

Brief Review of Underlying Principles in Developing a BIP

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Main Concept 1: Problem Behavior Is Related to the Context in which it Occurs

This includes ALL events and sensations that might affect a student at any given time:

- Immediate “triggers” (e.g., assignment just handed to student)
 - Immediate past “triggers” (e.g., fight on bus, late for class, adult use of harsh greeting)
 - Long-range “triggers” (e.g., history of school failure, difficult peer interactions over long period of time)
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- **environmental events**, such as specific instructions or peer interactions, or disruption in routine immediately before the behavior

 - **general conditions** to which a student is exposed
 - assigned activities
 - curricular expectations
 - seating arrangements, temperature, work space, etc.
 - Student’s physiological and emotional condition: anxiety, hunger, anger, fatigue, illness, pain, etc.

Main Concept Two: Problem Behavior Serves a Function for the Student

This behavior has worked in the past, or is working currently to achieve a result that is agreeable in some way to the student:

- to get something

- to escape, protest or avoid something

Key Questions for the “Behavioral Sleuth”

☞ **What are the specific circumstances or “predictors”(time, location, activities) that are associated with a high likelihood that the problem behavior will occur?**

☞ **What are the specific circumstances or “predictors” (time, location, activities) that are associated with a high probability that the problem behavior will not occur?**

Main Concept Three: All Effective Plans Address Both Environmental Conditions and the Function of the Behavior

The problem behavior will continue until the need to use the behavior is eliminated and until the student can use a socially acceptable alternative behavior that meets the same function. (Remember: This behavior has worked in the past, or is working currently to achieve a result that is agreeable in some way to the student.)

- change the environmental conditions to eliminate need to use this behavior
- teach alternative, acceptable forms of behavior that allow the student to get something or protest/escape/avoid something when needed

□ *Environmental Conditions to Change*

1. Classroom Environment: Likely Predictors for Problem Behaviors

- noise level
- uncomfortable temperature
- over or under stimulating
- poor seating arrangements
- frequent disruptions
- distracting or aversive interactions going on around or with the student

2. Curriculum and Instruction: Likely Predictors for Problem Behaviors

- A general lack of opportunity in five areas often results in a wide range of problem behaviors as students attempt to get these needs met in alternative, often challenging, ways:
 - ☞ physical needs (food, clothing, shelter)
 - ☞ fun
 - ☞ freedom
 - ☞ belonging - (peer group member & ownership by adults)
 - ☞ empowerment - (A sense of being socially and academically valued and competent)

- Screen for these environmental predictors of problem behavior:
 - lack of choice making opportunities
 - lack of predictability in the schedule
 - lack of individual schedule when needed by the student
 - inadequate or intrusive level of assistance provided to the student
 - manner in which instructions/interactions are delivered
 - degree of teacher proximity and attention, excessive or not enough
 - unclear directions provided for activity completion
 - few opportunities for the student to communicate in satisfying ways with peers and adults
 - activities, curriculum and instructions that are too difficult
 - activities that take a long time to complete
 - activities that the student dislikes
 - activities for which the completion criterion is unclear
 - activities that might not be perceived as being relevant or useful by the student
 - lack of opportunity to demonstrate real skills and receive acclaim

3. **Physiological Factors That May Trigger Problem Behavior At Times**

- sickness/allergies
- side effects of medications
- fatigue
- hunger or thirst
- increased arousal due to a fight, missing the bus, a disruptive routine

Teaching of Alternative Behaviors

Shape, Model, Cue

- **If the student has demonstrated the behavior elsewhere:**
Identify other environments in which the student uses a functionally equivalent behavior successfully. Provide prompts and reinforcement for the student to use the alternative behavior in the problem environment.
- **If the student has never demonstrated the skill:**
Determine an alternative replacement behavior and any general skill areas that can be taught which would reduce the student's need to use the problem behavior. Teach (shape, model, cue) the new alternative behavior in each environment in which it will be needed.