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Improving Skills When Working with Challenging Behaviors: Get "Sneaky Smart"

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Improving Skills When Working with Challenging Behaviors: Get "Sneaky Smart"

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Many Thanks to:

- Dr. Terrance M. Scott, Univ. of Louisville
- Dr. Rob Horner, Univ. of Oregon
- Dr. Kent Parker, Oconee School District
- Dr. Geoff Colvin, Behavior Associates
- Dr. Susan Thomas, Glenforest School

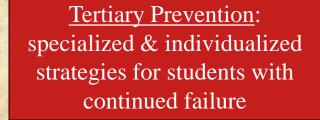
Goals for Today

- 1) Help improve some of the evidenced based interventions that you already use,
- 2) Expose you to some new strategies/interventions to try as you deal with challenging behaviors, or when consulting and working with school teams, and
- 3) Review some of the best ways to gather and use behavioral data on individuals that can lead to better problem solving when the "sneaky smart" proactive strategies are not effective.

As Educators, we are charged with trying to ensure that we live up to what parents are wanting

- Parents want:
 - -A safe & secure environment
 - -Their kids to feel special
 - -Their kids to learn

Student Outcome and Prevention Model for Schools



~15%

-5%

Secondary Prevention:
supplementary strategies
for students who
do not respond to primary

Primary Prevention:
school-wide or class-wide
systems for all
students and staff

~80% of Students

Let's take a moment to review what some of our green zone students are learning & writing

- Italics is what Italians write in
- Don't is a contraption
- Anarctica is like the regular Arctic, but ritzier
- Good punctuation means not to be late

More proud written statements on tests

- When a baby is born the doctor cuts the biblical cord
- Columbus discovered the world while cursing about the Atlantic
- If a pronoun is used in place of a noun, a proverb is a pronoun in place of a verb

And Finally

- Want Ad: Free puppies. Half cocker spaniel & half sneaky neighbor's dog
- I hate it when people make grammerical errors
- What part of our body do we use to think?
 Answer:

It is hard to imagine why a child would . . .

Intentionally behave in a way that would make other people respond in a manner that makes him miserable

Ross Greene, PhD

"Why can't we finish the last sentence as automatically as we do the others?"

(John Herner ,1998)

 It was that unexpected response from a parent...

Bottom Lines for Today:

- It is <u>all</u> about changing adult behavior (being sneaky smart)
- QTIP
- Adults being flexible & willing to truly problem solve
- It is best to alter the environment & the positive supports that we can put into place

Effective Implementation

- Our usual methods of Behavior Intervention do not work with our targeted students.
- We need to get out of the mindset that "They know better", "They are just being hateful", and "They can control it when they want to".
- All of those things may be true, but those beliefs aren't going to impact the behaviors.

Think about how we teach concepts for academics

- Do we teach the meaning of every single word?
- OR do we teach stems?
- If you instruct on "keeping hands & feet to self," it doesn't cover spitting, throwing objects, etc.
- So we teach concepts like, "Respect Others"
 & "Here's an example of respect . . ."

Reasons that Behavior Rehearsals are Necessary

- If by history, you know the student has evidenced inappropriateness in a certain school setting, it is likely that the behavior will occur again.
- Behavior rehearsal is a standard requirement for acquiring any new skill
- Think about this: Do we ask kids to take a pre-ACT?; Do we take practice GRE's?
- Lastly, teachers want students to be fluent in exhibiting expected behaviors.

Within the School Context, We Have 55+ Years of Research on the Science of Behavior

- Applied behavior analysis model
 - Antecedents, behavior, & consequences
- Functional communication
 - Behavior serves a function: Student is getting something or avoiding something
 - Don't be afraid to hypothesize what is making a student "tick" & talk to others about what he/she is getting out of the misbehavior

Classroom management research, especially at the elementary level

- Reveals that on-task classrooms are led by teachers who consistently reinforce/acknowledge positive behavior AND
- Have minimal disruptions in instruction (avoid letting a student derail the instruction)

Think Teamwork & Collaboratively

- What makes a successful high school coach?
- What do they do to prepare for a game?
- Do they encourage & let the team know that he/she has confidence in the team?
- Do they give reminders (pre-corrects)?
- Do they use lots of lecture or do they focus on practicing different scenarios?
- What do they do at half-time?

Interventions that Focus on the Positive

- Mystery Motivators
- Transition tickets/Lottery
- Mystery Hero Student
- Role Model Student
- Student of the Week/Month
- Using visuals to chart positive progress (E/T)

Ask Yourself

What do I honestly "give life" to? Is it the inappropriate or the appropriate behaviors?



Your Turn

What are some strategies that you have used or seen used to increase the "positives" in your classes?

For a Great List of Reinforcing Ideas that cost no money, & contains no sugar or salt:

- www.successfulschools.org
- And click on "Resources"
 Then "Behavior"

Strategy #1 If you want to see immediate change, dramatically increase the positive to negative statement ratio that you use when interacting with students

About encouragement . . .

- Research clearly indicates that the behavior-specific praise increases ontask behavior. "Mark, I like the way you are listening; Anthony, I appreciate you raising your hand." VS. "Good job; nice work."
- Remember what the research tells us about the ratio of positive statements to negative ones?

Any Oprah fans in the house?

Along with being positive . . .

- Reassess whether we have been clear in expressing the expectations (When taking a grad course, you expect that syllabus at the first class, don't you?)
- Have fun with your kids when reviewing what is & is not acceptable in your class (i.e., what is the rule about approaching your desk? Which door do we exit out of to go to special area?)

Why Are Educators Rewarded by Punishment?

- It is easy to administer
- Works for most students <u>without</u> challenging behaviors
- Has been a part of Judeo-Christian history
- We can be stubborn about accepting information that does not match our beliefs
- There is a prevailing "control mentality" that places educators in a reactive vs. proactive position

Source: John Maag (2001)*

Life is Like An Echo •You Get Back What You Send Out



Strategy # 2 Work on the "alliance/connection" that you have with students. If students feel respected AND respect you, this is going to have a major impact on what you can get out of them.

Teacher efforts to get to know students are also important . . .

- Research shows that the most reliable predictor of outcome is the "alliance" that is perceived by the student
- This is greatly influenced by the student's views of how respected they feel by the teacher & whom they respect
- Remember that it is hard to get excited over someone else's goal so include the student's input as you work to figure out the intervention
- Think about inquiring, "Tell me something about your teacher that worked for you" or "You had such a good day today; How did you do that?"

Survey of Student Perspective of Respectful Teacher Behavior

- Participants
 - Over 5,000 middle & high school students
 - Chicago, IL, Hammond, IN, Houma, LA & Webster, MA
 - Approximately 76% of students at school receive free or reduced lunch
- Survey asked students, "What are some ways that teachers show you respect?"

Survey Process

- Administered to each student through their English class.
- Asked to provide 3 responses to the question
- Instructions stated that "respect" should be defined in terms that are observable and acknowledgeable.

Top 12 Answers

Of the over 5000 responses, the ones listed were written by 200 students or more.

- Talk privately to students when a problem occurs.
- 2. Use a calm tone of voice, even when they are upset. (No yelling)
- Respect personal space
 (Don't touch, grab, eyeballing, crowd)



Top 12 Answers (continued)

- 4. Listens without interrupting.
- 5. Have a sense of humor.
- 6. Displays student work around the classroom/school.
- 7. Prepares exciting lessons.
- 8. Let parents/guardian know student did a good job *sometimes* (see a balanced picture).



Top 12 Answers (continued)

- 9. Use student's name or addresses them as ma'am or sir when talking to them
- 10. Be available during non-classroom times
- 11. Returns work promptly
- 12. Talk sincerely no sarcasm or "eye rolling"
- Worth noting: "Smiles at me & acknowledges my birthday" received multiple mentions.

Making Connections

- · Attachments just don't happen
- Feeling connected should be a priority for all students, especially the difficult ones
- "Does this student see me as someone who imposes, limits, & corrects OR as a helper, guide & ally?"*

Ways to Connect

- Make a conscious decision to connect
- · ALWAYS connect with a greeting
- · Select the adult "connector"
- · Make an effort to find out about a common object, subject, etc.*

Why do we remember the special teachers that we had when we were younger?

One of the Important & Often Overlooked Ingredients of Teaching Behavior Is the "Script" that the Adults Agree to Use to both teach new behavior & to correct behavior

Strategy # 3
Use the "Wal-Mart" questions rather than what we typically resort to out of frustration:

How can I help you? What do you need?

Want a way to help staff to better deescalate an "edgy" student?

- Exclusively use one of the following two scripted "Wal-Mart" questions in a calm manner & you will be much more likely to de-escalate that student & get him/her refocused:
 - How can I help you?
 - What do you need?
 - These questions keep <u>you</u> calm, redirects/ refocuses the student and will tend to not escalate the student

A favorite script of mine is known as the Deferral Tactic

Change Starts Within Us As Adults

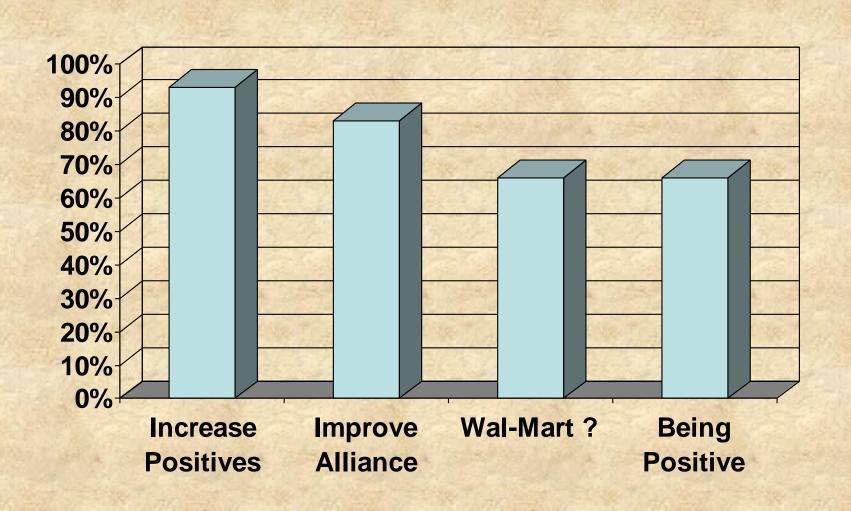
- As you go from this point in the year, be aware of the emotions that are aroused within & work on your language:
 - The language we internally say
 - The language we overtly say
 - We can make a vow to ourselves todaythat we will make a change in the negative & deficit-laden language we use



Strategy # 4 Be ever mindful of the language you use. Work to be positive about expectations (SRA, etc.), reinforce compliance, praise in public, reprimand in private (watch the loudness of your own voice).

I promise you, it will make <u>you</u> feel better too!

Teachers' Reporting of Strategies *That Helped*



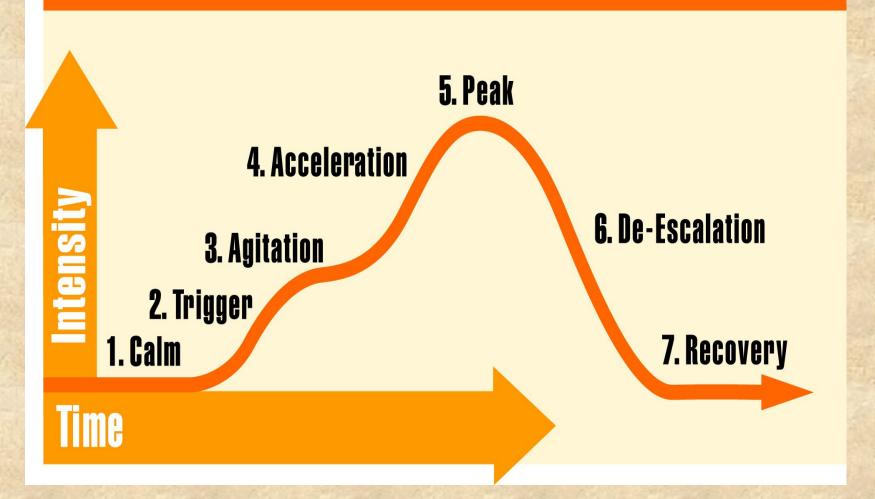
Strategy 5

Focus on structure, class procedures & expectations of what needs to happen during any unstructured times-class entry, if you finish your work, etc.

Calming Strategies for Managing Students That Are Agitated: Ba Smart & Think Pro-Actively

Many Thanks to Geoff Colvin for these Strategies

Phases of Acting-Out Behavior



Recognizing Signs of Agitation

| Increases in Behavior | Decreases in Behavior |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| ■Darting eyes | Stares into space |
| Non-conversational | ■Subdues language |
| language | ■ Contains hands |
| Busy hands | ■Lacks interaction |
| ■Moves in and out of | ■Lacks involvement |
| groups | ■Withdraws from groups |
| Starts and stopping | Lacks responding |
| Moves around room | Avoids eye contact |
| ■Fidgety | 51 |

Agitation Management Steps

Three Steps

- 1. Re-direct the student to task at hand
- 2. Recognize signs of agitation
- 3. Use strategies to reduce agitation

Lesson Learned

Even when we don't think it to be the case, children do get confused & miserable in the midst of it all. They don't have the coping skills to deal with all these confusing feelings.

What do we naturally do when an obstacle is thrown at us, even as adults?

Strategies for Reducing Agitation

- Teacher support and empathy
- Create space or isolation
- Provide choices
- Permit preferred activities (with clear boundaries)
- Independent tasks or activities

Agitation Strategies Cont'd

- Use teacher proximity
- Permit movement (use movement tasks)
- Use relaxation techniques
- Use passive activities
- Involve the student as appropriate

The following strategies must be used:

- Before the onset of serious acting-out behaviors in hopes that the student can gain composure
- The issue is all about TIMING & should be used earlier than later in the Agitation Phase
- ALSO think about using some of these in the behavior plans for your students.

Empathy: Recognizing & Communicating Concern-Scripts to Use (Think how helpful these would be to you)

- Are you doing ok?
- Why don't you sit a bit & I'll be back shortly?
- Do you think you can get through this first part of the assignment?
- You don't look your usual self today?
- Can I help to get you started?

Providing space

- When students seek space, they are less likely to be provoked & they are provided with an opportunity to settle down.
- Teaching the student the procedure for using the space is important as well as teaching calming strategies such as
 breathing & relaxation exercises.

Other Sneaky Smart Activities to Interrupt A Negative Cycle

- Run an errand
- Fill a cup with water
- Deliver something to another teacher
- Getting materials ready, etc.
- All of the above can set the stage to adjust the behavioral momentum in a positive way

Continuum of Consequences

- General
 - 1-2 Behavior Supports first
- Continuum process (privately delivered)
 - 1. Remind/prompt expected behavior
 - 2. Provide choice (a.k.a. warning)

Engage in expected behavior or alternative

OR Expected behavior or receive 1st consequence

Put it on the student to make a decision

- 3. 1st Classroom consequence
- 4. 2nd Classroom consequence
- 5. Office-managed consequence

When Correcting . . .

- · Be As Brief As Possible
- · "Act, Don't Yak"
- · Be Immediate
- · Be Consistent
- · Be Unemotional
- · Use Direct Eye Contact
- · Deliver in Close Proximity*



Systematic Correction Procedures

- Deliver the penalty or loss of privilege in a matter-of-fact manner
- Do not argue with the student
- Do not discuss the details of the penalty
- WALK AWAY.....WALK AWAY

Decide if addressing it is worth it

- Addressing problem behavior means providing attention which MAY REINFORCE the behavior
- Controlling for attention is critical
- The next student behavior is often determined by initial (and subsequent) teacher responses

Sneaky Smart Strategy that Prevents: Active SupervisionYou are that po-po car that we sometimes see on our way to work

- Movement-
- -Greater visibility
- –Increased rate of proximity to more students
- Increased opportunity to interact positively
- Increased chances of uncovering unsavory behaviors such as bullying

Hallway Behavior

Anytime you don't know student:

Greet

 Secure student's attention: "Hello", "Good morning", "Good afternoon"

Meet

- Introduce yourself with name & title (other?)
- Optionally, can offer to shake hands
- Ask student's name (before making requests)
- Optionally, "Nice to meet you"

Remind

- "I'm sorry, but in the hallway, you need to _____"
- "Do you know what I'm going to ask you to do?"
- "I need you to Be Respectful by _____"
- Thank (we're correcting for next time)

Verbal Intervention Tips and Techniques

Do

- ✓ Remain calm
- ✓ Isolate the situation
- ✓ Enforce limits
- **✓** Listen
- ✓ Be aware of nonverbals
- ✓ Be consistent

Don't

- *Overreact
- *Get in a power struggle
- * Make false promises
- *Fake attention
- *Be threatening
- *Use jargon

The More Explicit We Are & The More Adults Are Consistent & Unified, The Better

- For those complex students that need behavior plans
 - -Example of "I understand, but now..."
 - -"This is the bottom line . . ."
 - -"Time and space" prompt
 - -"Change the channel" prompt

Never Underestimate the Power of the "Script"

- Deferral Tactic
- · "There is an expectation about ..."
- "At _____ Middle, we . . . "
- Strongly recommended that the adults role-play

Teach safety steps as you do for fire drills.

- Strongly suggested that you teach your class:
 - The "FREEZE" game (teach, practice, acknowledge)
 - Another "code" word that indicates you need them to move to safety (<u>teach, practice, acknowledge</u>)
 - Share the info. with other adults that teach the students
- · Advantages:
 - Safety for all by TEACHING a procedure
 - Target student may actually "freeze"
 - Gives the adult confidence
 - Is defensible to any parent that is concerned b/c there is a safety procedure that has been taught

Fundamental Rule!

"You should not propose to reduce a problem behavior without also identifying alternative, desired behaviors person should perform instead of problem behavior" (O'Neill et al., 1997, p. 71).

Focus

- Other than the agitated student, four classes of problem behavior will be addressed
- Behaviors range in intensity from low level to high level
- Behaviors fall short of physical or actual danger
- Behaviors may be defused or escalated, managed safely or unsafely

73

Selected Behavioral Strategies for:

- 1. Off-task behavior
- 2. Rule violations
- 3. Disrespectful behavior
- 4. Limit testing

Off Task Behavior Management Steps

- Attend to students on task and delay responding to student off task
- 2. Redirect student to task at hand and do not respond directly to off task behavior
- 3. Acknowledge cooperation briefly

If need be, more systematic correction procedures

- Secure student's attention by finding a place to talk to the student
 - Check to confirm: can use a simple/silly request/comment
- Redirect the student to expected behavior
 - (pre-established gesture/verbal prompt)
- Inform him/her of expected behavior
- Acknowledge the changed behavior at earliest occurrence

Activity Regarding Rule Violation

What is the same about each of these examples?

Example One:

Sarah comes into class wearing a rude T-Shirt. Students start to laugh and the teacher calls her aside and the following exchanges occur

Teacher "Sarah that T-shirt has a rude message and it can't be worn at school."

Sarah: "My dad gave it to me."

Teacher: "That doesn't matter. It is against our dress code rule and you need to go to the restroom and turn it inside out."

Sarah: "You can't make me."

Teacher: "Do what you are asked or I'll send you to the Office for not following directions."

Sarah: "I don't care."

Teacher makes Office Referral.

Example Two:

Joe steps on the bus and pulls out a huge candy bar and begins to eat it. The driver points to the sign above the door and the following exchange occurs:

Driver: "Look- no food on the bus."

Joe: "So" and takes another bite.

Driver: "Alright. I said no food on the bus so give me the candy."

Joe: "No way."

Driver: "OK give me the candy or you're off the bus."

Joe: "I don't care."

Driver calls office to have student removed.

What is the same in each example?

At what point did the situation accelerate?

 Any thoughts on how could this have been avoided?

"Sneaky Smart" Responses to Rule Violation

- Clarify the rule or expectation in simple, clear terms while staying non-emotional
- 2. Explicitly request the student to "take care of the problem"
- 3. Set limits by presenting options "If you do this now, then you will get to _____." (Make sure you give the positive outcome first.)
- 4. Allow time for student to make a good decision. Walk away if possible.
- 5. Follow through with the limit.

Think about this:

 Adults often give additional directives to a student that is clearly in the context of non-compliance~ But what is the real chance that the student is going to follow yet another directive in that non-compliant context?

Disrespectful Behavior

Management Steps

- Studiously avoid reacting personally (such as shouting, challenging, becoming agitated)
- 2. Maintain calmness, respect, and detachment (Teacher modeling role)
- 3. Pause and focus
- 4. Focus on the student behavior ("That language...")
- 5. Deliver consequence as appropriate
- 6. OR Use Deferral Tactic...

Limit Testing Management Steps

- 1. Pre-Teach the procedures
- Deliver the following information in a calm matter-of-fact manner
 - 1. Present expected behavior and negative consequence as a decision
 - 2. Allow few seconds for decision
 - 3. Withdraw and attend to other students
- 3. Follow through based on student decision

Golden Rule

Whether the problem behavior is managed safely or not or is defused
In large measure depends on

YOUR INITIAL RESPONSE

Data Collection on Individual Students

Why Collect Data?

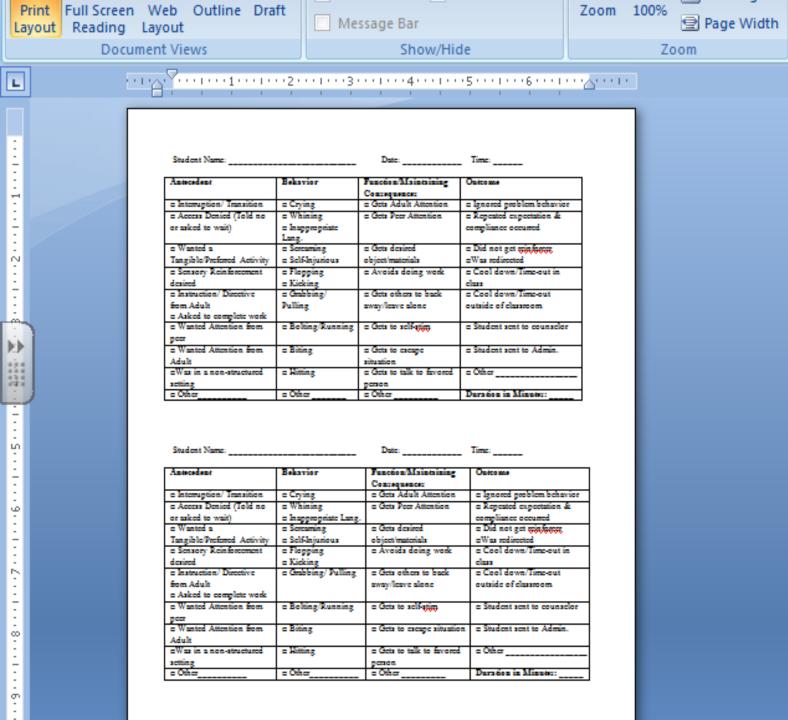
- Helps us to be able to predict both problems & successes (When/where/who?)
- Tells us who needs targeted or intensive academic supports
- Guides us as to which environmental changes and/or supports are needed
- Gives us information on the actual frequency & duration of the problems

Other Pointers

- We should always be looking for the simplest way to collect information
- For many of your students with special needs, there will likely be goals of helping them with both academic and social issues. We often feel more comfortable with looking at the academic goals & progress, but get perplexed and/or emotional when it comes to behavioral needs

From Data:

- We get more accurate information
- We get a more complete picture of the issues that need intervention
- We should always pay attention to the "Context" of the behavior
- We get an idea as to the possible "function" of the problem behavior & then we can focus on an acceptable replacement behavior (e.g. raising hand to get attention rather than yelling out)



--- Split

Styles

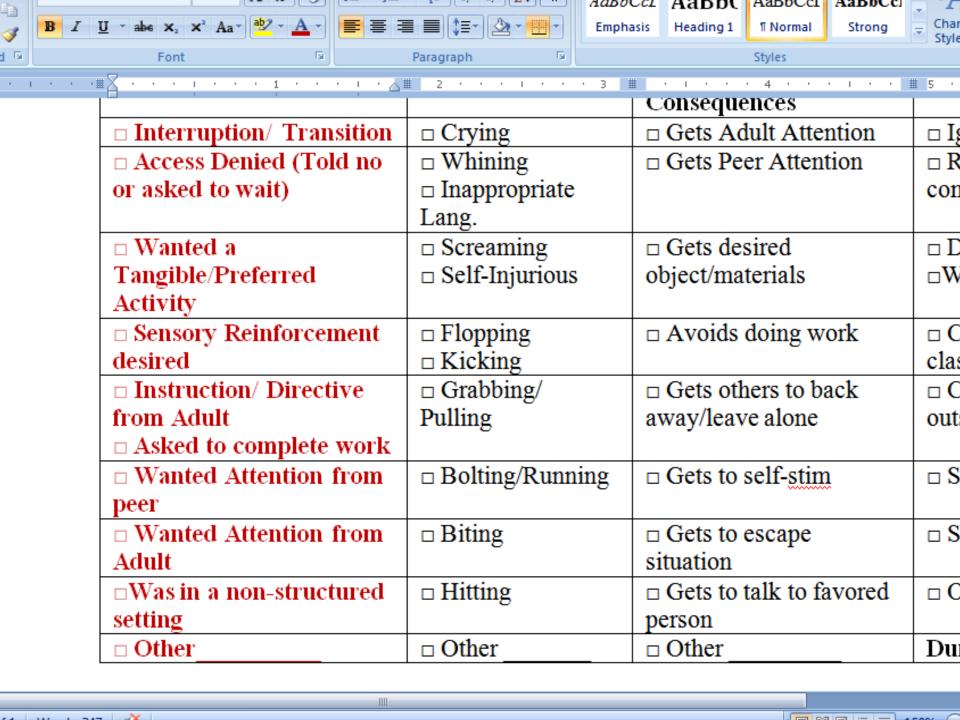
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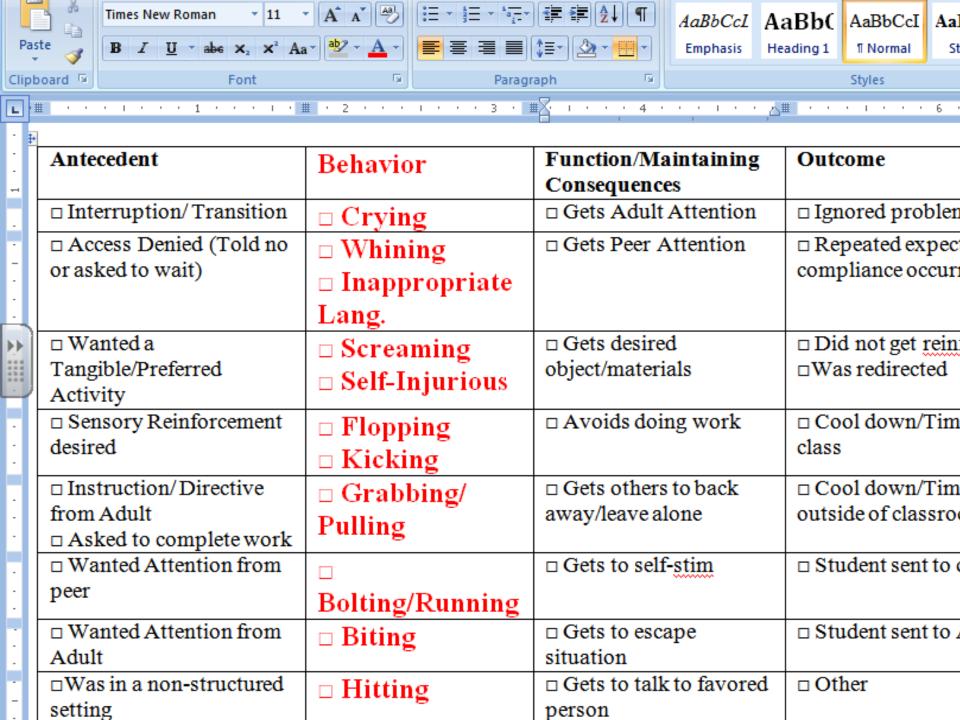
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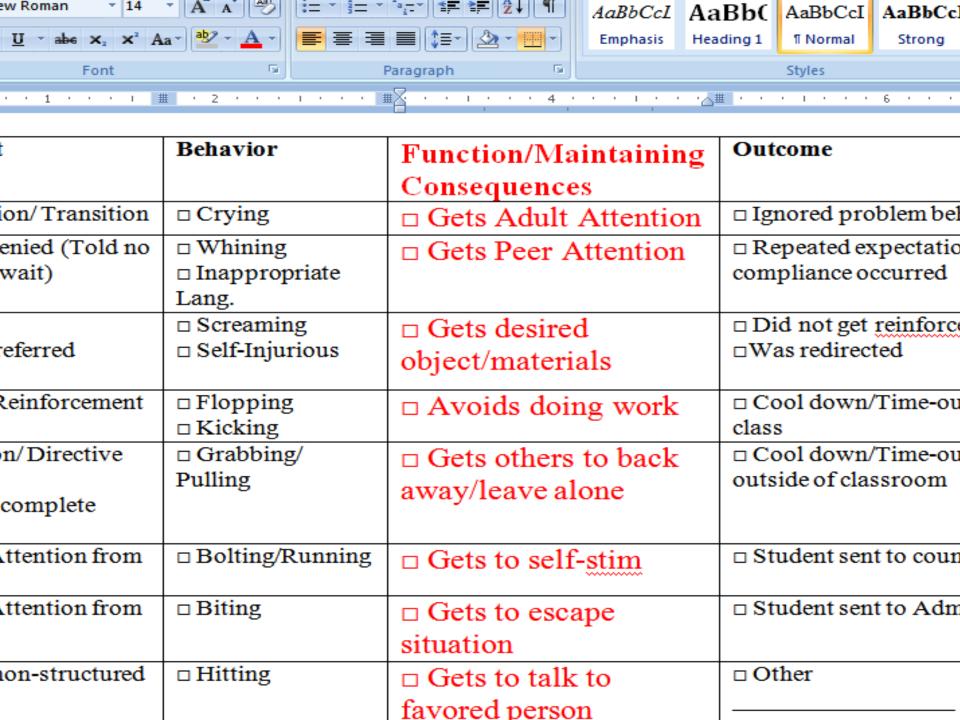
Collecting data on Antecedents (or Triggers) gives us clues as to what the setting event is. Let's talk about some examples of the following

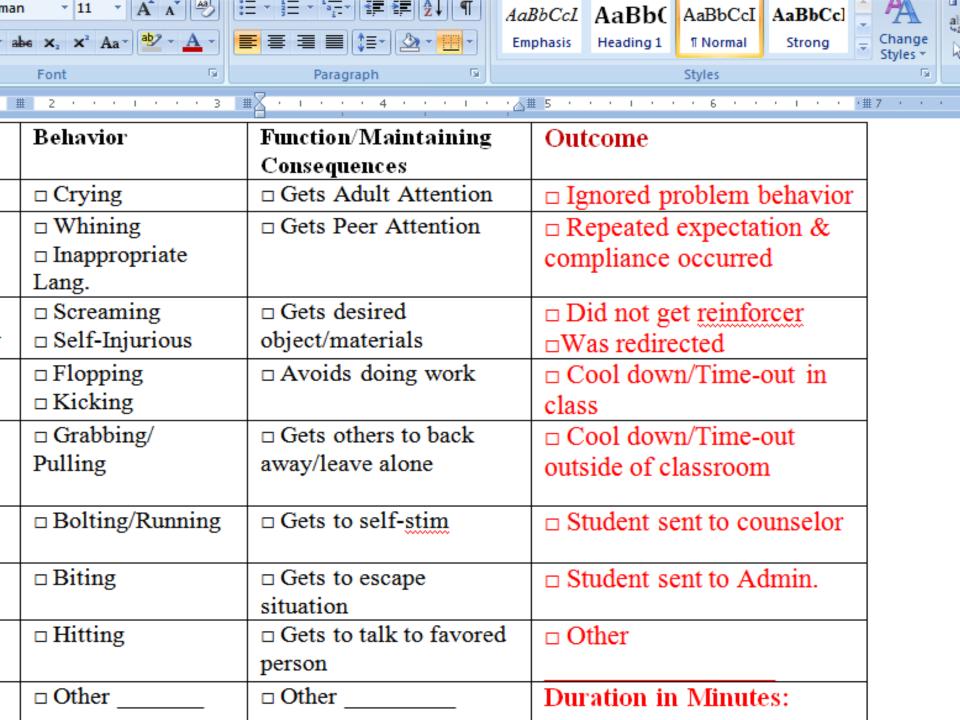


Remember

- There are no right or wrong responses
- You can check more than one in each column, but remember that if you check 5 triggers, it is actually going to give you less information so pick the most prominent one or two that is going to be the best descriptor. (If it is an Aspergers spectrum student and you know that "swinging" is a highly desired activity, then check off accordingly. For him, it is likely sensory & not just "wanted a preferred task")

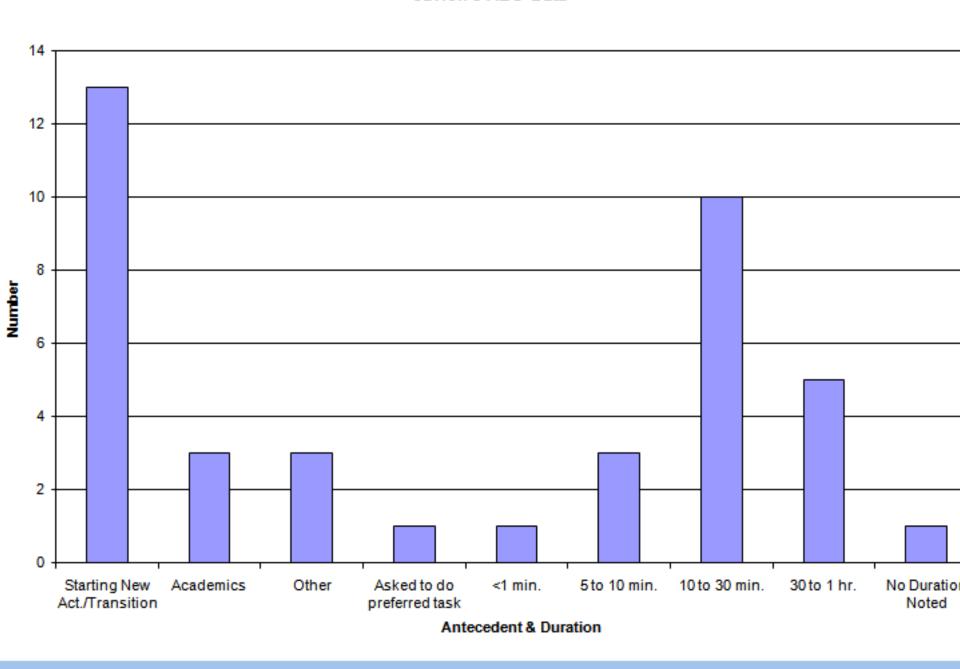


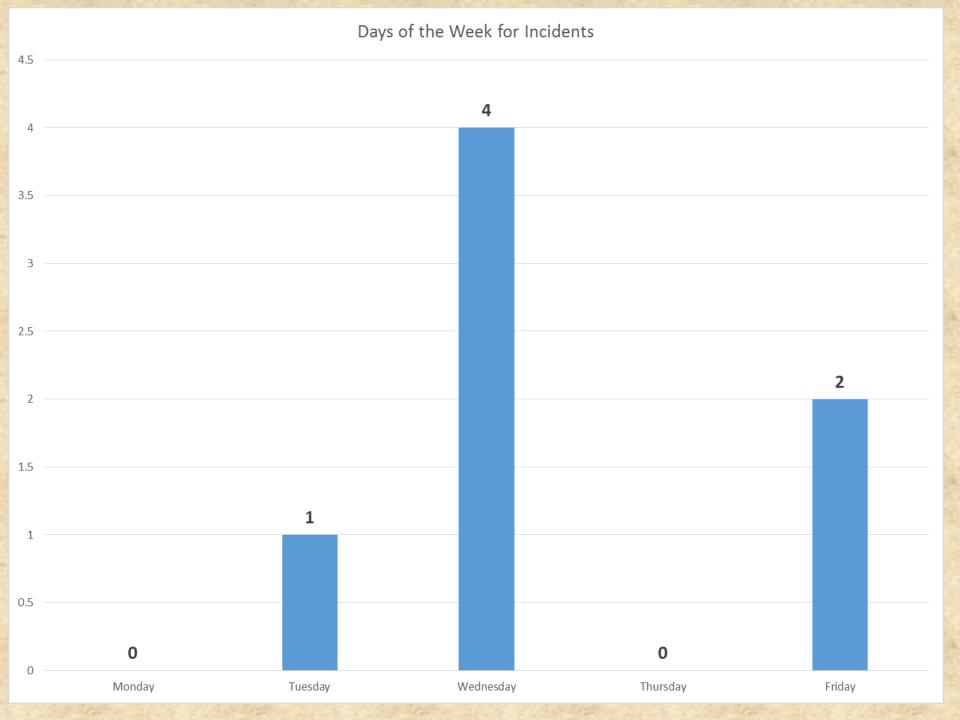




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| | | Date: | Time: | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | Behavior | Function/Maintaining | Outcome | | | |
| | | Consequences | | | | |
| Transition | □ Crying | □ Gets Adult Attention | □ Ignored problem behavior | | | |
| d (Told no | □ Whining | ☐ Gets Peer Attention | □ Repeated expectation & | | | |
| :) | □ Inappropriate | | compliance occurred | | | |
| | Lang. | | | | | |
| | □ Screaming | □ Gets desired | □ Did not get reinforcer | | | |
| red Activity | □ Self-Injurious | object/materials | □Was redirected | | | |
| forcement | □ Flopping | □ Avoids doing work | □ Cool down/Time-out in | | | |
| | □ Kicking | | class | | | |
| irective | □ Grabbing/ | □ Gets others to back | □ Cool down/Time-out | | | |
| | Pulling | away/leave alone | outside of classroom | | | |
| plete work | | | | | | |
| ition from | □ Bolting/Running | □ Gets to self-stim | □ Student sent to counselor | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| ition from | □ Biting | □ Gets to escape | □ Student sent to Admin. | | | |
| | | situation | | | | |
| structured | □ Hitting | ☐ Gets to talk to favored | □ Other | | | |
| | | person | | | | |
| | □ Other | □ Other | Duration in Minutes: | | | |
| | 1 | | | | | |

Javion's ABC Data





Final Thoughts on Data

- What are the advantages of documenting on this form over just writing out everything that happened in a narrative format?
- Don't collect data for collection sake make sure informs the process
- Don't "drown" in data keep focused on the question
- Data without context are simply numbers

Examples of Targeted Group Interventions

- The Behavior Education Plan (BEP)
 - Anne Warberg, Nancy George, Robert March, Doris Brown, Kelly Churan, Deanne Crone, Susan Taylor-Greene, Rob Horner, Leanne Hawken
- Robert March & Rob Horner
 - Feasibility and Contributions of Functional Behavioral Assessment in Schools
 - » Journal of Educational and Behavioral Disorders
- Leanne Hawken & Rob Horner
 - Evaluation of a Targeted Group Intervention within a School-wide System of Behavior Support. Journal of Behavioral Education
- Check –in/ Check-out (Bethel) H.U.G (Tigard T)
- Check and Connect (Winston)

CICO Data 2008-2009

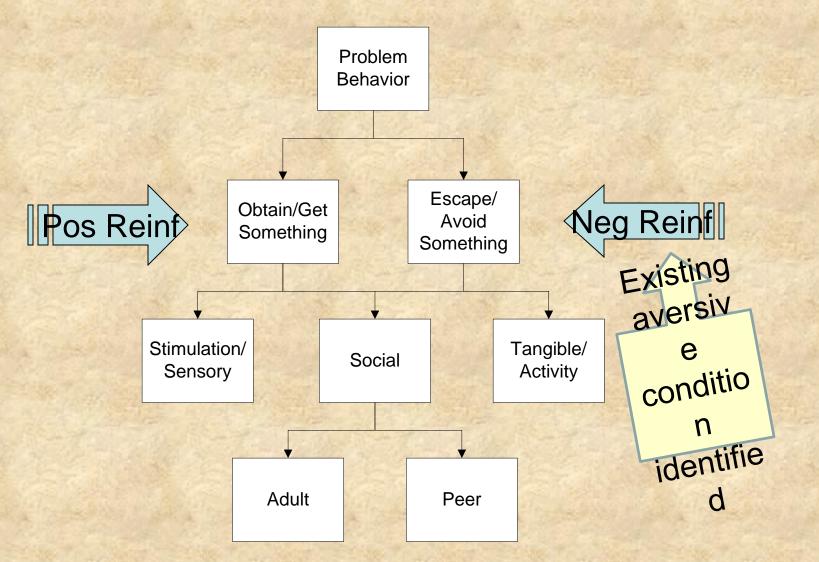
| Student | Referrals per month before CICO | Referrals per month after CICO |
|---------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| SA | .85 | 0 |
| EM | 1.28 | .5 |
| JM | 1.85 | 3.5 |
| BW | 1.42 | .5 |
| AW | 1.42 | .5 |
| SB | 1.71 | O |
| TL | 1.57 | O |
| DM | 1.57 | 1.5 |
| TS | 1.14 | 1.5 |
| MS | 1.42 | 1.5 |
| OS | 1.42 | .5 |
| SS | 1.71 | 1.5 |
| CB | 2.14 | .5 |
| ТВ | .57 | 0 |
| MM | .85 | 1.0 |
| BB | .28 | .5 |
| DH | .14 | 0 |
| KJ | .23 | 3.5 |
| AC AC | .14 | O |
| CD | 3.71 | 4.5 |
| KS | .85 | .5 |

ERASE

Problem Behavior

- xplain What is the problem?
- Reason What is he/she getting out of it or avoiding?
- Appropriate What do you want him/her to do instead?
- Support How can you help this happen more often?
- valuate How will you know if it works?

Only 2 Basic Functions



When working on the wording in a BIP, consider adding steps such as:

- 1. Giving rule clarification in a nice & non-confrontational way. "Hey Joe, there is a rule about . . ."
- 2. Then putting it on the student. "What can we do about it?" OR "I'd like you to take care of it."

Great Resources

- PBIS.org
- Successfulschools.org
- Florida & Missouri PBIS state websites
- www.livesinthebalance.org

Remember

- Escalation and self-control are inversely related.
- The more agitated an individual is, the less that person is able to access rational options of problem solving.

Many thanks for your attention!

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