



Principles of Behavior Elementary Level



Objectives

Participants will be able to:

- Describe the ABCs of behavior
- Name the functions of behavior
- Develop an hypothesis for a problem behavior
- Develop an intervention plan to address the problem behavior



MTSS Problem-Solving Process and Principles of Behavior

Step 1: Identify the Problem

- **ABCs of Behavior:**
 - **What** problem behaviors are occurring most often?
 - **When** and **Where** are the problem behaviors occurring?
 - **Who** is involved?

Step 2: Analysis: ‘Why’ are problem behaviors occurring?

- **Function of Behavior** - Hypothesis

Step 3: Develop a Plan: Match interventions to function

- **Prevention:** Alter the environment (systems changes)
- **Teach:** New skills (replacement behaviors)
- **Reward:** Demonstration of appropriate behaviors (new skills)

Step 4: Evaluation: Response to Intervention

3



Florida Department of Education
Dr. Eric Smith, Commissioner



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Defining Behavior

Behavior:

- Response to one's environment (antecedents)
- Anything we say or do (observable)
- Serves a **function** or purpose ('why')
- Results in a desired outcome (consequence/reinforcer)
- Predictable
- **Learned** (teach replacement behaviors)
- Can be changed (alternative outcomes)
- Dead man test, Stranger Test



Problem Behaviors

Examples:

- Steven often talks to his peers and roams around the room during independent seatwork.
- Robert is routinely late to school. When he enters the room he yells out “I am here. Class can start now”
- Caroline is a 5th grade student performing on a 2th grade level. She often swears, screams, throw things, and sometimes leaves the classroom throughout the day.
- James likes to make fart noises with his arm pits and then says loudly “Liam farted”
- *All of these behaviors could be labeled as “disruption” but they are very distinct, please provide a definition of other behaviors you have seen that are “disruption”*



Step 1: Problem Identification

ABCs of Behavior

Antecedents

- Event or stimulus (*trigger*) that occurs before the behavior
 - **Fast Triggers:** non-preferred activity, given a difficult task, told 'no'
 - **Slow Triggers** (setting events): late for school, no breakfast, conflict with parent, missed bus

Behavior

- The observable, measurable action

Consequences

- Event or response that immediately follows the occurrence of the behavior



Observing the ABCs

Antecedent Events:

- Increase the likelihood the problem behavior will occur
- Inform **prevention** strategies

Behavior

- Determines new skills to **teach** (replacement behavior)

Consequences:

- **Reinforce** the problem behavior
- Determine **function** (purpose) of the behavior
- Inform alternative, appropriate reinforcers for new skills



Example of Antecedents

- Teacher tells student to go to their “centers”.
- Sara was asked to stop talking.
- Students are told to start on page 50 of math text and begin problems 1-25.
- Teacher calls on James to answer a question in front of the class.
- Patrick was asked by the teacher to start his writing assignment.
- Students are asked to line up to go to lunch.
- Tammy was told to move seats.

What are some other antecedents that you have seen/heard in elementary schools?



Example of Behavior

- Students mumbles, “I don’t like centers they are boring”, then puts head down on desk.
- Sara says sorry and stops talking.
- Student says “I hate math. Math is stupid.” and slams the book closed and throws it onto floor.
- James starts to tell a story about pet dog.
- Patrick breaks his pencil and says he does not have another pencil.
- The students quietly stand up, push in their chairs and line up by the door.
- Tammy screams at the teacher, “Why are you always picking on me? You never tell anyone else to move. Tell Peter to move.”

What are some behaviors that have occurred after the antecedent you mentioned?

9



Example of Consequences

- The teacher walks away and lets the student sleep.
- The teacher tells Sara she appreciates her being Respectful.
- The teacher tells the student to gather his belongings, delivers a referral, and tells him to go to the principal's office.
- The teacher says, "If you answer the questions, then you have 15 seconds to tell me about your dog."
- The teacher tells Patrick, "Without a pencil, you will have to sit there and receive a zero on the assignment."
- The teacher tells the class they beat last week's record by 5 seconds and thanks them for being responsible.
- In a calm voice, the teacher asks Tammy to move again and walks away. The teacher then repeats this two more times before Tammy moves.

What are some consequences that have occurred following the behavior you mentioned?

10



ABCs of Behavior

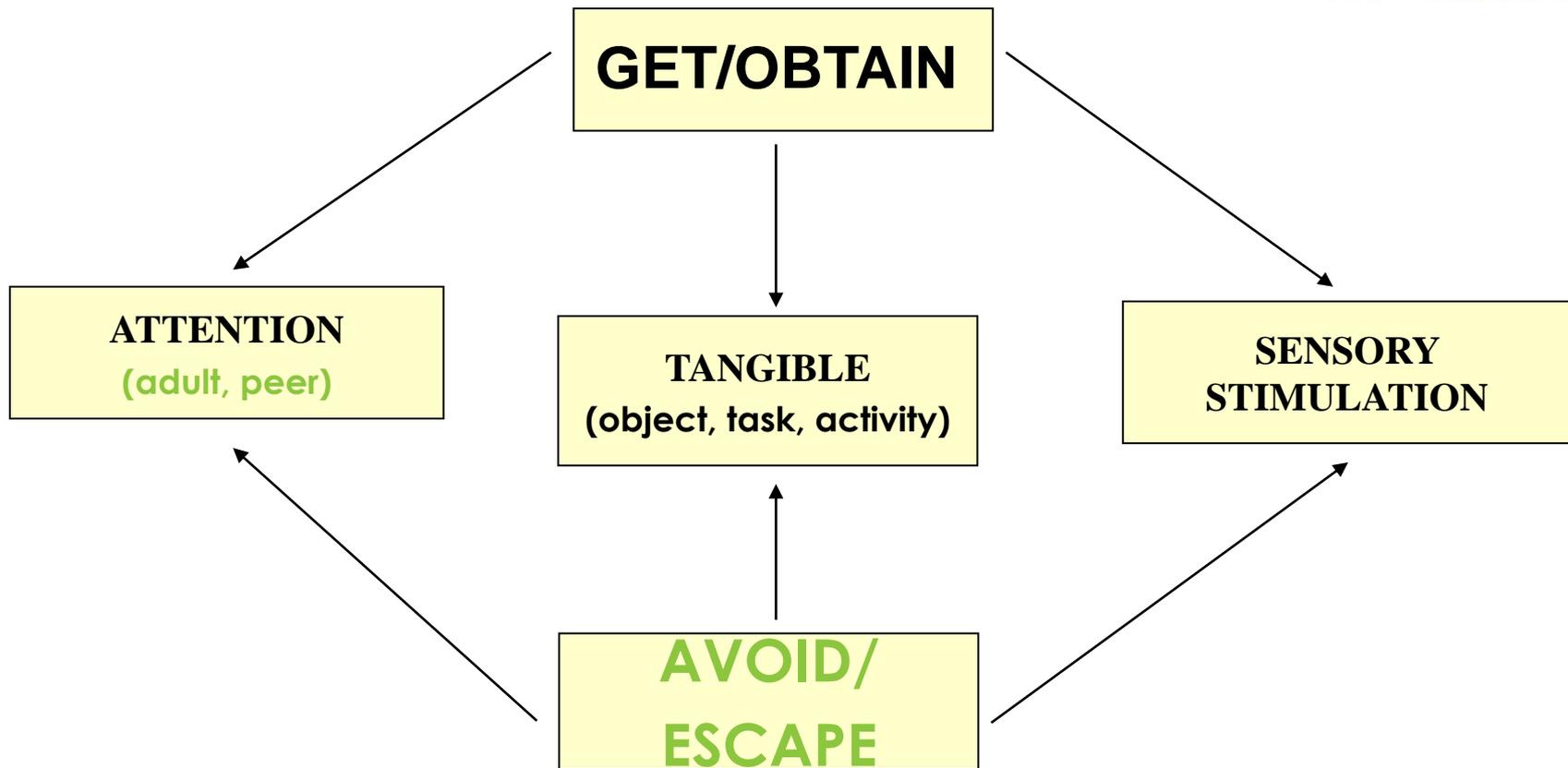
Problem Behavior Example: Steven often talks to his peers and roams around the room during independent seatwork.

<u>A</u> ntecedent	<u>B</u> ehavior	<u>C</u> onsequences
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teacher assigns independent work to the class after direct instruction.• Teacher begins working at her desk.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Steven talks to his peers and roams around the room.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teacher remains at her desk and repeatedly redirects Steven to return to his seat and complete his work.



Step 2: Problem Analysis

Functions of Behavior



Determine Function of Behavior

- Why is the problem behavior occurring?
 - Get/Obtain or Escape/Avoid
 - Attention - peer or adult
 - Tangible - object, task, activity
 - Sensory stimulation
- Develop Hypothesis (Best Guess)
 - When (**antecedent**) occurs, student engages in (**behavior**). As a result, s/he is able to (**function**).



Functions of Behavior

Example: Steven often talks to his peers and roams around the room during independent seatwork.

- **Problem Analysis: Why is the problem occurring?**
 - The work is too hard for Steven to complete independently. (*avoid task*)
 - **Steven needs additional assistance in order to complete the assignment.** (*gain attention/avoid task*)
 - Steven would rather talk to his friends. (*peer attention*)
 - **Other possible reasons?**
- **Hypothesis/Best Guess: Other possible hypotheses?**
 - When Steven is given work to complete independently, he often talks to his peers and roams around the room. As a result, he is able to **gain teacher attention** and **escape the task**.



<u>Antecedent</u>	<u>Behavior</u>	<u>Consequences</u>	<u>Function</u>
Teacher tells student to go to their "centers"	Students mumbles "I don't like centers; they are boring" and puts head down on desk.	The teacher walks away and lets the student sleep.	Avoid peer attention
Sara was asked to stop talking.	Sara says sorry and stops talking.	The teacher tells Sara she appreciates her being Respectful.	????
Students are told to start on page 50 of math text and begin problems 1-25.	Student says "I hate math. Math is stupid." and slams the book closed and throws it onto floor.	The teacher tells the student to gather his belongings, delivers a referral, and tells him to go to the principal's office.	????

<u>A</u> ntecedent	<u>B</u> ehavior	<u>C</u> onsequences	Function
Teacher calls on James to answer a question in front of the class.	James starts to tell a story about pet dog	The teacher says, "If you answer the question, then you will have 15 seconds to tell me about your dog."	????
Patrick was asked by the teacher to start on his writing assignment.	Patrick breaks his pencil and says he does not have another pencil.	The teacher tells Patrick, "Without a pencil, you will have to sit there and receive a zero on the assignment."	????
Students are asked to line up for lunch.	The students quietly stand up, push in their chairs and line up by the door.	The teacher tells the class they beat last weeks record by 5 seconds and thanks them for being responsible.	????

<u>A</u> ntecedent	<u>B</u> ehavior	<u>C</u> onsequences	Function
<p>Tammy was told to move seats.</p>	<p>Tammy screams at the teacher, "Why are you always picking on me?. You never tell anyone else to move. Tell Peter to move!"</p>	<p>In a calm voice, the teacher asks Tammy to move again and walks away. The teacher repeats this two more times before Tammy moves.</p>	<p>?????</p>



What to do when this is reported.....

<u>A</u> ntecedent	<u>B</u> ehavior	<u>C</u> onsequences	Function
NOTHING happened	Elyse gets up and runs out of the room and slams the door.	Teacher writes an office referral.	?????

- **Why is it inaccurate to say ‘nothing happened’ as the antecedent?**
- **What are some possible reasons a person might believe that ‘nothing happened’?**
- **What might be some possible antecedents?**



Step 3: Plan Development - Prevention

When Steven is given work to complete independently, he often talks to his peers and roams around the room. As a result, he is able to gain teacher attention and escape the task.

<u>Antecedent</u>	Prevention Strategies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Steven is given independent seatwork. • Teacher goes to her desk to work on the computer. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After assigning independent seatwork, the teacher will review the assignment individually with Steven to ensure he understands what to do. (<i>attention</i>) • Steven will be offered the choice of completing the assignment at his desk or the front table near the teacher's desk. (<i>attention</i>) • Steven will be offered the choice of completing the assignment alone or with Brian, his 'study-buddy', at the front table. (<i>peer attention</i>) <p><i>Other possible strategies?</i></p>



Step 3: Plan Development - Teach

<u>Behavior</u>	Teach Replacement <u>Behavior</u>
<p>Current Behavior:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Steven talks to his peers and roams around the room. <p>Replacement Behavior:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Steven will remain in his designated area and complete his assignment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Steven will be given a checklist outlining the expected behaviors for independent seatwork. These will match the school-wide expectation “Be Responsible” by completing your assignment and not disturbing others.• The checklist will include a prompt to ask his study-buddy’ for help prior to seeking the teacher’ s assistance.• Steven will be taught how to use the checklist to monitor his behavior. <p><i>Other possible strategies?</i></p>



Step 3:

Plan Development - Reinforce

Current <u>C</u> onsequences	Replacement <u>B</u> ehavior	Alternative Outcomes <u>C</u> onsequences/Reinforcers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Steven is able to avoid completing his independent seatwork. • Steven receives attention from the teacher through repeated redirection to work on the task. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Steven will remain in his assigned area and complete his independent seatwork. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The teacher will review the checklist with Steven at the end of the independent work period. (<i>attention</i>) • Steven will receive a check for each task on the checklist he is able to successfully complete. • After accumulating a certain # of checks, Steven will be able to ‘opt-out’ of 2 questions on an independent task of his choice. (<i>escape task</i>) <p><i>Other possible reinforcers?</i></p>



Step 3: Plan Development - Reinforce

Consequences are most effective when consistently and immediately given upon display of the appropriate behavior.

Administering Consequences

- The teacher will ***immediately*** review the checklist with Steven at the end of each independent work period and provide checks for tasks successfully completed. (*attention*)
- Steven will be allowed to ***immediately*** ‘cash in’ his checks, once earned, to ‘opt out’ of 2 questions on an independent task of his choice. (*escape task*)

Other possible strategies?



Behavior Principles Summary

- Behavior is learned, it can be changed and new behavior can be taught:
 - Determine the replacement behavior.
 - Clarify the skills to be taught, so students are able to engage in the appropriate, replacement behavior
 - Teach, model, and prompt the required new skills/behaviors



Behavior Principles Summary

- Consequences strength or weaken behavior
 - Reward students' use/demonstration of new, appropriate skills/behaviors immediately
 - Tie back to the expectation demonstrated and the rules followed
 - Provide positive praise
 - Thank you for being Respectful when you stopped talking when asked
 - You showed Responsibility by being on time
 - Use school-wide reward system
 - ***Other possible strategies?***
 - Alter previous consequences so inappropriate, problem behavior is no longer reinforced
 - Instead of letting the student get out work for not having supplies, the student is lent a pencil and the teacher holds onto the students shoe until the pencil is returned.
 - When it is time to use the computer the student who is missing their work from centers time has to complete it before being allowed to use the computer.
 - ***Other possible strategies?***

Behavior Principles Summary

- Behavior tends to be repeated due to the consequences (outcomes) that follow the behavior
 - When something desirable follows an **appropriate** or **inappropriate** behavior, that behavior is **strengthened** and **more** likely to be repeated.
 - At least once a week Cristina is sent to another teacher's room for time out. She does not have to do her math work.
 - Victor loves to talk and is the first person to raise his hand in class. He gets called on a lot by the teacher. The frequency of raising his hand has increased.
 - Abby is sent by her teachers almost daily to “talk out” her issues with the guidance counselor. She enjoys spending time with the guidance counselor.
 - Hector historically does not walking quietly in line to the cafeteria/specials. Last week when he was respectful in line, he got a Tiger Ticket and won the raffle. He has been quiet in line the last 3 days to class to get the Tiger Ticket.
 - **Other possible strategies?**



Behavior Principles Summary

- Behavior is weakened by withholding consequences that maintain it
 - When something desirable does **NOT** follow an **appropriate** or **inappropriate** behavior, the behavior is **weakened** and **less** likely to be repeated.
 - Cristina is no longer put in the hallway when she acts up. She has to complete missing work during “club time”; she is now completing her assignments.
 - Victor loves to talk and is the first person to raise his hand in class. The teacher no longer calls on Victor, so he yells out his answers.
 - Abby enjoys spending time with the guidance counselor. She is no longer sent to the guidance counselor to “talk out her issues”.
 - Hector historically is tardy to class. Last week when he was on time, and he was not acknowledged for being on time. He has been late every day since.
 - **Other possible strategies?**



Behavior Principles Summary

- Behavior is strengthened, weakened, or maintained through modeling via peers and adults
- **Examples:**
 - Steven may be less likely to leave his assigned area when he see his peers earning ‘Tiger Paws’ for remaining seated and working quietly on the assignment. (*weakened*)
 - Steven may be more likely to complete the task when he see his peers earning free time for completing the assignment in a timely manner. (*strengthened*)
 - Steven may continue to be talk to his peers and roam around the room during independent seatwork if peers are engaged in the same type of behaviors. (*maintained*)



Importance of Understanding Behavior

- **Basic Principles of Behavior:**
 - Create a foundation for School-Wide, Tier 2 and Tier 3 system supports
 - Provide a common framework for addressing problem behaviors across the tiers
 - Lead to greater consistency when implementing Rtl:B (fidelity)



Next Online Chat

Teaching Social Emotional Behavior

Wednesday, October 24
2:30 PM EST/ 1:30 CST

29



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Contact Information and Resources

FLPBS:RtIB Project

- Phone: (813) 974-6440
- Fax: (813) 974-6115
- E-mail: flpbs@fmhi.usf.edu
- Website: <http://flpbs.fmhi.usf.edu>
- Facebook: www.facebook.com/flpbs
- FLPBS on Twitter: [@flpbs](http://www.twitter.com)

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- Website: www.pbis.org

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