CHALLENGING BEHAVIOR DURING ASSESSMENTS
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About Me
- Licensed psychologist at Integrated Health in Southaven, MS
- Board Certified Behavior Analyst
- Conduct evaluations to rule out ASD and related disorders
- Worked at the Boling Center for Developmental Disabilities and provided training on behavior management to various disciplines

About our talk
1. General discussion of applied behavior analysis
2. Elaborate on the influences of learning
3. Learn about the three-term contingency
4. Outline steps of determining the function of a behavior
5. Implement an appropriate function-based intervention to survive an assessment
“Behavior”

- Behavior is anything a person does that:
  - Creates a change in his/her environment
  - Is observable
  - Is measurable

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<th>Examples</th>
<th>Nonexamples</th>
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<tr>
<td>Asking for help</td>
<td>Feeling anxious</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hitting head</td>
<td>Being bored</td>
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<td>Throwing chair</td>
<td>Acting scared</td>
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<tr>
<td>Requesting item</td>
<td>In pain</td>
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<td>Verbal perseverations</td>
<td>Thinking</td>
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What behaviors do you see with your clients?

- Topography of behavior - what a behavior looks like
“learning”

- Learning is the development of skills
- Learning is an experience that changes behavior
- It is as important to prompt clients with what to do instead of focusing on what not to do
  - Ex: “I want Johnny to stop running.”

Influences on learning

Influences on learning
Personal characteristics

- Biological
  - Illness, pain, injury

- Preferences
  - Activities, items, people

- Strengths/Needs

- Diagnoses
  - Reading disability
  - Autism
  - Social/emotional

Influences on learning

- Personal Characteristics
- Environment

- Physical Factors
  - Setting (classroom, lunch, playground, reading nook)

- Social Aspects
  - Antecedents
  - Consequences
Influences on learning

Skill or learned behavior can be thought of as a three term contingency

The Three-Term Contingency

*Antecedent (A)*

- What occurs immediately before the behavior
- Every behavior takes place in the context of a particular situation or set of antecedent conditions.
- Can influence behavior change when manipulated
The Three-Term Contingency

**Consequence (C)**
- What happens immediately after the behavior
- Determines the probability of future occurrences

**ABC Model**

A Antecedent
Mr. Walters asks Juan to put away his backpack

B Behavior
Juan screams and hits Mr. Walters

C Consequence
Mr. Walters takes Juan's backpack and puts it away for him.

**ABC Model**

A Antecedent
Mom asks Portia to put on her shoes

B Behavior
Portia puts on her shoes

C Consequence
Mom tells Portia "good job" and gives her a hug
ABC Model

A Antecedent
Mrs. Jacobs asks Henry to write his name

B Behavior
Henry breaks the pencil

C Consequence
Mrs. Jacobs sends Henry to the time-out room

A-B-C Examples

- Child and mother are in candy aisle
- A child asks for candy
- Mother says “no”
- Child screams “I want candy”
- Mother says “no”
- Child throws self on floor
- Mother picks the child up and takes her out of the store
- Child continues screaming

Behavior is affected by stimulus changes that occur **prior to** and immediately **after** the behavior

That is the three-term contingency
ABC Model (Three term contingency)

- Antecedent
- Behavior
- Consequence

Taken together, the antecedents and consequences will identify the FUNCTION of the behavior.

 Sometimes you can intervene during the antecedent to problem behavior, this is called an antecedent intervention.

- Antecedent means BEFORE- so these are strategies you should do BEFORE problem behaviors occur.
Antecedent-based interventions

1. Behavior specific praise
2. Precorrection
3. Premack principle
4. Rules and routines
5. Behavioral momentum

Behavior-specific praise

Examples
- Thank you for keeping your hands to yourself, Ana!
- Great job being quiet, Jayveon!
- Jaime, I like that you are sitting.
- Great job trying!
- Laura, excellent job following directions!

Nonexamples
- Don’t touch him!
- Good job!
- Way to go!
- Stop that!
- That’s not nice! We don’t behave that way here!

What is Behavior Specific Praise?

- Behavior Specific Praise (BSP): Praise statements that include reference to the specific behavior for which the student is being recognized (Birnley, 1981; Sutherland, Wanser, & Cooperman, 2005).

- Key Components
  - Praise statement must be linked to a behavior
  - Provide feedback specific to the behavior
  - Be sincere
  - Reflect skill level
  - Evaluate effectiveness
  - Praise effort – not ability

(Haydon, Musti-Rao, 2011, p. 31)
Precorrection

• What is precorrection?
  • Identified predictable contexts that often result in problem behavior and provides students with supports, prompts, and reinforcement for engaging in appropriate behavior

Precorrection

• Brief reminder of the behavior you are looking for and potential reinforcers available
• Precorrection provided to a group of children
  • “We are about to walk in the hallway. Remember, we use walking feet and quiet voices.”
• Precorrection provided to an individual child
  • “Zane, it is your turn to sit at the computer with Molly. Remember, we need to take turns. That means you use the mouse for five minutes, and then Molly gets a turn with the mouse for five minutes. I’ll set the timer.”
• Precorrection

Premack Principle

• “Grandma’s rule” (Cipani, 2008)
• To get a less preferred behavior to occur, reinforce it with a more preferred behavior
  • “If you eat your vegetables you will get dessert
• What are some examples you have seen in your placement?
Behavioral Momentum

- Tasks with a high probability of success are presented in succession to increase the learner's motivation to persist with more difficult task that follows.
- Response persistence with difficult tasks occurs as a result of a high rate of reinforcement.
  - behavioral momentum

If you have tried these techniques and they are not successful, you may need to look closer and determine the function of the behavior.
Consequence-based strategies

• To implement consequence-based strategies you need to think about the FUNCTION of the behavior

Functions of behavior

1. Access peer/adult attention
2. Avoid peer/adult attention
3. Escape from a task
4. Access a tangible/activity
5. Self-stimulatory

Identify the function of the behavior

1. Access peer/adult attention
2. Avoid peer/adult attention
3. Escape from a task
4. Access a tangible/activity
5. Self-stimulatory

These are the same For ALL individuals
multiply-maintained behavior

- When one behavior serves multiple functions . . . Attention? Escape? Self-Stimulatory?
- Self-injurious behavior
  - Self-injury research shows that students who begin to engage in self-injury between ages 2-4, are most likely due to self-stimulatory behavior, but as students get older, these behaviors are shaped to serve multiple functions.

Behavior support plan

- Identify an intervention based on:
  1. Function of the behavior
  2. Personal characteristics
  3. Diagnostic characteristics
- Should focus on teaching a replacement behavior

Mrs. Waters asks Juan to put away his backpack

Problem Behavior
- Juan screams and hits Mrs. Waters

Consequence
- Mrs. Waters puts away his backpack for Juan

Antecedent
- Mrs. Waters asks Juan to put away his backpack
Possible function-based interventions:

**Tangible**
- Requesting attention through sign, gesture, or phrase
- Planned ignoring (differential reinforcement)
- Noncontingent attention
- Token economy to earn attention
- Requesting tangible through sign, gesture, or phrase
- Restricted access to tangible
- Token economy to earn tangible

**Escape**
- Request break through sign, gesture, or phrase
- Precorrection to teach skills
- Token economy to earn break
- Social story to teach skills
QUESTIONS?

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