

Understanding the Basics of Behavioral Intervention


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Behavior and Learning Connection

- What does the learner understand?
- Is the work too hard or too easy?
- Does the learner know how to learn?
- What environmental changes are necessary for student success?
- Is the student motivated and reinforced?
- Are there effective teaching strategies and behavior management techniques?



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What does ABA stand for?

APLIED-interventions used with individuals in their natural settings and target behaviors significant for the person's social and day to day living

BEHAVIORAL – interventions are based on behavioral principles

ANALYSIS-therapeutic decisions are based on on-going data collection

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ABA is not

ABA is not just for students with autism spectrum disorders
ABA is not one program
ABA is not just for schools or therapy settings
ABA is not the Lovaas method
ABA is not Discrete Trial Training (DTT)
DTT is not the Lovaas Method

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ABA

ABA is NOT- just for special education

BEHAVIOR MODIFICATION AND BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTIONS– have been around for a long time – weight loss programs, smoking cessation, incentives and bonus plans.

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Behavior

BEHAVIOR IS NOT ALL BAD!



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Behaviors

Point to object or picture	Cry or scream
Take hand and pull someone	Repeating phrases
Manual sign language	Avoid eye contact
Hand picture to adult	Hands on ears
Ask a question	Bite hand or shirt
Name an object or picture	Hand-flapping
Read words	Destroy materials
Answer a question	Say "no"
Ask for help	Jump up and down
Follow directions	Push away items
Eat food	Hit or bite another person

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Behavior

Behavior is:

- CAUSED (*antecedents/triggers*)
- OBSERVABLE (*recordable*)
- COMMUNICATION
- SERVES A FUNCTION (*why*)

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Challenging or Problem Behavior

Function is *not* usually the problem
Same behavior may have several functions
Interferes with learning new skills
Socially isolates the learner

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Functions of Behavior

Gain object, activity or attention	Escape/Avoid object, activity or attention
Gain Sensory	Escape/Avoid Sensory

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Functional Behavior Assessment - Outcomes

Identify and Define

- Challenging or inappropriate behavior
- Function of the behavior(s)
- Strategies to prevent or antecedent strategies
- Strategies for alternative/replacement behaviors
- Consequences that will not maintain inappropriate behaviors
- Input for IEP
 - Specially designed instruction (SDI)
- Input for Behavior Plans

On-Going Process

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A-B-C's of Behavior

Antecedents – setting events

- What happened immediately before the behavior(s)?
- What triggered the behavior (s)?
 - Person, place, activity, sound, smell, demand/request
- Slow triggers
- Quick triggers
- Hunger, thirst, pain, fatigue

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A-B-c's of Behavior

Behavior or the response
 Observable, recordable
 Collect data - make decisions

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A-B-C's of Behavior

Consequences

- What happened after the behavior
- Includes corrective feedback
 - "Right" "Good Job"...
 - "No" "Wrong" "It isn't..."

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Consequences

Consequences are not all bad!!!
 Consequences occur after the behavior

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Reinforcement

- Attention (depends on the student!)
- Stickers
- Token economy
- Rewards
- Toys or games
- Escape
- Avoidance

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Punishment

- Simple correction
- Overcorrection
- Restitution
- Time out
- Response Cost
- Corporal Punishment (not recommended)

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The ABCs OF Behavior

ANTECEDENTS What happened before?	BEHAVIOR What happened afterwards?	CONSEQUENCE What happened
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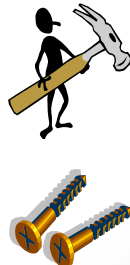
Traditional Emphasis (arrow from Antecedents to Behavior)

Emphasis Needed (arrow from Behavior to Consequence)

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Strategy Selection

- Learn a new skill
 - appropriate or acceptable replacement behavior
- Increase behavior
 - on task time
- Decrease behavior
 - Perseveration on topic
- Honor the function
 - Request a break
- Cannot honor the function
 - Remain in room during fire drill



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Targeted Strategies – Increase Communication to Protest and Request


Target (increase)
Appropriate means to request or protest rather than scream, cry, grab, hit, cover ears, turn away

Strategies

- Functional Communication Training (FCT)
- Alternative Augmentative Communication system (AAC)
 - Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS)
 - Sign language
- “Break” card
- Parent/staff note signs that child is frustrated
 - Redirect, distract, interrupt
- Practice/rehearse -various times, places and with many adults during the day

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Visual schedules



1	bathroom	6	doll house
2	snack	7	play outside
3	gels & crafts	8	game
4	puddle	9	cat
5	lotion	10	bathroom

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Targeted Strategies - Transition

Target (increase)
Transition

- Person to person
- Place to place
- Activity to activity

Preferred to preferred
Non-preferred to preferred
Preferred to non- preferred activity

Strategies

- Visual Schedule
 - actual items, pictures, photos along with printed words
- Preferred items as distractors
- Preferred adult gives direction/request
- Create jobs that move the child in hallways
- Pre-specified reinforcers
- Transition Helpers or fidget toys

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Visual timers



www.timetracker.org

www.timetimer.org

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Social Skills Challenges

- Play Skills
- Pragmatic language skills
- Anxiety
- Speech intelligibility
- Attention span
- Organizational Skills
- Motivation
- Prompt dependency
- Restricted interests



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Social Skills Strategies

- Capitalize on strengths
- Personalize Strategies
- Practice/role play all roles
 - variety of settings, children and adults
- Real time support/feedback
 - most to least support
- What's popular with peers?
 - Games, shows, language

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Targeted Strategies-Play Skills

Target
Increase play with toys and appropriate play materials

Strategies

- Pair preferred object with non preferred activity
- Visual schedules
- Offer choice
- Morph restricted interests into more appropriate or accessible activities or objects
- Introduce new toys gradually – not with other children
- Siblings or other children "model" play
- Layers of reinforcement

Targeted Strategies – Social

Target

Increase appropriate interaction with peers and adults

Strategies

- Structured activities and games
 - Lunch bunch
 - Play dates
- Video or photo activities and interactions to reinforce positive
- Seating arrangements
 - Away from triggers if possible
 - Near a good peer model
 - Proximity to staff
- Role play- "characters" acting out
- Assign a job during social activity
- Social stories
 - www.thegraycenter.org

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Play dates

- Plan and structure
- Just right timing
- Include a snack
- Make a list - together
- Something for everyone
- "Social engineer"
 - Kids from school
 - Kids from community
 - Scouts, dance, religious
- Photo or video
- Monitor don't hover

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Social Stories

That was Easy
Meet and Greet
A trip to the beauty parlor
Care and Share
Trip to the Doctor
Homework
Going to a restaurant
Getting a gift
Self-flush toilets
That's a disappointment
Telling someone to stop

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Successful Approaches

- Clear, effective communication
- Structure and routine
- Consistency
- "Pair" with reinforcers
- Attention to signs of anxiety and triggers
- Awareness of language skills and reinforcers
- Redirection and distraction are effective tools
- Visual supports and schedule are often essential
- Offer choices – which one do you want to do first?
- Teach and offer opportunity to request a break
- Reinforce the behaviors that you want to increase
- It's not always what you say but how you say it
- Control what you can e.g., your responses, environment

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