Behavior Basics

A  Make the right behavior easier.
B  Behavior is an action not a label.
C  Make the right behavior rewarding.
Goals

- Define what behavior is
- To understand some possible causes for “problem” or undesired behavior
- Discuss techniques to manage behavior
What is behavior?

• EVERYTHING that a person does
  – Including physical actions, speaking and thoughts
• Passes the dead man’s test
  – Can a dead man not talk?
  – Can a dead man talk?
Challenging Behavior

• Behavior that poses a challenge to a student’s social or academic development
• Need to think about the function of the behavior
• All challenging behaviors are learned
• REMEMBER: Behavior happens for a reason
Addressing Challenging Behavior

• Behavior that WORKS, will CONTINUE
• Every behavior has a function
• Behavior has TRIGGERS
• Behavior has CONSEQUENCES
• When you try to change behavior it will get WORSE before it gets BETTER
• When behavior no longer works it will go away
How are Challenging Behaviors Learned?

• Through consequences... both intended and unintended
  – Steven strikes his head against the wall. His mom immediately goes to him and consoles him, because she doesn’t want him to hurt himself
  
  • **Unintended consequence:** Steven learns that striking his head against the wall results in his mom’s attention
How are Challenging Behaviors Learned?

• Through consequences... both intended and unintended
  – Sara jumps up and down, flaps her hands, and screams loudly at church. In an attempt to quiet her, dad gives her a piece of candy from his pocket.

  • **Unintended consequence:** Sara learns that screaming, flapping and jumping results in getting candy from dad
ABC’s of Behavior

• There are 3 components to every situation

A • ANTECEDENT
   • What happens before a behavior

B • BEHAVIOR
   • The physical, verbal or mental action

C • CONSEQUENCE
   • What happens after a behavior
Consequences of Behavior

• Behavior is strengthened or weakened by its consequences

• Consequences can have a:
  – Reinforcing effect
    • Increases the likelihood of that behavior happening again
  – Punishing effect
    • Decreases the likelihood of that behavior happening again
  – No effect
Consequences of Behavior

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stimulus</th>
<th>Effect on Behavior</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Increases or Maintained</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Decreases or Eliminated</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presented</td>
<td>Positive Reinforcement</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Positive Punishment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Removed</td>
<td>Negative Reinforcement</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Common Functions of Problem Behavior

• Gain attention from parents, teachers, peers
  – E.g., reprimands, comfort statements, eye contact
• Gain access to preferred items
  – Activities, food
• Escape/Avoid
  – Work, taking a bath, cleaning up, etc.
• Auto reinforcement/stimulation
How Can We Figure Out the Function?

• Step 1: (Behavior)
  – Define the behavior
    • What does it look like?
    • How often does it occur?

• Step 2: (Antecedents)
  – Identifying situations
    • When does the behavior occur? Not occur?
  – Identify places
    • Where does the behavior occur? Not occur?
How Can We Figure Out the Function?

• Step 3: (Consequences)
  – Determine why behavior happens
    • What is the reason?
    • What is the function?
<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Events/factors that occur BEFORE the behavior</td>
<td>DESCRIPTION of the behavior</td>
<td>What is MAINTAINING the behavior</td>
<td>Escape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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ABC Recording Practice

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<td>Mary is talking on the phone</td>
<td>Jose enters the room and starts to sing loudly</td>
<td>Mary stops her conversation and tells Jose to stop</td>
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- Escape
- Tangible
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- Automatic
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<td>Alex wants milk in the morning. His mom is in another room.</td>
<td>Alex starts to scream for his mom to get him milk.</td>
<td>Mom leaves the room and gets up to get milk for Alex. Mom gives Alex a bottle of milk.</td>
<td>??? Escape Tangible Attention Automatic</td>
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Tangible

Automatic
Zory is sitting at her desk and the teacher gives her an assignment she does not like. Zory starts to hit her head. The teacher sends Zory to the reading area and the behavior stops. The teacher sends Zory to the reading area and the behavior stops.

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<td>Children are sitting at their desks. The teacher tells them that they need to treat their friends nicely.</td>
<td>Susan starts to rock and play with her hair.</td>
<td>The teacher ignores Susan but the behavior continues.</td>
<td>Escape&lt;br&gt;Tangible&lt;br&gt;Attention&lt;br&gt;Automatic</td>
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Tangible  
Attention  
**Automatic** |
Now what?

• Once we find out what is reinforcing a behavior....
  – Stop providing the identified reinforcer following the behavior
  – Teach the person a new/appropriate way to access that reinforcer
Replacement Behaviors

• Socially appropriate
• Provide the same result as the challenging behavior
• Be as efficient as the challenging behavior
• Be as easy to do as the challenging behavior
## Replacement Behaviors Examples

- **Johnny**
  - 16 year old male
  - Communicates via 1-2 word utterances

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<td>Teacher is busy with another student or task and not paying attention</td>
<td>Screaming</td>
<td>Teacher asks Johnny to use his inside voice or redirects him to the task</td>
<td>Attention</td>
<td>Asking for attention: “Look”</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Teaching Replacement Behaviors

• Teach in:
  – “Good times”
  – Repeatedly
  – Show the child how it will work for them
  – Demonstrate the behavior-reinforcer contingency
  – Practice it until mastery

• Upon mastery:
  – Prompt it when you see antecedent behaviors
  – Remind the student of the replacement behavior
More Ways to Manage Behavior

• Proactive
  – How to prevent future problems from occurring

• Reactive
  – How to react/intervene when a problem behavior has occurred
Proactive Procedure

• Create a structured and enriched environment
  – Plan ahead and have activities/tasks ready
  – Transition quickly and smoothly
  – Have a routine and follow it
  – Make activities fun and inviting
  – Share ideas with other teachers
Daily Schedule
Classroom Schedule
Visual Task Analysis
Reactive Procedures

• Active ignoring
  – Only works if the child is acting to get your attention

• Not allowing escape
  – Only works if they are reinforced by getting out of work or other activity

• Rewarding appropriate behaviors
  – E.g., asking for attention, help or a break
Reinforcing Appropriate Behaviors

• Deliver reinforcers immediately after the appropriate behavior occurs (if possible)
• Reinforce appropriate alternatives to the problem behavior (*replacement behaviors*)
• Reinforce as often as possible!
Motivational Systems
Motivational Systems

First

Then
Summary

• All behaviors are learned
• We want to set up the environment to encourage appropriate behaviors and reduce inappropriate behaviors
• Knowing why a behavior occurs (the function) will help us in reducing/eliminating the behavior
• At first we want to reinforce all appropriate behaviors every time they happen
Thank you!