



# Principles of Behavior Secondary Level



Florida Department of Education  
Dr. Eric Smith, Commissioner



This product was developed by Florida's Positive Behavior Support Project through the University of South Florida, Louis de la Parte Florida Mental Health Institute funded by the State of Florida, Department of Education, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services, through federal assistance under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Part B.



# 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

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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 first and fourth periods. When he enters the room he yells out “I am here. Class can start now”
- Caroline is a 7<sup>th</sup> grade student performing on a 5<sup>th</sup> grade level. She often swears, screams, throw things, and sometimes leaves the classroom throughout the day.
- When the teacher is talking, Cindy and Sammy turn their backs to the teacher and continue carrying on their conversation. It is loud enough for the teacher to hear from the front of the room.
- *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 get into their cooperative learning groups.
- Sara was asked to stop talking.
- Students are told to start on problems 1-25 on page 50 of math text.
- Teacher calls on James to answer a question in front of the class.
- Patrick was late to class and the teacher asked him why and for a pass.
- Students are told to transition to lab tables.
- Tammy was told to move seats.

*What are some other antecedents that you have come across in secondary schools?*



# Example of Behavior

- Students mumbles “I ain’t moving” put head down on desk and pulls hoodie up over head.
- Sara says sorry and stops talking.
- Student says “I hate math. Bump this” slams the book closed and throws it onto floor.
- James starts to tell a knock-knock joke.
- Patrick says his 2<sup>nd</sup> period teacher was talking to him and would not let him leave. He says he does not have a pass.
- The students pick up their supplies and quietly and quickly move to the lab tables at the back of the room.
- 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 you have seen, both appropriate and inappropriate, after the antecedent you mentioned?*

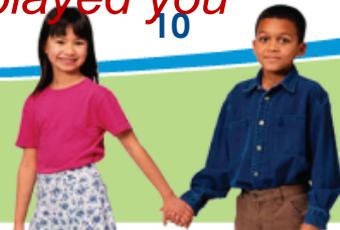


# Example of Consequences

- 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 belongs, hands him a referral, and tells him to go to the principal's office.
- The teacher says "Who", finishes the joke and then asks the student to answer the question. The students answers the question.
- The teacher sends Patrick out of the room to get a pass from his 2nd period teacher.
- The teacher tells the class they beat last weeks record by 5 seconds and thanks them for being responsible.
- The teacher in a calm voice asks Tammy to move again and walks away. The teacher repeats this two more times and then Tammy moves.

*What are some consequences you have seen after the behavior displayed you mentioned?*

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# ABCs of Behavior

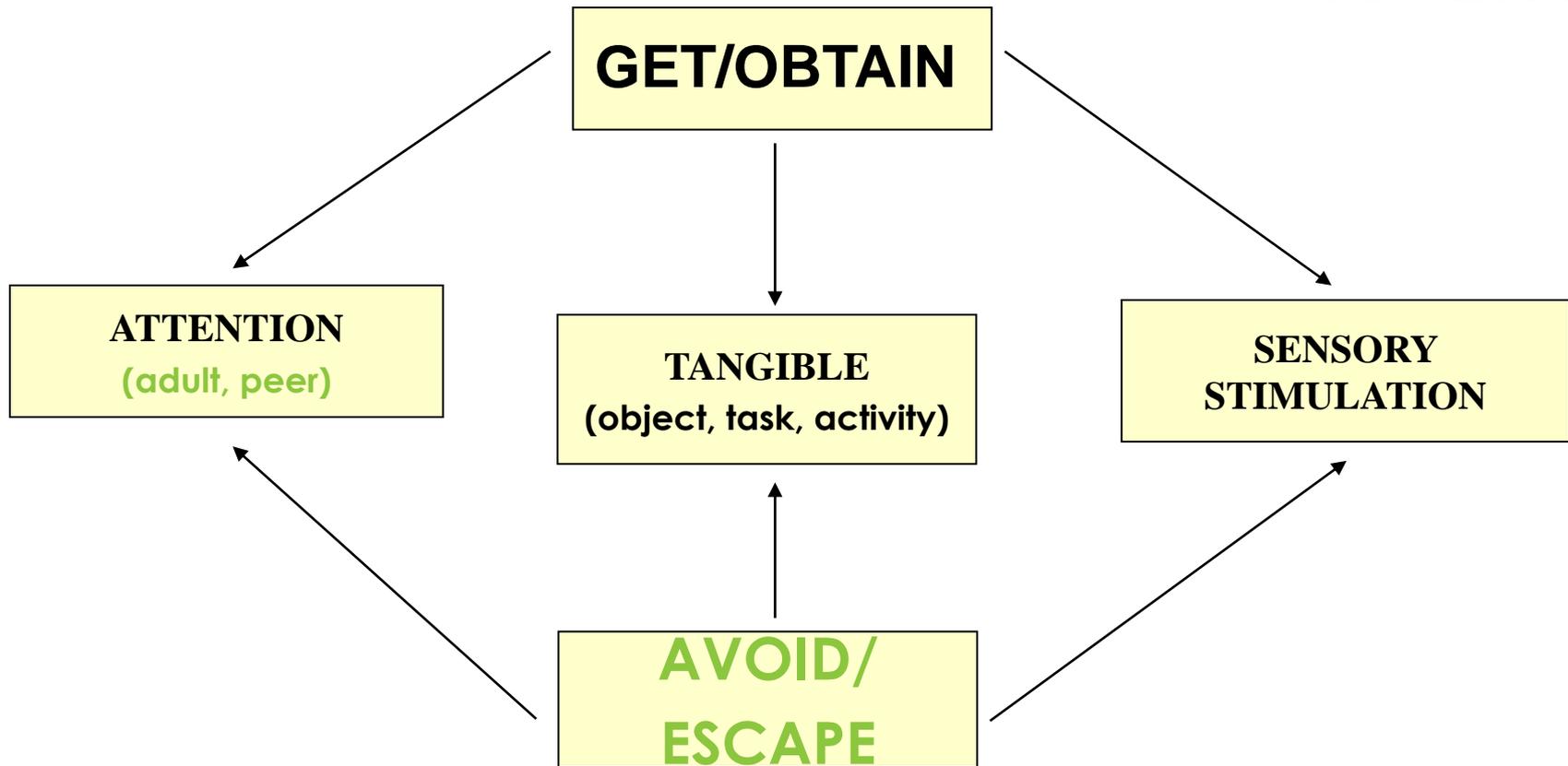
**Problem Behavior Example:** Steven often talks to his peers and roams around the room during independent seatwork.

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



# 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>A</u> ntecedent	<u>B</u> ehavior	<u>C</u> onsequences	Function
Teacher tells student to get into their cooperative learning groups.	Students mumbles "I ain't moving" put head down on desk and pulls hoodie up over head.	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 problems 1-25 on page 50 of math text.	Student says "I hate math. Bump this" slams the book closed and throws it onto floor.	The teacher tells the student to gather his belongs, hands him 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 knock-knock joke.	The teacher says "Who", finishes the joke and then asks the student to answer the question. The students answers the question.	????
Patrick was late to class and the teacher asked him why and for a pass.	Patrick says his 2 <sup>nd</sup> period teacher was talking to him and would not let him leave. He says he does not have a pass.	The teacher sends Patrick out of the room to get a pass from his 2nd period teacher.	????
Students are told to transition to lab tables.	The students pick up their supplies and quietly and quickly move to the lab tables at the back of the room.	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>The teacher in a calm voice asks Tammy to move again and walks away. The teacher repeats this two more times and then Tammy moves.</p>	<p>?????</p>



# 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"><li>• Steven is given independent seatwork.</li><li>• Teacher goes to her desk to work on the computer.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• After assigning independent seatwork, the teacher will review the assignment individually with Steven to ensure he understands what to do. (<i>attention</i>)</li><li>• 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>)</li><li>• 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>)</li></ul> <p><b><i>Other possible strategies?</i></b></p>



# Step 3: Plan Development

## Teach

<u>B</u> ehavior	Teach Replacement <u>B</u> ehavior
<p><b>Current Behavior:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Steven talks to his peers and roams around the room.</li></ul> <p><b>Replacement Behavior:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Steven will remain in his designated area and complete his assignment.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 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.</li><li>• The checklist will include a prompt to ask his study-buddy’ for help prior to seeking the teacher’s assistance.</li><li>• Steven will be taught how to use the checklist to monitor his behavior.</li></ul> <p><i><b>Other possible strategies?</b></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"> <li>• Steven is able to avoid completing his independent seatwork.</li> <li>• Steven receives attention from the teacher through repeated redirection to work on the task.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Steven will remain in his assigned area and complete his independent seatwork.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The teacher will review the checklist with Steven at the end of the independent work period. (<i>attention</i>)</li> <li>• Steven will receive a check for each task on the checklist he is able to successfully complete.</li> <li>• 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>)</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Other possible reinforcers?</i></b></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 sending the student out of the room to get a pass from previous teacher, the student owes you 3 minutes of time missed
    - When it is time to use the computer the student who is missing their bell work has to complete bell work prior to using 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 made to sit in the hallway during science. She does not have to do her science 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 is tardy to class. Last week when he was on time, he got a Tiger Ticket and won the raffle. He has been on time 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 Chats

## Teaching Social Emotional Behavior

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



# Contact Information and Resources

## FLPBS:RtIB Project

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- FLPBS on Twitter: [@flpbs](http://www.twitter.com)

## OSEP TA Center on PBIS

- Website: [www.pbis.org](http://www.pbis.org)

## Association on PBS

- Website: [www.apbs.org](http://www.apbs.org)

