Overcoming Behavioral Challenges in the Classroom

Meme Hieneman, Ph.D., BCBA

Applied Behavior Analysis Services
All Children's Hospital

Agenda

- Case Examples: What would you do?
- Background: Evolving Practices
- Understanding Behavior (FBA)
- Developing Interventions
- Case Examples: Interventions
- Classroom-Wide Behavior Support
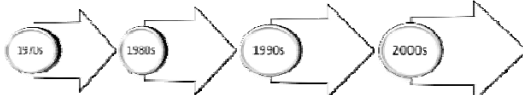- Reflections and Discussion

---

What Would You Do?

Grant

Grant has tantrums lasting up to 45 minutes every day, sometimes destroying materials and hurting his classmates
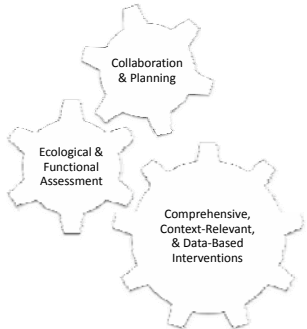
Suzie

Suzie only discusses a limited range of topics (mostly related to space travel) and avoids daily activities at home and school; when pressured to participate, she hums or cries

---

PBS: Evolution of An Applied Science

Basic Principles & Procedures	Assessment-Based Methods	Comprehensive Intervention	Multi-level applications
Contingency management	Functional analysis	Antecedent-based strategies	Collaboration with stakeholders
Consequence-based methods	Individualized intervention	FBA/ecological assessment	Contextual fit (practicality)
Basic Teaching strategies	Targeted skills instruction (e.g., communication	Multi-component interventions in context	Systems change (e.g., Rti)

Elements of Effective Intervention

Collaboration & Planning

Ecological & Functional Assessment

Comprehensive, Context-Relevant, & Data-Based Interventions

Understanding Behavior
Functional Behavioral Assessment

- Define specific target behaviors and identify which behaviors "go together"
- Identify the of consequences maintaining behavior – what the child gets or avoids

  social interaction   sensations

  toys, items or activities   delay/escape

- Determine the contexts in which the behaviors occur (Ws – when, where, with whom, what)

Interview Questions

- What are _____'s greatest strengths and interests?

- What specifically is ___ doing that is of concern to you?

- Under what circumstances do these behaviors occur most?
  Who?   What?   Where? When?

- Under what circumstances do these behaviors occur least?
  Who?   What?   Where? When?

- What do you think _____ gets or avoids through these behaviors?

- Is there anything else you think might be affecting _____'s behavior?

ABC Observation

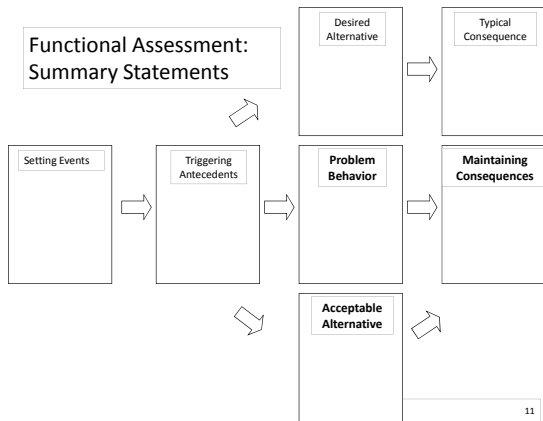| What happened before behavior	What the child said or did	What happened after behavior

Grant's Behavior Patterns

Tantrums (and aggression) occur when:
- *A routine is disrupted or one of Grant's rules is broken - he regains control of the situation and gets his way*
- *Grant asks for something and is told no - he gets what he wants or something else*
- *Adults pay attention to a peers or siblings - he gets the adult's attention back*
- *Grant is involved in activities that require him to take turns – he gets to leave the situation and play by himself*

Suzie's Behavior Patterns

- *When Suzie is asked by an adult or peer to physically participate in activities, she refuses, walks away, or talks about outer space. If they demand cooperation, she hums loudly and cries. As a result, she is usually able to avoid these activities and social interactions.*
- *Suzie is most resistant to participating in activities when she has to stop doing something she enjoys, if the situation is particularly socially demanding, or the expectations are unclear.*

Functional Assessment: Summary Statements

| Setting Events | Triggering Antecedents | Problem Behavior | Maintaining Consequences |

Desired Alternative → Typical Consequence

Acceptable Alternative

11

Comprehensive Intervention
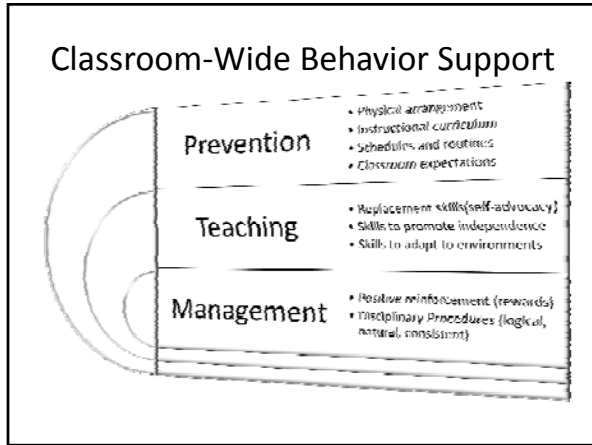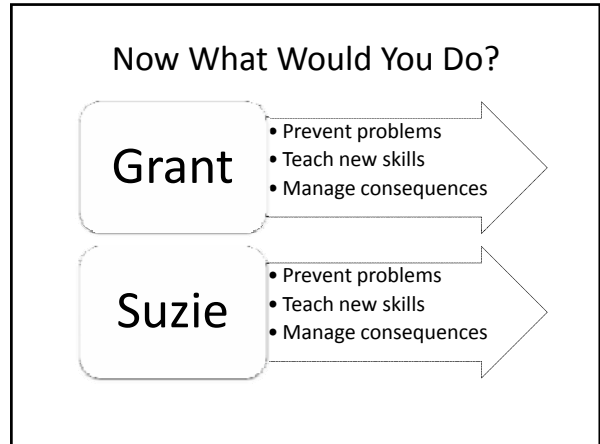### What Works?

Proactive Strategies
- curricular modifications
- choice or preference
- "neutralizing" routines
- behavioral momentum
- activity schedules

Educative Strategies
- systematic instruction
- functional communication training
- incidental teaching
- differential reinforcement

Behavior plans include proactive, educative, and functional intervention strategies

Components of Behavior Support Plans

What circumstances set the stage for the problem behavior:	What is the individual currently doing that is of concern?	What outcomes does the individual achieve (get/avoid) through his or her behavior?
How can we prevent problems: • Avoid difficult situations • Make problem situations better • Add cues to prompt good behavior	What would we like the individual to do instead ('replacement' behavior)? How will I teach them to do this?	How will we respond to the individual's behavior to • Reinforce positive behavior? • Withhold reinforce-ment for misbehavior?
What broad changes can be made to improve the individual's (and/or family's) quality of life?		

Now What Would You Do?

Grant
- Prevent problems
- Teach new skills
- Manage consequences

Suzie
- Prevent problems
- Teach new skills
- Manage consequences

Classroom-Wide Behavior Support

Prevention
- Physical arrangement
- Instructional curriculum
- Schedules and routines
- Classroom expectations

Teaching
- Replacement skills (self-advocacy)
- Skills to promote independence
- Skills to adapt to environments

Management
- Positive reinforcement (rewards)
- Disciplinary procedures (logical, natural, consistent)

Reflections: Making it Work

- Develop clear, positive goals
- Engage parents/staff as partners
- Seek an understanding of behavior
- Use prevent-teach-manage principles
- Make sure interventions really "fit"
- Monitor and evaluate outcomes

Questions? Answers?

Meme Hieneman, Ph.D., BCBA
Applied Behavior Analysis Services
All Children's Hospital
727-767-8303
allkids.org/ABA

Behavior Support Plan

Student: _____   Date: _____

What circumstances set the stage for _____'s behavior:	What is _____ currently doing that is of concern?	What outcomes does _____ get or avoid through the behavior?
Prevention: How will I change these things to prevent problems?	**Teaching**: What would I like _____ to do instead ('replacement' behavior)?	**Management**: How will I respond to _____'s behavior to…
Avoid difficult situations:		Reward positive behavior?
Make problem situations better:	How will I teach this?	
Add cues to prompt good behavior:		Not reward problem behavior?

Functional Behavioral Assessment and Positive Interventions
Benchmarks of Effective Practice

FEATURES	BENCHMARKS OF QUALITY	NOTES
Goals of Intervention/ Team Process *IEP/intervention team Goals of intervention Target behaviors Baseline estimates Consensus decision-making*	IEP/intervention team is involved in the assessment and intervention process; this team includes key stakeholders from all relevant settings (e.g., student, teachers, parents, others involved in direct support) Broad goals of intervention are determined (e.g., improved peer relationships, greater participation in integrated activities) Specific behaviors of concern are defined in observable terms (what the student says or does that is problematic) Baseline estimates of behaviors of concern are established; these reflect objective measures (e.g., frequency, duration, intensity) Team achieves consensus regarding the target behaviors and goals of intervention	
FBA: Gathering Information (data) *Records review Interviews Observations*	Pertinent records have been reviewed (e.g., academic records, discipline referrals, child study notes, anecdotals, evaluations, interventions) Functional assessment interviews have been conducted with more than one person (e.g., student, parent, teacher, related service provider) who interact with the student within different settings and activities Direct observations have been conducted across relevant circumstances (e.g., multiple settings, over time) and by more than one observer Other assessments (curricular, ecological, etc.) are conducted, as needed, to determine broader variables affecting student behavior Tools used produce objective information regarding events preceding and following behavior, as well as ecological and motivational variables that may be affecting the student's behavior Information is collected until patterns are evident	
FBA: Hypotheses (summary statements) *Pattern analysis Summary statements (hypotheses)*	Patterns are identified from the information collected that include: 1) circumstances in which the behaviors of concern are most and least likely (e.g.., where, when, with whom) and 2) specific functions the behavior appears to serve for the student (i.e., what they get or avoid) Broader variables (e.g., curriculum, activity patterns) that may be affecting the student=s behavior are identified Patterns are summarized into written summary statements or hypotheses; these statements are clear, concise, and accurate (i.e., based on data) Team consensus is achieved regarding patterns addressed in the summary statements	

Hieneman, M., Dunlap, G., & Kincaid, D. (2005). Positive Support Strategies for Students with Behavioral Disorders in General Education Settings. *Psychology in the Schools, 4*2, 780-794. (Developed by Florida's State Training Team in collaboration with Florida's PBS Project)

| Behavioral Intervention Plans

Hypothesis-based intervention
Intervention plan components:
    environmental modifications
    replacement skills
    managing consequences
Crisis management
IEP/other support | Intervention strategies are clearly linked to the functional assessment information (hypotheses/ summary statements)
IEP/intervention team designs a behavioral intervention plan that includes:
    descriptions of the behaviors of concern, goals of intervention, and patterns identified through the functional assessment
    modifications to the social or physical environment that may prevent problem behavior and /or increase the likelihood of alternative appropriate behaviors
    specific behaviors (skills) to be taught and/or reinforced that will: a) achieve the same function as the problem behavior, and b) allow the student to cope more effectively with their circumstances
    strategies for managing consequences so that reinforcement is: a) maximized for positive behavior, and b) minimized for problem behavior
Goals of intervention and specific replacement skills are incorporated into the student=s overall educational plan (e.g., IEP)
If necessary to insure safety and rapid deescalation of the student's behavior, crisis management procedures and criteria for their use are determined
Behavioral intervention plan facilitates achievement of broad goals identified by the team, and promotes the durability of behavior change
Everyone working with the student on a regular basis is familiar with the behavioral intervention plan and agrees to implement its strategies | |
| Implementation, Monitoring, and Evaluation

Training & resources
Action planning
Monitoring:
    implementation
    outcomes
Team communication
Plan modification | Training and resources needed to insure implementation of the behavioral intervention plan are made available to the team
An action plan for implementation is developed, including specific objectives/activities, persons responsible, and time lines
Plan implementation is monitored (e.g. through reports and observations) to insure that strategies are used consistently across intervention settings
Objective information is collected to evaluate the effective-ness of the behavioral intervention plan; this information includes:
    decreases in problem behavior
    increases in replacement skills and/or alternative behaviors
    achievement of broader goals
    durability of behavior change
Team communicates consistently (based on time lines determined by the team) to review student progress and make necessary adjustments to the behavioral intervention plan | |

Hieneman, M., Dunlap, G., & Kincaid, D. (2005). Positive Support Strategies for Students with Behavioral Disorders in General Education Settings. *Psychology in the Schools, 42*, 780-794. (Developed by Florida's State Training Team in collaboration with Florida's PBS Project)

Classroom Management Inventory

Teacher/Class: _____ School: _____ Date: _____

Physical Arrangement	Yes	No	NA	Notes
Are the temperature, lighting, and setting comfortable?				
Are materials needed for lessons easily accessible?				
Are unused materials and equipment stored out of the way?				
Do students/teacher have a place to keep personal belongings?				
Are unnecessary auditory and visual stimuli minimized?				
Is the seating arrangement conducive to instruction/learning?				
Can students be supervised easily by the classroom teacher?				
Are areas of the classroom designated by purpose/activity?				
Comments:				

Instructional Curriculum	Yes	No	NA	Notes
Are lessons/activities introduced without significant delay?				
Does the teacher vary methods of presentation (e.g.. direct instruction, small group activities)?				
Are students engaged in lessons through questions/activities?				
Are students given consistent feedback for work completed?				
Are activities varied based on needs of individual learners?				
Are back-up activities planned to minimize 'down time?'				
Do other instructional characteristics appear adequate:				
- task difficulty, length, pacing				
- incorporation of student preferences				
- clear, functional outcomes of tasks				
Comments:				

Schedule and Routines	Yes	No	NA	Notes
Is a schedule of activities posted (including 'reward' time)?				
Are low and high-preference activities interspersed?				
Are challenging activities scheduled at 'peak' times?				
Is the length of activities based on the students' attention span?				
Are there specific routines for:				
- entering/exiting the classroom				
- distributing/returning materials?				
- requesting assistance?				

Schedule and Routines (continued)	Yes	No	NA	Notes
- completing classroom responsibilities?				
- asking permission to change activity?				
- transitions between activities/settings?				
Comments:				

Classroom Expectations	Yes	No	NA	Notes
Is there a clear vision and goals for this classroom?				
Are there pre-established classroom rules/expectations?				
Are the rules positively stated (i.e., behavior expected)?				
Are the rules clear (i.e., everyone knows what to do)?				
Are the rules posted and reviewed periodically?				
Is there a system for teaching and practicing classroom rules?				
Are rules modified/clarified across circumstances as needed?				
Comments:				

Positive Reinforcement	Yes	No	NA	Notes
Are expected behaviors (i.e., adhering to rules) defined?				
Are rewards/recognition given to students for following rules (e.g., feedback, praise, activities, tokens/points)?				
Are the rewards age-appropriate and matched to preferences?				
Are the types and amounts of rewards appropriate to behavior?				
Is praise given at a higher rate than correction (e.g., 4:1)?				
Is access to rewards controlled when rewards are not earned?				
Are the types and presentation of rewards varied?				
Comments:				

Disciplinary Procedures	Yes	No	NA	Notes
Are problem behaviors (i.e., rule violations) clearly defined?				
Are disciplinary procedures reviewed with the students?				
Are specific consequences delivered for engaging in these behaviors (e.g., planned ignoring, time-out, restitution)				
Are students reminded of their choices when problems occur?				
Are consequences delivered consistently and respectfully?				
Are criteria for office referrals clearly defined?				
If a school-wide system exists, are classroom expectations, rewards, and consequences consistent with that system?				

Comments (disciplinary procedures):				

Data-based Decision Making	Yes	No	NA	Notes
Are data collected to evaluate changes in student behavior?				
Are data collected to assess academic progress (e.g., grades)?				
Are data collected to monitor overall classroom functioning?				
Are disciplinary actions and crisis interventions recorded?				
Are these data reviewed on a regular basis?				
When data reflect problem areas, are they addressed?				
Comments:				

Individual Student Supports	Yes	No	NA	Notes
Are individualized plans in place for students who are not responding to the classroom system?				
Are individualized strategies (e.g., IEP goals) implemented and evaluated consistently?				
Are students with special needs integrated with typical peers to the greatest extent possible?				
Are strategies in place for supporting integration/socialization?				
Is there a system for communicating with parents regularly?				
Comments:				

Sources:
Classroom Management Inventory. Behavioral Guidelines Manual. Hernando County Schools.
Initial Classroom Assessment. Florida's Positive Behavior Support Project, DARES/FMHI/USF.
Positive Environment Checklist. Proactive Behavioral Support. Specialized Training Project,
University of Oregon.