shower, etc.
 - Hitting oneself results in release of neurotransmitters that are similar to a “runner’s high”

4 Reasons for Why We Behave



It All “Looks the Same” to Me!

- A student may throw a toy to:
 - Get Attention
 - Get out of, or Escape from demands
 - To get a better Tangible item or toy
 - To hear the Sensory sounds of the toy banging on the floor.
- So, how are you going to figure out the **REASON** why this student at this time is doing the problem behavior?????

Taking the Guesswork out of Cause

- ① Attempt to assess the possible causes
- ① Attempt to identify the “triggers” of the behavior.
- ① Attempt to identify your current consequences for the behavior.
- ① Change the consequences. **DO SOMETHING DIFFERENT!**

Step 1: Assess the Possible Cause

- Ask yourself the following questions?
 - Does the student seem to engage in the problem more often when others are not paying attention to him/her?
 - Does the student seem to stop the problem if given access to a toy or other item?
 - Does the student engage in the problem when someone asks him/her to do something?
 - Does the student seem to do the problem behavior at all times, no matter what is going on??
 - Be careful with this last one.

Step 2: What are the Possible Triggers for the Behavior?

- Certain times of day?
- Certain teacher or aide?
- Certain activity in the classroom?

- What about correlations with medication?
- Transitions from one activity to another?
- Being sick or sleep deprived?

Step 3: Respond Different

- ◉ What you are currently doing or the way the environment is arranged is NOT working.
 - That is why the problem exists right now.
 - The only way to get rid of the problem is to change the way you respond and the way the environment is arranged.

Example 1: Throwing Toys

- Assessment – done more often when student is asked to do certain tasks
 - Deduce ---- Escape function
- Triggers ---- Asked to transition from play to work task; a certain staff member (you); after lunchtime
 - Current response --- student told to stop throwing toys and made to go over and pick up all the mess (while other students are starting their lesson)
 - Something Different --- Thrown toys are ignored, and student is immediately transitioned to lesson

What if the Toy Throwing was for “Sensory”

- Same behavior may look the same and be done for very **DIFFERENT** reasons.
 - Should the response you give the student be the same?
 - What if you had a better way to get the student to get the things they want?

Teaching – Based on Function

- Once we identify that the cause of behavior is either: attention, escape, tangible, or sensory
 - And this is how the student is attempting to communicate their “wants” or “wishes”
 - We can use this information to teach them differently.
 - We can teach them to communicate their wants and wishes more appropriately.
 - Ex. If you want to get out of a lesson, you don’t need to throw a toy to do so.

Functional Communication

- Regardless if it is throwing toys, screaming, hitting oneself, or hitting someone else
 - The reason is to communicate something to you as a caregiver or teacher
 - You deliver a consequence.
 - If it is the one the student wants --- it strengthens the behavior in the future
 - If is one the student does not want – it weakens the behavior in the future

Teaching Replacement Skills

- Teach alternative behavior to challenging behavior.
- Replacement skills must be efficient and effective (i.e., work quickly for the student).
- Consider skills that student already has
- Make sure the reward for appropriate behavior is consistent.

Functional Equivalence

- Identify an acceptable way that the student can deliver the same message.
- Make sure that the new response is socially appropriate and will access the student's desired outcome.
- Teach the student a skill that honors that function of the behavior (e.g., if student wants out of activity, teach student to gesture "finished").

Interventions for Attention

- Avoid Triggers: Provide attention frequently
- Change Response: Planned Ignored (yes, time out!) when behavior occurs
- Teach: A New Attention-Seeking Response
- New Response for New Attention-Seeking Behavior – Reinforce the Behavior with LOTS of Attention

Interventions for Escape/Avoidance Behaviors

- Avoid Triggers: Frequent Breaks from Work and Task Alteration (Change difficulty, number, novelty, etc.)
- Change Response: Don't let them out of the task. Do NOT use planned ignoring (NO TIME OUTS!)
- Teach:
 - Strengthen compliance (behavioral momentum/high probability commands)
 - Reinforce earlier responses in the escape chain
 - Teach an alternative escape behavior
- New Response for New Escape/Avoidance Behaviors: When student asks for break, give it to them.

Interventions for Sensory (Self-Stimulation)

- Avoid Triggers: Provide more appropriate Sensory Stimulation frequently
- Change Response: Response Block, etc.
- Teach: Teach new Sensory Stimulation Response
- New Response: When student uses new response for Sensory Stimulation, provide it.

Making Your Job in the Classroom Easier with Behavior Analysis

Thank you to Dr. Mark R. Dixon
for assisting with the
presentation
Board Certified Behavior Analyst