



Module Three
Behavior Support Plans

Training Outcomes

1. Participants will understand the role of functional assessment in developing behavior support plans.
2. Participants will understand components of good behavior support plans.

Module Three

Behavior Support Plans

A positive behavior support plan (BSP) is written as a protocol for those who are supporting the person with challenging behaviors. The objective is to have a written plan that assures consistency in approach and holds people to accountability (O'Neill, et. al., 1997).

The plan has elements to describe that environments can be modified, what new skills are to be taught and how to teach them, and it predicts how a person will respond to problematic or positive behavior. Many people think of a behavior support plan as an approach to change a person's behavior. However, the purpose of a BSP is to change the behavior of those who are supporting the person.

A behavior support plan is built from a functional assessment of the problem behavior. There are two critical questions to ask when designing the BSP from the functional assessment:

1. Is there a logical link to the functional assessment? The intervention strategies selected should relate to the findings in the functional assessment and address the hypothesis statement.
2. Is the plan being written to be a good fit for the people implementing the plan? Will it be workable in the situation?

Many problem behaviors can be altered with changes in the environment. Many people are responsive to well planned and positive environments.

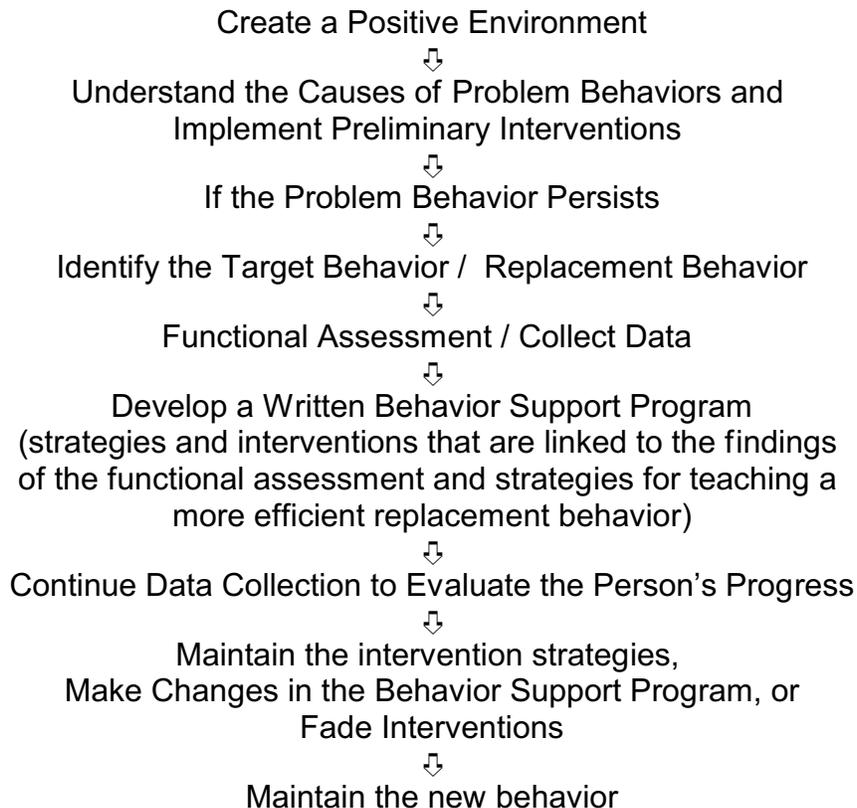
An example: A teacher is having difficulty with several students talking out on a regular basis. The teacher starts increasing the ratio of positives to students that are gaining attention appropriately by raising their hands. She refuses to respond to the other students talking out. Soon all students are raising their hands. This is a good example of a teacher shaping the environment with a simple intervention.

People with more challenging behaviors often do not redirect and shape as easily. A question that always seems to surface is when is it a good time to develop a behavior plan.

When considering how much to intervene with a problem behavior it is good to consider two criteria:

1. The degree of the problem behavior limiting the person's success; and
2. If the presentation of the problem behavior is intrusive to others.

Approach to Problem Behaviors



Behavior support plans can look different in design. They vary in size depending on the complexity of the person and the presentation of challenging behaviors. In simple situations the plan may be brief and require simple documentation. More complex situations may require a sophisticated plan and careful documentation as the plan is implemented.

Several criteria can identify the behavior plan as a positive plan (Horner, Sugai, Todd, & Palmer).

1. There Is an Understanding of How the Person Perceives and Experiences Events in Their Environment.

The specific experiences of the person and events in their environment are understood in relationship to how the person responds to the social network.

Examples: disabilities, psychological characteristics, social factors, medical conditions, changes in routines, or other factors that affect the person's daily experience.

2. The Plan Invests in Preventing Occurrence of Problem Behavior.

The plan focuses on strategies to modify the environment, adapt situations, or other accommodations to make the person successful.

3. Teaching Is a Primary Focus.

The behavior support plan should have instructional objectives. Recent research demonstrates that teaching is the single most powerful strategy in lasting behavioral change.

4. The Plan Avoids Rewarding Problem Behavior.

People inadvertently reward the behavior they consider the most challenging. People tend to pay more attention to problem behavior than appropriate behavior.

5. The Plan Focuses on Rewarding Positive Behaviors.

More attention is focused on what people do right.

6. There Is a Description of What People Do in the Most Difficult Situations.

The plan provides procedures in the event that the person needs additional support.

There are some common characteristics of effective behavior support plans.

Components of Behavior Support Plans:

1. Identifying information
2. Rationale for the BSP
3. Positive Characteristics of the Person (Horner, Albin et. al., 2000)
4. Description of the Target Behaviors and Replacement Behaviors
 - Observable and Measurable descriptors (avoid using diagnostic labels)
 - Baseline
 - Outcomes (O'Neill et. al., 1997)

There are times when a person engages in several intense behaviors and other smaller, disruptive behaviors are ignored. It is important to identify all behaviors that are maintained by the same function.

Example: John yells, screams, throws over desks.

He lays down on the floor curled up with his face

toward the floor. The hypothesis is that he does this to escape doing what he is asked. It is easy to become focused on the intense behaviors of yelling, screaming, throwing over desks, which allow him to escape. Laying quietly, John continues to escape because the behavior was not identified.

5. Specific Intervention Strategies That Are Linked to the Functional Assessment to Reduce the Probability of the Problem Behavior and Encourage Teaching New Skills and Replacement Behaviors
6. Crisis Intervention Protocol if Warranted
7. Guidelines for any Intrusive Interventions
8. Data Collection Methods, Evaluation Procedures
9. Staff Training



Define baseline:

What are some characteristics of a hypothesis statement?

What does it mean to have a link between the functional assessment and the behavior support plan?

Selecting Interventions for the Behavior Support Plan:

There is a range of interventions that can be used to link the functional assessment to a treatment plan. Team creativity is often the best source of determining an intervention that is a good fit for the person and those implementing the plan. Specific interventions will be discussed in Module 4 Interventions.

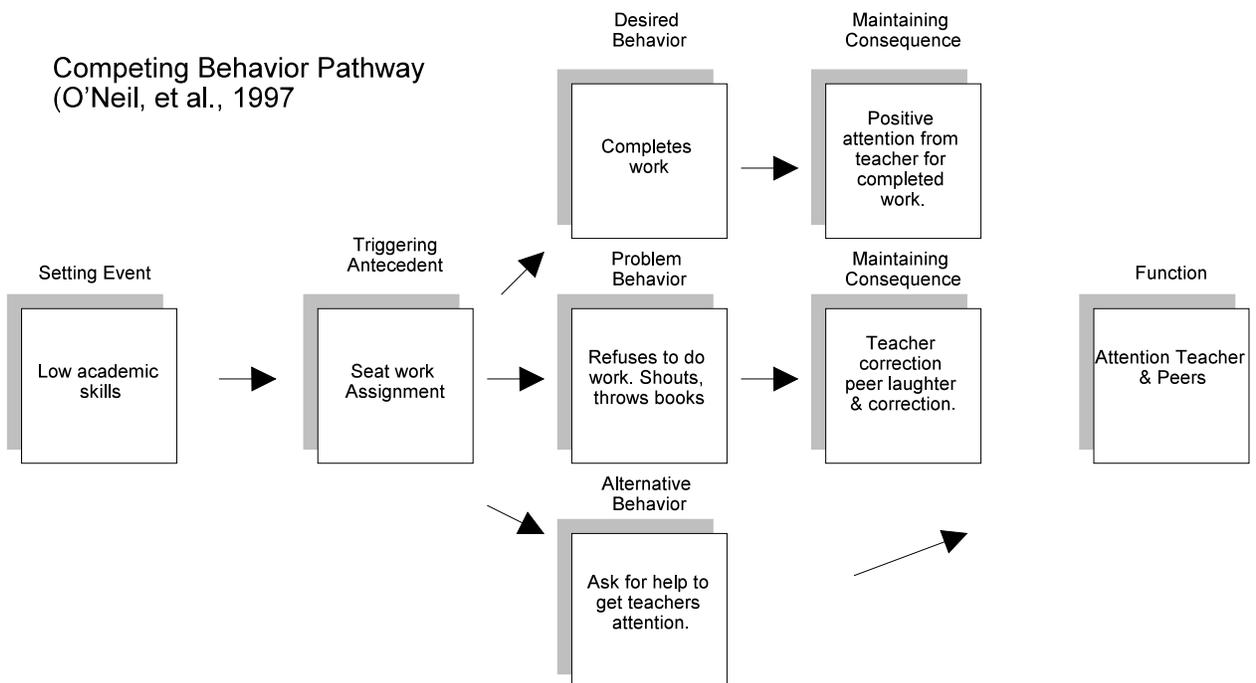
Model for Developing the Behavior Plan:

O'Neill discusses a popular concept in plan development in his book Functional Assessment of Problem Behavior: A Practical Handbook. It is called a competing behavior model. The focus is to reduce problem behavior and increase appropriate replacement behaviors.

The theory behind the model is to build a Competing Behavior Pathway. The concept is that a person can not engage in two competing behaviors. For example, a person cannot be up walking around if they are sitting at the table eating dinner. To build the model the behavioral consultant would take the hypothesis statement and identify competing desirable behaviors to the problem behavior. They would then identify strategies to make the problem behavior non functional or inefficient for the person and make the appropriate competing behavior more functional for the person. This could occur by modifying the environment, changing routines, changing reinforcement approaches, etc.

Example:

When asked by the teacher to do a task, Jake refuses to do work, he yells “no,” at the teacher, he throws his book on the floor. Jake likes teacher and peer attention.



Setting Event Strategies	Antecedent Strategies	Behavior Teaching Strategies	Consequence Strategies
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assess expectation and demand. 2. Start with a limited amount of problems, add others as a reward for work. 3. 1:1 instruction time or giving directions. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 1:1 time to define expectation and explain assignment. 2. When Jake works for 10 minutes he gets 5 minutes of activity from the choice table. 3. Teacher interaction every 3 - 5 minutes. 4. Move desk closer to teacher area 5. Alternate hard subject area with a preferred subject area. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Teach gaining attention appropriately (Boy's Town Social Skill) 2. Teach asking for help and waiting without disruption. 3. Set daily goal with Jake. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Token economy for meeting expectation (ticket). 2. Chart mover. 3. Ignore inappropriate attention getting response. 4. Bonus point at end of day for meeting daily goal. 5. Use token to buy preferred tangibles.



The instructor will hand out an Example and a competing behavior pathway form. Read the example and complete the competing behavior pathway form.

The competing behavior pathway will become the plan for putting together the behavior support plan. The plan will individualize approaches that will meet the person's needs. Detailed instruction and procedure will be developed to help all staff be consistent.

Monitoring and Evaluating the Behavior Support Plan

Good planning is the best way to assure the success of the behavior support plan. Some ways to increase the success of the behavior support plan:

1. Team based plans have more success. Involving people directly supporting the person in the functional assessment process and development of the plan, empowers more ownership as a team.
2. Assure that people implementing the plan have appropriate training that is on going.
3. Problem solve and determine if strategies and interventions match the setting events, antecedents, and consequences found in the functional assessment.
4. Include the person the plan is developed for, to have some involvement in the functional assessment and development of the plan.

The only way to assure good monitoring is to continue the data collection methods selected during the functional assessment. After the plan is implemented, the data helps determine the success of the intervention plan. The objective would assess how the strategies in the behavior plan relate to the problem behavior and the replacement behavior. The objective is to decrease problem behavior and increase the rate of presentation of the replacement behavior.

Continued graphing helps display how the target behavior is responding to plan implementation. When graphing, it is important to indicate any change in intervention to determine the response of the target behavior.

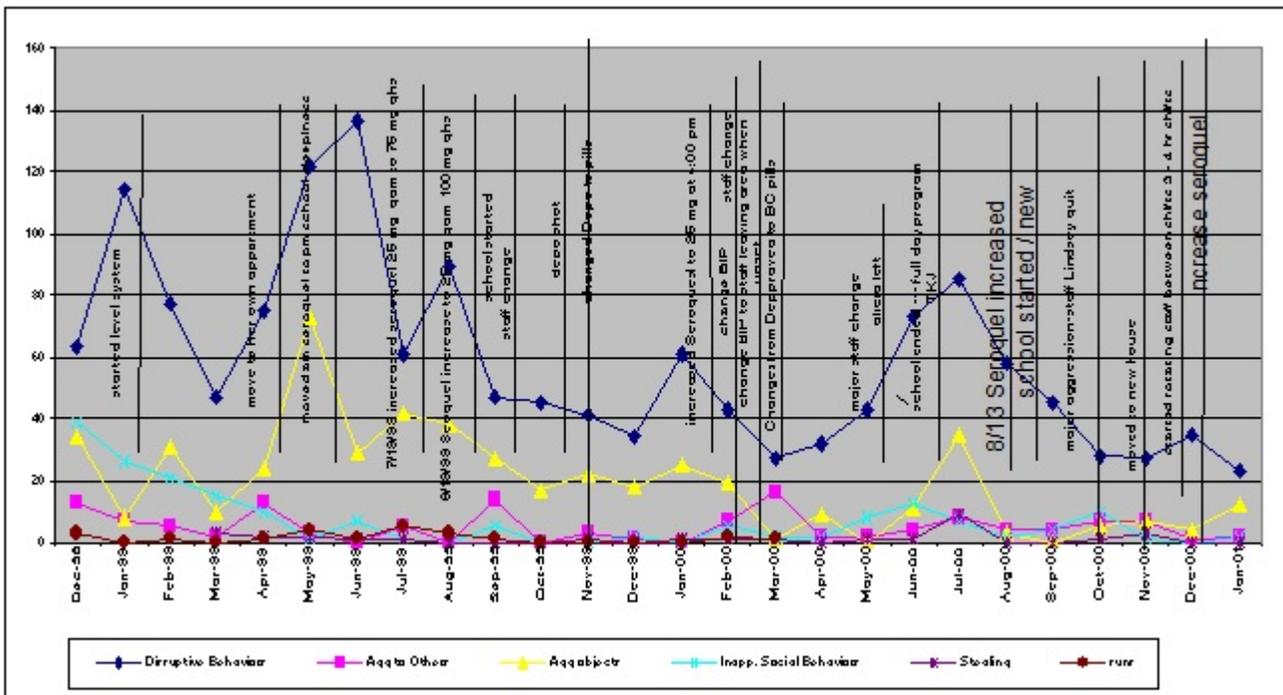
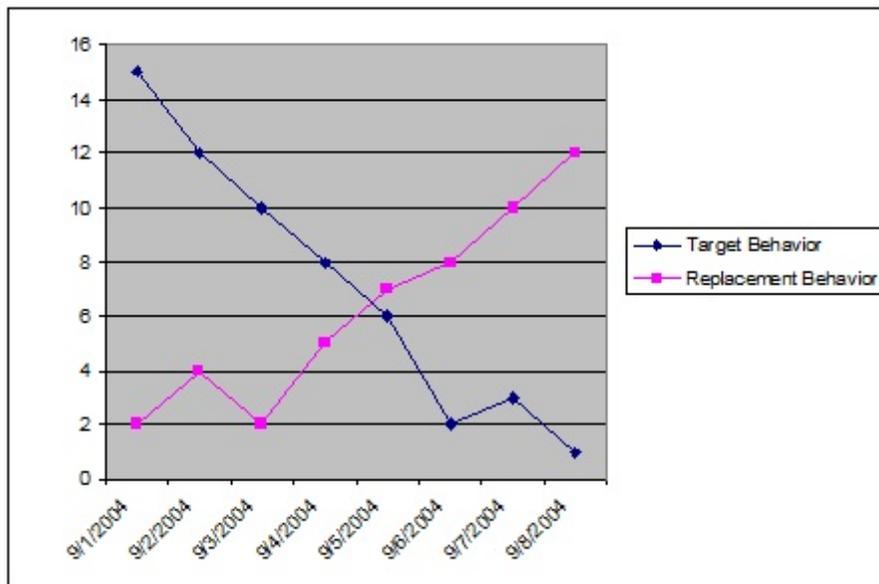


Chart Example

Behavior Intervention Changes:

<p>Jan-99 Level System Daily Point Card Points for Replacement Behaviors</p> <p>April 99 Loss of TV time for breaking windows</p>	<p>May 99 Increase reinforcers. Added increased tv time. Started to use stored points.</p>	<p>Feb 00 Change BSP Self- monitoring</p> <p>March 00 Staff leave area when upset, time to cool down</p>
---	--	--

The same type of chart should be kept on the replacement behavior. If the chart is not tracking multiple target behavior, the target behavior and replacement behavior can be monitored on the same chart.



Behavior Support Plans Glossary

Behavior Support Plan: A written plan that is developed based on a functional assessment of problem behavior. Behavioral support plans contain multiple intervention strategies designed to modify the environment and teach new skills.

Competing Behavior Diagram: A brainstorming tool that is used to define the features of an effective environment. These features are used to identify specific intervention strategies that are directly linked to the functional assessment information. The competing behavior diagram is used to design interventions for replacing problem behavior with new skills, and implementing strategies that will make problem behavior unnecessary and ineffective

Crisis Prevention Plan: The crisis prevention plan provides teachers and staff with clear guidelines for interrupting and managing dangerous behavior. The plan should provide a clear description of what a crisis situation looks like, specific intervention procedures, clear guidelines for ending intrusive procedures such as restraint or the use of protective equipment, data collection to be conducted, reporting procedures, training and support strategies for staff.

Escalating Sequence of Problem Behavior: A number of problem behaviors (i.e. whining, spitting, throwing, kicking) that appear on a continuum from lower to higher levels of intensity. Knowledge of the escalating sequence of problem behavior is used to intervene early in a chain of problem behaviors.

Function: The consequences that are related to maintaining the occurrence of a behavior. Documented functions of problem behavior include (a) attention, (b) desire for activities or items, (c) escape from attention or activities, and (d) escape from or obtain physiological stimulation.

Positive Lifestyles: Opportunities for students to exercise choice, engage in positive social interactions, experience academic success, and live in a stable and predictable environment.

Positive Reinforcement: Behavior increases when a stimulus is delivered.

Preventative Strategies: Behavioral support plans that are implemented before problem behavior has a chance to occur. Preventative strategies involve redesigning the environment and teaching new skills.



Reinforcement: The state of receiving or presenting a reinforcer. A stimulus that when presented immediately following a response increases the probability that the response will occur again. Can be the presentation of a reward or removal of something unpleasant.

Reinforcer: A consequent stimulus that increases the probability a behavior will occur, or maintains the future rate of that behavior.



Behavior Support Plan Resources and Suggest Readings

Dunlap, G., Vaughn, B.J., & O'Neill, R.E. (1997). Comprehensive behavior support: application and Intervention. Retrieved from Web:
<http://www.nau.edu/ihd/positive/library/dunlap7a.pdf>

Horner, R. H., Sugai, G., Todd, A. W., & Lewis-Palmer, T. 2000. Elements of Behavior Support Plan: A technical Brief. *Exceptionality*, 8(3), pp 209-210.

Oneill, R.E., Horner, R.H., Albin, R.W., Sprague, J.R., Storey, K., & Newton, J.S. (1997). Functional assessment and program development for problem behavior: A practical handbook (2nd ed.). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.