



WAYNE RESA

Guidelines for Behavior Intervention



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Wayne RESA Guidelines For Behavior Intervention

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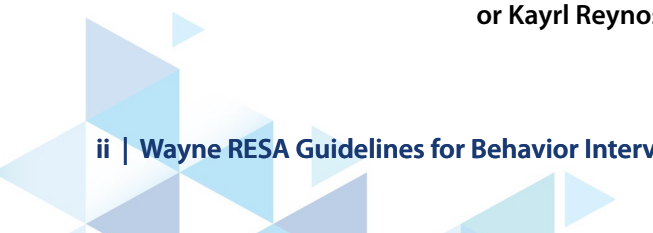


Table of Contents

Part I: Best Practices, Policy, and Legal Considerations	7
Introduction.....	7
Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support.....	10
Tier One:	10
Tier Two:	11
Tier Three:.....	12
Best Practices, Policy, and Legal Considerations	14
Federal.....	14
State	15
Part I References	16
Part II: Functional Behavior Assessment.....	17
Definition and Purpose of Functional Behavior Assessment.....	17
Collaboration in Conducting the FBA.....	17
Basic FBA	18
Intensive FBA.....	18
Tools for Direct Observation Data Collection.....	21
Scatterplot Assessment	21
Antecedent-Behavior-Consequence Assessment.....	22
Possible Functions of Problem Behavior.....	23
Part II References	24
Part III: Positive Behavior Intervention and Support Plans.....	25
Developing and Implementing the PBIS Plan.....	25
PBIS Plan Essentials	25
Basic PBIS plans	26
Intensive PBIS plans	26
Part III References	27

Part IV: Prevention Strategies	28
Modify the Program/ Provide Additional Support	29
Personal Greetings.....	30
Pre-correction.....	31
Exercise/Movement Breaks.....	32
Opportunities to Respond (OTRs)	33
Adult Mentors	34
Part IV References	35
Part V: Teaching Replacement Behaviors	37
Teaching Alternative Behaviors	38
Social Skills Instruction	39
Functional Communication Training	40
Take a Break	41
Self-Management	42
Instructional Design	43
Task Analysis	43
Prompting	43
Graduated Guidance:	44
Shaping and Fading	45
Generalization and Maintenance	45
Discrete Trial Instruction	46
Part V References	47
Part VI: Positive Reinforcement Strategies	49
Designing an Individualized Plan of Positive Reinforcement	49
Identify Target Behaviors	50
Choosing Reinforcers	50
Types of Reinforcers	51
Schedules of Reinforcement	52
Negative Reinforcement	53
Check In/Check Out	54
Token Economy	55
Contracting.....	56
Part VI References	57

Part VII: Responding to Problem Behavior	58
Essentials	58
Degree of Restrictiveness	58
Non-Restrictive Techniques	59
Simple Correction	59
Corrective Feedback (with Empathy).....	60
Restitution	61
Redirection	62
Extinction/Reduction of Reinforcement.....	62
Differential Reinforcement	63
Non-Exclusionary Time-Out	64
Privilege Loss/ Response Cost	66
Home-Based Consequences	67
Moderately Restrictive Techniques	68
Physical Response Interruption	68
Exclusionary Time-Out	69
Send-Home Time-Out	70
School-Based Wraparound	71
Part VII References	72
Part VIII: Emergency Intervention.....	74
Restrictive Techniques	74
Emergency Physical Restraint.....	74
Definitions	74
Emergency Situation	74
General Procedures for Use.....	74
Limitations on Use.....	75
Documentation	77
Physical Restraint in an Emergency Intervention Plan.....	77
Emergency Seclusion.....	78
Definitions	78
Emergency Situation	78
General Procedures for Use.....	79

Limitations on Use.....	79
Documentation	79
Seclusion in an Emergency Intervention Plan.....	80
Protective Devices	81
Definition	81
Appropriate Uses of a Protective Device.....	81
Procedures for Use of a Protective Device in a PBIS Plan	81
Limitations on Use.....	82
Documentation	82
Part VIII References.....	83
Appendix.....	84
Wayne RESA Guidance and Position Statement Regarding the Emergency Use of Seclusion.....	84
Statement of the Problem.....	84
Definitions of Seclusion	84
MDE Policy and Guidelines	85
MDE Policy and Guidelines as Applied to Students and Preschool Children.....	85
Conclusion	86
List of Downloadable Forms on the Wayne RESA PBIS webpage	87
• Functional Behavior Assessment	
• Intensive Functional Behavior Assessment	
• PBIS Plan	
• Emergency Intervention Plan	
• Peer Review	
• EIP – Parent Review	
• Behavior Review Meeting Summary	
• Weekly Scatterplot (with times)	
• Weekly Scatterplot (blank)	
• Antecedent Behavior Consequence (ABC) Log	
• Time-Out Log	
• Individual Data Summary (Excel)	



Part I: Best Practices, Policy, and Legal Considerations

Introduction

The 2020 version of the *Wayne RESA Guidelines for Behavior Intervention* is the ninth edition of the document dating back to 1985. In 35 years we have seen a profound evolution in values and the technology schools utilize to provide behavioral support for all students, including those with disabilities and those with significant behavioral challenges.

In the 1980s behavioral intervention was reliant on its roots in Applied Behavior Analysis. By the late 80s research on what came to be called Non-Aversive Behavior Management focused heavily on educational alternatives to punishment for individuals with severe self-injurious and aggressive behaviors. That period saw the beginning of inclusive practices generally, and produced innovations such as Functional Communication Training (Carr and Durand, 1985), which to this day informs the broad concept that “all behavior is communication.”

With the 1990s came the advent of Positive Behavior Support which coincided with the development of Functional Behavior Assessment (O’Neill, 1997). Significant advances were made in designing antecedent interventions (prevention), the teaching of replacement behaviors (functional equivalence), positive reinforcement, and environmental modifications. All of this technology was being developed as children with disabilities were increasingly included with their non-disabled peers

in school and community settings, opening up a world of opportunities that for many children and adults had previously been denied. In 1997 Positive Behavior Support was written into the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and it remains in the 2004 reauthorization of IDEA. FBAs and Positive Behavior Support plans have been a staple of Individual Education Plans (IEPs) since that time.

In the late 1990s and early 2000s, thanks to a small number of researchers, PBS took a quantum leap in its evolution to become school-wide in application. School-wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (SW-PBIS) is now more often referred to as simply PBIS. In 1998 the U. S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) established the National Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports. The Center has been supporting states, regions, school districts, and schools as they scale up and sustain the PBIS framework for over 20 years.

In recent years the framework of PBIS has proven to be especially beneficial as schools work to coordinate a number of newer initiatives such as restorative practices, bully prevention, trauma-informed practices, and focus on equity into a cohesive multi-tiered framework of support for all students.





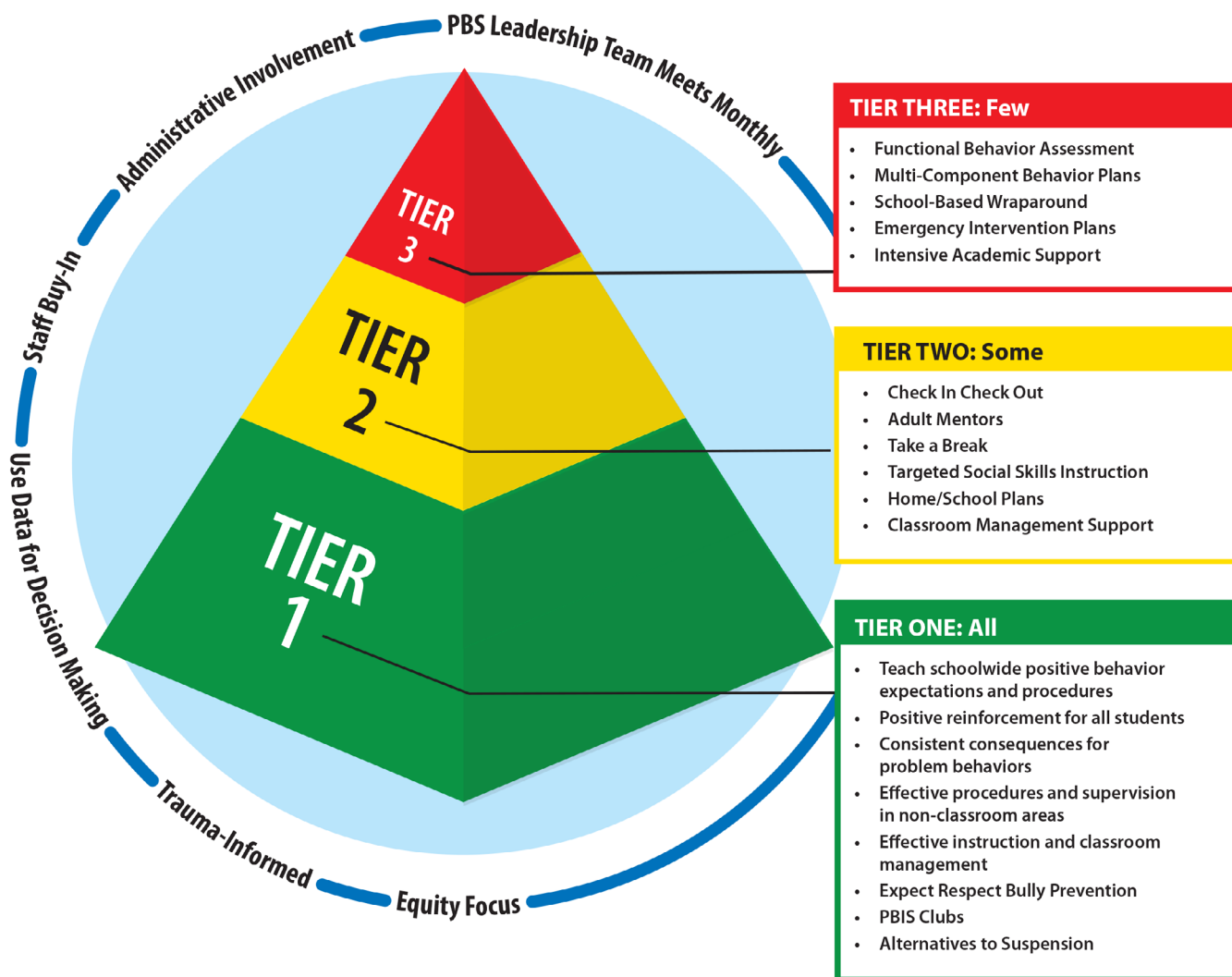
The **Wayne RESA Guidelines for Behavior Intervention, 2020** is intended primarily to provide tools and resources for functional behavior assessment and intensive PBIS plans developed within a PBIS framework. The guidelines are also written in accordance with federal and state policy and law, including MCL 380.1307 which regulates the use of emergency seclusion and restraint in Michigan schools.

We have attempted to incorporate many of the best practices, positive interventions, and the evidence base that has developed within the field of behavior intervention over the last 35 years. We have also tried to make the format user friendly to teachers and other school staff that frequently need to find pertinent information quickly, and easy to access electronically.

All of the **forms** included in this document can be found in a downloadable format on the Wayne RESA website.

The **Wayne RESA Guidelines for Behavior Intervention, 2020** has been developed as a collaborative effort involving representatives from numerous Wayne County districts and Wayne RESA. It is recommended that school districts utilizing these guidelines have them reviewed by their local Board of Education, and provide necessary resources to educational staff to ensure their proper implementation. The Michigan State Board of Education Positive Behavior Support Policy, 2006, called for positive behavior support for all students, at the school-wide and individual student levels. It is our sincere hope that these guidelines will be an aid to educators and parents as they continue that effort.

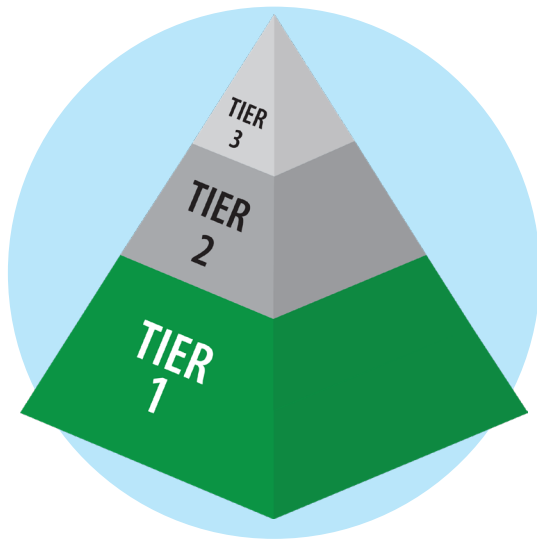
Three-Tiered Model of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support



Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support

Tier One:

All students receive universal interventions.



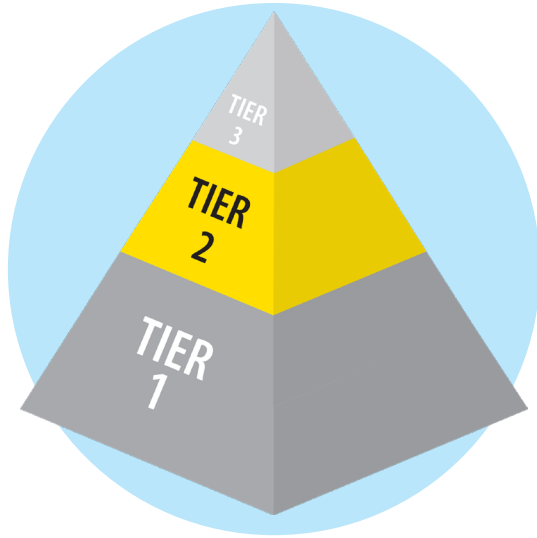
PBIS provides a model for implementing research-based behavioral support practices for all students in any school setting. It uses a three tiered system of intervention beginning with a set of best practices implemented with all students. Tier one includes:

- **Establishing and explicitly teaching agreed upon positive behavior expectations** in classroom and non-classroom settings.
- **Providing a high rate of positive acknowledgments**, reinforcement, and feedback to all students for demonstrating the positive expectations.
- Providing a continuum of **consistently implemented and predictable consequences** for all students for behavior infractions.
- Providing **effective classroom management and instruction**.
- Using a **collaborative, team-based approach** to developing the school's unique PBIS program.
- **Using data to guide the decision-making process** and to help identify students who need additional support.



Tier Two:

Some students receive targeted interventions.

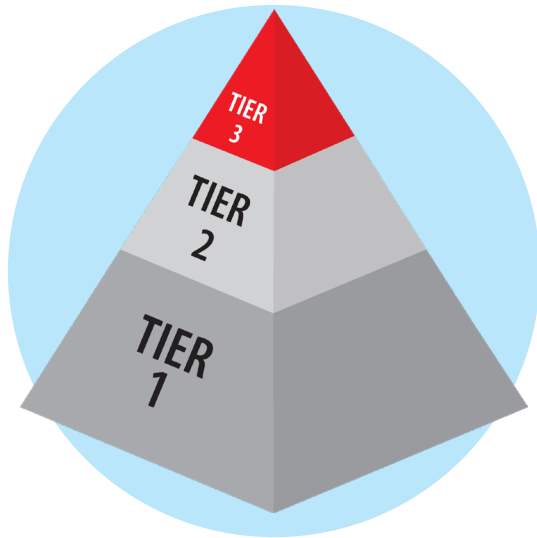


At the second tier, targeted interventions are developed to address small groups of students who are at-risk for escalating behavioral difficulty. Interventions at this level should be quickly accessed, be easy to implement, and may be based on a basic level of functional behavior assessment (FBA). A school may develop a menu of Tier 2 interventions to address a variety of student needs. Some of those include:

- **Check-In/Check-Out:** A simple monitoring system whereby the student checks in with an adult upon arrival, gets a prepared written daily progress report form, and gets positive adult attention and pre-corrections for having a successful school day. Throughout the day the student gets feedback and ratings on his behavior from his teachers. The student checks out at the end of the day to tally his behavior record for the day. Incentives can be attached to this system. The daily cycle is completed when the student takes the report home to be reviewed, signed by his parents and returned to school the next day.
- **School-based Mentors** provide the opportunity for the student to have individualized time with an adult in the school setting where the focus is on strengthening personal relationships and creating stronger connections to the school environment.
- **PBIS Clubs** provide opportunities for students to engage in high interest activities, experience success, create connections, and practice important social skills in a natural setting.
- **Home-School behavior plans** provide a collaborative process and format for parents and teachers to develop common expectations and strategies in order to increase consistency and communication between home and school.
- **Take a Break** teaches students appropriate replacement behaviors to cope with frustration, anger, or agitation.
- **Targeted Social Skills** provide small groups of students with additional or specialized instruction around specific behavior issues.

Tier Three:

A few students receive intensive Positive Behavior Support



For a small number of students with chronic and/or severe behavior problems additional, intensive behavior support is needed. At tier three, students have an individualized team formed around them and more intensive FBA is conducted, typically leading to a multi-component PBIS plan. The following are core features of an Intensive PBIS plan;

- The student's behavioral support team conducts an **intensive functional behavior assessment** through indirect and direct methods, thereby identifying triggers to problem behavior, events that reinforce the behavior, behavior and learning skill deficits that contribute to the problem, and any other pertinent variables associated with the behavior (e.g., medical, health, environmental, personal history, etc.)
- The team develops interventions immediately following the FBA and utilizes the information from the FBA to design an **individualized PBIS plan** for the student. The FBA must directly inform the selection and design of the intervention strategies.



- The PBIS plan may include **prevention strategies** that not only aim to reduce known triggers to problem behavior, but also include **antecedent events** that are known to increase the likelihood of positive behavior.
- A few high priority **replacement behaviors** for skill deficits known to be associated with the problem behavior are identified and a teaching plan for acquisition and generalization of the target replacement behaviors is developed. Replacement behaviors that are functionally equivalent (i.e., provide the same type of reinforcement) to the problem behaviors are given high priority for instruction. These can include social, communication, academic, or other adaptive behaviors.
- An **individualized schedule of positive reinforcement** is designed. This includes a reinforcement inventory i.e., identifying a range of reinforcers that are motivating to the student and are easily available in the school environment. Typically, an individualized positive reinforcement plan increases the frequency of access to reinforcement beyond the schedule available through the school-wide PBIS or classroom systems. Consideration is given to eventually fading to naturally occurring levels of reinforcement, such as simple behavior specific praise or acknowledgment. Token systems and point systems such as Check In/Check Out are frequently used as part of an intensive PBIS plan.

- An **individualized plan for responding to problem behaviors** is designed. This may involve identifying multiple response actions depending on the intensity, type, and function of the problem behavior. Consequence strategies may include actions such as take a break, corrective feedback, non-exclusionary or exclusionary time-out from reinforcement, privilege loss, and/or restorative practices.
- **Effective parent collaboration** greatly enhances the likelihood of success with intensive PBIS plans. Home and school can share ideas, create common expectations where possible, and generally support each other's efforts. Effective parent collaboration begins by establishing a positive relationship with the family based upon mutual respect, trust, and a solution-focused approach to supporting the student.
- **Intensive PBIS plans should be reviewed at a team meeting** at least quarterly. These meetings should start with a review of data that includes graphic summaries and qualitative reports. The agenda should also include discussion of

the fidelity of implementation of the strategies, an assessment of outcomes, and discussion of modifications to the plan. Discussions of student behavior should include both long-term and short-term goals. Meeting notes should be distributed to all parties and the next meeting scheduled.

- Students that are at highest risk for restrictive or exclusionary practices may benefit from a **school-based wrap around planning process** that includes the school team with behavioral expertise, the student if appropriate, his/her family, mental health personnel, and other individuals that are natural supports to the student (Scott and Eber, 2003). School-based wrap-around meetings typically occur on a monthly to bi-monthly basis.

The resources described in this document provide a framework and guidelines for developing intervention plans for students at both Tier Two and Three.



Best Practices, Policy, and Legal Considerations

There are several federal and state laws, policies and guidance documents that are intended to provide safe and supportive school environments for all students. The following is a brief summary of some of those legal mandates that most directly affect the manner in which schools address student behavior.

Federal

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 2004

This special education law requires schools to be vigilant about the effects of problematic behavior. As an on-going practice, IEP Teams must consider behavioral factors when determining appropriate interventions, supports, and programs for students with disabilities. Specifically, IDEA requires that IEP Teams discuss and address behaviors when they interfere with the student's learning or the learning of others.

When a student's problematic behavior results in a high number of disciplinary removals, IDEA 2004 requires the school to conduct a functional behavior assessment, and to make a determination as to whether the behavior is a manifestation of the student's disability. A summary of the IDEA Discipline Requirements issued by the Michigan Department of Education Office of Special Education May, 2019, can be found [here](#).

U.S. Department of Education, Restraint and Seclusion: Resource Document, May 15, 2012

This document describes 15 principles for states, school districts, schools, parents, and other stakeholders to consider when developing or revising policies and procedures on the use of restraint and seclusion.



U. S. Department of Education Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services Dear Colleague letter, August 1, 2016

This guidance document is intended to clarify for schools their responsibilities related to ensuring that students with behavioral needs are provided a free appropriate public education (FAPE) and placement in the least restrictive environment.

U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights Dear Colleague Letter: Restraint and Seclusion of Students with Disabilities, December 28, 2016

[This document](#) provides guidance to school districts on how the use of seclusion and restraint may result in discrimination against students with disabilities under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

State

Corporal Punishment Act (Michigan Revised School Code—Sec. 380.1312, Act 451 of 1976)

This law prohibits school personnel from deliberately inflicting physical pain by hitting, paddling, spanking, slapping, or any other physical force as a means of discipline. When serious circumstances are involved, the regulation allows for the use of reasonable physical force to maintain order and control so as to provide an environment conducive to safety and learning.

Policy on Safe Schools (Michigan State Board of Education policy adopted 2000)

This policy encourages schools to undertake proactive, preventative approaches over reactive, punishment approaches in curbing violent student behavior. It also encourages schools to develop alternative educational opportunities for troubled youth who engage in serious misconduct.



Positive Behavior Support Policy (Michigan State Board of Education policy adopted September 12, 2006)

This policy encourages schools to adopt research-based positive behavior support systems for all students. These support systems provide a proactive, positive, skill-building, and data-based approach for the teaching and learning of successful student behavior throughout the school environment.

Matt's Law—Public Act 241 (2011)

This law requires every school district in Michigan to pass a policy banning bullying. It provides a definition of bullying and specifies what a district's policy must include. It also encourages the adoption of prevention strategies and training for school employees.

Emergency Seclusion and Restraint in Schools, 2016 (Michigan Revised School Code - MCL 380.1307)

This law regulates the use of emergency seclusion and restraint in Michigan schools and requires the Michigan Department of Education to develop a policy to support implementation of the law.

Policy for the Emergency Use of Seclusion and Restraint (Michigan State Board of Education policy adopted March 14, 2017)

This policy recommends that schools use a PBIS framework, describes mandated training requirements for school personnel, provides definitions of key terms, describes mandated reporting requirements, and procedures for development of emergency intervention plans for individuals with whom there is repeated use of emergency seclusion and/or restraint.

State of Michigan Rethink Discipline Law, 2016 (Public Acts 360-366)

This law requires schools to consider seven factors before suspending or expelling a student for any offense other than a weapons or drug violation. Schools must consider whether restorative practices will be used and whether a lesser intervention would properly address the violation.

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PBIS

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Part II: Functional Behavior Assessment

Definition and Purpose of Functional Behavior Assessment

Functional behavior assessment (FBA) is a method for identifying the variables that reliably predict and maintain problem behavior. Variables that predict, or trigger, behavior are called antecedents. Variables that maintain behavior are considered reinforcers.

FBA involves an examination of how the student interacts with the environment, and attempts to determine specifically where, when, and why problems arise. It includes an assessment of the student's strengths and interests. It also involves an assessment of how skill deficits may contribute to the problem behavior.

Information gathered through the FBA process is summarized, and hypothesis statements are developed regarding the factors that might be influencing the behavior of concern. **The variables that are identified through the FBA process should inform the selection and design of the interventions in the student's Positive Behavior Support Plan.**

FBA is best considered an on-going process of problem solving conducted by the intervention team. FBA information should be continually gathered, and data should be summarized and reviewed by the team. Data should be used to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions, and the intervention plan should be modified as necessary.

Parental consent is required prior to conducting both the basic and intensive FBA.

Collaboration in Conducting the FBA

Determining the need for and conducting a FBA requires a collaborative team effort. The team should include the following:

- Student's teacher(s)
- Student's parents
- Student, if appropriate
- Support staff
- Administrators
- Persons who know the student well
- Staff who have expertise in positive behavior support

The school district should establish a process whereby instructional staff can receive assistance from support staff (e.g., social worker, psychologist, behavior specialist, or teacher consultant) in conducting the FBA and developing the PBIS Plan.

The behavior intervention team performs several planning functions including:

- Identifying and discussing problem behaviors
- Gathering background information
- Determining what additional information is needed
- What methods will be used to collect the information
- Who will be collecting the information



Basic FBA

Criteria for Conducting a Basic FBA

Functional Behavior Assessment can be either basic or intensive, depending on:

- The methods used to gather information
- The number of people involved
- The range of possible variables considered in the assessment
- A basic FBA may be appropriate under the following circumstances:
 - In a school-wide PBIS system, if the student reaches 2-5 office discipline referrals (Tier 2) or some other established criteria regarding number of behavioral incidents.
 - An individual teacher or other staff person may refer a student for a basic FBA based upon observed class behavior.
 - A Tier 2 intervention has been reliably implemented and found to be insufficient to address the student's needs.

Methods for Conducting a Basic FBA

The first step in conducting a basic FBA is to complete an interview or [information gathering form](#) such as the one provided on the Wayne RESA website. More than one person can have input in this process. For example, the classroom teacher, school social worker, and parent may all have input.

Data systems may involve the continued gathering of office referrals or some other incident reports. The team may decide to use Check In/Check Out data, scatterplot and/or ABC recording of the target behaviors.

Some method of data collection should be established in order to provide on-going FBA information and to help evaluate the effectiveness of the intervention plan. The team should plan to review behavioral data periodically and make adjustments to the intervention if necessary.

Intensive FBA

Criteria for Intensive FBA

Using a PBIS model, the need for intensive FBA (Tier 3) is established when Tier 2 assessment and interventions have been reliably implemented, and the student continues to have significant difficulty. A higher level of support is needed. Frequently at this level the student has been referred to special education and other program issues are under consideration.

Intensive FBA should be utilized with students who demonstrate a pattern of behavior that is one or more of the following:

- Dangerous or potentially dangerous
- Extremely disruptive
- Severely negatively impacts the student's learning or quality of life
- Highly resistant to behavior change efforts

Methods for Conducting Intensive FBA

At an intensive level of FBA, typically both indirect and direct methods of assessment are used. A more in-depth interview process may be employed, with separate, detailed interviews of the teacher, student, and parents. In-depth histories and record reviews should be conducted. Scatterplot and/or ABC log recordings are conducted systematically over longer periods of time.

The composition of the intervention team may be expanded to include individuals with more specialized knowledge or skills, including a:

- Behavioral Specialist
- Psychologist
- School Social Worker
- Student's Physician
- Mental Health Workers
- Other outside agency personnel involved with the student

PBIS plans that are based upon intensive FBA should typically be multi-component, incorporating strategies in the areas of:

- Prevention
- Replacement behavior instruction
- Positive reinforcement
- Planned consequences
- Emergency interventions, if appropriate
- Home/School collaboration

These plans can be complex, involving different aspects of the plan being implemented by different members of the team. One or two members of the team should assume the role of coordinators of the entire plan and intervention process.

Steps for Conducting a Basic/Intensive FBA

1) Define the problem behaviors.

- **Use observable terms**, such as “talks out without raising hand.” Definitions should pinpoint the problem behaviors.
- **Identify the behaviors that are the highest priority** for intervention.
- **Cluster behavior definitions by category** for conciseness. Teachers and others who work with the student should provide examples of the problem behavior based upon their observations. Some examples:
 - Aggressive: hits, kicks, pinches
 - Disruptive: blurts out, wanders classroom, bothers other’s materials
 - Identify “chains of behavior” or specifically how the student escalates from low to high intensity behaviors.

2) Conduct indirect assessment.

The most common method of indirect assessment is to interview teachers, parents, the student, and others who know the student well. The Basic FBA & Intensive FBA Guide include questions that can be used to gather information via structured interviews. These guides may incorporate information from one or more people.

In addition to interviews, indirect assessment includes a review of the student’s files, incident reports, office discipline referrals, assessments, evaluations, questionnaires, rating scales, etc.

Both indirect and direct methods can be used to identify patterns of behavior and factors associated with the student’s behavior.

3) Conduct direct observation assessment.

This may include:

- Scatterplot
- ABC logs
- Direct observation by a person with behavioral expertise.

Design a data collection system that does the following:

- **Allows information to be easily summarized** and/ or graphed so that it can be shared with other team members. Remember, the purpose of data collection is to provide accurate information to guide the process of behavioral intervention.
- **Can be realistically implemented** within the school environment.
- **Provides on-going information.** Some students with chronic and severe problem behaviors require longitudinal FBA and progress monitoring in order to ensure positive outcomes.

4) Summarize results of the FBA (basic or intensive) and develop a hypothesis.

The summary can be in the form of a “summary statement” included in a PBIS plan, or it can be documented on a separate FBA form.

The summary may include:

- A description of the methods used to conduct the FBA.
- A description of the student's target behaviors.
- Antecedents found to trigger the behavior.
- A hypothesis regarding consequences that appear to reinforce or maintain the behavior.
- Identified replacement behaviors.
- Potential reinforcers.
- Other variables found to be associated with the problem behavior.

To increase confidence in the hypothesis generated from the FBA, look for at least three sources that identify the same variable (triangulation of data).

Using Data Effectively / Behavior Review Process

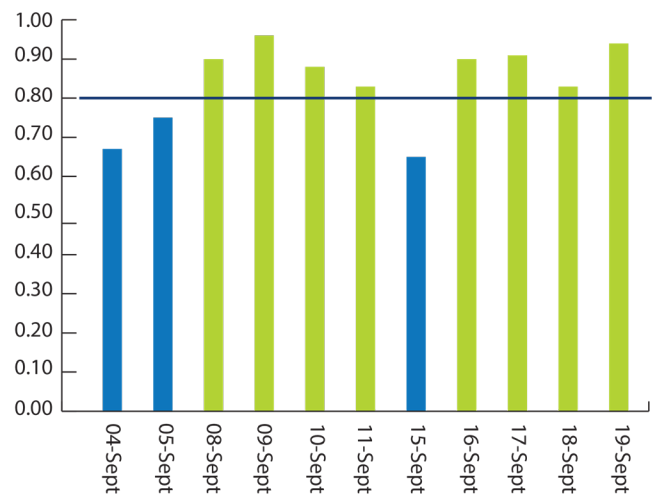
Intensive PBIS plans should include a process for regularly scheduled review meetings. We recommend that these be done on at least a quarterly basis. It is important to not wait until a crisis occurs to schedule a behavior review meeting. PBIS is a proactive approach. If a student has reached the level of requiring a Tier 3 intervention plan, then the team should assume that on-going proactive planning meetings will be necessary until substantial and durable behavior change has been achieved by the student.

Behavior review meetings should include the following:

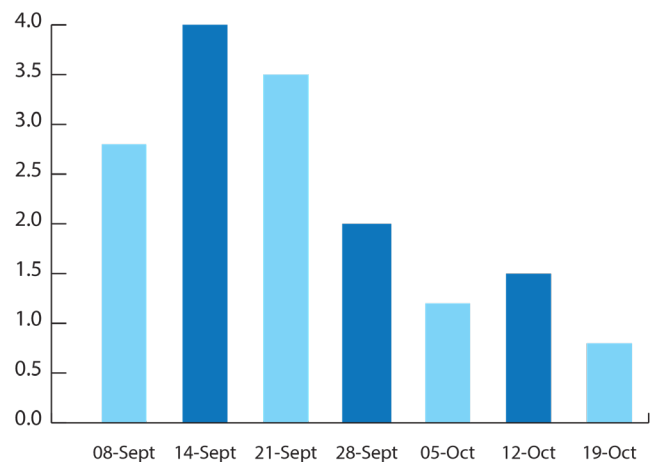
- Invitations to all team members.
- An organized, efficient agenda of discussion points.
- A written or graphic summary of the student's behavioral data presented to all team members in a clear and easy to understand manner.
- A summary of pertinent staff and parent observations focusing primarily on recent patterns of behavior or incidents.
- A review of the extent to which the behavioral strategies that were designed for the student have actually been implemented in a reliable manner.

- A discussion regarding any changes that may be needed to the plan.
- Written documentation of the meeting, i.e., minutes shared with all participants.
- Scheduling of the next review meeting.
- See [Behavior Review Meeting Summary](#).

**Check In/Check Out Data Summary:
Daily Percentage of Points Earned**



Daily Average of Major Disruptions



Tools for Direct Observation Data Collection

The two most commonly recommended tools for direct observation for FBA are scatterplot and antecedent-behavior-consequence assessment.

Scatterplot Assessment

Scatterplot assessment can be used to identify a relationship between a condition in the environment (e.g., math class) and the frequency of a behavior (e.g., tardy). Frequency information can be tracked using scatterplot intervals or episodes of behavior.

A scatterplot is usually 15 or 30-minute blocks, organized by week or month. See the Wayne RESA website for a [sample blank form](#) or a [sample form with times](#).

Observers simply note occurrences of a target behavior and/or intervention, using a designated symbol, within the appropriate block of time or interval. If the target behavior does not occur, nothing needs to be recorded. If it is not possible to record every instance of a high frequency problem behavior, the team may decide, for example, to document only those occurrences that require a restrictive intervention, such as time-out or being sent to the office.

- **More than one behavior and/or intervention may be tracked** on a scatterplot. Limit collection to highest priority behaviors, not more than two or three.
- **Data may be summarized** by counting the number of intervals during which the behavior occurred (interval recording), or actual instances of the behavior (frequency recording).

- Data obtained via the scatterplot method may be used to **establish a baseline rate of behavior**. For example, average daily rate of behavior can be calculated on a weekly basis by dividing the total number of behavior episodes in a week by days that the student was present in school that week. In this case, the baseline rate would be a daily average by week.
- The scatterplot data collection method is then **continued into the intervention phase**, which allows for evaluation of the behavior intervention.
- Scatterplot is **designed to show patterns of behavior over time**. If behavior is found to occur during specific time blocks, the classes, activities and conditions at those times should be examined using antecedent- behavior-consequence analysis.

Generally, the staff member who is with the student during that time interval is responsible for collecting the data.

Weekly Scatterplot

Student: _____ Week of: _____ Year: _____

Target Behaviors: _____ Interventions: _____

1. _____ A. _____

2. _____ B. _____

3. _____ C. _____

Time	Monday Date:	Tuesday Date:	Wednesday Date:	Thursday Date:	Friday Date:
8:30-8:45					
8:45-9:00					
9:00-9:15					
9:15-9:30					
9:30-9:45					
9:45-10:00					
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2:15-2:30					
2:30-2:45					
2:45-3:00					
3:00-3:15					
3:15-3:30					
Totals					

Antecedent-Behavior-Consequence Assessment

Antecedent-Behavior-Consequence (ABC) data recording would typically be used for high priority behaviors, in that it is generally more time-consuming than scatterplot data collection. ABC assessment involves descriptive accounts of events that precede, include, and follow the target behavior. ABC data collection can help identify the triggers to problem behavior and the events that may be reinforcing it.

Here are some guidelines for conducting ABC assessment.

- Use shorthand or abbreviations for the observed events.
- Report only actions (events) that are seen or heard.
- Record events that occur immediately before and after each response.
- Record the estimated duration of each behavioral event.
- Use a form or data sheet specifically designed for ABC information. See Wayne RESA's website for a [sample form](#).
- ABC recording can be carried out by staff assigned to the student, or as part of an observation conducted by another person e.g., trained paraprofessional, support staff.

Consider the following when recording ABC data:

- Possible **antecedents** include the scheduled activity, people present or absent, background activity, conversation, noise level, or specific demands. Did the student appear confused, frustrated, bored, mischievous, or did he/she appear to want something? Given what you know about the student what seemed important about what was going on?
- **Setting events** are a type of antecedent that “sets the stage” for behavior. Examples include physical

states such as hunger, sleep deprivation, illness, medication effects, etc. Other setting events include conditions that may not be immediately evident, but that still affect the likelihood of a behavior occurrence, such as a recent argument at home, separation of parents, death of a grandparent, etc. Interviews are usually necessary to identify setting events.

- In describing the student’s behavior use **observable terms** and describe any lower intensity behaviors that preceded the target behavior e.g., “Paul frowned, lowered head, and refused to open his book when asked by teacher.” Describe **intensity, frequency, and duration**, if possible.
- **Consequences** are details of what occurred after the behavior, including what was said to the student and whatever else happened e.g., “teacher verbally redirected student to task.” Any observable events and reactions should be recorded, including no response (e.g., ignoring) on the part of others.
- An additional category of student response may be added to describe the **student’s response to the consequence** e.g., “P. complied with the teacher’s redirection.” It is important to note which consequences are effective in managing the behavior, and which have no effect or contribute to escalating the behavior.

ABC Log

Student: _____ Target Behaviors: _____

Date	Time	Activity	Antecedents	Consequence	Student's Reaction

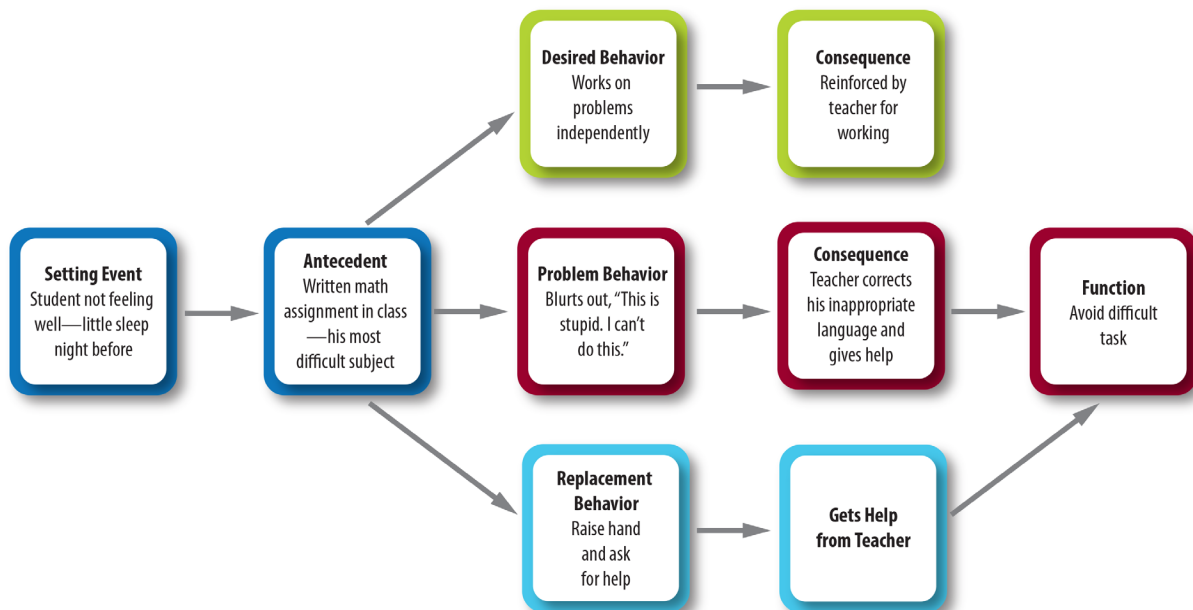
Possible Functions of Problem Behavior

Problem behavior usually serves a function or fulfills a need for the individual. The student gains some type of reinforcement from the behavior. Consider the following possible functions when conducting a FBA.

- **Attention-seeking:** may be positive or negative attention, from adults or peers.
- **Communication:** the behavior may be an attempt to communicate a specific message, such as a desire to have something or to get the teacher to do something. Children with expressive communication deficits may find that problem behavior is a more efficient way of communicating their needs than through language.
- **Escape/avoidance:** the behavior may result in preventing or stopping something that is unpleasant to the student, such as an assignment he/she finds difficult, interacting with an unpleasant person, or being at school at all.
- **Gain access to things or activities:** problem behavior may be rewarded when it results in the child getting something that he/she wants.
- **Control:** some children use problem behavior as a way to exert control over other people or their environment e.g., to gain predictability or structure.
- **Automatic reinforcement:** some behaviors are intrinsically reinforcing in that they provide pleasure to the individual or they may alleviate an unpleasant condition.
- **Obsessive/compulsiveness:** some individuals exhibit repetitive or ritualistic behaviors that have no apparent function, or are internally driven by anxiety.
- **Fear or phobic responses to specific stimuli:** some students may exhibit an exaggerated response to certain stimuli or situations.
- **Trauma-related:** children exposed to trauma or chronic toxic stress (e.g., physical or emotional abuse, chronic neglect, caregiver substance abuse or mental illness, exposure to violence) may exhibit a range of problem behaviors including oppositional, aggressive, withdrawn, or self-harm.
- **Revenge:** some behavior is motivated by a desire for retaliation.

Competing Pathways Diagram

Can help identify functional replacement behaviors



Part II References

Functional Behavior Assessment

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Part III: Positive Behavior Intervention and Support Plans

Developing and Implementing the PBIS Plan

PBIS plans should match the results of the FBA. If the FBA found that writing difficulties lead to problem behavior, then the PBIS plan should include support strategies to the student in the area of writing. If the FBA found that the student's problem behavior was driven by poor functional communication skills, then the plan should include functional communication training. If the FBA found that the student performed best with hourly reinforcement, then that schedule should be reflected in the PBIS plan.

The behavior intervention team should meet to discuss the results of the FBA and develop the PBIS plan. Typically, one person on the team assumes the role of drafting the PBIS plan, but the content should be discussed and agreed upon by all team members.

PBIS Plan Essentials

- For behavioral practices to be effective, implemented widely, and sustained over time, they **need to be manageable for teachers**.
- The PBIS plan provides important documentation regarding the student and represents an agreement between those involved in its development. One of its primary functions is to **serve as an action plan** for those who work directly with the student. Keep it simple and easy to read. Strategies should be written in clear language and enough detail for staff to know what to do.
- Strategies or interventions found in the PBIS plan should be written **specific to the student and the context** of the school environment, e.g., "Student will go to room 225 to take a break when needed."

Do not use vague language e.g., "Student may receive a reward." Use language that specifies what will happen, e.g., "Student will receive 3 sessions of replacement behavior instruction per week."

- The **student should be informed** and/or instructed regarding the plan, as appropriate.
- The plan should be **discussed with all staff**, as appropriate, prior to implementation.
- Any time a PBIS plan is developed for a student, the **parent should be informed** and encouraged to partner with the school in the development of that plan.
- Every person who implements the plan should have **access to a copy of the plan**.
- Any **specialized training** necessary to implement the plan should occur as soon as possible. Data collection procedures should be reviewed with staff.
- Unless otherwise indicated, PBIS plans should be **implemented throughout the school day**. Collaboration and effective communication between team members are essential to maintain a high level of consistency in implementing the plan.



- The **review process** should help determine how the plan is actually being implemented. This process should bring any problems to the attention of those responsible for monitoring the plan in a timely manner, so that modifications or adjustments can be made as soon as possible.
- Continue to **use data collection and FBA** to evaluate the interventions, and continue to collaborate as a team. Behavioral data should be summarized for members of the intervention team and be made available to assist the team in the decision-making process.
- PBIS plans promote generalization when they involve all the individuals who interact with that child, both at home and school. The **child should experience consistency** from one environment to the next in terms of behavioral expectations, prompts and reinforcers, and consequences.
- Maintenance of behavior change can be enhanced through PBIS plans by ensuring that transitions to new classrooms, teachers, schools, programs, or other environments are done with **adequate planning and training for new staff**.

Basic PBIS plans

Basic PBIS plans typically involve one or a few interventions. The selection and design of these interventions should be based on some FBA. For example, the plan may consist of some specific replacement behavior instruction (e.g., anger control), or a positive reinforcement plan. It could involve changing something in the environment found to trigger the behavior e.g., put the student in a different group of students, or adding a specific consequence for a behavior. A simple home/school behavior intervention plan may involve creating common expectations around a target behavior, e.g., define acceptable and unacceptable language.

Within a school-wide PBIS model basic behavior plans, such as Check-in/Check-out are standardized in format, intended for small groups of students, are data-based, and are easily accessed by the student's teacher.

Intensive PBIS plans

Intensive PBIS plans are typically multi-component, incorporating individualized strategies in the areas of:

- Prevention
- Replacement behavior instruction
- Positive reinforcement
- Planned consequences
- Emergency interventions, if appropriate
- Home/School collaboration

Specific interventions are more likely to be individually designed and detailed. For example, the exact manner in which a replacement behavior is taught, the specific prompting and reinforcement procedures may need to be detailed.





Part III References

Designing Behavior Intervention Plans

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Part IV: Prevention Strategies

Prevention strategies usually involve altering an immediate antecedent or setting event that was found to trigger the problem behavior. Setting events are circumstances that may affect the likelihood of a behavior occurring, such as a student's health, use of medications, or an argument at home that morning. Antecedents are specific circumstances that occur immediately before the behavior.

The **choice of antecedent interventions is driven by the results of the functional assessment**. Generally, they could include:

- Modifications to the curriculum
- The manner in which activities or instructional tasks are presented
- The length of time spent on a task
- Who works with the student
- What is said to the student when giving directions or correcting behavior
- How the student is grouped with peers
- Changes in instructional prompts

Other possible changes could involve:

- Seating arrangements
- Making changes to the student's schedule
- Increasing supervision in certain settings (e.g., during transitions or on recess)
- Providing increased practice at a skill (e.g., tutoring)
- Parent-teacher-student communication systems (e.g., assignment notebooks or e-mail correspondence) can be very effective antecedent interventions
- Re-teaching the universal behavioral expectations to the entire class or the individual student

- Giving increased opportunities for making choices
- Adult or peer mentoring
- Provide personal greetings to students on a daily basis
- Providing a time and place to engage in certain behaviors, e.g., stimulus control
- Increasing the frequency of opportunities to respond (OTRs) to instruction. See Haydon, et al., 2010. Providing high rates of OTRs has been found to increase academic engagement and reduce disruptions.

Medical or health conditions associated with problem behavior can be dealt with through antecedent interventions e.g., arranging for the student to take medication in school.

Antecedent interventions **may involve adding or scheduling events that predict, or trigger desirable behaviors**, e.g., working on a high interest subject or with a preferred adult.

Antecedent interventions **can produce an immediate reduction in problem behaviors**. They can provide a window of opportunity to establish skill training, positive reinforcement, and consequences aimed at producing more enduring change.

Sometimes it is not appropriate to eliminate the antecedent condition entirely, but a temporary modification may be acceptable. For example, if the student becomes disruptive every time he is asked to read aloud in class, then perhaps this demand could be temporarily discontinued while efforts were made to increase his skills and confidence in reading. Gradually, the demand would be reintroduced. On-going antecedent-behavior-consequence data collection should provide information regarding possible antecedent interventions.

► Modify the Program/ Provide Additional Support

Description

This involves analyzing specific aspects of curriculum design and program scheduling in relation to the student's problem behaviors. **Changes in activity selection, the teaching situation, or other components of the student's school day are implemented for the purposes of increasing effective instruction and reducing problem behaviors.**

Procedures

- Conduct a Functional Behavior Assessment. Determine whether some aspect of instructional demands, scheduling, transitions, groupings of students, seating arrangements, the physical environment, or any other factor related to the student's educational program is consistently associated with problem behaviors.
- Determine whether this aspect of the program may be changed, so as to decrease the occurrence of the problem behavior. For example, this may involve reducing the length of tasks or providing activity reinforcers more frequently throughout the day. There are many different aspects of the instructional situation that the student may find difficult, leading to frustration and problem behaviors. Attempt to determine the specific difficulty and modify that aspect of the demand situation.
- In certain situations it may be necessary to temporarily remove the problem situation entirely. If this involves eliminating an important educational activity for the student, plan to reintroduce the demand situation after other interventions have been implemented, and the student is better prepared to meet the demands of the difficult situation.

Examples

A middle school student consistently becomes defiant and disruptive when confronted over missing homework assignments. His daily schedule is altered to give him individualized assistance in organization and completing his homework.

A high school student becomes defiant when he is continually prompted by his teacher to complete written class work. Instead, the teacher develops a contingency plan so that when the student finishes his work he can go on the computer. She no longer gives him verbal prompts to keep working.

A student with autism has been engaging in extremely dangerous aggression to others and self-injurious behaviors. The student's team decides to program for him outside of his classroom in a quieter more controlled setting until his behaviors can be stabilized. When it is safe he will be reintroduced to his classroom environment.



► Personal Greetings

Description

When a student receives a personal greeting from his or her teacher, it **sets the tone for the day or the class period**. Personal greetings communicate to each student that they are noticed and valued by their teacher. Research shows that the strategy of using personal greetings, especially when combined with pre-corrections and behavior specific praise, improve student behavior and result in more time engaged in learning in the classroom. (Jaba, Allday, & Parkur, 2007; Cook, Fiat, et. al., 2015).

At the elementary level, students may like to choose their own greeting as they enter the classroom

At both the elementary and secondary level, teachers and staff should use the student's name when greeting them.

Procedures

- Greet students by name and with a positive statement at the door when they first arrive to the classroom.
- Allow elementary students to choose how they would like to be greeted, (e.g. handshake, high five, fist bump, etc.).
- When class begins, provide pre-corrections to students to remind them of the behavior expectations.
- During class, provide feedback and encouragement when students are engaged in learning and modeling appropriate behaviors.
- Make personal greetings a standard part of the day, if not a school-wide practice.

Examples

Elementary students line up at the door as a part of their morning procedure before entering the classroom. The teacher stands at the door and greets each student by name. The student points to a picture on a poster the type of greeting they would like to receive each morning.

A high school teacher makes a point of greeting as many students by name as possible in a natural and authentic way.



► Pre-correction

Description

This strategy involves discussing an activity and expectations for behavior with a student immediately prior to it taking place. The language used should be simple and to the point. Gestures, pictures, and objects may be used in this effort. The student should then acknowledge that he understands the behavior expectations for the activity.

By anticipating an event mentally, especially with associated rules for behavior, the student's focus on the essential demands of the task is increased, making him less susceptible to distraction or impulsivity. The inclusion of a reward at the end of the sequence of events may provide an additional focus of attention and motivation.

Procedures

- ❑ Identify the activity to be performed and break it down in parts that can be understood by the student when described. Provide these directions to the student, or preferably the entire class, immediately prior to doing the activity. Also, provide expectations for behavior. Keep it simple. If there is a reward involved in completing the activity, indicate that as well.
- ❑ Use verbal cues and reminders related to the original directions throughout the activity, as necessary.
- ❑ Reinforce the student at the conclusion of the activity by acknowledging successful completion of the task.
- ❑ If in the course of conducting a FBA it is found that problem behaviors occur predictably in certain situations, plan to use pre-corrections for positive behavior expectations immediately prior to those situations.



Example

Immediately before leaving the classroom for recess, the early childhood classroom teacher reviews how the students are expected to walk to the door, how they should line up to return when the bell rings, and that they are to keep their hands to themselves.

► Exercise/Movement Breaks

Description

Movement or exercise breaks can be implemented as a regular part of the PBIS plan. The activity takes place at scheduled times, or on an as-needed basis, not as a consequence for inappropriate behavior.

In addition to the obvious health benefits, **regular exercise or movement can increase alertness and focus, and decrease problem behaviors.**



Procedures

- Obtain parent permission prior to instituting an exercise program or movement breaks that result in the student leaving his/her class.
- Determine the appropriate type of movement activity for the child in the context of his school program. If possible, embed movement within an educational or functional activity, such as walking to the library or delivering a message to the office.
- Set a schedule of movement breaks based upon the needs of the student and evaluate its effectiveness. Is he/she more focused upon returning? How long does the effect last? Are there fewer behavior problems?
- Determine whether movement breaks will be scheduled, used as needed, or both. Also, determine whether to allow the student to request movement breaks.

Example

Regularly scheduled activities could include walking, jogging, roller skating, swimming, use of a treadmill, rowing machine or bike, or active physical education games.

Limitations

Exercise may not be appropriate for students with known medical problems, especially those with cardiovascular, respiratory or motor impairments.

► Opportunities to Respond (OTRs)

Description

When students are given frequent opportunities to respond to instruction, they engage in the learning process and present with fewer behavioral issues (MacSuga-Gage & Simonsen, 2015). OTRs can include a variety of methods that ask students to be actively involved with the lesson. Examples include: whole group action responses (e.g., thumbs up, thumbs down, put your finger on the title), choral responding, small group/partner activities, whole group written responses, or asking students to use response cards. OTRs not only keep students engaged, but also provide the teacher with immediate formative assessment as the lesson is being taught.



Procedures

- Teacher provides students with instruction on how they are to respond to the lesson. When prompted, students are to indicate whether they understand the lesson or need more time by raising the appropriate response card.
- The teacher has a goal that she will provide an opportunity to respond at high rates (e.g., once every 2-3 minutes).
- Teacher uses the students' responses as a way to determine if the concept needs to be reviewed again, or if the class is ready to move on.
- Students in need of more assistance, based on their responses, receive small group help during the class period.

Examples

An elementary school teacher asks students to respond to the lesson at least every 3 minutes. Students engage in choral responses, "think-pair-share" exercises with a partner, and indicate with a thumbs up if they are ready to move on in the lesson.

A middle school social studies teacher finds that using response cards frequently during her instruction increases students' engagement, comprehension of the material, and decreases disruptive behavior.

► Adult Mentors

Description

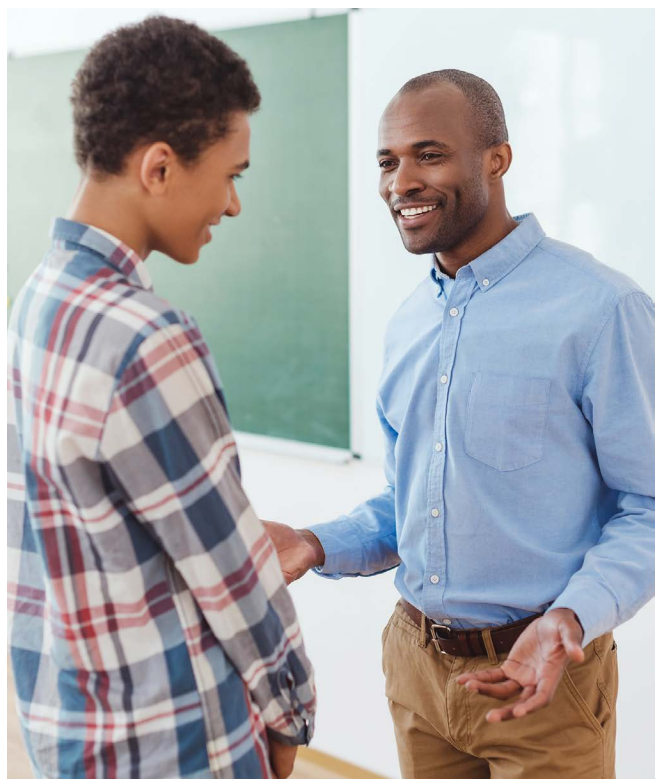
School-based adult mentors can be included in a student's behavior plan as a preventative strategy.

Students who struggle with self-esteem, motivation, and/or forming positive relationships within the school setting may benefit from having a mentor assigned to them. Mentors should be adults in the school who are available at least once per week to meet with the student for conversation or to do an activity together. Assigning a student a mentor can increase the student's level of engagement in the school and provide him with a positive role model.

Procedure

School-based mentors should be selected based on their availability to meet with the student and their willingness to participate in a mentoring program. Matching students with adults who share similar interests is preferable, though not always necessary. The adult mentor should set up a regular time during the week to meet with the student. During the mentoring time, students and mentors can talk, play a game, or do another mutually agreed upon activity together.

The primary purpose for the mentorship is for the adult mentor to develop a positive relationship and listen to the student. Mentoring is not a time to discuss disciplinary issues, unless adequate trust has been developed between the mentor and the student. The mentor can help the student set goals and provide guidance to the student. It is important that the adult mentor consistently meet with the student and let the student know if he or she is unable to follow through on a planned meeting time.



Example

A high school PBIS team identified staff members interested in mentoring a student identified as needing more support. Mentor time would last no more than 30 minutes and would take place during the student's lunch period. Several staff members volunteered to meet with students during their lunch period for conversation and activities. Academic and behavioral data for individual students was monitored to evaluate the effectiveness of the mentoring intervention.

Limitations

Parents should be made aware that their student is participating in a school-based mentorship program. A school should obtain written permission from the parent for their child to meet with the mentor on a regular basis. If any concerns about the student arise during the mentorship time, the mentor should alert the school's administration.

Part IV References

Prevention/Antecedent Interventions

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Part V: Teaching Replacement Behaviors

Problem behaviors may occur because they provide reinforcement to the student and because the student has not learned an appropriate alternative to the behavior. They are often the result of specific skill deficits. Plans based on FBA emphasize the **importance of teaching and strengthening desirable behaviors that should “replace” the problem behavior with behaviors that are “functionally equivalent” to the problem behavior.** For a replacement behavior to be considered functionally equivalent, it needs to be more efficient than the problem behavior. It should:

- Require the same or less physical effort
- Result in the same degree of reinforcement as immediately and consistently as the problem behavior

Replacement behaviors identified as part of a PBIS plan should be given high priority for instruction. Specific teaching and reinforcement procedures should be detailed so that those implementing the plan have a clear understanding of when and how instruction should occur. **Frequent teaching trials, both scheduled and incidental,** should occur so that the student’s opportunity to increase his/her proficiency is maximized. **Have as many adults as possible prompt and acknowledge the student’s use of the replacement behavior, so as to increase generalization of the skill.**



► Teaching Alternative Behaviors

Description

This approach involves **identifying and teaching essential skills** (academic, functional, social, communication, play, and leisure) **that will serve as appropriate alternatives** to a problem behavior. The more a student demonstrates a wide variety of adaptive behaviors, the more likely he/she will receive positive reinforcement, and the less need he/she will have to engage in problem behaviors.

An important part of functional assessment involves **assessing the individual's skills in critical domains**. For example, if it is found that a student's most difficult time of the day is math class, then a detailed assessment of the student's math skills, in relation to the expectations of the class, should be conducted. If the student's problem is recess, then social and play skills would receive priority for functional assessment.

This approach broadens the person's adaptive behavioral repertoire. It also respects the functional quality of the problem behavior, and provides a socially acceptable approach to replacing it.

Procedures

- Identify the problem behavior and perform a functional assessment, focusing on whether the student has the essential skills necessary for being successful in the environment where the problem is occurring.
- Evaluate whether critical skills have generalized to the environment, e.g., setting and people. For example, a student may have good conflict resolution skills in the classroom setting, but does not use those skills out of the classroom, or when the teacher is not present. Or a student may raise her hand and ask for help in the Resource Room, but does not ask for help in the regular classroom. In these situations the issue may be one of planning for generalization, more than teaching a new skill.
- Identify an appropriate skill that would serve functionally as an alternative to the problem behavior. This could include skills in the area of academics, self-care, leisure, play, or other functional adaptive skills.
- Develop a plan for teaching and reinforcing the alternative behavior. Specify the instructional cues, prompts, reinforcers, and when and where trials will occur. Plan to evaluate the student's acquisition of the skill periodically, and alter the instructional plan as necessary e.g., move from acquisition to generalization strategies.

► Social Skills Instruction

Description

Students with behavioral problems frequently lack the necessary social skills with adults and peers, for successful adjustment in school. Increasingly, educators have found that it is **necessary to teach students explicitly the social skills they will need to function in a school setting**. A number of curricula have been developed to this end, addressing the needs of a wide range of students from elementary to secondary levels.

In assessing a student's social skills deficits, it is important to distinguish between types of deficits. Gresham, Sugai, and Horner (2001) identified **three different types of social skills deficits: acquisition** (student lacks the skill), **performance** (student has the skill, but does not use it in context), and **fluency** (student knows how and wants to perform the skill, but is awkward in its performance). The authors point out that the type of intervention should depend on the type of deficit identified.

Procedures

- Conduct a Functional Behavior Assessment to identify the specific social skills deficit and type of deficit. Gresham, Sugai, & Horner (2001) stress the importance of using functional assessment technology to better match social skills instruction to a student's problem behaviors. The highest priority for social skills instruction should be given to those deficit areas that are most directly related to the student's problem behaviors.
- Develop a plan to teach and reinforce the target social skills. Strategies for teaching new social skills (acquisition) include:
 - Breaking it down into teachable parts
 - Demonstrating the behavior
 - Coaching the student through performing it
 - Repeated practice or rehearsal of the skill
 - And providing constructive feedback to the student regarding his performance
- An excellent way to teach social skills is to conduct brief lessons (10-15 minutes) with the student's entire class. This can be done as a collaboration between the teacher and a support staff, e.g., social worker. Instruction can also occur in a small group setting, or may be done
- Strategies for increasing social skills related to performance deficits involve arranging antecedents and consequences so as to increase the desired social behavior, and to decrease the competing problem behavior. These interventions would occur throughout the school day, wherever and whenever necessary to set the stage for the desired behavior to occur, and to decrease the likelihood of the problem behavior being triggered or reinforced.
- Students with fluency deficits need more practice and feedback on the desired behavior.
- Teaching social skills directly in the natural setting (e.g., classroom, playground, lunchroom) increases the likelihood that the student will actually use them in that setting. If the skills are taught to the entire class, then they are likely to be reinforced by other students.
- Gresham, et al., (2001) explain that problem behaviors will continue to be performed if they are more efficient and reliable than the desirable social skills.
 - Efficient means that the behavior produces immediate reinforcement with less effort than an inefficient behavior. For example, pushing into line may be more efficient for some students than waiting and asking politely to get into line. In this case, the behaviors of pushing and asking politely are said to be functionally equivalent behaviors, i.e., they produce the same consequences.
 - Reliable means that the behavior produces more consistent reinforcement than an unreliable behavior. (p. 340-341)
- Students with autism may benefit from social skills instruction using social stories. According to Fouse and Wheeler (1997), social stories use the visual strengths of individuals with autism to teach desired behaviors, routines, expectations, and academic skills. They can also be used to address undesirable behaviors such as aggression, fears, or compulsions.

► Functional Communication Training

Description

Functional communication training involves **teaching students the skills necessary to use appropriate communication behaviors as a replacement for problem behaviors**. Horner and Carr (1997) describe functional communication training as teaching students a specific communication response that:

- Is socially appropriate
- Produces the same effect as the problem behavior, e.g., escape for aversive situations or obtaining desired objects/activities
- And is as or more efficient than the problem behavior, i.e., requires less time, effort, or repetitions

Procedures

- Conduct a Functional Behavior Assessment to identify the conditions that trigger and maintain the problem behavior (antecedents and consequences).
- Select a communication behavior that is functionally equivalent to the problem behavior (provides the same reinforcement as the problem behavior). The communication behavior could be one that the student has in her repertoire, but does not use effectively, or could be a new skill.
- The replacement behavior should be more “efficient” than the problem behavior in terms of requiring less physical effort and it being likely to be reinforced more immediately and more consistently than the problem behavior.
- Establish a program to teach the behavior. Consider using discrete trial training and incidental teaching i.e., any naturally occurring opportunities to teach the

behavior, usually child-directed. See Discrete Trial technique. Be sure that the student has enough trials (practice) to ensure that she becomes proficient in using the behavior as rapidly as possible.

- Make sure that the functional communication behavior is taught and reinforced in all environments where the student needs to be able to communicate her need or want.
- Develop a plan for minimizing reinforcement for the problem behavior that the functional communication behavior is intended to replace.

Example

A 9-year-old boy with Autism Spectrum Disorder becomes frustrated with certain writing tasks, and “shuts down” by refusing to do the work and tearing his paper. He is taught to request assistance from the teacher by raising his hand and asking for help. The request for help is a functionally equivalent replacement behavior for “shutting down” or noncompliance, in that they both have the effect of reducing frustration with the task.



► Take a Break

Description

Break time is an opportunity for a student to calm down and/or refocus, so as to be able to return to the instructional situation ready to learn. Students may become agitated emotionally or physically for a variety of reasons. Problem behaviors often escalate as a result of this agitation. **An appropriate use of break time can prevent more severe behavior problems from occurring.** Break time is different from time-out in that its focus is to teach the student an important self-control strategy, whereas time-out is a predetermined consequence for rule-breaking behaviors. Some students may have both break-time and time-out in their PBIS plan, though these are different interventions.

Procedures

- Conduct a Functional Behavior Assessment to determine if a break time is an appropriate strategy for the student. Generally, it is appropriate for students who have difficulty with anger, explosiveness, aggression, extreme hyperactivity, or agitation.
- Identify a break area either in the classroom or outside of it, as appropriate. The area should be neutral to the student in terms of reinforcing value. It should not be confused with a reward area.
- The student should be taught how to request the use of a break (see Functional Communication Training), and should be taught exactly how to take the break time. By requesting a break the student is being allowed to escape a potentially difficult situation. This is preferable to having to remove the student from the situation after he escalates into more severe behavior. Eventually however, the student should be taught other coping behaviors, such as how to request and accept assistance.
- Although uncommon, some students may overuse the opportunity to take a break. Monitor the frequency of the intervention, so as to prevent its overuse. The initial frequency of break requesting

behaviors may be high, but may quickly decrease as the student becomes more able to use breaks as necessary and the novelty wears off. When students continue to overuse a “break” strategy after about a week of consistent implementation, usually something has been missed in the data collection and hypothesis development. The student may be more motivated to escape demands than initially determined and not enough has been put in place to help the student increase his/ her desire to perform.

- Allow the student to perform a neutral, but calming activity during the break and keep it as brief as possible.
- Use a timer to help the student understand that the break is time-limited.

Examples

Marc, a nonverbal high school student with autism, occasionally becomes explosive and may hit the staff that work with him. Marc is taught to request a break when he first starts to get agitated, using a voice output communication device, and he then goes to sit in a designated quiet area until he calms down. Marc’s teacher has taught him exactly how to make the request and what to do in the break area. He practiced this procedure about once a day when it was initially introduced, until he became familiar with it.

Jeff is a middle school student who can be defiant and explosive with his teacher, when he is corrected for minor misbehaviors. Things can escalate with Jeff quickly and unpredictably. A plan has been agreed upon whereby, if Jeff starts to get really upset and shows signs of agitation (before he curses at the teacher), he can leave the classroom and go the counselor’s office to cool down and talk, if necessary.

► Self-Management

Description

Self-management strategies **involve the student in taking responsibility for his or her behavior, including academic performance.** Using these strategies increases the student's level of independence and can be very motivating to the student. Self-management strategies can be adapted for all ages of students. The following is taken from Alberto and Troutman's (2013) chapter on teaching student's to manage their own behavior. **Three primary methods of self-management include self-recording, self-reinforcement, and self-instruction.**

Procedures

- Explain to the student what behavior resulted in reinforcement.
 - Ask the student to relate part or the entire contingency e.g., "Sam, you did 10 problems right. How many points did you earn?"
 - Involve students in choosing reinforcers and in determining their cost in terms of behavior.
 - Self-recording systems involve teaching the student to take data on his/her behavior. This may involve simply noting the occurrence or nonoccurrence of the behavior during a specific time period on an index card or simple tally sheet. A brief, clear description of the target behavior should be written on the data sheet and reviewed with the student. Students are generally honest and accurate in self-recording, if they have been trained in the system adequately. Self-recording systems can be designed to track desirable or undesirable behaviors.
- Self-recording systems can be used to provide self-reinforcement. Explain to the student what the target behavior for reinforcement is (consider asking for the student's input to the selection of the target behavior). Involve the student in selecting reinforcers and determining their cost in terms of behavior, as appropriate. Administration of reinforcers should begin under teacher control, until the student demonstrates a familiarity with the system. Eventually, students can be taught to self-administer reinforcement.
 - Self-instruction involves providing prompts for oneself to guide one's learning. The teacher demonstrates to the student, who then rehearses the following skills:
 - Problem definition ("What is it I have to do?")
 - Focus attention and guide responses ("Go slow... be careful.")
 - Self-reinforcement ("Good, I'm doing fine.")
 - Coping skills and error correction ("That's okay... even if I make an error I can go on slowly.")
 - This basic strategy has been used effectively with a wide range of children with learning disabilities, attention deficit disorder, emotional, and cognitive impairments.

Instructional Design

Procedures frequently used in the design of individualized behavior strategies include:

- Task Analysis
- Prompting
- Shaping and Fading
- Generalization and Maintenance

► Task Analysis

Description

Task analysis is a **description of the component behaviors needed to accomplish a goal behavior, given the student's current ability level.** The components are sequenced into the order in which they occur.

Breaking a task up into smaller tasks provides the learner:

- More frequent opportunities for reinforcement
- A higher probability of producing correct responses
- And decreased probability of being overwhelmed

Task analysis is necessary prior to using shaping techniques.

Procedure

To determine the sequence of steps, staff may perform the task and write down each step. Recording tasks from memory, especially those done routinely, may lead to either grouping several steps into one behavior or forgetting steps altogether.



Example Skill: Introducing yourself

1. Look at the person. Smile.
2. Use a pleasant voice.
3. Say "Hi, my name is."
4. Shake the person's hand.
5. When you leave, say, "It was nice to meet you."

► Prompting

Description

A prompt is **an additional stimulus that increases the likelihood that the student will respond correctly.** Rules, instructions, and hints are examples of verbal prompts. Visual prompts include pictures or written rules or instructions. Pointing is an example of a gesture prompt. Demonstrations and modeling are another form of prompting. Physical prompts can range from a light touch to hand over hand instruction.

In general, when using prompts:

- Remember that prompts should help focus the student's attention on the task, not distract from it.
- Use the weakest prompts necessary.
- Plan to fade prompts as soon as possible. Students can become "prompt dependent" without effective prompt fading.

Example

A small visual cue is taped to the student's desk representing a prompt, e.g., "Raise hand when I need help." The teacher can point to the visual cue as needed without requiring a verbal prompt or interrupting the lesson.

► Graduated Guidance

Description

Graduated Guidance is a technique often used with young children or students with severe disabilities in which **physical prompting is used with gradual fading until the need for physical prompting is no longer necessary**. The physical prompts are paired with verbal instructions or feedback, with reinforcement given during and after the procedure.

When a student does not display any imitation of the desired behavior, physical prompting may be necessary to begin teaching the skill. This is especially true for students who have difficulty understanding spoken language, or who have specific sensory impairments such as loss of hearing and/or vision. Some students learn best through their kinesthetic and tactile modalities. Graduated guidance has been found to be an effective teaching procedure for students who engage in problem behaviors (Demchak, 1989).

Procedure

- The object of this technique is to physically guide the student through a task with as little physical contact as is necessary to prompt him to continue it.
- The instructor should be alert to the student's muscle tone and movement initiations, and adjust the degree of physical contact accordingly, exerting more contact when the student's hands stop or move in the wrong direction.

- Verbal reinforcement is given as long as the student's hands are moving in the correct direction. Praise and verbal instruction are essential. Other forms of reinforcement (e.g., tactile) may be used with deaf-blind students. The student is also reinforced at the completion of the task.

Example

A teacher decides to teach a nonverbal student to use the manual sign for "help" to request assistance. Since the student will not imitate the sign when demonstrated, she decides to also use a graduated guidance prompt to teach the skill. Initially, she uses a complete hand over hand prompt, and reinforces the student immediately by providing praise and assistance with the task. Gradually, she fades the degree of physical assistance used, while continuing to present a gesture model for the sign.

Limitations

Some students may find physical contact very rewarding and resist self-initiation. Other students may find physical contact uncomfortable. For these students, consider consulting with an Occupational Therapist.



► Shaping and Fading

Description

Shaping is the process of **teaching goal behaviors by prompting and rewarding successive approximations of the desired behavior or skill.**

Components of a goal behavior are reinforced for the purpose of teaching the student the larger skill.

Fading is the gradual reduction of the prompts and reinforcements used to teach the behavior.

Procedures

- ❑ Identify the goal behavior. Break it into steps using task analysis.
- ❑ Select a behavior the student currently performs that is an approximation of the goal behavior.
- ❑ Provide immediate reinforcement for the student's approximation behavior. Use prompts or guidance if necessary.
- ❑ Gradually increase the demand or requirement for reinforcement, such as achievement of the next behavior on the list of approximations.
- ❑ Once the goal behavior is well established, begin to fade the reinforcement to an intermittent schedule.

Example

Shaping strategies can be used to gradually increase the amount of work a student does in one sitting, or the length of time a restless kindergartener stays at circle time.

► Generalization and Maintenance

Description

Generalization occurs when a skill or behavior learned in a specific setting, such as school, occurs in a different setting, such as home. The ultimate goal of instruction is for students to transfer the skills they have acquired at school to home and community settings. Generalization of behaviors can occur across environments, people, or other stimuli; or it can occur over time, after planned instruction has ended (maintenance).

Strategies to increase the likelihood of generalization

- Teach or modify the behavior in the setting where it is needed.
- Sequential modification involves modifying the behavior in one setting, and then evaluating whether the improvement generalized to other settings. If necessary, plan to modify the behavior in those other settings. For example, a token system is established for a student in the Resource Room to help reduce disruptive behaviors. It is effective there, but the student still has disruptive behaviors in Art Class. The token system is then implemented in the Art class to help decrease disruptive behaviors in that setting.
- Use many different examples of the same kind of instruction. For example, in teaching greeting responses to a student, a few different adults should plan to greet the child throughout the day.
- Increase the student's proficiency in the behavior through extensive practice. Schedule ample opportunities throughout the day for the student to practice the behavior.
- Teach the behavior in multiple settings, e.g., different classrooms, hallways, playground, and home.

- Use common stimuli. For example, a visual schedule of the student's classes is used in 1st hour homeroom to help get him organized and ready for the day. The student takes this portable device (the schedule) with him to other classes to help remind him of his routine throughout the day.
- Training loosely involves deliberately incorporating diverse stimuli in instructional situations. This may also involve teaching skills concurrently (e.g., teaching communication skills within the context of academic or self-care instruction), and reinforcing the spontaneous occurrence of the target behaviors.
- Teach self-monitoring and self-reinforcement. See Self-Management technique.

► Discrete Trial Instruction

Description

Discrete trial instruction is **a structured, behavioral procedure for teaching a variety of skills, including direction following**. The following is taken from a description by Anderson, et. al. (1996) of the use of discrete trial methodology with young children with autism. Discrete trial methods can be used in direct instruction (individualized training), activity-based instruction, and incidental teaching.

Procedure

1. Giving Instructions

- Before giving the instruction, get the child's attention by saying the child's name, making eye contact, or touching the child.
- Phrase the instruction as a statement (not a question) clearly and concisely, and give it only once e.g., "Bob, open your book to page one." As opposed to: "Bob, quit playing with you pencil. Are you ready to work? Get out your book and open to the first page."

- Initially, keep the wording of the instruction the same. After the child demonstrates an understanding of the instruction, vary the wording to encourage generalization of the direction following skill.

2. Child's Response

- In general, allow 3-5 seconds for the child to start his response.
- The child may respond in one of three ways: correctly, incorrectly (including avoidance behaviors such as attempting to leave), or not at all.

3. Consequences (Adult's Response)

- For correct responses provide immediate reinforcement i.e., enthusiastic praise in combination with identified reinforcers such as stickers, high fives, tokens, etc.
- For incorrect or no response provide mild verbal correction (e.g., "Wrong") or repeat the instruction and physically guide the child to respond correctly.
- Do not repeat the instruction or prompts several times as this may teach the child he does not have to respond the first time you ask.
- Less enthusiastic praise can be given during the correction trial. After the child demonstrates an understanding of what he is being asked to do, reserve reinforcement only for correct responses that occur following the first request.

4. Between-Trials Interval

- An interval of 3-5 seconds will help the child understand that one instruction has ended and a new one is being given.
- Begin each new instruction by gaining the child's attention

Part V References

Teaching Replacement Behaviors/Social Skills Instruction

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Part VI: Positive Reinforcement Strategies

Designing an Individualized Plan of Positive Reinforcement

Positive reinforcement is the presentation of an event that follows a behavior, which has the effect of increasing the frequency, duration, and/or intensity of that behavior over a period of time.

John Maag (2001) points out that,

Reinforcement and punishment are naturally occurring phenomena—all behaviors are followed by certain consequences. If a behavior increased, then the consequence functioned as a reinforcer; if a behavior decreased, then the consequence functioned as a punisher. (p. 180)

Maag (2001) makes the following recommendations for using positive reinforcement in the classroom.

1. “Catching students being good” is one of the easiest and most effective ways of dealing with students with problem behaviors. He says that many teachers don’t use positive attention more often because they believe that students “should” behave well, therefore only give them attention for inappropriate behaviors. He says that this belief is a prescription for failure and frustration, especially when working with students with behavior problems. Maag says that as a general rule, the second time a teacher gives a student a verbal warning should be a cue for that teacher to start “catching them being good.” He points out that teachers only have to catch students being good occasionally because intermittent reinforcement can maintain high rates of

desirable behaviors. In contrast, punishment is most effective when delivered continuously.

2. Think small. Plan to reinforce small units of behavior.
3. Use a group management plan of positive reinforcement for the entire class. These systems maintain high rates of appropriate behaviors for the entire class, and make it easier to implement individualized systems of reinforcement. Maag refers to Rhode et al. (1995) for ideas for classroom reward systems.
4. Use preventative strategies such as establishing clear rules and specifying rewards for displaying appropriate behaviors. Keep students academically engaged. Keep students with behavior problems away from each other. Walk around the room frequently to reinforce students in subtle ways. Maag points out those natural human behaviors of eye contact, smiles, kind words, physical proximity, and social interaction have powerful reinforcing value. Think about the 4 to 1 ratio of positive teacher attention to corrections for problem behavior used within systems of school-wide positive behavior support.
5. Use peer influence favorably. Be aware that the attention of peers may be more powerful than a punishment the teacher can deliver. Group management plans can help with using peer influence effectively.

► Identify Target Behaviors

While all students need acknowledgment and/or reinforcement for a wide range of academic, social, and life skill behaviors, the use of positive reinforcement in a behavior intervention plan is **focused on increasing critical replacement behaviors that should directly result in a decrease in problem behaviors.**

Developing a plan of positive reinforcement first involves identifying the specific behavior(s) to be taught and/or strengthened. Refer to the results of the FBA to identify the target replacement behaviors or alternative behaviors. Operationally define the replacement behaviors. For example, in the FBA it might have been found that the student needed to learn how and when to gain the assistance of an adult. In developing the behavioral strategies however, the intervention team concludes that the specific behaviors for requesting adult assistance will differ depending on whether the student is in the classroom or on the playground. The target replacement behavior in the classroom involves raising his hand and waiting to be called on, whereas on the playground it involves finding the right adult and walking to that person.

► Choosing Reinforcers



Choosing a reinforcer and determining how and when it will be used will affect the ultimate success or failure of a behavior intervention plan. Students who have learned how to gain control of powerful reinforcers in their environment by engaging in problem behaviors, may require careful analysis and a coordinated effort between school and home to **ensure that only appropriate behaviors receive positive reinforcement.** This can be easier said than done, especially with older students, or in situations in which adults have less ability to control the student's access to reinforcers. If a student is demonstrating frequent problem behavior, the intervention team should look closely at current reinforcement patterns using functional behavior assessment.

After identifying the specific behavior(s) targeted for planned positive reinforcement, the team should determine the types of reinforcement to be used and the schedules for providing it. For example, the target behavior might be following directions during the first 35 minutes of math class to be reinforced by a break, during which students can do an activity of their choice. Additionally, the teacher might provide the individual student with positive attention about every 10 minutes during the class, immediately after he has been observed to follow directions. Positive attention reinforcers could include acknowledgments such as, "thanks," a smile, thumbs up, etc. In this case, the behavior of following directions in math class is on two schedules of reinforcement, using two different types of reinforcers. Each of these schedules could be altered over time, as necessary.

► Types of Reinforcers

Reinforcer Type	Description
Positive Teacher Attention	<p>The best type of reinforcer is one that is readily available and appropriate to the environment, easy to deliver, can be controlled by the teacher, and which is powerful to the student. High rates of teacher praise have been associated with increased engagement of students at risk for emotional and behavioral disorders (Downs, et al. 2019). Positive teacher attention usually meets all of these criteria.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Praise emphasizes social approval. “You have pleased me by what you did.” • Recognition is feedback to the individual that emphasizes the advantage of the behavior to that individual or others. It is more likely to foster independence and self-direction. • Positive attention helps establish a relationship or rapport. It communicates to the student a caring and respectful attitude. Examples include asking a question unrelated to schoolwork, a personal greeting, or a smile. • Positive attention indicates to the student that she is noticed and valued.
Edibles	Drinks, fruit, snack, etc.
Tangible	Pencils, pens, markers, toys, gadgets, sports items, books, puzzles, electronics, etc.
Sensory	Music, hand lotion, swinging, movement, etc.
Activity	Drawing, coloring, making things, taking care of a class pet, watching a video, computer time, free time, extra gym or recess, reading, etc.
Social	Socializing with friends, helping teacher, tutoring another student, being a leader in class, spending time with principal or favorite adult, etc.
Leisure	Playing sports, playing an instrument, listening to music, hobbies, etc.
Secondary	Tokens, points, or money used to buy other types of reinforcers

Several methods can be used to identify potential reinforcers for an individual student.

If a positive reinforcement intervention appears to be ineffective, the behavior intervention team should evaluate the appropriateness of the reinforcers being used. Be prepared to make adjustments in the selection of rewards.



► Schedules of Reinforcement

Another potential problem is having an inadequate schedule of positive reinforcement. Replacement behaviors can remain weak if they are not reinforced with enough immediacy or consistency. **The foundation of most successful classroom management systems is a high ratio (at least 4 to 1) of reinforcement (e.g., positive teacher attention) to corrections or reprimands.** In determining the schedule of reinforcement for an individual student, some assessment of existing ratios (schedules) should occur. Generally, plan to increase the frequency of that schedule. This may involve scheduling more opportunities for reinforcement to occur throughout the school day e.g., every period, twice per day, once per day, etc.

The student may require many opportunities for teaching, prompting, and/or reinforcement of the target replacement behaviors in the process of acquiring the skill. He may also require more than one reinforcer. For example, both tangibles and praise could be used initially, with the tangibles faded after the behavior is strengthened. Eventually, the behavior should be maintained by intermittent (occasional) reinforcement, or by that which occurs naturally in the environment. In general, have a plan from the outset for fading the reinforcement schedule to more naturally occurring schedules.

The following are some examples of reinforcement schedules.

Reinforcer Schedule	Description
Continuous	Reinforcement is delivered after every occurrence of the target behavior. This should be used when teaching a new behavior.
Intermittent	Less frequent reinforcement is used to maintain and strengthen appropriate behaviors once they have been established through the use of continuous reinforcement.
Fixed Interval (FI)	Reinforcement is delivered following the behavior, after a specified interval of time e.g., 15 minutes.
Variable Interval (VI)	Reinforcement is delivered following the behavior after the passage of varying intervals of time around a specified average. For example, the student is reinforced approximately every 30 minutes after he displays appropriate work behavior.
Fixed Ratio (FR)	Reinforcement is delivered after a specified number of responses. For example, the student receives a break after completing 25 package assemblies.
Variable Ratio (VR)	Reinforcement is delivered after a specified average number of responses. For example, a student may receive verbal recognition after completing an average of three questions in his workbook, with a range of one to five questions.

In the event that a student exhibits some inappropriate behavior just prior to his scheduled positive reinforcement, withhold the reinforcer for a short time (e.g., 1 minute), so as not to reinforce the inappropriate behavior.

► Negative Reinforcement

Not to be confused with punishment, which has the effect of decreasing behavior, negative reinforcement **increases the frequency of a behavior due to the removal of an unpleasant stimulus immediately following the behavior.** When a child's whining or tantrum behaviors lead to the removal of a parent's demand to do homework, the tantrum behaviors have been negatively reinforced. That is, they are more likely to occur in the future when the child is expected to do homework. Negative reinforcement can result in the strengthening of undesirable behaviors, but can also result in increases in desirable behavior.

A teacher uses negative reinforcement to increase a desired behavior when he tells the group that there will be no homework for those that behave themselves in class. Avoiding a negative experience (homework) served to increase a desirable behavior in class. In terms of functional behavior assessment, this is called escape or avoidance motivated behavior. [\(See Teaching Replacement Behaviors.\)](#)



► Check In/Check Out

Description

Check In/Check Out (CICO) is an evidence-based Tier 2 intervention that is successful with 75% of students who need Tier 2 interventions. CICO **provides frequent, structured feedback to students regarding their behavior throughout the school day and aligns with school-wide PBIS expectations of Respect, Responsibility, and Safety.** CICO incorporates all the essential components of a simple behavior plan: a review of behavioral expectations, positive reinforcement, corrective feedback, data collection, and regular home-school communication. While CICO can be a stand-alone Tier 2 intervention for students, it is also effective as a foundational component of a more complex behavior plan. CICO provides a systematic method for data collection that supports the overall behavior plan and indicates to a student's team the amount of behavioral progress he is making.

For additional resources for implementation of CICO, see the [Wayne RESA PIBS webpage](#).

The form is titled "Check In-Check Out Point Sheet". It includes a "Student Name:" field, a "Date:" field, and a "Goals:" section with a legend: 2=Great Job!, 1=So So, 0=Goal Not Met. The main table has columns for "Targeted Behaviors", "Reading", "Math", "Open", "PE/Music", and "Science". Each cell in the table contains a 2-1-0 grid. Below the table is a "Parent Signature:" line. A small box in the top right corner contains fields for "Points Possible:", "Points Received:", "Percentage of Points:", and "Goal Met:".

Targeted Behaviors	Reading	Math	Open	PE/Music	Science
Respectful	2 1 0	2 1 0	2 1 0	2 1 0	2 1 0
Responsible	2 1 0	2 1 0	2 1 0	2 1 0	2 1 0
Safe	2 1 0	2 1 0	2 1 0	2 1 0	2 1 0

CICO Daily Cycle

Morning

- Quick check in with adult upon arrival
- Greet and acknowledge student for checking in
- Check preparation for the day
 - Materials and supplies
 - Attitude
- Turn in previous day's signed card
- Pick up day's card
- Reminders for appropriate behavior/review expectations

Throughout the Day

- Student brings card to teacher in each class period and any supervised setting
- Teacher acknowledges student for checking in
- Teacher rates and provides feedback

End of the Day

- Check out with adult at end of the day
- Review day's points and goals; collect graph data
- Adult acknowledges and/or encourages
- Take card home for parent signature

Parents

- Give card to parent. Parent acknowledges and encourages for next time
- Parent signs card
- Student returns signed next day
- Adult enters daily point data

Parent Involvement

- Get permission
- Get buy-in
- Coach parents on how to review the point sheet with their child— keep it positive and encouraging

► Token Economy

Description

This is a procedure whereby **certain items**, such as poker chips, pennies, fake money, points, or check marks, **are given to students for specific, appropriate behavior(s). The student then exchanges her tokens for a back-up reinforcer**, usually high preference items or activities. Tokens take on the properties of generalized reinforcers, and this eliminates many of the problems associated with temporary satiation with a reinforcer. Token systems may be used effectively with individuals or groups of students.

Token economies should be tailored to the functioning level of the students, and should fit with the classroom situation. Some students may need to be trained in the use of the token system. The success of the program will depend heavily on the desirability of the back-up reinforcers and the interval between exchanges. Tokens should be portable, durable, and easy to handle.

- Provide the token to the student immediately after the behavior occurs or on a designated schedule e.g., at the end of every class period. Pair giving the token with social reinforcement, i.e., tell the student why he has earned the token.
- Ensure that the token system travels with the student throughout the school day. Each staff member working with the student should be trained on the token system is implemented.
- In general, when a token system is designed as a behavioral intervention it should gradually be faded out when the objective has been accomplished, and control shifted to the delivery of natural consequences.
- Once tokens are given to the student they should not be taken away unless the plan specifically calls for token fines.

Procedure

- Determine the target behaviors to be increased e.g., task completion, following class rules.
- Determine the value of the token in relation to the back-up reinforcers. Develop a menu of reward options from which the student(s) may choose. Different reward items may be assigned different values. Use a visual display of reward options.
- Determine the schedule for accessing the back-up reinforcers. Younger students, or students with more frequent behavioral problems, may require more frequent exchanges e.g., 4-5 times per day. The goal is to gradually lengthen the time between exchanges (i.e., once per day, week, or month) as the student's behavior improves.

I Am Working For

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► Contracting

Description

A behavioral contract is **an agreement between the student and others** (e.g., teacher, parent) **that describes reinforcement to be provided to the student for achieving identified goals or accomplishments.** Contracts are negotiated between the parties involved, and should be as simple as possible. While some contracts may appropriately include consequences, the primary purpose of a contract is to promote positive behaviors. The use of consequences should be individualized i.e., they shouldn't simply restate the classroom management plan or school code of conduct.

A contract would typically be a subset of a behavior intervention plan, and would be signed by the student, as well as other parties involved in implementing the contract.



Description

Steps in Developing a Contract

1. Identify target behaviors, e.g., completing assignments. Initially, plan to reward small approximations of behavior. Set the student up for success.
2. Negotiate a list of reinforcers that are easy to deliver and inexpensive. In negotiating reinforcers with the student, be open to a wide variety of options that might be available at home or school. Use bonus clauses for exceptional performance. Specify individualized consequences, if appropriate.
3. Set a timeline for earning rewards, usually daily, weekly or bi-weekly. Set a start date and schedule for renegotiation.
4. Write the contract in positive terms and have all parties sign it.
5. Contracts should be negotiated and should be fair to both parties.
6. Keep a record of the student's performance. Review it daily with the student.
7. Fade out written contracts after new patterns of behavior and reinforcement have been established.

Part VI References

Positive Reinforcement

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Part VII: Responding to Problem Behavior

Essentials

Planned consequences in a behavior intervention plan should:

- Make problem behaviors less useful
- Increase predictability for the student and staff
- Be instructional and teach responsibility
- Keep everyone safe
- Respect the dignity of others

A planned response or consequence to problem behavior should reduce or eliminate the reinforcement the student receives for the behavior, resulting in a weakening of the problem behavior.

Consequences should be **designed so as to be humane, respectful, and effective** in reducing the problem behavior. They should minimize the disruption to the classroom or school environment, and should be the least restrictive to the student.

When a student is experiencing behavioral problems it is important to ensure that he has been explicitly taught the behavioral expectations and rules. It may be necessary to re-teach specific expectations and let the student know that you will be monitoring his/her behavior. Re-teaching expectations can be done with the individual student, or the entire class.

It is important to teach consequence procedures, e.g., how to take a time-out appropriately. If appropriate, use demonstration and role-playing, and provide practice for students in teaching them the behaviors that are expected in school.

If possible, it is best to intervene early in the typical sequence of problem behavior; do not wait until it escalates to use an effective intervention. For example, if the teacher observes the student becoming agitated and frustrated with a task, intervention should occur at that point (e.g., prompt the student to request assistance or take a break), before the becomes explosive, if it is known that is what is likely to happen without intervention.

Having an agreed upon procedure for responding to problem behaviors creates consistency for the student across environments and various adults with whom he/she interacts. It reduces the likelihood that someone will inadvertently reinforce the problem behavior.

Consequence procedures include techniques such as corrective feedback, extinction, redirection, time-out, and privilege loss. There are many ways of implementing these techniques and the manner in which they are designed for the particular student in the context of his/her school setting will greatly determine their effectiveness. If necessary, get the assistance of a person experienced in designing behavioral strategies in school settings.

Degree of Restrictiveness

All students have a right to education and behavioral intervention that is free from the use of unnecessarily restrictive procedures. **The criteria for selection of an intervention requires that the least restrictive means be used, provided that it affords protection to the student and others, and that it is likely to achieve the desired result.** The planned consequences and safety procedures described in the following section are arranged by degree of restrictiveness.

Non-Restrictive Techniques NR

A PBIS Plan may be developed, but is not necessary to implement these techniques.

► Simple Correction NR

Description

Correction is most effective when adults are **consistent** in their response to student behaviors and when students receive **more positive attention for desired behaviors than correction** for unacceptable behaviors. See [Positive Reinforcement](#) technique.

Procedures

Jenson & Reavis (1996) summarized 10 ways to increase direction following by using precision requests.

1. Direct requests are more effective than questions. For example, "Would you stop teasing?" is less effective than "I need you to stop teasing."
2. Make the request up close (one desk away), not from across the classroom.
3. Make eye contact. Ask the child to look into your eyes. (This may not be appropriate for students with autism.)
4. Only give the same request twice. Don't nag. Have preplanned back up consequences.
5. Use a soft but firm voice. Don't yell, cajole, plead, or humor.
6. Give the student time to comply. Don't keep talking.
7. Use start requests, more than stop requests. For example, "Please start your arithmetic assignment," is more effective than, "Stop wasting time."

8. Control negative emotions. Use non-emotional requests. Yelling, name-calling, showing anger, or sarcasm can decrease compliance and make the situation worse.
9. Use descriptive, specific requests.
10. Reinforce compliance when it occurs, e.g., "Thank you for doing that right away." Don't ignore the positive result.

Adult Behaviors That Add to Power Struggles

- Responding quickly
- Trying to convince
- Threatening
- Increasing consequences
- Having the interaction in the presence of others
- Remaining in the interaction too long
- Getting angry, being sarcastic
- Putting the student down

Adult Behaviors That Reduce Power Struggles

- Simple directive, choices
- Predetermined consequences
- Listening
- Being brief and direct
- Private discussion
- Walking away
- Conveying calmness: lower your voice, strategic pause, sitting down next to the student as opposed to standing over.
- Validate and label the student's emotions (e.g., "Linda, you seem angry/frustrated/annoyed, tell me what's going on.")

► Corrective Feedback (with Empathy) **NR**

Description

This procedure requires that the student **practice an appropriate behavior following the occurrence of an inappropriate behavior**, i.e., “Let’s try that the right way.” It has an educational function for the student regarding appropriate behavior expectations. The ultimate objective is that the student would incorporate the appropriate behavior into his typical behavior patterns.

Procedures

- The student’s inappropriate behavior is interrupted and identified, e.g., “Joey, stop; that was a disrespectful thing to say.”
- State the positive expectation: “In our class, we speak respectfully to each other.”
- Have the student practice. Joey practices saying it the right way.
- Teacher acknowledges the correction: “Thanks, Joey.”
- Why with empathy? Providing an empathic statement immediately prior to a corrective feedback reduces the likelihood of a power struggle and may make the student more open to correction. For example, “Lauren, I can see you are pretty upset, but leaving the room without permission is not safe. What else could you have done?”

In general, corrective feedback should be used for target behaviors in which the student has previously demonstrated competence. If the appropriate behavior is not performed correctly after two or three trials in a single episode, then other techniques may need to be considered.

Physical force should not be used to implement this technique.



Examples

A student deliberately slams a door shut when leaving the room. The student is brought back into the room and instructed to walk out and close the door properly.

A young man walks by another student and touches him in a teasing manner. The student is required to retrace his steps with his hands to himself.

A student speaks rudely to the cashier in the cafeteria, demanding a certain food item. She is corrected and required to ask politely.

► Restitution/ Restorative Practice **NR**

Description

Restitution requires that the **student take actions that correct the results of his/her problem behavior**. The student must return the environment to the same state it was in before the behavior. For example, the student who breaks a window must pay for a new one; the student who makes a mess must clean it up. Restitution is a good example of a logical consequence, where the punishment “fits the crime.”

Social restitution involves making amends or trying to correct emotional harm to another caused by the problem behavior. Restitution promotes self-discipline and learning to take responsibility for one’s actions. Making restitution is an important life skill that should be taught from a young age on through adulthood.

In a study of the perceptions of high school students assigned to community/court schools for disciplinary problems, restitution as a disciplinary procedure was viewed as more effective than suspension, which was perceived as ineffective in reducing recidivism (Houck, 2000).



Procedures

- Generally, with a student who is upset at the time of the disruption, it is best to implement a time-out or “break” consequence first, to allow the person time to calm down and reflect on his actions, prior to implementing restitution.
- Restitution with young children or those with limited language ability may require the teacher to coach the student through the entire process. For example, a child who hurt another child may need to be provided with the words to apologize and encouraged to shake hands with the other child.
- Older students should be more involved in determining the specific form of restitution for their behavior. Apologies may still be appropriate, but the student may need assistance from an adult in understanding how they have harmed others, and possible options for providing restitution.
- If appropriate, compensation for the misbehavior should be provided. This could involve a direct correction of the problem e.g., paint over graffiti or pay back stolen money. It could also involve additional compensation, such as work hours at home, at school, or community service.
- Participants in a restorative conference may determine that restitution is the appropriate manner to “restore the harm” that was caused by a student.

► Redirection **NR**

Description

Redirection **attempts to shift the focus of the student's attention from a negative interaction to a positive behavior.**

Procedures

- ❑ Ignore the problem behavior (or interrupt it) and direct the student to something you know he or she is more likely to do or comply with e.g., a more interesting task.
- ❑ Use behavioral momentum. Get the student started on the activity and give positive feedback to his or her initial efforts. Provide increased assistance to get the student started, if necessary. Plan to reward the student for compliance to the redirection.
- ❑ A possible risk associated with redirection can be reinforcement of negative behaviors. Consider redirection to a less rewarding or neutral activity if the problem behavior from which the student is being redirected continues or increases in frequency. The activity may be considered neutral if it is not difficult (the student can do it independently), but it is also not highly reinforcing (it should not be a reward activity). The neutral activity should have the effect of helping the student calm and refocus, if necessary. Once the student has completed the neutral activity, simply redirect him to the original task or the next scheduled activity.

► Extinction/Reduction of Reinforcement **NR**

Description

Extinction is the **withholding of reinforcement for a behavior** that was previously reinforced for the purpose of reducing the occurrence of the behavior.

Procedures

- ❑ It is first necessary to conduct a FBA to determine the reinforcer(s) maintaining the behavior, e.g., escape from demand, seeking attention or something in the environment, or some kind of sensory stimulation.
- ❑ Next, plan to make that reinforcer unavailable to the student after the behavior. For example, if the FBA suggests that the student is being disruptive to gain adult attention, plan to ignore the student when he engages in the behavior.
- ❑ Plan to give the student the reinforcer (e.g., your attention) frequently when he is engaging in appropriate behaviors. Plan to teach the student alternative or functionally equivalent behaviors to gain the reinforcer he is currently obtaining through problem behavior.
- ❑ It is important that all people throughout the student's day carry out the extinction procedure, or else the problem behavior may be strengthened by intermittent reinforcement.
- ❑ The use of extinction may result in an initial increase in the problem behavior as the student increases his or her attempts to gain the reinforcement that used to be available for the behavior (extinction burst).
- ❑ Do not use extinction for behaviors that are dangerous, potentially dangerous, or disruptive to the school environment.

► Differential Reinforcement NR

Description

Differential reinforcement uses positive reinforcement to decrease inappropriate behaviors.

Differential Reinforcement for Other Behaviors (DRO)

DRO involves using **positive reinforcement for the absence of inappropriate behavior during a specified interval of time**, e.g., a student receives points for not talking out during the class period. To determine how frequently to provide the reinforcement, measure how frequently the behavior occurs, e.g., every 30 minutes on average. Then plan to reinforce the student twice as frequently for the behavior not occurring, i.e., every 15 minutes without displaying the behavior.

DRO should generally be accompanied by an acquisition technique designed to teach the student appropriate alternative behaviors.

Differential Reinforcement of Alternative Behaviors (DRA)

There are two types of DRA:

- **Differential Reinforcement of Incompatible Behavior (DRI) involves reinforcing a behavior that is physically incompatible with the target behavior.** For example, DRI might be used to reinforce appropriate toy play in a child with autism who repetitively flaps his hands. He cannot hand flap and play with the toys at the same time, so the hand-flapping is reduced by way of increasing his toy play.
- DRA also involves **positive reinforcement for a behavior that is a functional equivalent to the problem behavior.** A functional equivalent is not necessarily physically incompatible with the problem behavior, but it accesses the same reinforcer as the problem behavior for the student. For example, each time Bob blurts out something to get the

teacher's attention he is redirected to raise his hand. He is then reinforced by being called on, and given positive attention by the teacher. The goal is to reduce blurting out by reinforcing hand raising.

Procedures

The alternative behavior selected for reinforcement should be more efficient than the problem behavior in gaining what it is that the child wants.

- Generally, it should be a behavior the student already knows how to perform.
- Make sure that it serves the same function as the problem behavior.
- It should require less effort than the problem behavior and receive as immediate payoff or reinforcement.

Example

Sarah is a preschooler with an expressive language delay who grabs toys from other children during free play. Her teacher uses DRA by redirecting her when she does this, to "use her words" to ask for the toy from her classmate. Her teacher then facilitates Sarah being reinforced for appropriate asking.



► Non-Exclusionary Time-Out **NR**

Description

Time-out is defined as the **loss of positive reinforcement for a specified period of time following a problem behavior**. In order for time-out to be effective, the classroom must be a place where the student receives a high level of instructional engagement and plenty of positive reinforcement.

There are several types of time-out ranging in degrees of restrictiveness. Use the least restrictive form of time-out that is appropriate to the classroom/school situation and likely to be effective with the student. Non-exclusionary time-out and contingent observation time-out are examples of classroom time-out.

Non-exclusionary time-out involves the student losing reinforcers for a short period of time, usually for minor disturbances. Here are some examples:

- Students are told to put their heads on their desks for two minutes.
- A student is required to sit quietly at her desk for three minutes.
- Student loses access to a certain object or activity for a period of time.



Contingent observation time-out involves having the student sit apart from the group (e.g., a chair to the side of the room), but able to observe others in the class.

Duration of contingent observation time-out should be brief. Follow the procedures described below.

Procedures

In using any form of time-out, there are several important elements to consider.

- Teach behavioral expectations and rules. Teach the consequences for following the rules (rewards) and for choosing not to follow the rules.
- Establish an identified place for time-out. Keep it free from distractions. Time-out should be boring. Locate it somewhere that allows easy monitoring.
- Teach the proper procedure for going to time-out, what to do while there, and what to do when it is over. Establish rules of time-out e.g., stay seated, be quiet, and hands to self. Post these rules in the time-out area.
- Time-outs should be used for more significant rule-breaking behaviors e.g., minor aggression, disruptiveness (attention-seeking), or defiant behaviors. Generally, time-out should not be used for work avoidance or escape motivated behaviors, because it may reinforce the problem behavior. The use of time-out should be based upon an appropriate FBA.
- Give directives briefly and calmly. State the rule that was broken and the consequence e.g., "The rule is we keep our hands to ourselves, no hitting. Take a time-out."
- When time-out is over, simply redirect the student back to his scheduled routine.
- Keep it brief, generally 2-5 minutes for classroom time-outs. Brief classroom time-outs provide an immediate consequence for problematic behavior, and if implemented correctly allow the student to rejoin the class and resume his schedule in a relatively short

period of time. Visual timers can be very effective in focusing the student's attention and to signal the end of the time-out period.

- Generally, ignore minor disruptions or attention-seeking behaviors in time-out. For example, if the student stays in the time-out chair, but makes some sounds while there, ignore the sounds and carry on. If the student's disruptive behaviors can't be ignored, it may be necessary to use a back-up consequence.

Some students, especially younger children, may have difficulty accepting consequences such as time-out and will escalate their problem behavior in order to avoid the consequence. It may be necessary to take a gradual approach to teaching the student how to


accept consequences for his behavior, e.g., use shaping techniques to reinforce approximations of compliance with time-out.

Variations on time-out include having students complete a writing task or "think sheets" (What did I do wrong? What can I do differently the next time?). Restorative questions may also be incorporated into a think sheet (What happened? What were you thinking about at the time? Who was affected? What do you need to do to make things right?) These procedures generally take a little more time than contingent observation time-out.

Data Collection


The frequency and duration of time-out should be documented and monitored when used as part of a behavior intervention plan.


Keidan Center Think Sheet





Name: _____


I am feeling:


Mad



Sad



Scared



Happy



Embarrassed


I chose to: _____ **I could have:** _____



fight



bully

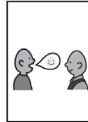

push

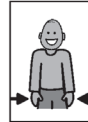

hit



scratch


yell


told an adult


apologized


kept hands to self


used an inside voice/quietly

Did I apologize? Yes No

Do I need to apologize? Yes No

Student's Signature

Teacher's Signature

Parent/Guardian's Signature

► Privilege Loss/ Response Cost **NR**

Description

This is a procedure in which a **reinforcer is taken away from the student contingent upon the occurrence of a target behavior**. This may involve the loss of a privilege, points, or tokens.

Procedures

- Define the target behavior in observable terms.
- Identify the reinforcer that may be lost. The simplest form of response cost is loss of a privilege. It is important to not have the student lose all opportunities for reinforcement. Consider subtracting portions of time lost as a consequence for the target behavior, e.g., five minutes off recess.
- Loss of points or tokens involves establishing a point system or token economy for positive reinforcement of desired behaviors. Points and tokens are secondary reinforcers i.e., they acquire value to the student because they are associated with buying favored items or activities. Points and tokens are provided to the student throughout the school day in order to reinforce a variety of behaviors e.g., work completion, punctuality, following classroom rules, appropriate social behaviors, etc. Response cost can involve the loss of some previously earned points or tokens as a consequence for problem behavior.
- Prior to implementing response cost identify the amount of reinforcement that will be removed contingent upon the targeted response. Be sure to choose an amount that will effectively reduce the likelihood of the person's repeating the target behavior, without eliminating all motivation to continue to behave appropriately.

- Consider a hierarchy of costs, with more serious rule violations resulting in greater loss than minor infractions.
- Removal of the reinforcer should occur as a consequence for inappropriate behavior. The student should receive an explanation of why the privilege was lost.
- Response cost procedures should be closely monitored in order to prevent overuse. With a student who engages in many inappropriate behaviors, the possibility exists of removing too many reinforcers, thus creating a generally negative environment for the student.
- Careful consideration should be given not to withdraw activities or privileges that would adversely affect the student, given the nature of his/her disability, e.g., excessive loss of recess for a student with ADHD.

Data Collection

Document the frequency of response cost procedures so as to monitor the effectiveness of the strategy.

Example

A student pushes another student to get ahead in the lunch line. He loses five minutes of reward time at the end of the day.



► Home-Based Consequences NR

Description

Home-based consequences can be written into a behavior plan or a simple home-school plan for more significant infractions in school, e.g., physical aggression, major disruption.

In order to implement home-based consequences, the **parent identifies an appropriate consequence** (e.g., privilege loss for the evening, loss of technology time) **that he or she can reliably institute after a problem behavior occurs at school**. The student should sense that something is “different” about the evening at home as related to his privileges. It is important for the school staff and the parent to communicate to the student that the privilege loss at home is a direct result of the student’s behavior demonstrated at school that day. Home-based consequences, when implemented correctly, can be an effective alternative to suspension.



Procedure

- The home-based consequence plan is written into the student’s behavior plan and agreed upon by the parent.
- The school may need to assist the parent in identifying safe, appropriate home-based consequences such as the loss of a privilege.
- The parent is notified by the school when a behavior infraction has occurred that should result in a home-based consequence.
- The school ensures that the home-based consequence is implemented and monitors the plan to evaluate effectiveness.

Example

An elementary student demonstrates repeated defiance with teacher directions throughout the school day. Per the student’s behavior plan, repeated defiance results in a communication with the student’s parent and a privilege loss at home for the evening. The student loses access to or has reduced screen time minutes on his/her iPad.

Moderately Restrictive Techniques MR

It is recommended that the use of these techniques be included in a PBIS Plan and developed in collaboration with the parent/guardian.

These plans should be reviewed on at least a quarterly basis.

► Physical Response Interruption MR

Description

Some students exhibit behaviors that are physically dangerous to themselves or others, or that are highly disruptive, which may require a brief physical interruption. Physical response interruption is a **brief blocking or restriction of movement for the purpose of providing safety to the student and/or others.**

The purpose is not to create an uncomfortable or aversive situation for the student, but rather to provide safety, correct a specific student behavior and set the stage for learning new behaviors.

Procedures

- This technique involves a brief physical contact with the student, in which the instructor either blocks or holds the student.
- It may be necessary in some cases to carry out repeated interruptions. Verbal directives should always be considered for use in conjunction with this technique so that physical prompts can be faded and replaced by verbal directives.
- Interruption is followed by redirection to a desirable behavior.
- This technique may not be appropriate for those students who have severe negative reactions to physical contact.



Examples

While playing a table game with another student, George, a fourth-grade student with autism, becomes frustrated and begins to strike his face repeatedly. An instructor says “Relax, George” while she holds his hands down for a few seconds, before redirecting him to the game.

A fourth-grade student with emotional impairment is exhibiting unsafe and highly disruptive behavior, climbing on cabinets, tipping furniture, and throwing teaching materials across the room. Teaching staff use de-escalation strategies, including physically taking him down off the cabinets and holding his hands, while escorting him out of the classroom to a safe area.

Two high school students start to argue in the hallway during class exchange. Neither is following the directions of the hallway monitors to separate and get to class. The assistant principal is called and the boys are physically escorted to safe areas.

Data Collection

Document frequency of target behavior and use of the intervention.

► Exclusionary Time-Out MR

Description

Exclusionary time-out (ETO) involves **having a student leave the classroom or his regularly scheduled program, contingent on a problem behavior**. ETO may be necessary to prevent significant disruption of the teaching situation. The student's loss of opportunities to receive reinforcement may decrease inappropriate behaviors in the future. ETO can defuse a volatile situation and allow the student an opportunity to calm down, before rejoining the scheduled activity. ETO generally is a longer duration than non-exclusionary time-out, and may be used as a back-up to a lower level time-out procedure i.e., if the student remains disruptive during in-class time-out.



Procedures

- See procedures described in non-exclusionary time-out. Teach all students the rules and consequences, including how exclusionary time-out should be taken, if necessary.
- If possible, give the student a warning prior to using exclusion time-out.
- If the student continues the disruptive or rule-breaking behavior, calmly inform him of the consequence and the reason for it. The duration of the time-out period should be specified and brief (10 to 45 minutes, unless otherwise specified).
- Generally, it is recommended that in the exclusion situation the student first calm down for 5-15 minutes without adult interaction. Then, the student should do a written or verbal reflection, take responsibility for his/her actions if necessary, and develop a plan for re-entry to the classroom.
- Reset Rooms/Exclusionary Time-Outs must have well-defined procedures that have been explained to both students and staff. Data should be collected on the number of times a student receives an exclusionary time-out/Reset Room visit.

► Send-Home Time-Out MR

Description

Sending a student home from school for the day as a response for severe problem behavior can be effective in a PBIS plan as a type of time-out from reinforcement procedure. This requires a well-planned and cooperative effort between home and school.

Send homes should only be used for unsafe or highly disruptive behavior.

This could also include restrictions on the amount of interaction or attention the parent or caregiver gives to the child. Homework should be completed, if appropriate. Generally, consequences should be predetermined and implemented firmly, and with a minimum of emotion or verbal interaction. The duration of send-home time-outs should be one day only.

Send-home time-out can be an effective intervention with some students when the behavior demonstrated at school is very disruptive to the school setting. It can be an effective way of communicating to the child that his/her parents and teachers have consistent expectations and consequences. Send-home time-out should be monitored carefully, so as not to be overused or lose its effectiveness.

Data Collection

Document all uses of Exclusion Time Out, In-School Suspension, and send-homes. Send homes must be documented as removals from school and are counted toward the student's total days of removal for the school year.



School-Based Wraparound

Description

Within a PBIS model, the school-based wraparound **process is a method to achieve success for students who have extremely complex behavioral needs. For these students, a functional assessment and behavior plan is not enough.** These students need a team comprised of teachers, ancillary staff, parents, outside mental health and agency supports, and any other natural supports that the student has in his life. This team typically meets every four to six weeks to review behavioral data together, provide updates on the student's functioning, and revise his behavior plan as needed. The student's plan must be informed by functional assessment. As the student makes consistent behavioral progress, the wraparound meetings can occur on a less frequent basis until they can be faded out. The school-based wraparound process often takes place over several years, as these students present with a variety of complex needs and are at highest risk for exclusion from school.

Procedure

- School identifies a facilitator for the wraparound process. The facilitator coordinates the meeting schedule, invites the participants including the parents and agency representatives, and creates the agenda.
- A note-taker is identified at each meeting. Notes from the meetings are distributed in a timely manner to all participants.
- Wraparound meetings are data-driven, with a review of the behavioral data occurring at the beginning of each meeting.
- Each person at the wraparound meeting is given time to discuss their observations regarding the student's overall functioning and behavior.
- Wraparound meetings are strengths-based, with a focus on utilizing and increasing the natural supports in a student's life.
- Decisions are made by the consensus of the team regarding any changes to the student's behavior plan or program. No significant decisions regarding the student's plan are made outside of the wraparound meeting.
- The next meeting date is determined at the current wraparound meeting to ensure all participants can attend.



"The team-based wraparound process is recommended for students with intensive and comprehensive needs to ensure that the efforts of families, teachers, other caregivers and service providers are linked through one consistently implemented and carefully monitored plan."

— Eber, 2003

Part VII References

Responding to Problem Behavior

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Part VIII: Emergency Intervention

Restrictive Techniques **R**

If a student exhibits a pattern of behavior that poses a substantial risk of creating an emergency situation in the future that could result in the use of emergency seclusion or restraint, school personnel should develop a written emergency intervention plan (EIP) to protect the health, safety, and dignity of the student.

► Emergency Physical Restraint **R**

Definitions

U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights (OCR)

Physical restraint refers to a personal restriction that immobilizes or reduces the ability of a student to move his or her torso, arms, legs, or head freely.

Michigan Department of Education Policy for the Emergency Use of Seclusion and Restraint, 2017

An action that prevents or significantly restricts a pupil's movement by means of direct physical contact.

"Emergency physical restraint" is defined in MCL 380.1307h(d) as "a last resort emergency safety intervention involving physical restraint that is necessitated by an ongoing emergency situation and that provides an opportunity for the pupil to regain self-control while maintaining the safety of the pupil and others."

Emergency Situation

An emergency situation means a situation in which a pupil's behavior poses imminent risk to the safety of the individual pupil or to the safety of others. An emergency situation requires an immediate intervention. Physical restraint may only be used in an emergency situation.

Physical restraint should only be considered as a last resort, when the student's behavior is a clear and imminent risk to the safety of himself/herself, or to others.

General Procedures for Use

- Physical restraint should be performed in a manner that is:
 - Safe
 - Appropriate
 - Proportionate to and sensitive to the student's:
 - ◆ Severity of behavior
 - ◆ Chronological and developmental age
 - ◆ Physical condition
 - ◆ Medical condition
 - ◆ Psychiatric condition
 - ◆ Personal history, including any history of physical or sexual abuse or other trauma
- Physical restraint should not be used any longer than necessary for the student to regain control of his/her behavior. Generally, it should not exceed 10 minutes.

- School personnel should call for assistance from key identified personnel as appropriate.
- If restraint exceeds 10 minutes, or if at any point the student shows signs of physical distress, school personnel shall call for additional support, which could include the school administrator, nurse, specialists, or additional key identified personnel.
- The student must be continuously observed for indications of physical distress. Staff must seek medical assistance if there is a concern.
- Observations of the physical restraint should be documented.
- If possible, an adult who does not participate in the restraint procedure should witness the restraint.
- The safety and comfort of the student should be maintained during the restraint procedure. Pressure should not be exerted against joints.
- Proper staff ratios should be maintained to effectively and safely implement a physical restraint procedure.
- To the extent practicable, physical restraint should not interfere with the student's ability to communicate. Ensure that there are school personnel present that can communicate with the student using the student's primary mode of communication.

Limitations on Use

- Physical restraint should never be used as a punishment procedure, for the convenience of staff, as a substitute for less restrictive alternatives, or because of a lack of adequate staffing.
- Physical restraint should only be performed by staff that have been properly trained in strategies designed to prevent the need for restraint and the use of safe physical management techniques.
- Any use of a physical restraint procedure is potentially dangerous. Restraint related positional asphyxia (CPI, 2002) occurs when a person being restrained is placed in a position in which he cannot breathe properly and is not able to take in enough oxygen. This lack of oxygen can lead to disturbances in the rhythm of the heart, and death can result. Certain factors increase a person's risk for restraint-related positional asphyxia. These include:
 - Obesity
 - Extreme physical exertion or struggling prior to or during the restraint
 - Breathing problems, such as asthma or emphysema
 - Heart disease
 - Use of alcohol or other drugs
- Staff must be aware of the physical dangers of a period of extended restraint with a student. Monitor the student's vital signs.
- No physical restraint procedure should be used that has a negative impact on the respiratory system of the student.
- Any restraint that inhibits breathing, including floor restraints, facedown position, or any position in which an individual is bent over in such a way that it is difficult to breathe is prohibited. This includes a seated or kneeling position in which an individual being restrained is bent over at the waist and restraint that involves sitting or lying across an individual's back or stomach.
- Prone restraint is prohibited.

Documentation

- The Michigan Department of Education requires that every incident involving seclusion or restraint be documented according to specific guidelines. See the [Wayne RESA PBIS website](#) under MDE Seclusion and Restraint Resources for MDE required documentation and debriefing forms.
- Use of physical restraint should be reported to building administration and parents immediately.
- Written documentation of physical restraint should be provided to the parent/guardian within the earlier of one school day or seven calendar days.
- After any use of physical restraint school personnel must make reasonable efforts to debrief and consult with the parent or guardian. Debriefing must be documented on a form provided by MDE.
- The Michigan Department of Education requires that all uses of restraint be documented in the Michigan Student Data System (MSDS) per the Federal OCR definition of physical restraint.

Physical Restraint in an Emergency Intervention Plan

- If a student exhibits a pattern of behavior that poses a substantial risk of creating an emergency situation in the future that could result in the use of emergency physical restraint then school personnel should:
 - Conduct a Functional Behavior Assessment.
 - Develop an intensive PBIS plan including prevention strategies, replacement behavior instruction, positive reinforcement, procedures for responding to behavior, including de-escalation strategies.
 - Develop an Emergency Intervention Plan that includes de-escalation strategies and safety procedures for the use of physical restraint. Specific physical restraint procedures written into an EIP may need to be individually designed in accordance with the needs of the particular student. The specific behaviors for which the student will be restrained should be identified in the EIP.
 - The EIP should provide a sequence of less restrictive interventions to be used before physical restraint, if possible.
 - Staff should be trained in the specific physical restraint procedures described in the EIP.
 - A Tier 3 intensive behavior support team should be formed to conduct the FBA, and develop the PBIS plan and EIP in partnership with the student's parents/guardians. In addition to the student's parents, the behavior support team should include the student's teachers, those responsible for implementing the plan, and persons with expertise in intensive FBA and PBIS plans.

- See section on [school-based wrap-around](#).
- Make inquiry to the student’s medical personnel regarding any known medical or health contraindications for the use of physical restraint with the individual student.
- The PBIS Plan and EIP should be data-based and include monthly to quarterly review meetings including the entire behavior support team.
- The PBIS Plan should receive peer review from knowledgeable staff.
- See Appendix Emergency Intervention Plan: Parent Review Form for information that must be provided to parents regarding an EIP.

Restraint Does Not Include

- A brief hold of a student to calm or comfort.
- The minimum contact necessary to physically escort a student from one area to another.
- Briefly holding a student to prevent a behavior that threatens the student’s safety.
- The necessary actions taken:
 - To break up a fight;
 - To stop a physical assault as defined by MCL 380.1310(b) (“Physical assault” means intentionally causing or attempting to cause physical harm to another through force or violence.)
 - To take a weapon from a student.

See Michigan Department of Education [Policy for the Emergency Use of Seclusion and Restraint](#), 2017 for additional statutory requirements, including staff training.

► Emergency Seclusion R

Definitions

U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights (OCR)

Seclusion refers to the involuntary confinement of a student alone in a room or area from which the student is physically prevented from leaving.

Michigan Department of Education Policy for the Emergency Use of Seclusion and Restraint, 2017

Seclusion means the confinement of a pupil in a room or other space from which the pupil is physically prevented from leaving.

“Emergency seclusion” is defined in MCL 380.1307h(e) as “a last resort emergency safety intervention involving seclusion that is necessitated by an ongoing emergency situation and that provides an opportunity for the pupil to regain self-control while maintaining the safety of the pupil and others.”

Wayne RESA Position of Seclusion Definition, (See Wayne RESA Guidance and Position Statement Regarding the Emergency Use of Seclusion, 2018 in Appendix)

It is Wayne RESA’s position that constituent schools should harmonize the seclusion definition in the Michigan law with the federal and commonly-accepted definitions, by incorporating the element of *alone* when implementing the new law and when collecting and reporting data for incidents of seclusion.

Emergency Situation

- An emergency situation means a situation in which a pupil’s behavior poses imminent risk to the safety of the individual pupil or to the safety of others. An emergency situation requires an immediate intervention. Seclusion may only be used in an emergency situation.

- Seclusion should only be considered as a last resort, when the student’s behavior is a clear and imminent risk to the safety of himself/herself, or to others.
- For some students the use of seclusion may present less of a risk of injury to the student and staff than physical restraint, when used as a safety procedure for extremely aggressive or dangerous behaviors.

General Procedures for Use

- Seclusion should be performed in a manner that is:
 - Safe
 - Appropriate
 - Proportionate to and sensitive to the student’s:
 - ◆ Severity of behavior
 - ◆ Chronological and developmental age
 - ◆ Physical size
 - ◆ Gender
 - ◆ Physical condition
 - ◆ Medical condition
 - ◆ Psychiatric condition
 - ◆ Personal history, including any history of physical or sexual abuse or other trauma.
- The student placed in seclusion must be continuously visually monitored to ensure the safety and well-being of the student.
- The duration of seclusion should not be any longer than necessary to allow the student to regain control of his/her behavior. Generally, seclusion should last no longer than:
 - 15 minutes for elementary school students,
 - 20 minutes for middle and high school students,

- If the student is still not demonstrating safe behavior at the end of the recommended timeline, consider extending the seclusion for a predetermined length of time (e.g., two minutes) and communicate to the student the expectation to be in control and demonstrate safe behavior during the final portion of that time (e.g., last one minute) before exiting seclusion.
- Generally, it is recommended that instructional control (following simple directions) be re-established prior to reintroduction to the educational environment.
- Also, obtain additional support (e.g., administrative, nurse, or other key identified personnel) as appropriate to deal with the situation. Contact the parent/guardian.
- Provide documentation to explain the extension beyond the general time limit.

Limitations on Use

- Seclusion should never be used as a punishment procedure, for the convenience of staff, or because of a lack of adequate staffing.
- Seclusion should only be utilized by staff that have been properly trained in its use and strategies designed to prevent the need for seclusion.
- A room or area used for seclusion:
 - Must not prevent the student from exiting the area should staff become incapacitated or leave the area.
 - Must provide adequate space, lighting, ventilation, viewing, and the overall safety and dignity of the student.
- Seclusion is prohibited for preschool children. That is, preschool children may not be confined in a room or area alone. They may be physically prevented from leaving a room or area if to not do so would create an unsafe or emergency situation for the child or others, provided staff remain in the room or area with the child.
- Seclusion is prohibited for students who are severely self-injurious or suicidal.

Documentation

- The Michigan Department of Education requires that every incident involving seclusion or restraint be documented according to specific guidelines. See the [Wayne RESA PBIS website](#) under MDE Seclusion and Restraint Resources for MDE required documentation and debriefing forms.
- Use of seclusion should be reported to building administration and parents immediately.

- Written documentation of seclusion should be provided to the parent/guardian within the earlier of one school day or seven calendar days.
- After any use of seclusion school personnel must make reasonable efforts to debrief and consult with the parent or guardian. Debriefing must be documented on a form provided by MDE.
- The Michigan Department of Education requires that all uses of seclusion be documented in the Michigan Student Data System (MSDS) per the Federal OCR definition of seclusion.

Seclusion in an Emergency Intervention Plan

- If a student exhibits a pattern of behavior that poses a substantial risk of creating an emergency situation in the future that could result in the use of emergency seclusion then school personnel should:
 - Conduct a Functional Behavior Assessment.
 - Develop an intensive PBIS plan including prevention strategies, replacement behavior instruction, positive reinforcement, procedures for responding to behavior, including de-escalation strategies.
 - Develop an Emergency Intervention Plan that includes de-escalation strategies and specific safety procedures for the use of seclusion. The means of directing the student to seclusion should be carefully planned. Staff should be trained in appropriate guidance techniques so that the possibility of injury to student or staff is minimized.
 - Less restrictive interventions should be utilized before seclusion, if possible.

- A Tier 3 intensive behavior support team should be formed to conduct the FBA, and develop the PBIS plan and EIP in partnership with the student's parents/guardians. In addition to the student's parents, the behavior support team should include the student's teachers, those responsible for implementing the plan, and persons with expertise in intensive FBA and PBIS plans.
- See section on [school-based wrap-around](#).
- Make inquiry to the student's medical personnel regarding any known medical or health contraindications for the use of seclusion with the individual student.
- The PBIS plan and EIP should be data-based and include monthly to quarterly review meetings including the entire behavior support team.
- The PBIS plan and EIP should receive peer review from knowledgeable school personnel.
- See an Appendix Emergency Intervention Plan: Parent Review Form the [Wayne RESA PBIS webpage](#).

Emergency Intervention Plan

Student: _____ Date: _____
 School: _____
 Parents: _____ Teachers: _____
 Support Staff: _____

Description of behavior(s) that constitute an emergency situation:

Describe the pattern of behavior that requires an emergency intervention plan. Include the frequency of emergency seclusion and/or restraint use.

Has a Functional Behavior Assessment been conducted?

Has a Positive Behavior Interventions and Support Plan been developed?

Describe in detail the emergency intervention procedures. Include de-escalation strategies and the use of seclusion or restraint.

With parental consent, has inquiry been made of the pupil's medical personnel regarding any known medical or health contraindications for the use of emergency restraint? Explain any known contraindications.

Schedule for review of PBIS plan in emergency intervention plan:

Signatures: _____ Date: _____

2017 Wayne RESA Emergency Intervention Plan

► Protective Devices **R**

Definition

Protective devices are equipment recommended by a physician or therapist for the purpose of providing safety for a student whose behavior (e.g., self-injurious head banging or self-biting) may present an imminent risk to the safety of himself/herself, or others.

It should be noted that the Michigan Department of Education Policy for the Emergency Use of Seclusion and Restraint, 2017 prohibits the use of mechanical restraints, but not adaptive or protective devices recommended by a physician or therapist when used as recommended.

If a physician or therapist recommends a protective or adaptive device for behavioral purposes, and that device restricts movement or normal body function, these guidelines recommend that a Functional Behavior Assessment and PBIS plan be developed for that student, in accordance with the procedures described below.

Students needing protective and adaptive devices are typically identified as eligible for special education. The use of an adaptive or protective device should be referenced in the IEP or 504 Plan of a student with a disability.

These guidelines do not apply to the use of safety equipment used as intended by the general student population e.g., seat belts, safety harness on school transportation.

Appropriate Uses of a Protective Device

- The behavior of some students may be of such a serious, even life-threatening nature that use of a protective device may be necessary. While for some students self-injurious behaviors may have a degree of physical or medical causation, frequently self-injury is also a learned behavior, and as such requires intensive behavioral

intervention in combination with other approaches, for successful treatment.

- See the [NCBI article](#) on the association between self-injurious behaviors and autism spectrum disorders.
- Because of the restrictions these devices may place on a student's freedom of movement, their use must be accompanied by a specific plan aimed at reducing and/or eliminating use of the device.

Procedures for Use of a Protective Device in a PBIS Plan

- If a pattern of behavior emerges that may require a protective device to ensure the safety of a student, then the student's behavior support team should do the following:
 - Consult appropriate medical personnel, such as the student's physician and/or an occupational or physical therapist, to determine if there is a recommendation that a protective device be utilized in the school setting.
 - Conduct an Intensive Functional Behavior Assessment.
 - If appropriate, develop an intensive PBIS plan including prevention strategies, replacement behavior instruction, positive reinforcement, consequence procedures, and specific procedures for the use of the protective device.
 - The PBIS plan should be data-based and include monthly to quarterly review meetings including the entire behavior support team.
 - The PBIS plan should receive peer review from knowledgeable staff.
 - Conduct the FBA and develop the PBIS plan in partnership with the student's parents.

Limitations on Use

- Protective devices may develop highly reinforcing qualities for some students with self-injurious behavior. When the device is removed he/she may engage in self-injury in order to have the device re-applied. Specific procedures may need to be developed for fading or removal of the protective device.
- The behavior intervention team for a student whose behavior requires the use of a protective device should include experienced and qualified interventionists.
- The student must be visually monitored while wearing the protective device.

Documentation

Every use of the protective device should be documented and include the following information:

- Description of the target behavior.
- Description of the antecedent events to the behavior.
- A description of the protective device applied to the student.
- A description of the student's response to the device.
- The duration of use of the device.

Reporting to parents on the use of the protective device should occur at behavior review meetings, or more frequently if the parent requests.

Part VIII References

Emergency Intervention

- Caraulia, A. G., & Steiger, L. (1997). *Nonviolent crisis intervention: learning to defuse explosive behavior*. Brookfield, WI: Crisis Prevention Publishing.
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- Michigan Department of Education (2017). [Policy for the Emergency Use of Seclusion and Restraint](#)
- Minshawi, N. F., Hurwitz, S., Fodstad, J. C., Biebl, S. Morriss, D. H., & McDougle, C. J. (2014). The association between self-injurious behavior and autism spectrum disorders. *Psychology Research and Behavior Management*, published online 2014, April 12 doi: 10.2147/PRBM.S44635.
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- Oliver, C., Murphy, G., Hall, S., Arron, K., & Leggett, J. (2003). Phenomenology of self-restraint. *American Journal on Mental Retardation*, 108, 71-81.
- U. S. Department of Education, (2012). Restraint and seclusion: Resource document.
- Worsdell, A. S. (2000). Response blocking as treatment for severe behavior disorders. *Self-injury abstracts & reviews*. Gainesville, FL: Oxford Publishing Group

Wayne RESA Guidance and Position Statement Regarding the Emergency Use of Seclusion

Statement of the Problem

Since the new Michigan Seclusion and Restraint law was enacted (MCL 380.1307 to 380.1307h), Wayne RESA has been striving to provide guidance to its LEAs/PSAs regarding the use of seclusion, to assist with compliance and to protect the safety and well-being of students and staff. After a thorough review of the Michigan legislation, the federal agency definition and other commonly-accepted definitions of seclusion, Wayne RESA believes that the Michigan Department of Education's ("MDE") formal and informal guidance creates significant ambiguity regarding the definition of seclusion, which threatens the safety of students and staff at school and which interferes with the school's ability to protect the dignity of the students in emergency situations. The ambiguity also causes confusion and uncertainty for schools implementing the data collection and reporting requirements of the law.

It is Wayne RESA's position that constituent schools should harmonize the seclusion definition in the Michigan law with the federal and commonly-accepted definitions, by incorporating the element of alone when implementing the new law and when collecting and reporting data for incidents of seclusion.

Definitions of Seclusion

The U. S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights' definition of seclusion expressly states that seclusion occurs when a student is **alone** in a room or area from which the student is physically prevented from leaving. The definition of seclusion found in the new Michigan law is silent on whether the student must be alone to be considered seclusion. The commonly-accepted dictionary definition of seclusion contemplates that the individual is alone or isolated from other people. Recently-issued MDE Guidelines create an ambiguity, if not an outright inconsistency, among the federal and commonly-accepted definitions and the Michigan law. The ambiguity is significant in terms of:

- procedural and reporting requirements associated with seclusion,
- data collection and public reporting,
- developing safety intervention plans involving parents and students, and, most importantly,
- the permissive use of a common safety procedure used with preschool and other school children.

U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights (OCR) Definition:

Seclusion is the involuntary confinement of a student alone in a room or area from which the student is physically prevented from leaving.

Commonly-Accepted Dictionary Definition:

Seclusion means isolation, solitude or the state of one who is alone. (Merriam-Webster Dictionary).

Seclusion means the state of being alone, away from other people. (Cambridge Dictionary).

Revised Michigan School Code Definition:

Seclusion: The confinement of a pupil in a room or other space from which the pupil is physically prevented from leaving.

There are two core features of the U.S. Department of Education definition of seclusion: 1. the student is alone in the room or area, and 2. the student is physically prevented from leaving the room or area. The Michigan definition only speaks to one of these features; that the student is physically prevented from leaving the room or other space. The Michigan law does not explicitly state whether or not the student must be alone in order for the confinement to be considered seclusion.

MDE Policy and Guidelines

The new Michigan law requires MDE to issue policies and guidelines to the field. The MDE policy is silent regarding whether seclusion means the student must be alone, while also being physically prevented from leaving the room or area. MDE provided the following guidance in a Q & A document:

If school personnel evacuate a room with the exception of one pupil and an employee of the school, is it considered seclusion?

If the pupil is not physically prevented from leaving the room, it is not considered seclusion.

The MDE guidance addresses the student being physically prevented from leaving the room, but it does not address whether the student must also be alone in the room to be considered seclusion. MDE's informal guidance since the Q&A was adopted refuses to recognize the element of "alone" as part of the definition of seclusion. Therefore, school districts are left to determine the intent of the Michigan law. As indicated above, MDE's interpretation creates dangerous confusion among school staff related to the permissible use of a common safety procedure for preschool and other students and also has significant implications involving the extent of data collection and time-consuming reporting and procedural requirements.

MDE Policy and Guidelines as Applied to Students and Preschool Children

K-12 Students

If MDE's interpretation of seclusion is accepted, school staff would be engaged in seclusion when they evacuate a classroom where a student is in crisis, even if the student is under close and constant supervision of one or more adults. Not only would such an interpretation be in conflict with federal and commonly-accepted definitions of seclusion, but such an interpretation would also dissuade staff from using this intervention to keep the student and other students safe and it would undermine the dignity of the student in crisis. In addition, such an interpretation would require a school to engage in data collection, debriefing and reporting requirements that are time-consuming and beyond the scope intended by the Michigan Legislature.

Preschool Children

Under the Michigan law, seclusion of preschool children is prohibited. If the definition of seclusion were to include **alone** (as the federal and commonly accepted definitions do), Wayne RESA supports such a prohibition. Yet, according to early childhood and other educators around the State, it is not uncommon in an emergency situation that threatens the safety of a child to physically prevent that child from leaving the classroom, with adults present in the classroom with the child in distress. This is not considered by early childhood educators to be seclusion, nor does Wayne RESA believe that the Michigan Legislature intended the definition of seclusion to include this safety practice, as that would clearly put young children in a dangerous situation and undermine their dignity in a crisis. Under MDE's interpretation, use of this safety practice would be prohibited all together for preschool children and staff. Such a result would create safety concerns for the students and staff because absent the use of this intervention, staff would have to choose between the use of physical restraint to prevent a preschool child from leaving the classroom or allowing

the child to leave the classroom in distress, which promotes student elopement, broader safety concerns and potential disruption of the entire building.

Conclusion

Wayne RESA encourages its constituent schools to continue to implement and follow the Michigan Law, the MDE policy and MDE guidance, to the extent the MDE policies and guidance are consistent with best safety practices, the federal guidance and commonly-accepted definitions of seclusion. Wayne RESA believes this is consistent with the Michigan law and the intent of the Michigan Legislature. On the other hand, contrary to the MDE formal and informal guidance, when an adult is in the room from which the child is physically prevented from leaving, it is Wayne RESA's position that such an intervention is not seclusion and should not be treated or reported as such. Wayne RESA encourages its constituent schools to continue to utilize all necessary precautions to keep students safe when faced with an emergency situation, including physically preventing a child whose behavior presents an imminent risk to the safety of themselves or others from leaving that room or area, if appropriate. This includes preschool children. It is recommended that schools report instances of seclusion consistent with the U.S. Department of Education definition of seclusion to both OCR and MDE.

—January 2018

Please see the [Wayne RESA PBIS webpage](#) for the following downloadable forms:

- Functional Behavior Assessment
- Intensive Functional Behavior Assessment
- PBIS Plan
- Emergency Intervention Plan
- Peer Review
- EIP – Parent Review
- Behavior Review Meeting Summary
- Weekly Scatterplot (with times)
- Weekly Scatterplot (blank)
- Antecedent Behavior Consequence (ABC) Log
- Time-Out Log
- Individual Data Summary (Excel)



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