The ABCs of Behavior
The ABCs of Behavior

Objectives

What is Behavior

Functions of Behavior

ABC’s of Behavior
What is Behavior

Anything a person says or does

Dead Man’s Test

Observable and Measurable
The ABCs of Behavior

Defining Behavior

What does it look like?

What is not behavior?

Examples
The ABCs of Behavior

Behavior is Neutral – Not Good or Bad

Socially Significant

The EFFECT on the environment determines significance

We ALL engage in behavior that may negatively affect the environment
Behavior Happens For A Reason
There are Four Functions (Reasons) of Behavior

- ESCAPE
- ATTENTION
- TANGIBLE
- SENSORY
ESCAPE

A person behaves a certain way to get out of or avoid doing something that they do not want to do.

Example: A child yells no and runs off to their room when asked to put toys away and is no longer required to put the toys away. The child learns that yelling no and running off will get them out of putting things away.
ATTENTION

An individual behaves in a way that gets focused attention from parents, peers, teachers or other people around them.

Example: Teacher asks students to raise their hand if they know the answer. One student begins waving their hand frantically and yelling out the answer until the teacher tells them to stop shouting out the answer and wait to be called upon.
ACCESS TO TANGIBLES

The individual behaves in a certain way to get a preferred item or access to an activity.

Example: Individual cries and says, “I want a cookie” and parent says “no”. Individual cries and whines about wanting more food. Parent lets child have more food. Child learns that crying and whining will get them what they want.
SENSORY

The individual behaves in a specific way because it feels good to them, or it stops something from feeling bad.

**Example:** Individual scratches their skin to relieve the itching.
So, how do we determine the function?
Take Data
The ABCs of Behavior

SETTING EVENT:
Prior events that have happened that will increase the likelihood of target behavior occurring

Antecedent → Behavior → Consequence
The ABCs of Behavior

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/1/2022</td>
<td>2:43 PM</td>
<td>Asked Jonny to put his toys away.</td>
<td>Jonny threw one of his toys.</td>
<td>Yelled at Jonny to stop throwing toys.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## The ABCs of Behavior

### Taking ABC Data

**Antecedent:** What happened directly before the target behavior occurs

**Behavior:** *Observable* behavior – what happened

**Consequence:** What happened directly after the target behavior occurs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Setting Event</th>
<th>Antecedent</th>
<th>Behavior</th>
<th>Consequence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The child woke up at 4:30 am after a nightmare.</td>
<td>The parent asked the child to put his toys away.</td>
<td>The child starts to pick his lip.</td>
<td>The parent says, “stop picking.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>School was canceled because of snow.</td>
<td>The child was playing with his toys when his sister began playing with a nearby toy.</td>
<td>The child pulls his sister’s hair.</td>
<td>The sister yelled “ow!” and began crying.</td>
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The ABCs of Behavior

Place a tally mark in the box during each time period the at the target behavior occurs.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>From</th>
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Tips for Collecting ABC Data

• Pay attention to antecedents such as demands, difficult tasks, transitions and being told “no”
• Pay attention to consequences such as repeating requests, attention, given preferred items and demands being lifted
• Consider documenting the setting event as well as the ABC
• Collect multiple ABC scenarios prior to implementing an intervention
THE ABCS OF BEHAVIOR

SETTING EVENTS

- Clothing feels itchy
- Family moved
- Temperature / Lighting in the room
- Poor sleep
- Not feeling well
- Changes to routine
Antecedent (Preventative) Interventions

- Creative Scheduling
- Provide Choices
- Enrich the Environment
- Use the Child’s Interests
- Preset, Preset, Preset
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Consequence (Reactive) Interventions

- Reinforcement
- Extinction
- Punishment
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**Reinforcement**

(Increases Behavior)

- Positive

**Negative**

- Active Avoidance
- Escape
Examples of reinforcement

Positive
- Praise
- High Five
- Offering an Activity
- Cheering
- Giving a Hug

Negative
- No homework if 90 or more on test
- Taking a different route with less traffic to get to work
- Removing curfew or rules
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Punishment
(Decreases Behavior)

Positive

Negative
Examples of punishment

**Positive**
- Getting Pulled Over
- Extra Chores
- Reprimands

**Negative**
- Removing Door After Slamming
- Taking Away a Cell Phone
- Taking Away Video Games
Extinction

Stop reinforcing a problem behavior that has been previously reinforced.

Example:

Your child screams and cries when it’s time to leave the park. Previously you would allow five more minutes. An extinction procedure would be picking your child up and leaving without giving any response to the screaming and crying.
Discontinuing reinforcement of a previously reinforced behavior.

**Extinction**

- **Intervention Implemented**
- **Extinction Burst**
Open Discussion

Q & A
RESOURCES

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