Understanding Student Behavior

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THE STEPPING STONES GROUP | EBS HEALTHCARE

Transforming Lives and Making a Difference Together

Disclosures:

- Financial Disclosure: Other than being a paid employee of EBS Healthcare, Karen Bilbao has no other relevant financial relationships to disclose.
- Non-Financial Disclosure: Mrs. Bilbao has no other non-financial information to disclose.

Learner Outcomes:

1. Define behavior in observable terms.
2. Discover antecedents and consequences that are reinforcing undesirable behaviors.
3. Define the function of undesirable behavior.
4. Brainstorm alternative, more desirable behaviors and ways they can be implemented in the context of the classroom and therapy room.
5. Use federal and state resources from positive behavior support networks to aid in the analysis.

Outcome of Today's Workshop:

To increase understanding of your role as a speech language pathologist in positively supporting students' behavior.

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Behavior Starts and Ends with You!!!!!

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Focus on building strengths

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Not [ ]ing weaknesses
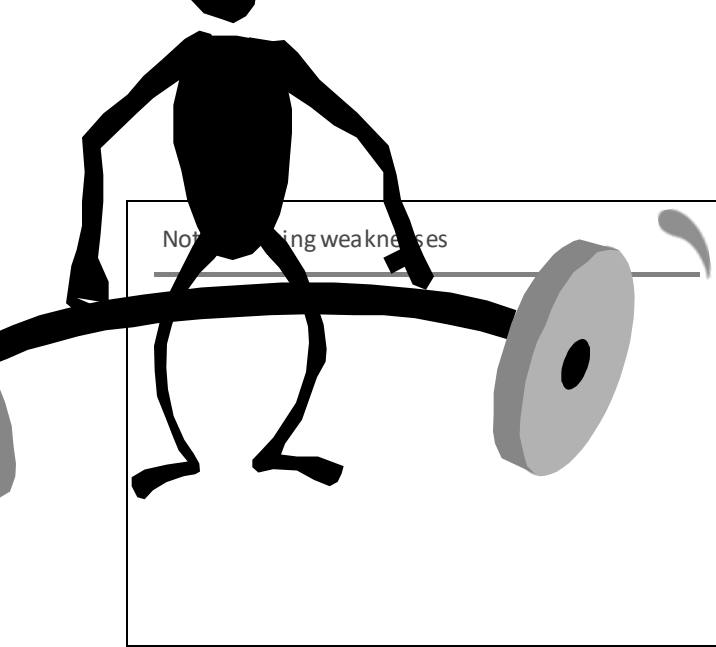
Activity

Would you like to work on your weaknesses every day?

LIST YOUR TOP FIVE STRENGTHS/INTERESTS	LIST YOUR TOP FIVE WEAKNESSES/LEAST FAVORITE ACTIVITIES
1.	1.
2.	2.
3	3.
4	4.
5.	5.

Behavior Is Communication

- It is:
- Observable
- Manipulable

Look at behavior Rationally

- Know the triggers – antecedents
- Isolate the behavior from the person
  - This is me
  - This is my behavior
- Beware of the consequences that reinforce the behavior
- Recognize associated feelings/judgements

Figure out the Function

- To get something (attention, an item, sensory stimulation)
- To avoid something (challenging work, interaction with certain people, humiliation)
- To move toward pleasure and away from pain

Other Functions – from Maslow's Hierarchy of Human Needs

- Physical Needs (Hunger; insufficient sleep)
- Security (Feeling welcome/supported by teacher; acquiring self-confidence)
- Social (Fitting in with a clique or peer group)
- Ego (Power, control, choice)
- Self-Actualization (Achievement; competence, success)

Understanding

- Once we understand the function, we can figure out a socially appropriate behavior that satisfies that function.

My Problem Behavior

- A – Triggers (**A**ntecedents)
- B – My Problem **B**ehavior
- C – **C**onsequences – Responses of Others
- Function – "What am I getting out of behaving like this?"
- Learn an alternate, socially-appropriate strategy

Small Group Activity

- Identify one of your own problem behaviors that affects your professional work.
- Use the worksheet to examine the behavior.
- Look at History/Triggers/Reinforcers.
- Figure out the function and find a socially appropriate alternative behavior.
- Group Share

The Positive Behavior In Schools (PBIS) Initiative

PBIS is sponsored by the New Jersey Department of Education, Office of Special Education, in collaboration with The Boggs Center at Rutgers-RWJMS. PBIS is funded by IDEA, part B. www.njpbs.org

- Mission: Replacing problem behavior with positive behavior
- A framework for preventing problem behavior and supporting a student's social, emotional and behavioral needs

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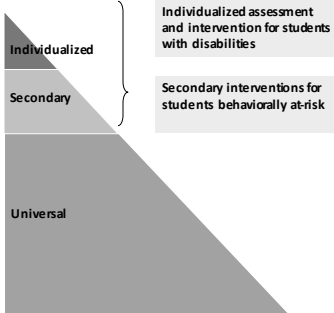Consistent School Wide Expectations, Recognition, and Procedures

Individualized — Individualized assessment and intervention for students with disabilities

Secondary — Secondary interventions for students behaviorally at-risk

Universal

Behavioral Success with PBIS

- Involve the students in decision-making
- Use the students':
  - Strengths
  - Interests
  - Academic competencies
  - Functional Skills
- Look at what they CAN do

PBIS Says to Look at making Changes in Three Areas

- The Environment
- Staff Responses
- Skills Building

Environmental Triggers

- Clutter in classroom/therapy room
- Design of the classroom/therapy room not conducive to learning
- Distraction or overstimulation from sensory input
  - Too much noise or too quiet
  - Offensive smells
  - Light that's too bright or insufficient light

Environmental **Triggers**

- Unspecified classroom/therapy room rules and routines
  - Rules/Routines MUST be posted (with pictures)
- Unexpected transitions in schedule/routine
  - Will a visual schedule help?
  - Can a song, tone or gesture be used to signal transitions?

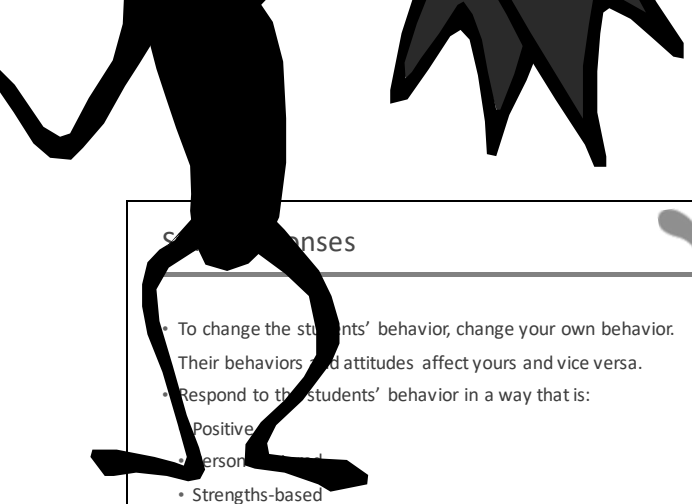### S___ ___nses

- To change the stu___nts' behavior, change your own behavior.
- Their behaviors ___d attitudes affect yours and vice versa.
- Respond to th___ students' behavior in a way that is:
- Positive
- ___erson___ ___
  - Strengths-based

How Do We Positively Reinforce Behavior?

Attention

- Social Praise
  - Verbal
    - Non-specific "Good job!"
    - Specific – "You read that sentence fluently."
  - Non-Verbal
    - Smile
    - Nod
    - Thumbs up
    - High five

Activities

- Spend time with the teacher, therapist or aide
- Take a walk
- Play a game
- Watch a video
- Other favorite activity

Affirmations

- Positive statements that remind the students of their strengths and the things they CAN DO, like:
  - "You are kind."
  - "You are so helpful."
  - "It was so nice of you to let Jenna go first."
  - "Thank you for picking up that card for me, Leslie."
    .

Tangibles

- Food (Cheerios, Pretzels)
- Tokens
- Tickets
- Stickers
- Checks
- Stars
- Points
- Access to toys/games/puzzles

Tangibles – Bucket Fillers

Visuals – Post the rules for Expected Behavior

Visuals and Kinesthetics

Visuals – Picture Schedule

Visuals - Timer

Visuals – Reward Chart

Visuals – Token Board
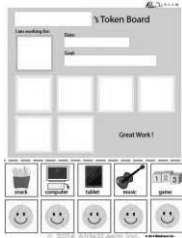
Visuals – First – Then Board

Skills Building

- Replace a problem behavior with an acceptable, alternative behavior
- Take the time to teach positive behaviors!
  - Model (Including self-regulation)
  - Tell social stories
  - Act out scenarios
- Teach behavior in the same way you teach speech/language therapy skills, through:
  - Prompting
  - Cueing
  - Redirecting

Skill Building – Modeling
http://www.nea.org/tools/52062.htm

- Think aloud through the steps to solve a problem.
- Enlist the students' help by brainstorming together solutions to a problem.
- Listen with respect to what students are telling you, given the appropriate time.
- Show your human side when you can!
- Model positive social interactions with the classroom teacher.
- Sing!
  - Singing brings joy and fun to teaching behavior and following rules.
  - Use simple tunes like "The Clean Up Song" or "We're Walking Back to Class"

Modeling – Self Regulation
https://nurtureandthriveblog.com/how-to-teach-your-child-self-regulation/

- Help students recognize the "higher goal" and control their impulse for immediate gratification.
- Don't pass up teachable moments.
- Acknowledge how difficult it is for students to wait for something they want.
- Teach students to create simple steps to obtain a goal.
- Give students a chance to "let go" every once in a while.

Using Social Stories to Redirect Behavior

A social story describes a situation, skill or concept in the form of a simple story that the student can relate to and understand.

GRAY, CAROL 1991

Examples of Social Stories

Line Leader Story

My name is Andrew. I am in the first grade. Sometimes, the children in my class form lines.

The children in my class stand in a line when we are getting ready to go to another part of the school. Children do move a little when they stand in a line. Children may move to scratch, or fix their shirt, or their shoe. Sometimes, because they are standing close together, children may touch one another. Many times, it is an accident when children touch one another in line. They were not planning to touch another child.

Line Leader Story

The children in my class walk in a line to move safely in the halls. Walking in a line keeps children in order, too. It is a safe and organized way to move many children.

Sometimes, I may be the Line Leader. This means that the other children in my class will walk behind me.

Sometimes, I may be second, or third, or fourth, or another position.

Many children in my class like to be the line leader. My teacher knows who should be first in line. Teachers know about being fair, and try to make sure each child is Line Leader now and then. My turn to be Line Leader gets closer every time the children in my class walk in a line!

GRAY, CAROL 1998

Verbal Redirecting

- Calmly call the student's name
- Maintain eye contact
- Calmly and clearly say what you want the student to do (i.e. Sit in the chair)
- Reflect, clarify, or summarize the situation
- Suggest an appropriate behavior the student can engage in.

Thinking Differently about Behavior

- What is the function of the behavior?
- What is in our control to change (Hint: Think, "Antecedent!")
- How did we respond?
- How can we respond differently?

Responding to Disruptive Behavior

- Attend to other student's appropriate behavior
- Move calmly to the student who is disrupting
- Speak to the student in private
- Use a calm, neutral voice
- Establish clear limits for the behavior

Responding to Disruptive Behavior (continued)

- Separate the student from the behavior (i.e., "Calling your classmates names is disrespectful" is better than "You are being very disrespectful").
- Offer choices of options and then put responsibility for making a plan on the student (with supports from you).
- Provide feedback for making a good choice.

Example: How to Handle When a Student is Having a Problem

- Given that there is a range of possible responses we can use when we sense someone is upset:
  - Which of these work best for you?
  - Which of these make you even more agitated?

- ___ Back off
- ___ Give me space
- ___ Ignore that something is wrong
- ___ Ask me what's wrong
- ___ Offer help
- ___ Offer comfort
- ___ Empathize
- ___ Cheer me on
- ___ Give me a suggestion

Developing a redirection protocol

- Research supports having a consistent –non-confrontational protocol for responding to occurrences of behavior AND training for staff on how to implement the protocol.
- How can this protocol be adapted for the speech setting?

Handout – "Student Problem Behavior – Redirection Protocol"

PBIS is sponsored by the New Jersey Department of Education, Office of Special Education, in collaboration with The Boggs Center at Rutgers-RWJMS. PBIS is funded by IDEA, part B. www.njpbs.org

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When Behavior Persists…….

- Reduce interactions with the student
  - Teacher/therapist steps back from confrontation and/or disengages from the debate
- Instead of keeping the conflict going
  - Lower your voice
  - Repeat one phrase – broken record technique ("Time to start work.)
  - Provide praise/reinforcement when the student starts to work

When Nothing works….

- Remove the audience if you can.
- Remove the student back to class or to the main office as a last resort.
- Note: Removal may reinforce the behavior by providing an escape, which may be the "function."
- Follow school protocols.

Develop a Plan to Prevent Future Occurrences

- Does a BIP exist (IEP)?
- If not, create a "Redirection Protocol"
- Involve the student and parent (if feasible)
- Teach strategies in Tier 3
- Utilize students' strengths/interests
- Offer visuals/ tangibles/ preferred items/ activities as reinforcers

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Context for Implementation

- 3-Tiered Model – Universal, Secondary, Individual
- www.njpbs.org
- Connect to School-Wide Programs/Classroom-wide systems
- Model behavior skills in Tier One (Whole Group).
- Practice skills in Tier Two (Small Group).
- Intervene with individuals (BIPS, Redirection Protocols, Specialized Strategies) in Tier Three.

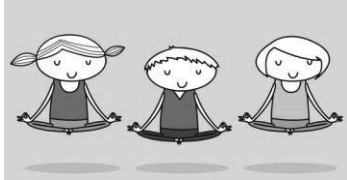## Be mindful that your behavior affects their behavior

Mindfulness for Students

- Always insure that students know why they are in speech/language therapy.
- They should be able to tell what they are working on.
- Emphasize the importance of what they are learning in therapy– motivation and background knowledge.
- Insure that the task/activity is at their level of ability.
- State the objective of the session before you begin– "Today we are working on summarizing a passage. That means we are able to tell what it is about in our own words."
- Review the behavior expectations for the session, using prompts and cues.
- Involve the students in progress monitoring.
- Let them know how they are doing.
- How do they think they are doing?

Engaging the student in Monitoring their own Progress

- Involve students, where appropriate, in creating criteria:
  - For speech/language goals
  - For effort, or for specific behavioral goals like:
    - Sitting up straight
    - Keeping within their own boundaries
    - Breathing deeply in and out
    - Staying quiet while waiting their turn
- Rate the students' behavior on a scale, like 1-5, instead of a binary plus/minus system
- Allow the students to rate themselves on the same criteria
- Compare your scores and conference
- Challenge the students to beat their scores next session

You are not alone! Collaborate!

- The OT can provide calming and sensory strategies.
- The BCBA or Behaviorist can provide specific behavior protocols.
- The BCBA may recommend training in Applied Behavior Analysis, CPI or other specialized methods based on your needs with managing student behavior.
- The school psychologist may conduct an FBA, write a BIP, help you with a Redirection Protocol, or provide you with cognitive-behavioral strategies.
- The social worker will give you the history of the problem behavior and how it affects family life at home.
- The classroom teacher will show you the tiered systems in place in the classroom.
- The paraprofessional can give you insights into the student's interests and preferred activities.
- The school administrators can tell you the universal strategies in place to positively support behavior in the school building and throughout the district.

Thank you for your participation!

Contact Information

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