

Understanding Your Child's Behavior

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My Goals:

- Help every parent understand the 4 functions of human behavior
- Identify specific interventions related to the function of each child's behavior
- Understand how to reinforce skills to increase positive behaviors

Human Behavior

- Behavior is LEARNED

Therefore...

- New behaviors can be taught
- Old behaviors can be replaced

Why do adults do the things we do?

- Why do we hit “snooze” on the alarm clock?
- Why do we speed in traffic?
- Why do we answer a phone?
- Why do we NOT answer the phone?

AKA... Behavior is *purposeful* and *communicates* something !

Impact on Child

- Affects the health and safety of the child & others
- Violates the rights of others
- Impedes upon the child's ability to function successfully and develop friendships
- Interferes with learning

Impact on the Family

- Increased tension and stress for everyone
- Parent's divided attention among all children
- Lack of time with extended family and friends
- Lack of opportunities to be in community
- Injury to family members
- Legal ramifications
- Property destruction



Ready to make changes???

Functions of Behavior

- **FUNCTION**
 - The reason **why** problematic behavior continues to occur
- **SOCIAL FUNCTION**
 - Environmental events that maintain behavior

4 Functions of Behavior

1. Avoidance/Escape
2. Attention
3. Tangible
4. Automatic Reinforcement

1. Avoid/Escape

- ❖ Behavior that allows the person to **avoid or escape** demands or other undesired events/activities, and

2. Attention

- ❖ behavior that produces **attention** and reactions from others- positive or negative!

3. Obtain Tangibles

- ❖ Behavior that results in access to desired wants, needs or events (e.g., toys, activities)

4. Automatic Reinforcement

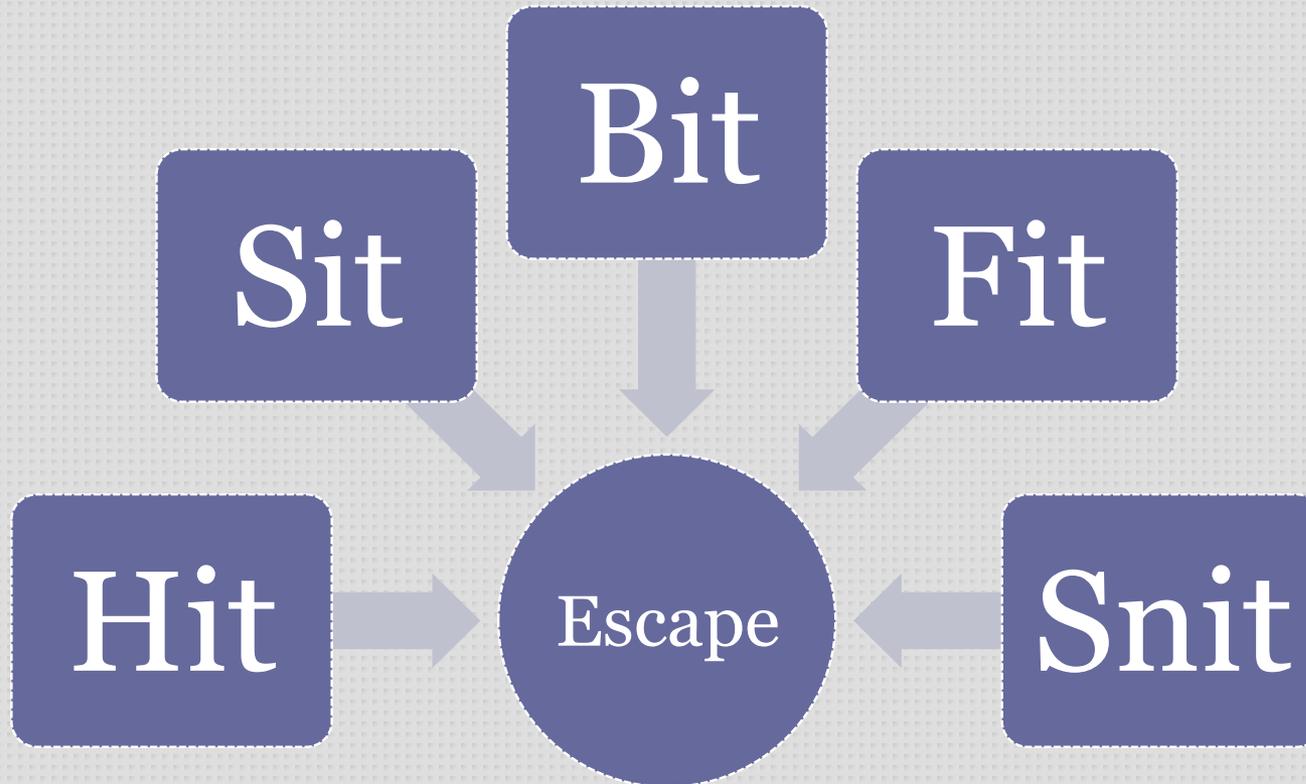
- ❖ Behavior that occurs because of its **sensory** consequences (relieves pain, feels good, etc.). The behavior provides its own reinforcement.

Hypothesis of Behavioral Functions

Behavior typically occurs to
“Get Something” or ***“Get out of
Something”***

Behavior can have multiple functions or serve different functions depending on the environment.

Different Behaviors can Serve the Same Function



Always consider what the
communicative intent of the
behavior is!

Teaching alternative, more
appropriate, functional behavior
is the *real* task in behavior
management

Interventions: Escape or Avoidance

1. Create a visual schedule (daily, weekly, monthly)
2. Create reinforcement contingencies
3. Imbed choices within less preferred activities
4. Use a timer to indicate how long a child must engage in the less preferred activity
5. Teach the child to request a break from a less preferred activity

NEVER allow the child to escape or avoid a demand!

Interventions: Attention

1. Provide lots of attention for all appropriate behavior
2. Teach an appropriate means of requesting attention and provide the attention contingent upon this new replacement behavior
3. **IGNORE all** instances of inappropriate behavior

Create free-access attention as often as possible

Interventions: Tangible

1. “Try again!” & model appropriate language
2. Show on daily/weekly/monthly schedule WHEN they can access tangible
3. IGNORE all tantrum behaviors
4. Explicitly state expectations

Avoid just saying “NO”

Interventions Automatic-sensory:

1. Provide a schedule with functional activities
2. Without telling the child to stop, reprimanding him, or giving him attention or tangibles, block the problem behavior (either physically or with equipment) to prevent the stimulation the child obtains from engaging in the behavior and redirect them to something else.
3. Teach the child to engage in more appropriate means of self-stimulation

Do not stop the behavior....REPLACE the behavior!

BIG TICKET ITEMS!!!!

- Daily schedules
- Family ‘huddle’ meetings
- Pass the baton
- Watch TV shows WITH your child
- “Try Again”
- 3 strike rule
- Toy time-out
- Technology is a privilege...not a ‘given’

My motto:

Down time is trouble time!!!

Reward vs. Bribe

Reward : The return for performance of a desired behavior; positive reinforcement.

Bribe: Something, such as money or a favor, offered or given to a person in a position of trust to influence that person's views or conduct before the behavior has occurred.

Researched based results....

Less Popular Treatments That Do Work

<u>Treatment</u>	<u>Effect Size</u>
□ PBIS	+ .90
□ Mentor-based support	+.60 to +1.00
□ Social emotional learning	+ .90
□ Social skills training	+ .68
□ Proactive classroom management	+ .81
□ Formative evaluation + graphing + reinforcement	+ 1.00
□ Supplemental academic instruction	+ .70 to 1.50
□ Behavior contract, self-monitoring	> +.50

Kavale (2005); Marquis et al. (2000); Cook, et al. (in press); Blueprints for Promising Treatments (1999)

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Popular Yet Ineffective Treatments

<u>Treatment/Intervention</u>	<u>Effect Size</u>
• Punitive discipline	-.13 to + .06
• Referral to outside counseling	.00 to + .08
• Meeting with the student	.00
• Analyze cognitive strengths & weakness	.00

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Consequence Menu

Behavior Requiring Information	Behavior to Ignore	Behavior Requiring In-class Consequence	Behavior Requiring Out-of-class Consequence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teasing • Off task • Bad habits • Sarcasm 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blurting out • Minor disruptions • Asking silly questions • Tattling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pushing, poking, hitting • Disruptive behavior • Refusal to follow directions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insubordination • Bullying & harassment • Severe physical aggression

Sample taken from Intervention N: Classroom Management Strategies by Sprick, Sprick, & Garrison, 1993

Be Consistent

- In which behaviors/skills we are reinforcing
- In providing reinforcement regularly across the day

Set Reasonable Objectives

- Start at a lower level to ensure success
- Slowly raise the expectation as the learner progresses

Questions to ask yourself

- **What is the function of the behavior?**
- **What do I want _____ to do instead of _____ing?**
- **What do I do when he/she is not _____ing?**
- **How do I react when he/she is _____ing?**
- **If the function is escape/avoidance, why does he/she want to avoid this task?**
- **Noncompliance?**
- **Not enough pairing of reinforcement?**
- **Task is too easy or too hard?**
- **Am I teaching verbal problem solving skills?**