Understanding Functional Behavior Assessments and Behavior Intervention Plans

Elements of an FBA (Functional Behavioral Assessment)

- **Identify the Target Behavior**
- **Classroom observation -** Take data on the target behavior, antecedents and consequences
- **Interviews -** Parent, Student, Teacher
- **Review of Records** - attendance, discipline, <u>academic performance,</u> prior assessments and health.
- **Setting events** - environmental factors, time of day, factors related to family, friends, or significant others, factors related to curricula, factors related to instruction and a response to prior events
- **Hypothesis/Function of Behavior(s) -** Use all of the information collected to make a hypothesis regarding what the function of the behavior is
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Identifying Target Behavior

➢ How would you describe those behaviors?

"She is never on task"

"He is just so aggressive"

" He is so defiant "

What is Behavior ?

All behavior is defined operationally—behavior needs to be observable and quantifiable in order to be measured

➢ The simplest way to determine what qualifies as a behavior is to give the **Dead Man's Test**. Can a dead man do it? If he can, then it is not a behavior. Can a dead man *not talk*? Yes. Can a dead man *not pay attention*? Yes.

➢ Things you can measure: throwing of objects, hitting, biting, spitting, written products, crying, walking, singing, putting the dishes away, talking

A — Wants attention

B — Luis is hitting

C — Gets attention
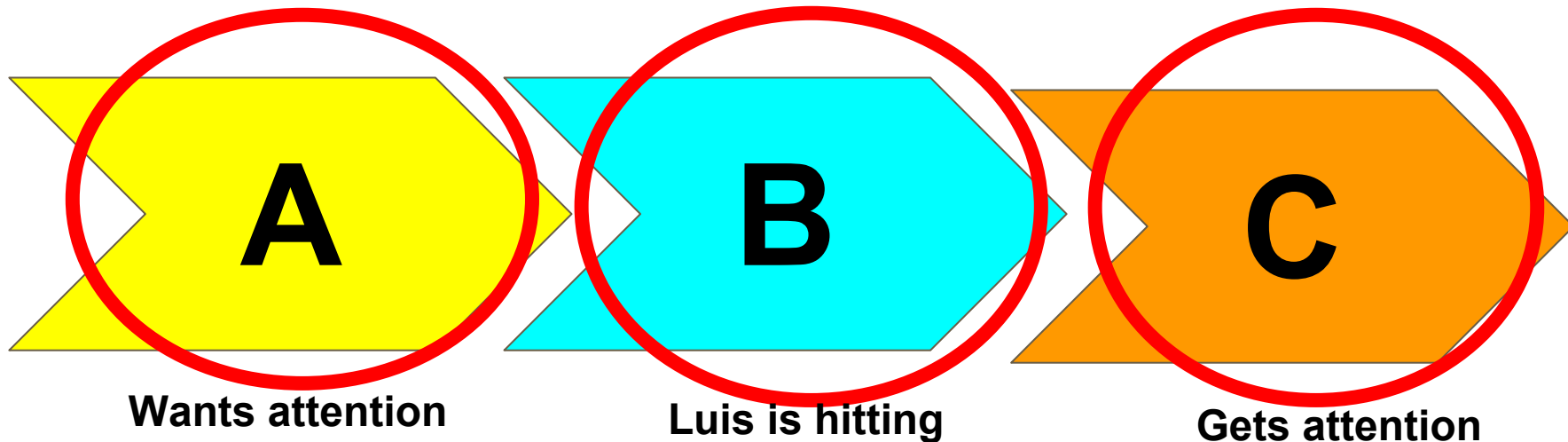
❖ People usually focus on what the behavior *looks* like

❖ FBAs get us to look at what happens **before** and **after** the behavior as well

❖ Helps us to understand *why* the behavior is occurring. How is it "functional"?
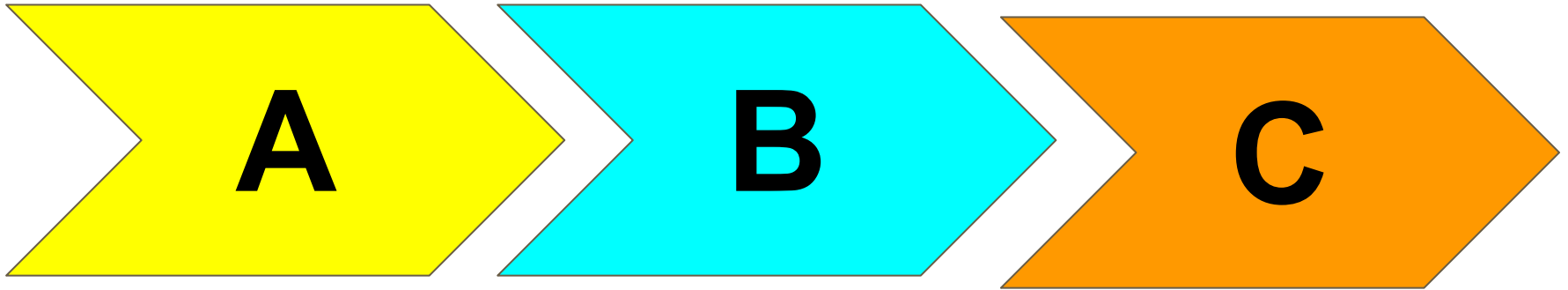
Antecedents

What happens immediately before?

➢ Presentation of a request
➢ Removal of a desired item
➢ Person
➢ Task
➢ Told "No"

Shouldn't there be consequences?

"His behavior is so unpredictable, so uncontrollable"

A

Jenny is tired

Aaron wants toy

B

Jenny drinks coffee

Aaron cries for toy

C

Jenny is now awake

Aaron gets toy

There are always consequences!

➢ What happens after the behavior occurs
➢ Person respond (attention/ praise)
➢ Natural response in the environment

2 kinds of consequence -
● Reinforcement
● Punishment

The consequence determines the likelihood of behavior occurring in the future.

Reinforcement

Behavior occurs and what happens immediately after, increases the future occurrence of that type of behavior.

There are two types of reinforcement.

➢ Positive Reinforcement - Something is added
➢ Negative Reinforcement - Something is removed

Be Careful!

Negative reinforcement – When a behavior is immediately followed by the **removal of a something that increases** the future frequency of the behavior.

Example -A teacher cancels a quiz if the students all hand in their homework. By removing the aversive stimulus (the quiz), the teacher hopes to increase the occurrence of the desired behavior (completing all homework).

Punishment

Behavior occurs and what happens immediately after, <u>decreases</u> the future occurrence of that type of behavior.

There are two types of punishment.

Positive & Negative punishment

I tried Positive Reinforcement but it didn't work!

Then it isn't reinforcing!

Identify Setting Events

- **When is this behavior more likely to occur -** environmental factors - Crowded halls, temperature , time of day, factors related to family, friends, or significant others, etc.
- Example - A student is given a worksheet and throws it off the table and gets sent to the office. The student is more likely to throw materials if the student is tired due to lack of sleep.
- **Antecedent** - Given a worksheet
- **Behavior** - Throwing Materials
- **Consequence** - Doesn't Complete the worksheet (escape)
- **Setting Event** - Didn't sleep well the night before

Hypothesis of the Function

Understanding the function of the behavior is important because it tells you how you change the environment to prevent the problematic behavior from re-occurring.

❖ The FBA is created by collecting data about the behavior:
- ➢ What is the behavior?
- ➢ Is the behavior to AVOID or to GAIN something (get out of an activity, get attention)
- ➢ What was happening before the behavior occurred?
  - ■ Who was around?
  - ■ What was being asked of the student?
  - ■ Was it hot? Cold? Noisy? Crowded?
- ➢ What happened after the behavior occurred?
 - ■ What was the consequence?

Functions that Behavior Serves

Obtain/ Get Something
- Attention from adults
- Attention from peers
- Preferred Activity
- Tangible Objects/Items
- Sensory/Stimulation (auditory, tactile, movement, etc.)

Avoid/ Escape Something
- Attention from adults
- Attention from peers
- Reprimands
- Non-preferred Activities/Tasks
- Tasks (boring, too hard, too easy, etc.)
- Unpleasant Sensory /Stimulation (auditory, tactile, movement, etc.)

Problem Behavior

Obtain/Get Something

Escape/Avoid Something

Stimulation /Sensory

Social

Tangible/ Activity
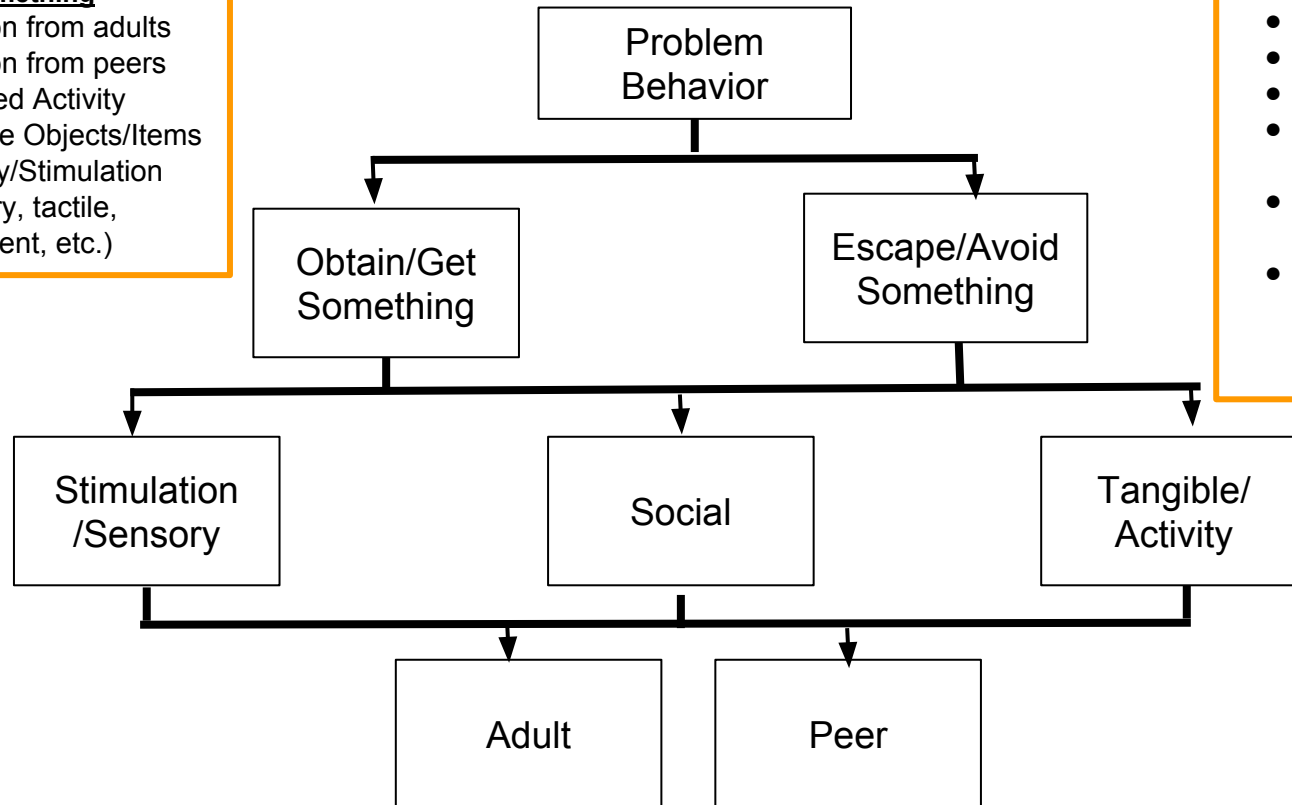
Adult

Peer

Functional Behavior Assessment

Example: "When Johnny is sitting for more than 10 minutes, Johnny demonstrates physical aggression by hitting and kicking adults and peers around him and will scream and cry in order to escape."

A → B → C
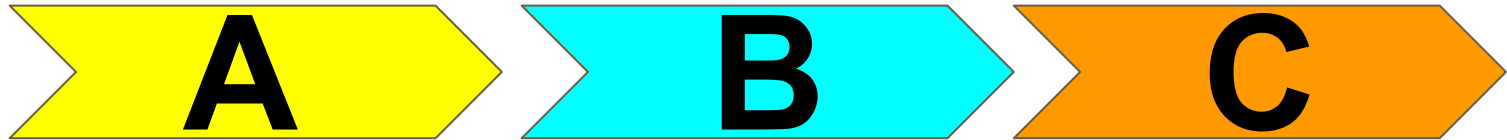
Elements of the BIP (Behavior Intervention Plan)

❖ Specific target behaviors (Identified on the FBA) are focused on to be reduced or eliminated.

❖ Select strategies to teach appropriate replacement behaviors -by giving students an appropriate way of getting what they want.

❖ Strategies in place to change what happens before (proactive) or after the behavior (reactive) based on the function of the behavior.

❖ Develop reinforcement system - How often does the student need to be reinforced, what do they like, do they need a visual system or tangible items or will praise be sufficient?

Proactive Strategies

- Use high interest materials (Star wars books during independent reading)
- Pre-teach concepts - Role
- Modify materials - Cut a worksheet in half
- Increase noncontingent attention - connect with student.
- Preprogrammed breaks - Provide breaks before target behavior occurs
- Behavioral momentum - Mix easy low effort tasks with harder high effort tasks
- Use a Token economy - reward appropriate behavior
- Address skill deficits - Extra math help, etc

Reactive Strategies

- Planned ignoring
- Vicarious Reinforcement
- Redirect to appropriate activity
- Model strategies to calm down
- Remind student when they can have access to a tangible item in the future.
- Require completion of the task

If the function is to GAIN something, then a behavior plan might look like this:

- ➢ Susie wants to gain attention so she screams.

- ➢ Instead of giving her attention when she is screaming, teach her to raise her hand to get your attention.

- ➢ If you ignore her screaming behavior and only give her attention when she raises her hand then eventually she will only try to get your attention by raising her hand.

- ➢ Increase non-contingent attention.

If the function is to AVOID something, then the behavior plan might look like this:

➢ Michael is trying to avoid going into the school so he will refuse to get off the bus and kick or hit anyone who comes next to him.

➢ A plan might consist of allowing Michael to do a preferred activity when he gets in school can help replace the problematic behavior.

Sometimes, without meaning to, we can cause the behavior to increase!

❖ For example, Suzie screams for attention. We want her to stop, so we talk to her, telling her to stop. Suzie has gotten what she wants (attention) so she screams again!

❖ For example, John does not want to ride the bus. He throws a temper tantrum (kicking, screaming, dropping to the floor) when the bus comes. His mother is angry but she drives him to school. John has gotten what he wanted (to avoid the bus), so he learns that the temper tantrum works!

❖ For example, Timmy does not want to do his classwork. He rips up his paper and throws his notebook. The teacher takes him out of the classroom. Timmy has gotten what he wants (to avoid classwork) so he does the same thing the next day!

He doesn't care if he loses choice time or recess

Sometimes what you may consider a punishment (yelling, taking something away, removal from the activity, removal from the environment) may be functioning as a reinforcer.

If the behavior is continuing – it is being reinforced

Example - Every day a child hits another child on the playground. This child has to go to the office instead of going out to recess – but this exact same behavior happens the next day!

This behavior is being reinforced!

Progress Monitoring a BIP

"This plan is not working"

How do you know:

- Data points (make sure to measure the correct thing)

- Revising the plan based on data to see if current strategies are acting as reinforcers/ punishers

- Set criteria to monitor/ discontinue

- Parent communication is KEY!