

ABA AS A TOOL TO MANAGE
PROBLEM BEHAVIORS:
*A PRACTICAL APPROACH TO
UNDERSTANDING CHALLENGING
BEHAVIORS*

South Pasadena 5th Annual Special Needs Conference
Nancy Goldstein & Ellie Morrissey, SPUSD

Goals for Today's Workshop

- Review of ABA Principles
 - ▣ Reinforcement
 - ▣ Extinction
- Understanding A-B-C Data
- Those tricky motivating operations...
- Common Mistakes in behavior intervention



WHY Address Behavior?

- Federal Law indicates that a school district **must** develop a “behavior support plan” when behavior is impeding learning of the student or other students.
- Each educator and provider must be informed of their specific responsibilities to accommodate, modify, and support.



Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA)

What is Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA)?

A **scientific approach** for discovering environmental variables that reliably influence socially significant behavior and for developing a technology of behavior change that takes practical advantage of those discoveries (Cooper, 2007).

What ABA Isn't...

- ❑ Homogenous
- ❑ A kid sitting at a desk with an adult
- ❑ Impossible to implement in the classroom



What Makes ABA Work?

- Most interventions derived from ABA are not new or unusual
- Its effectiveness comes from
 - ▣ Using assessment data to select the correct intervention
 - ▣ Using the intervention consistently.
 - ▣ Using the intervention correctly.
 - Time out



Make Yourself the Reinforcer!!!

- A huge predictor of any student's success is having a successful bond with their caregivers!
- The more your child values your company, the harder they will work to please you! Most things, but not everything, should be contingent on behavior.
 - Play games
 - Tickles
 - Let them watch a movie with popcorn

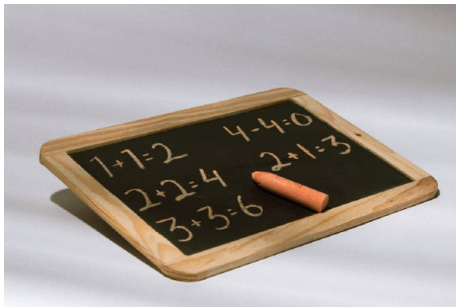


A – B – C Data

- Often the first type of data taken
- Record that behavior as it is occurring
- Do not interpret, just record
- If applicable, record instances of appropriate behavior as well



Hard Math
Assignment



Makes Inappropriate
Facial Expressions



Gets Sent To Time
Out



Antecedent



Behavior



Consequence

It's as Easy as A – B – C

ABC Recording Form

Observer: _____ Your Name _____

Student: _____ Raynetta _____

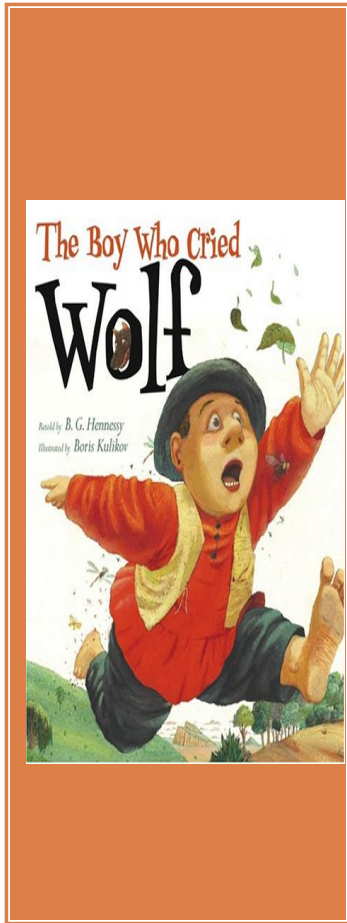
Setting (e.g., class #, gym, playground): _____

Date: _____

#	Time:	Activity/Task	Antecedent	Behavior	Outcome/Consequence
1		<input type="checkbox"/> Large group instruction <input type="checkbox"/> Small group work <input type="checkbox"/> Independent work <input type="checkbox"/> Unstructured time Specify:	<input type="checkbox"/> Given instruction <input type="checkbox"/> Given correction <input type="checkbox"/> Alone (no attention/no activities) <input type="checkbox"/> With Peers <input type="checkbox"/> Engaged in preferred activity <input type="checkbox"/> Preferred activity removed <input type="checkbox"/> Transition: Change in activity Other/Notes:		<input type="checkbox"/> Adult Attention Provided <input type="checkbox"/> Peer Attention Provided <input type="checkbox"/> Got Preferred Activity/Item <input type="checkbox"/> Got Sensation _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Adult Attention Avoided <input type="checkbox"/> Peer Attention Avoided <input type="checkbox"/> Task/Activity Avoided <input type="checkbox"/> Sensation Avoided _____ Other/Notes:
2		<input type="checkbox"/> Large group instruction <input type="checkbox"/> Small group work <input type="checkbox"/> Independent work <input type="checkbox"/> Unstructured time Specify:	<input type="checkbox"/> Given instruction <input type="checkbox"/> Given correction <input type="checkbox"/> Alone (no attention/no activities) <input type="checkbox"/> With Peers <input type="checkbox"/> Engaged in preferred activity <input type="checkbox"/> Preferred activity removed <input type="checkbox"/> Transition: Change in activity Other/Notes:		<input type="checkbox"/> Adult Attention Provided <input type="checkbox"/> Peer Attention Provided <input type="checkbox"/> Got Preferred Activity/Item <input type="checkbox"/> Got Sensation _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Adult Attention Avoided <input type="checkbox"/> Peer Attention Avoided <input type="checkbox"/> Task/Activity Avoided <input type="checkbox"/> Sensation Avoided _____ Other/Notes:
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4		<input type="checkbox"/> Large group instruction <input type="checkbox"/> Small group work <input type="checkbox"/> Independent work <input type="checkbox"/> Unstructured time Specify:	<input type="checkbox"/> Given instruction <input type="checkbox"/> Given correction <input type="checkbox"/> Alone (no attention/no activities) <input type="checkbox"/> With Peers <input type="checkbox"/> Engaged in preferred activity <input type="checkbox"/> Preferred activity removed		<input type="checkbox"/> Adult Attention Provided <input type="checkbox"/> Peer Attention Provided <input type="checkbox"/> Got Preferred Activity/Item <input type="checkbox"/> Got Sensation _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Adult Attention Avoided <input type="checkbox"/> Peer Attention Avoided <input type="checkbox"/> Task/Activity Avoided

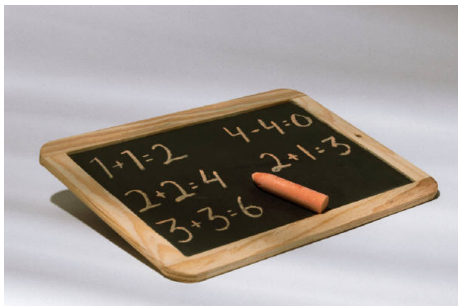
Let's practice!

The A – B – Cs of The Boy Who Cried Wolf



There once was a shepherd boy who was bored as he sat on the hillside watching the village sheep. To amuse himself he took a great breath and sang out, "Wolf! Wolf! The Wolf is chasing the sheep!" The villagers came running up the hill to help the boy drive the wolf away. But when they arrived at the top of the hill, they found no wolf. The boy laughed at them and loved getting the attention.

Hard Math
Assignment



Makes Inappropriate
Facial Expressions



Gets Sent To Time
Out



Antecedent

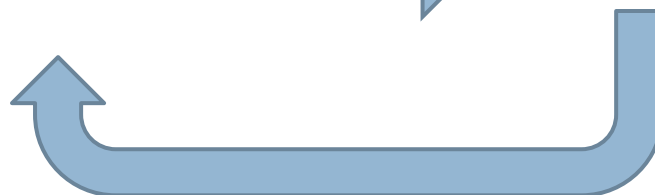


Behavior



Consequence

**Increases Future Probability of
Behavior if it Meets His Function**



What if I Can't Figure Out The Consequence?

- Consequence = A stimulus change following the behavior of interest
 - ▣ In other words, the **consequence is just what happened**. It doesn't matter what we think they got out of it, or what we were trying to do. A consequence is simply the observable stimulus change that occurred after the behavior was observed.



THE A-B-C MODEL

A

ANTECEDENT

(occurs before behavior)

You are late for work

You are late for work

B

BEHAVIOR

You drive 75 mph

You drive 75 mph

C

CONSEQUENCE

(occurs after behavior)

You get a speeding ticket

You get to work on time

**WHICH EVENT WILL INCREASE YOUR LIKELIHOOD OF
SPEEDING IN THE FUTURE???**

How do we know if a consequence is reinforcing for a student?

- They keep doing the same behavior over and over!
 - ▣ No matter how adverse we think the consequence is, it is reinforcing if the behavior persists



What is Reinforcing the Behavior?

Martin is a 4th grade student with ID and Autism. When he is working on a homework assignment he perceives as difficult, he will push it away. When he does his, mom will always pick it up and put it back on his desk. **SOMETIMES** after this happens, he will start head banging on his desk. At that point, his mother will remove the task demand.

- ▣ What is the student learning?
- ▣ What is he likely to do when presented with difficult work in the future?
- ▣ What should the staff do in the future?

Remember: All behavior is due to the individual's learning history!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Motivating Operations

- Make use of Motivating Operations!!!!
 - Alters the effectiveness of some stimulus as a reinforcer
 - Alters the current frequency of all behavior that has been reinforced by that stimulus.

Satiation



Deprivation



What behavioral process happening?

- Mary tends to get lost a lot. In the past when she was lost, she would text her husband and ask him to give her directions. He did this for a long time, but one day got frustrated and refused to answer any of her texts when she was lost. At first, she would send him more texts than she had in the past when she was lost, but eventually gave up and now doesn't text him at all when he is lost.

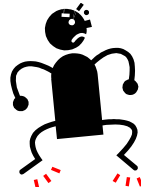
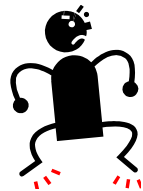
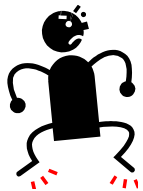


Extinction...It's Not Just for Dinosaurs!



Extinction

- Extinction
 - ▣ Withholding reinforcement for a behavior that has been previously reinforced
 - ▣ Expect an Extinction Burst!
 - Not ethical to use with severe or self – injurious behaviors
 - Don't use if you can't withhold all reinforcement
- Intermittent reinforcement will **STRENGTHEN** the problem behavior! (Don't be a slot machine!)



Possible Functions of Behavior



Determining The FUNCTION of Behavior

- Conjunction, junction, what your **FUNCTION?**
 - ▣ A FBA determines the function of the behavior
- The function of the behavior must be determined before an intervention is began.
 - ▣ The intervention must be an appropriate match the function of the behavior!



The Importance of Data in Determining the Function of the Behavior

- Johnny calls out in class.
- Susie runs away from the class at PE.
- Mark makes a rude comment to his teacher.

We don't know what the function of the behavior is without taking the A – B – C data!

Consequence = Function

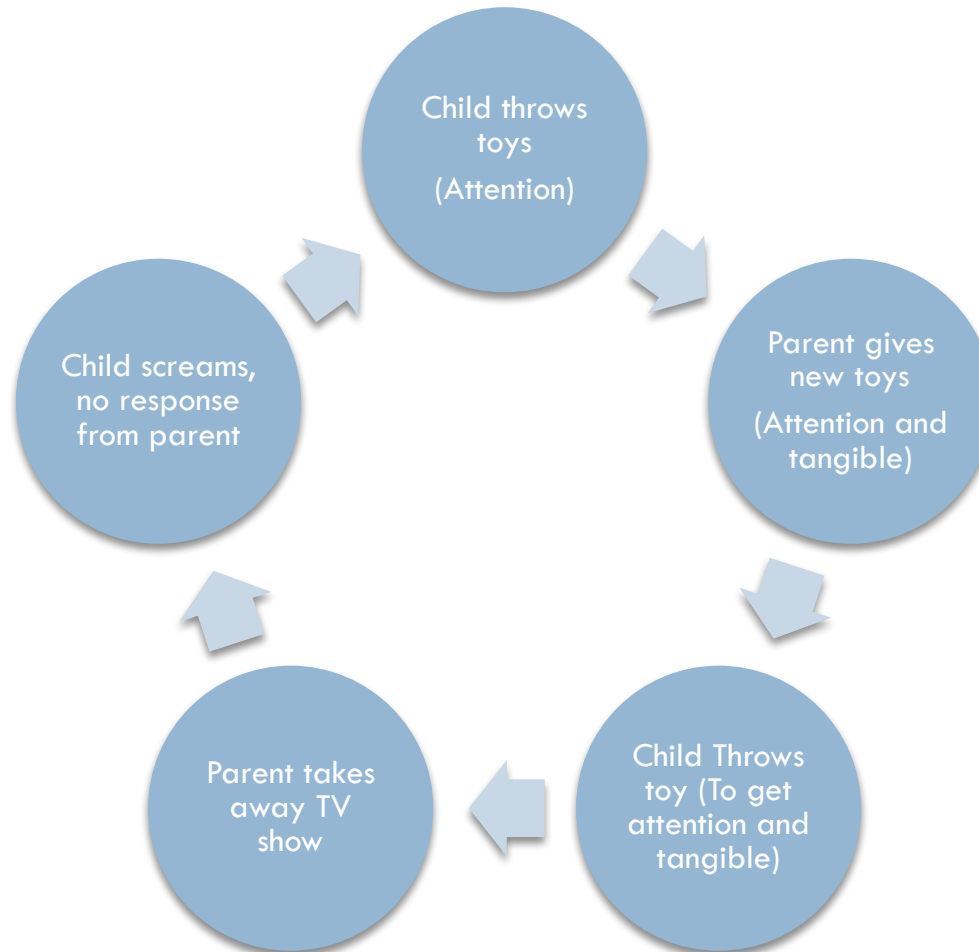
The data uses (A) & (C) to control (B).

Matching The Intervention to The Function of The Behavior

Mary is a 3rd grader with a learning disability. When she is doing independent math work, a subject that is difficult for her, she tends to stand up and make inappropriate jokes. The class laughs and her teacher responds by verbally reprimanding her and telling her to get back to work. This behavior seems to be happening more and more often.

1. What was the function of Mary's behavior?
2. Why was the teacher's intervention an inappropriate consequence/intervention?
3. What could the teacher do differently?

SIDENOTE...FUNCTIONS OF BEHAVIOR CHANGE!



HOW CAN I CHANGE BEHAVIOR?

- ▣ Alter the environment (antecedents)
- ▣ Teaching strategies (antecedents)
- ▣ Positive reinforcement strategies (consequences)



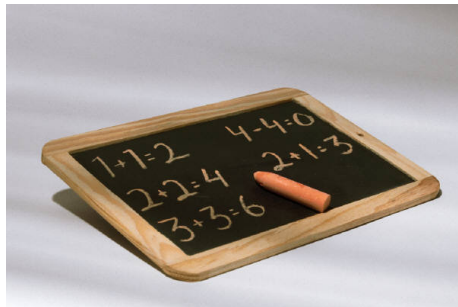
What do we want him to do?



Select the target behavior, then decide which antecedents or consequences you want to change to get that behavior to happen!

Change the Consequence

Hard Math
Assignment



Antecedent

Goal: Finish Work
with Adult Help



Behavior

Gets to Play on
Computer When
Finished



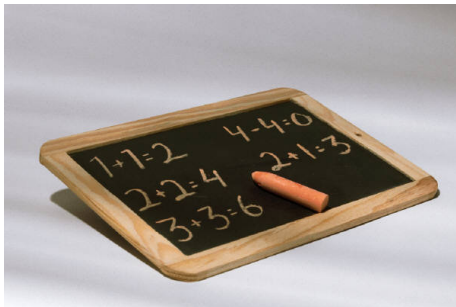
Consequence

Change the Antecedent

Easier Math
Assignment

Goal: Finish Work

Works on
Whatever is Next
In Class



Antecedent

Behavior

Consequence

If you don't have to set a
limit...DON'T!!!

Just do
you.

Takeaways



- ABA isn't just sitting at a desk with flashcards.
- A-B-C data helps us determine why a child is exhibiting certain behaviors.
- Whenever possible, have fun with your child!
- The “consequence” isn't always what we want it to be.
- Extinction is hard!
- Functions of the behavior can change.
- Give yourself a break, if you don't have to set a limit, don't!