

Functional Assessment Model: Part 1 Week 2

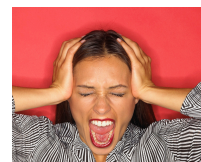
SPCD 519
Applied Behavior Analysis

Typically we intervene after problem behavior has occurred.

- Because we haven't figured out when it will occur (what precipitates it and what keeps it happening again and again)

We increase negative consequences if they initially fail to decrease/eliminate problem.

In other words, we react.



But what if you've done these, and a child continues to have serious problems that affect his/her learning or the learning of others?

Next step might be to develop an individualized Behavior Support/ Intervention Plan that is based on a Functional Assessment

- An FBA is like an "allergy test" (Vollmer, 2013)
- Helps to pinpoint the cause or function of problem behaviors so we can find effective interventions.



Skin Allergy Test

(Technorati, 2011)

Before Conducting a Functional Assessment, consider

- Does the target individual have "a life?"
- Is s/he in a classroom that provides appropriate, meaningful instruction?
- Are academic and behavioral expectations clear and reasonable?
- Is the instruction differentiated for all learners?
- Have medical or physical problems have been carefully examined and addressed?



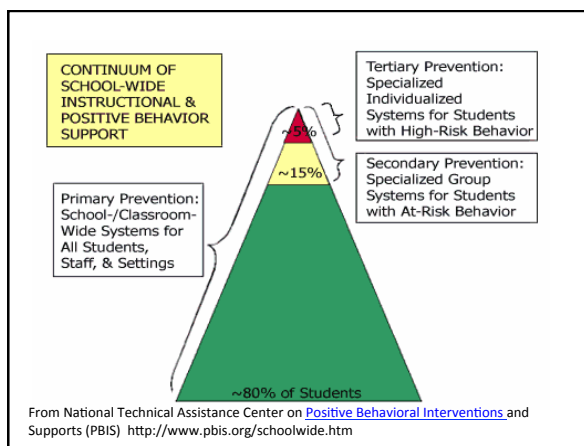
A functional assessment

- "is a set of processes for collecting information about problem behaviors and for defining the events in an environment that reliably predict and maintain those problem behaviors." (O'Neill et al., 2014, p. 2)
- takes a proactive vs. reactive approach,
- identifies the "why" (the function) of a problem behavior for the person using it,
- provides information on which to develop an effective and efficient Behavior Support (Intervention) Plan (BSP or BIP), that includes plans for teaching a replacement behavior(s), modifying the environment, and reinforcing appropriate behavior.

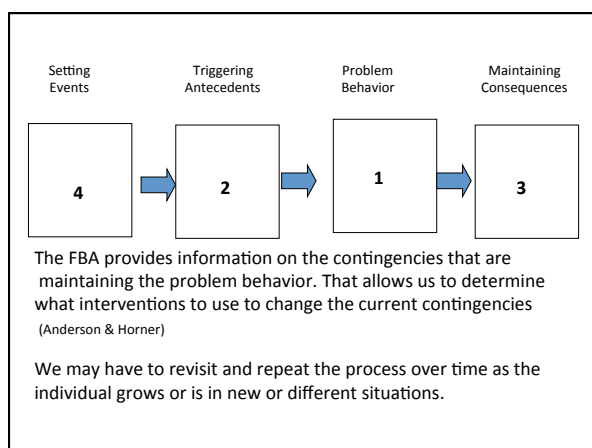
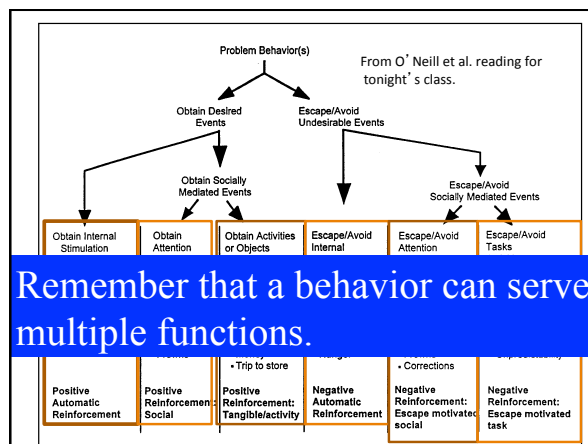
Functional Assessment Process to Develop a Behavior Intervention/Support Plan

- Is useful for ALL students, not just those receiving special education services
- Is a part of the PBS model and therefore, linked to the basis of the Rti model

<http://www.pbis.org/default.aspx>



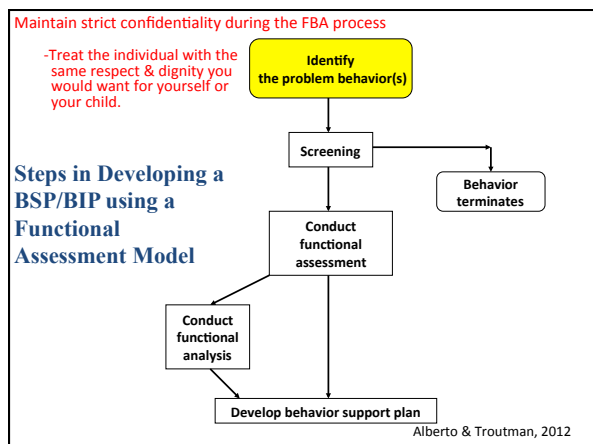
What do we mean by the *function*
(also called the maintaining consequence
or reinforcement for a behavior),
of a behavior?



Levels of Functional Behavioral Assessment

- **Informal Functional Behavioral Assessment**
 - Done in school by typical teachers/staff
 - Done as part of normal daily problem solving
- **Level I: Simple FBA**
 - Done by trained members of school setting
 - Typically involves interview(s), and brief observation
- **Level II: Complex FBA**
 - Done by behaviorally trained member of school or district
 - Typically involves interviews and observation
- **Level III: Functional Analysis**
 - Done by trained behavior analyst
 - Involves interviews, direct observation, and systematic manipulation of conditions.

Anderson & Horner



Questions to Ask When Selecting a Target Behavior

- Is the problem behavior keeping the student or others from learning?
 - Is the problem behavior interfering with the student's ability to socialize and make friends?
 - Is the problem behavior harming the student, peers, adults, or family members?
- (Video)

(Chandler & Dahlquist, 2002)

STEP 1: Identify the target behavior

1. Identify the target behavior

– Select an *important* behavior (one that is affecting a student's learning, social relationships, employment)

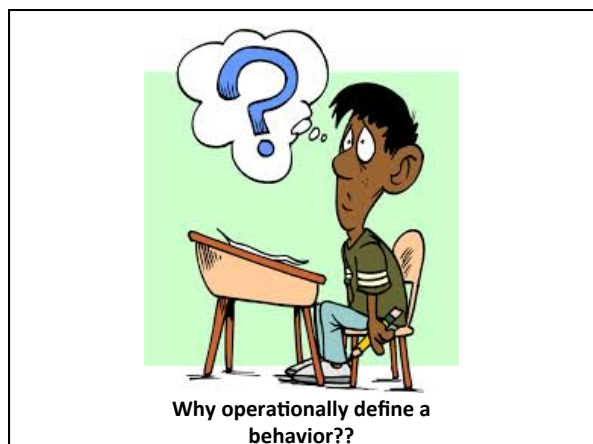
– Develop an **operational definition** of the target behavior

- Collect preliminary data to confirm that this behavior is problematic
- Meet with IEP committee (if at all possible) to get input from multiple people who know the student well.



Operational Definitions of Target Behaviors

- “agreed upon description of **observable** and **measurable** characteristics of the motor performance of the behavior . . . Clearly stated so that everyone can agree that it has or has not been performed” (p. 31, Alberto & Troutman, 2009)
- a precise description of exactly what the target behavior looks like, w/o subjective or personal biases (as much as is possible)
- include the definition of the behavior **and** examples and non-examples of the behavior



Examples of operationalizing a behavior

Name: Aggression ← **Descriptive name**

Definition: Hitting others with hand or object ← **General Definition**

Examples: Throw block at peer; hit teacher on the arm with his hand ← **Typical examples of the behavior**

Non-examples: verbally saying "No"; turning the pages of a picture book ← **Nonexamples of the behavior**

Rispoli et al., 2012

- **Descriptive name:** Handsucking
- **General definition:** Twisting hands out and away from body, then curling them back in and places fingers or palm of one or both hands in mouth.
- **Elaboration:** Usually does fingers first but manages to suck on entire part of both hands. Does not appear to suck very hard but produces a lot of saliva ← **More explanation of the definition**
- **Example:** Sucking on fingers
- **Nonexample:** Using hands to manipulate a ball

- **Descriptive name:** Academic engagement
- **General Definition:** Engage in materials in the manner intended
- **Elaboration:** Uses the instructional materials as requested by the teacher or EA;
- **Examples:** Put together an 8-piece puzzle, write his name upon request
- **Nonexamples:** Throw puzzle pieces across the rug; tear up worksheet paper

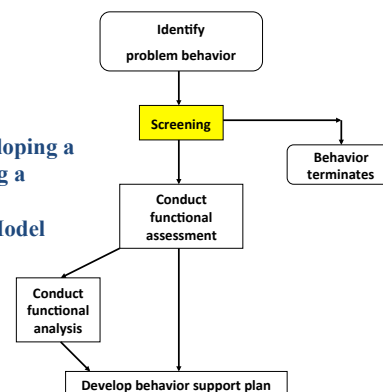
Rispoli et al., 2012

Learn and use the format on these slides for operational definitions in your project.



Your entire project can be skewed if your operational definition isn't written precisely.

Steps in Developing a BSP/BIP using a Functional Assessment Model

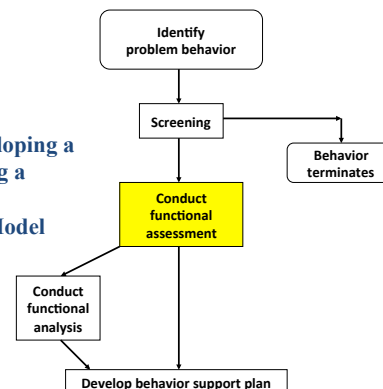


Step 2: Conduct a Screening by gathering Information

- Request/review additional medical or educational data
 - e.g., look for medication changes, vision/hearing screening, additional educational testing
- Implement changes in instruction based on screening (try something new!)



Steps in Developing a BSP/BIP using a Functional Assessment Model



Step 3: Conduct a Functional Assessment



1. Gather information using indirect strategies: interviews
2. Gather information using direct strategies: directly observe the behavior
 - a. conduct a **functional analysis** in some cases
3. Examine all your data and develop hypothesis of the function of the target behavior (we will call this a **summary statement**)

Resources for Indirect Assessment

- Behavioral Interviews
 - **Functional Assessment Interview (FAI)** (O'Neill et al., 2014)
 - Student-Directed Functional Interview Form (O'Neill et al., 1997)
 - Functional Behavioral Assessment Interview
- Behavioral Rating Scales
 - **Motivation Assessment Scale (Durand & Crimmins, 1988, 1992)**
www.monacoassociates.com/mas/MAS.html
 - Problem Behavior Questionnaire (Lewis et al., 1994)
www.slc.sevier.org/fbaproblembehaviorquestionnaire.pdf
 - Others

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Week 3



- Finish discussion on FBA and discuss how to develop a BIP from the information collected in an FBA
- Read O'Neill et al. (2014) Chapters 4 & 5
- Complete Vocab #2
- Secure signed consent/assent from the participant/guardian of the individual you are working with for the Functional Assessment project
- Work on conducting FAI and student interview (if appropriate)