

Behavior in the IEP: Understanding and Developing Behavior Intervention Plans

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How does the federal law on special education treat behavior problems?

The protections in the IDEA regarding discipline are designed to prevent the type of often speculative and subjective decision making by school officials that led to widespread abuses of the rights of children with disabilities to an appropriate education in the past.

When must a school develop behavior interventions for a student

- If the child's behavior impedes his learning or the learning of others, the IEP team must include strategies, including positive behavioral interventions, supports, and other strategies to address that behavior. If the child's behavior that impedes learning is not addressed in the IEP, the IEP Team must review and revise the IEP to ensure that the child receives appropriate positive behavioral interventions and supports and other strategies. (34 C.F.R. § 300.324(a)(2)(i) and 34 C.F.R. § 300.324(a)(3)(i).

A child who is removed from his or her educational placement shall.....

- ★ Continue to receive services to participate in the general curriculum and work on meeting IEP goals, and
- ★ *Receive an FBA, behavior interventions and modifications* to address the behavior violation so that it does not recur **from IDEA 2004 statute**

Functional Assessment: Because.....

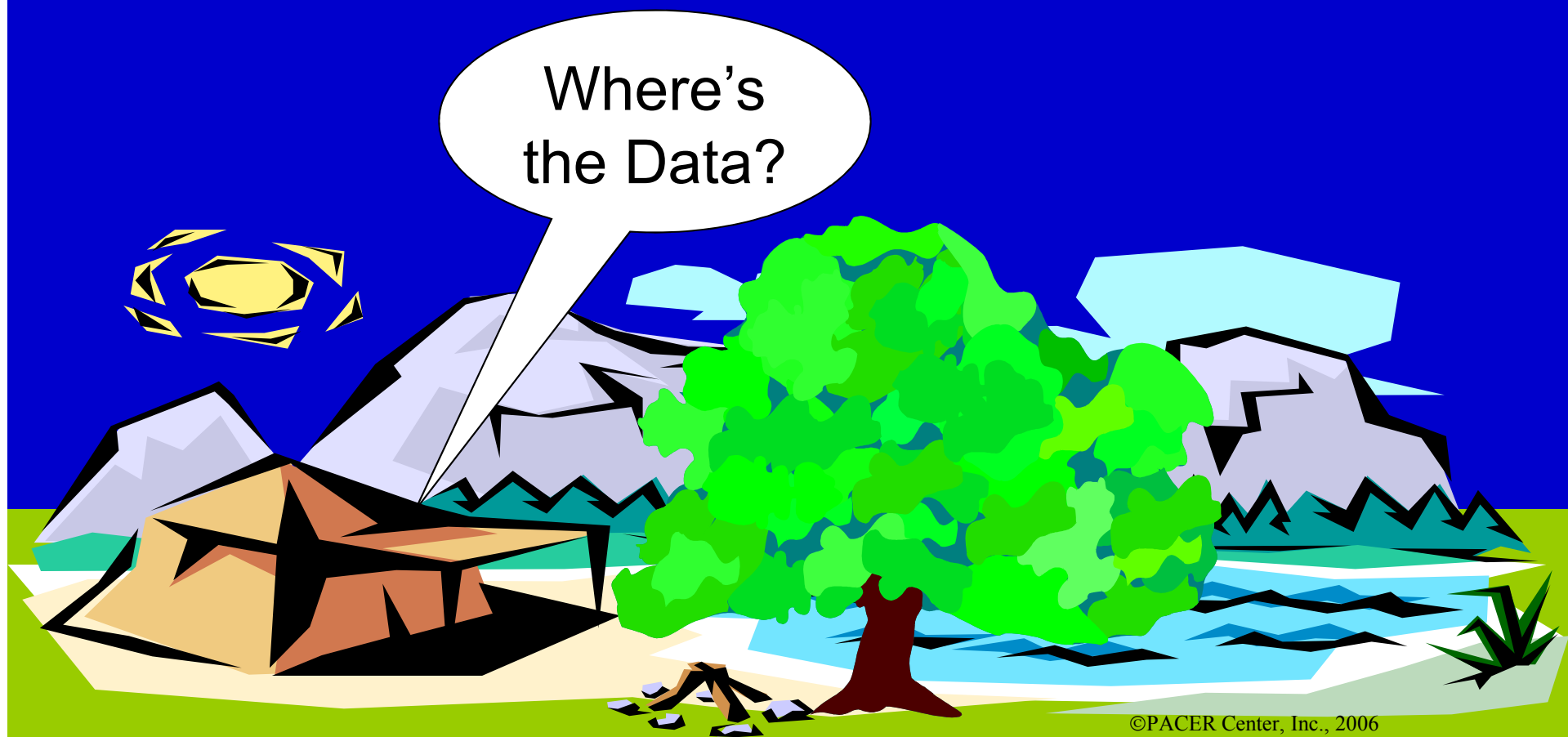
- ◆ IEPs should include behavior goals and positive behavior interventions
 - ◆ Positive behavioral interventions are based on functional behavioral assessment



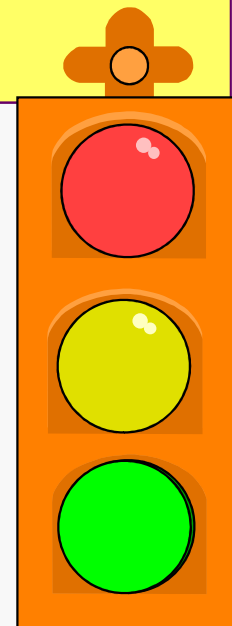
Functional Assessment: Because.....

- ◆ Special education decisions are to be driven by data, not opinion or belief systems

Where's
the Data?



Functional assessment: when?



- ★ When a child's behaviors do not respond to the interventions used with all students, **or**
- ★ When the team cannot provide data that supports why inappropriate behaviors occur, **or**
- ★ When a child is repeatedly disciplined for behaviors that do not improve, **then**

The team should request FBA as part of initial or ongoing evaluation

Functional behavior assessment

NOT a list of misbehaviors,
but an effort to determine
why a behavior occurs

FBA:

- helps the team to understand the purpose that a behavior serves for a child
- guides decision-making
- leads to intervention strategies
- required for removals beyond 10 days
- useful when behaviors have not responded to standard interventions



FBA: Typical Steps

Identify the behavior of concern



Where does it occur and not occur?



Antecedents (what happens beforehand)?



Is there a consistent pattern? Is it predictable?



What does the student “get” from it (the reinforcer)?



Possible reasons for the behavior (hypotheses)?



What replacement behaviors can be taught to the child that serve the same function?

General interventions

Make changes in the environment (seating, etc.)



Opportunities to make choices



Adaptations/modifications in curriculum



Reinforcement for appropriate behavior



Teach appropriate pro-social behaviors



Teacher adapts instructional style



Behavior intervention plan or crisis plan, using the data acquired through functional assessment

Section of FBA: NOT “Billy is disruptive”

BUT: Billy is out of his seat an average of 6x per class hour (class average .75). The greatest frequency (9x) is in math and geography, the lowest (2x) is in art

When out of his seat, Billy tries to engage other children in conversation. If ignored, he pokes at or touches them or their belongings

During one observation, Billy was asked by another student to return to his seat; he then threw that student’s papers onto the floor

Billy pokes at other kids when they ignore him.....

Hypotheses:

Billy does not know how to make friends

Billy is trying to get attention (from the teacher or students)

Billy has a hard time staying seated during math...

Hypotheses:

Math is too hard

Billy does not understand directions

Billy cannot read the math book

Too many problems on page; Billy is overwhelmed

Billy needs breaks during academic activities

Billy stays in his seat more during art.....

Hypotheses:

- Billy likes art, or is good at art**
- Billy needs hands-on activities**
- Billy works well with color**

**Billy tries to engage other children in talking.
If ignored, he pokes at them or their belongings**

Hypotheses:

- Billy is bored**
- Billy wants the teacher's attention**
- Billy wants the other children to like him**
- Billy does not have good problem-solving skills**

Why Focus on Positive Interventions?

- ★ Required in IDEA
- ★ Builds positive relationships
- ★ Encourages new behaviors
- ★ Reinforces skills (maintenance)
- ★ Increases self-satisfaction and optimism among youth, parents, and teachers



Positive Interventions....

- ★ Teaching *by itself* does not change behavior
- ★ Behaviors take time to become habits
- ★ Children need positive reinforcement over time
- ★ Must be used more frequently than punishment

And Meaningful Consequences....

- ★ Help change and maintain behavior across time
- ★ Consequences must —
 - Be clearly stated and communicated
 - Be logical – bear a relationship to the behavior
 - Apply universally to all

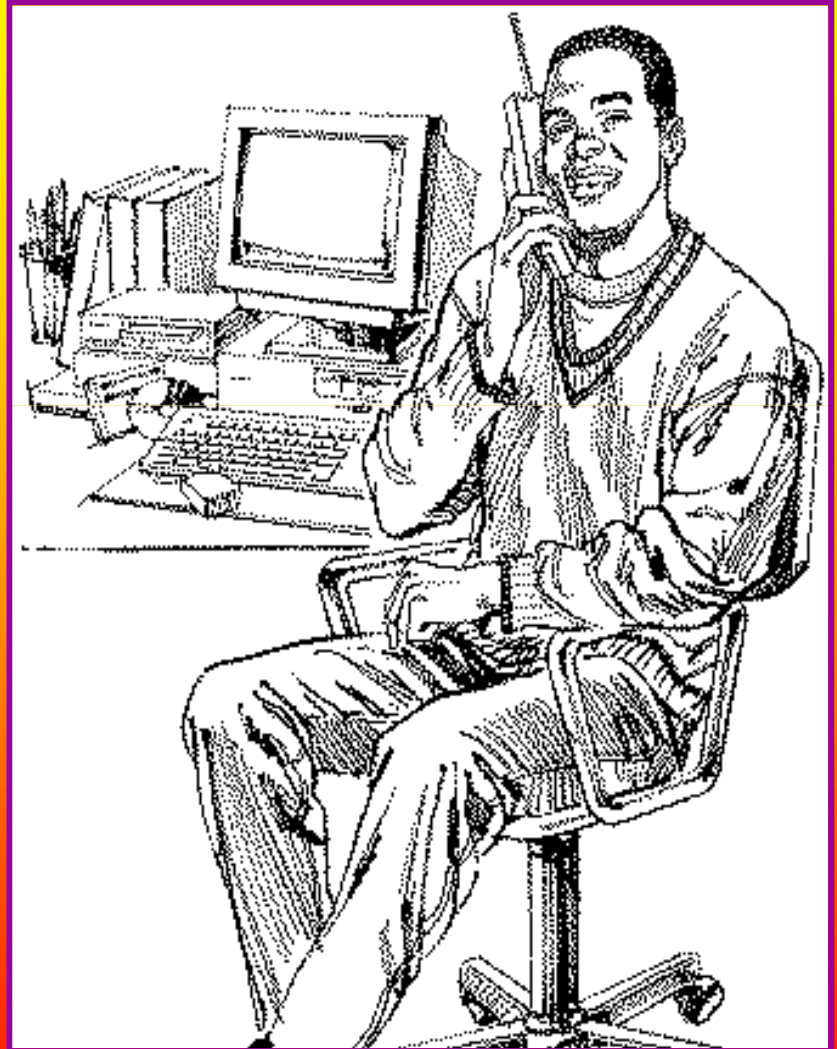
Building the IEP

★ Do the goals address:

- academic support?
- mental health needs?
- behavioral needs?

★ Does the child need:

- an FBA?
- related services?
- a behavior intervention plan (BIP)?
- a crisis plan?



Behavior Intervention Plan

BIP, PBI, BSP, etc.: A plan by any name, should be positive and instructive, based on FBA, and address—

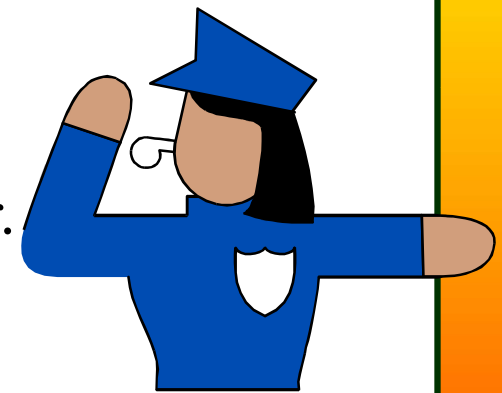
- ★ Effective re-teaching of the expected behavior
- ★ Rewards and consequences that are personally meaningful to a child (no two plans are alike)
- ★ Opportunities to self-manage behaviors
 - Positive behaviors are not maintained over time with mood rings and stickers
 - Self-management skills facilitate pro-social skills
 - Self-management skills lead to generalization

Developing a BIP: Considerations

- ★ Are changes needed in the classroom (seating arrangement, instructional approach, grouping, curriculum, etc.)?
- ★ Will replacement behaviors be specifically taught, reinforced?
- ★ Do the replacement behaviors serve the same function as the problem behaviors?
- ★ Is the child able to perform the desired replacement behaviors?
- ★ Will the child receive as much reinforcement from using the replacement behaviors as from using the problem behaviors?
- ★ Will new behaviors be reinforced across environments? Will parents, teachers and others use similar reinforcement systems?

Positive interventions

- ★ Many high school youth with behavior issues dislike authority, including the police. In one classroom, a teacher invited a mother to bring her baby to school and talk with the students about her dreams and plans, and the kind of community she wanted for her child.
- ★ The entire class had the opportunity to play with the baby and ask questions of the mother.
- ★ Two weeks later, the mother returned to the school - in her police patrol uniform.
- ★ She used the new visit to talk about her expectations for students if they were stopped by the police for any reason.



Positive interventions

- ★ A teacher kept a money jar in her classroom. For positive student acts, she put a nickel in the jar.
- ★ When the jar was full, students could spend the money. The catch: half was to be spent on someone the students professed not to like (often the assistant principal).
- ★ The students had to learn about the person they chose, and had to research what they thought that person would like. They purchased and presented a box of doughnuts with an accompanying note from the class.
- ★ Later, students found their note framed, hanging on the wall of the recipient.



Interventions that work

- ★ **Planned ignoring:** plan ahead of time to ignore specific behaviors that are directed at gaining the attention of the teacher or others. Do not use for peer problems. Ignoring takes practice - you must plan to do it! Planned ignoring may work for-
 - calling out answers in class
 - not having materials ready for class
 - interrupting the teacher
 - whistling or humming

- ★ Provide the attention a child is seeking when he or she displays appropriate behaviors.

Interventions that work

- ★ **Preventive cueing (signal interference)** - to alert the child who is doing something unacceptable
- ★ A frown, shake of the head, making eye contact, pointing to a seat for a wandering student, or snap of the fingers can convey the need to pay attention or to stop behaviors before they escalate
- ★ Do not show approval when using preventive cueing



Interventions that work

- ★ **Proximity control** - stand closer to the child who is beginning to have a problem with behavior. Less effective, move child closer to the teacher
 - Be sure that proximity is not seen as a threat to the child
 - Use during question/answer periods or when giving directions; may pair this interventions with “preventive cueing” for some students

Interventions that work

- ★ **Touch control** - light, non-aggressive physical contact, such as
 - placing a hand on the shoulder of student or
 - taking a child's hand to lead him or her back to the desk, etc.

- ★ To use touch control, a teacher must be sensitive to the needs of individual students, as some may perceive any form of touch as aggression!

Interventions that work

- ★ **Nonverbal warnings** - Place cue cards inconspicuously on a youth's desk as a reminder to change the behavior, or point to the posted rules.
- ★ **Discipline privately**, whenever possible, not before the child's peers. Students can gain power from daring to "take on" the teacher in a disagreement
- ★ **Humor** - a lighthearted comment or joke (never ridicule) can let a student "save face" who is in a confrontational situation with an adult.

Interventions that work

★ **Positive phrasing:** Let a child know exactly what behavior is expected, not just what is not expected

★ State the reinforcement for carrying out the desired behavior

- “You will be able to go outside with friends during recess if you keep your hands on the desk during discussion” or
- “I will call on you to answer as soon as you raise your hand”



Interventions that work

- ★ **Use “I” Messages.** A 3-part verbal intervention to help child understand impact of behavior:
 - Describe the behavior
 - Describe its effect on parent, teacher or others
 - Describe your feelings about the misbehavior
 - When you interrupt, I can’t hear others
 - I am unhappy because I want everyone to have a chance to have a turn
- ★ **Caution:** When children do not like their teacher, “I” messages may cause an increase in the behavior

Interventions that work

- ★ **Behavioral Shaping:** Reinforce behavior that is close to the desired behavior, then raise the criteria for reinforcement in small steps until reaching desired goal
- ★ **Reinforce learning.** Go over rules and expectations daily, demonstrate if necessary. Remind child of the rules, “Remember, the rules say that you are not to interrupt others.” Reminders that do not redirect the behavior must be followed with meaningful consequences

Interventions that work

- ★ **Give attention to children who are performing well**, so that other children can hear
- ★ **Encourage youth to ask for help** but do not withhold it for youth who are too shy or angry to ask
- ★ **Find opportunities for child to be of service** - line leader, food drives, etc.
- ★ **Provide advance notice of a change in activities**; give reminders



Interventions that work

- ★ **Place low priority behavior before high priority behavior** - such as scheduling spelling before recess
- ★ **Teach youth how to keep track of their own behaviors** (self-monitoring; a check sheet to show frequency and occurrence of a specific behavior)
- ★ **Move about the classroom.**
Acknowledge anything a child has done acceptably well



End