

Function Based Support: Brief Overview

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Purpose: Provide an overview of essential practices and systems for supporting accurate and sustained use of a function-based approach to individual student behavior support.

Sections: This overview is organized in 6 sections:

1. Foundations of School-wide Positive Behavior Support
2. Basic Function-based Behavior Support
3. Routine Analysis
4. Functional Behavioral Assessment: Competing Path Analysis
5. Function-based Behavior Intervention Planning
6. Function-based Approach to Consultation: Example

1. FOUNDATIONS OF SCHOOL FUNCTION-BASED SUPPORTS

Prerequisite	Criteria	Rating
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School-wide practices and systems (Tier I) implemented with high integrity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • >80% on SET • >70% on BoQ • >80% of students 0-1 major ODR 	Yes No ?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom-wide practices and systems (Tier I) implemented with high integrity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom routines taught & displayed • Continuum of positive behavior supports in place 	Yes No ?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School-based behavior support team (Tier II-III) in place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team meets biweekly • Behavior specialists • Function-based support approach 	Yes No ?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expert behavior support capacity available in school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tier II specialized group-based interventions • Tier III specialized individual, function-based behavior intervention planning • School-based wraparound 	Yes No ?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data system for decision making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quarterly screening of all students • Weekly progress monitoring of students on Tier II/III plans 	Yes No ?

2. FUNCTION-BASED SUPPORTS: BASICS

Basic Steps	Outcome
1. Document that prerequisites in place	Above
2. Review existing data on student academic & behavior strengths & weaknesses, & current intervention plans	Current level of functioning
3. Describe variations of problem & expected behavior	Response classes and chains
4. Conduct routine analysis for day &/or period	Priority settings/conditions for implementation
5. Conduct FBA in priority settings/conditions	Testable hypothesis: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting events • Triggering antecedent events • Problem behaviors • Maintaining consequence events (function)
6. Develop behavior plan for priority settings/conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting event manipulations • Antecedent manipulations • Behavior teaching procedures • Consequence Manipulations
7. Develop plan for implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Materials • Implementer scripts • Implementer training • Schedule • Implementation checklist

3. ROUTINE ASSESSMENT¹

Student _____ Date _____

Person(s) Completing Assessment _____

1. What skills/strengths does student display during transitions, typical activities and routines, etc.?

2. What do typical problem behaviors look like during transitions, typical activities and routines, etc.?

(1)

(2)

(3)

Time, Period, Activity	Typical Problem Behavior(s) (# above)	Typical Triggering Antecedent(s)	Typical Maintaining Consequence(s)	Likelihood of Problem Behavior (Low, Med, High)
				L M H ?
				L M H ?
				L M H ?
				L M H ?
				L M H ?
				L M H ?
				L M H ?
				L M H ?
				L M H ?
				L M H ?

¹ Adapted from O'Neill et al., 1994

4. COMPETING PATH ANALYSIS²

		(5) Desired Behaviors (DB)	(6) Typical Consequence Events
(4) Setting Events Affecting Behaviors	(2) Triggering Antecedents	(1) Problem Behaviors (PB)	(3) Maintaining Consequence Events
		(7) Alternative Behaviors (AB)	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. b. c. d. 	

² Adapted from O'Neill et al., 1994

5. BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION PLANNING³

Setting Event Manipulations	Antecedent Manipulations	Teaching Behavior Procedures	Consequence Manipulations
Neutralize SE	Add for DB/AB	AB	Add for DB/AB
Eliminate SE	Remove for PB	DB	Remove for PB

³ Adapted from O'Neill et al., 1994

6. FUNCTION-BASED APPROACH TO CONSULTATION: EXAMPLE

Email Request: “We have a child in our preschool with Downs Syndrome. He enjoys hitting and pushing peers - he does it across multiple environments and he does it almost looking for a reaction. He has the language to interact in a more 'appropriate' way so it isn't his only option for engaging with peers. He pushes hard enough to knock kids over. All things have been tried - the time outs that shouldn't be used are being tried as a last resort, but we have also tried substituting a more appropriate behavior 'give Jane a high five', noticing non-pushing and hitting times, rewarding with 'prizes' for short periods of non-aggressive behaviors, we have up picture schedules and picture cues of positive interactions with friends, we are using social stories about the good things we do with our hands and positive ways of interacting - we have tried many things, but still if there is an opportunity to push or hit and he does it. Can you point me in the right direction of addressing this problem using the framework.”

George's Response: “Sounds like you've been doing what needs to be considered/done. Given that I'm outsider not knowing all the specifics, please consider the following as possibilities.....I might have your team consider the following:

First, focus on (a) increasing adult active supervision (i.e., proximity, scanning, interactions) and (b) identifying the 4 or 5 times, places, etc. where the problem has been occurring most often (e.g., independent play, small group, waiting for snack).

And then do more of the following:

1. It does sound like his hitting/pushing are attention (reaction) maintained (especially peers), and I'd build all my strategies around that hypothesis.
2. You are smart to focus on teaching alternatives, especially those that also get him lots of peer attention (i.e., same thing that maintains problem behavior). I would be sure to continue and keep his reward/reinforcer schedule rich and frequent for two kinds of appropriate behaviors: (a) general appropriate (e.g., good hands, following directions, etc.) and if possible have peers deliver or co-deliver with adults and (b) specific alternatives behaviors that result in peer attention (e.g., say hello, give xxx this). Use access-to-peers as often as possible as a reinforcer (e.g., "nice job, you can visit with XX for 2 minutes" "you worked hard by yourself, you can pick a friend to XXX")
3. Consider upping the big peer attention reinforcer for an accumulation of X number of small appropriate peer contacts. For example, "when you do 5 of these appropriately, you can play with XXX for 5 minutes."
4. Consider increasing his opportunities to play with peers when he's being appropriate. Also identify early signs that an inappropriate hit/push is likely (e.g., out of seat, increase voice level, verbal noncompliance), and as soon as they are observed, remove peers for brief period of time. When he is calmed, he can return and be sure that he gets some form of immediate peer attention.
6. Teach and practice ways he can get peer attention, and be sure that he gets it when he uses those behaviors (e.g., "Can I play with XXX?" "I want to visit with XXX?").

The above require consistent applications/supervision, which might be difficult all day....so, focus on those 4-5 high priority times.

Well....there are my ideas. You should be cautious with them because I don't know all the specifics (i.e., I'm guessing based on what you've described). The most important action is to work these and other strategies through with the **team** of individuals who are working with the kid, and keep the idea prominent that his problem behaviors seem to be **maintained by access to peer attention**, maybe under conditions of not having much peer contact. In addition, **create as many opportunities** for him to experience access to peer attention for engaging in appropriate peer-access behavior.

Food for thought....hope they are helpful.

George”