BIP, Counseling or Both? You Be the Judge!

2015 PENT FORUM

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Students with Emotional and Behavioral Disorders

- Represent the most at-risk sub-group of students in the school
  - Highest dropout rates (~60%)
- Myriad negative outcomes in adulthood
  - Two decades shorter lifespans for those who have repeated childhood trauma
- Significant behaviors that interfere with learning of self and others
- Mental health needs that are often under-identified and/or under-addressed
Often we have large numbers of students with these challenges

Key Assumption

- Lesser interventions have been implemented with fidelity and progress monitoring data demonstrates non-responsiveness

- School team is now questioning what we should do next
BIP Key Concept: Understanding Function

Functional Behavior?

A student’s attempt to:
- Get/obtain/access something desired
- Avoid/escape/reduce contact with something undesired
- *Proactive seeking of an outcome in the environment*
The General Behavioral Model: ABC

ANTECEDENTS → BEHAVIORS → CONSEQUENCES

Summary Statement
Order of Team Discussion

Setting Events
Must be periodic, Not continuous!
sixth

Desired Alternative
second

Triggering Antecedents
fourth

Typical Consequence
third

Problem Behavior
First

Acceptable Alternative
seventh

Maintaining Consequences
fifth

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Key Concept: BIPS are about Teaching Students General Skills and Functionally Equivalent Replacement Behaviors (FERBs)

A BIP is:
- an action plan for teaching, reinforcing replacement behaviors
- delineates how to handle the problem if it occurs again
- delineates how to alter environments to remove the need for the student to use this behavior to meet needs

Feels like heroics are needed?

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Emotionally-Driven Behavior?

Students may also struggle due to:
- Cognitive fusion
- Emotional dysregulation

Definitions

- **Homeostatic balance** (a state of **homeostasis**): having an ideal body temperature, an ideal level of glucose in the bloodstream, an ideal everything
- **Stressor**: anything that knocks you out of homeostatic balance
Why Don’t Zebras Get Ulcers?
Perceived and Actual Non-Life-Threatening Stressors

- Stress is an unavoidable fact of life.
- However, for humans the vast majority of stressors are not life threatening in any way.
- Unfortunately, humans can generate stress by anticipating it—whether or not it occurs, and whether or not it’s merited.
- We don’t have to experience something to be stressed out by it (perceived stressors).

Key Term
- Perceived stressor

Cognitive Fusion

- Fusion is the idea that thoughts are inextricably linked to emotions and behavior
- Thoughts dictate and command actions

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We are Meaning Making Machines

- Humans are meaning making machines
  - Events or situations take place and we attempt to interpret what the event or situation means
  - The meaning we make out of situations is what makes us feel good, bad, or indifferent
- I buy my wife flowers and she thinks “he loves me or boy I’ve got him whipped”
- My wife cheats on me and I interpret “my life is over”
**Intense Emotions Make Us Stupid**

- Being highly emotional is generally incompatible with being rational or logical (i.e., poor decisions & regrettable behaviors)
- People do silly, stupid and potentially harmful things under the influence of emotions
  - For the sake of love
  - Road rage
  - Drink a little too much with friends
  - Hurt one's self or others when upset

**Normal to Impairing**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Happy/excited</th>
<th>Manic/grandiosity</th>
<th>Sad/bummed out</th>
<th>Depressed/Suicidal</th>
<th>Angry/upset</th>
<th>Violent/property destruction</th>
<th>Worry/anxious</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Does the emotional reaction fit the situation??????

The Cognitive Behavioral Model

- **Situation**
- **Thoughts & Meaning Making**
- **Reaction** (Emotional, Behavioral and Physiological)
- **Consequences** (Perceived and actual)
Typical child

Darn it! I stepped in dog poop. I better clean it off so I can go to school.

Depressed child

Of course, I step in dog CRAP. How symbolic. I can’t do anything right. I am a piece of crap.
Anxious child

OMG! This is horrible! I can’t go to school. Everyone will call me stinky dog poop boy!!!

Aggressive child

@#$%# dog!! I bet the owner made the dog poop here on purpose. If I saw the owner, I’d kick his butt.
Hmmm...something felt squishy. Oh look at that bird.

**Key Concept:** CBT Is About Teaching Students Skills to Better Manage Thoughts, Feelings, and Behaviors

- Thoughts, Feelings, & Behaviors Associated with Anxiety
  - **Thought:** this is scary
  - **Feeling:** anxiety
  - **Behavior:** Escape

- Teach the student:
  - ways of detecting cognitive and emotional reactions to situations,
  - emotional regulation/coping skills
  - more helpful ways of thinking
# Address Through a Tier 3 Intervention?

- BIP for function based behavior
  - For IEPs this is a supplementary aid and support to maintain LRE
  - For 504 plans this is accommodations in general education
- CBT for emotionally driven behavior
  - For IEPs this is a related service to benefit from special education
  - For 504 plans OCR and hearing officers are increasingly supporting CBT

## Case 1: Egbert

- Athletically-talented, 6th Grade student identified with an SLD
- Popular with peers
- Near grade-level in reading and math with difficulty in writing
- Area of concern:
  - Repeated incidents of teasing, putting down, and bullying weaker, less popular students
  - Demeanor during incidents is cool, calm, and collected with no distress on the face

**YOU DECIDE THE APPROACH...**
Case 2: Jamal

- 9th Grader with a history of trauma
- On grade level across subjects but attendance and motivational (learned helplessness) issues
- Child find provisions occurred and it was determined that he is not a student with a disability under IDEA
- Area of concern
  - Student makes negative statements about self, others, and future
  - Gives up easily and withdrawals from school activities

YOU DECIDE THE APPROACH...

Case 3: Lisa

- 4th Grade student with autism and ID eligibility
- Language skills approximate a 2-year old
- Educated 70% in a self-contained program
- Specialized needs are in the areas of communication and functional skills
- Area of concern:
  - Head banging and hand biting when frustrated

YOU DECIDE THE APPROACH...
Case 4: Becca

- 7th Grader receiving IEP services under the EBD category
- Below grade level in reading but on grade level in math
- She has multiple suspensions for a range of aggressive problem behaviors that have exceeded 10 days of removal
- Area of concern:
  - Explosive anger in response to adult directives and transitions from preferred to non-preferred
  - Once upset takes 30 minutes to calm down

YOU DECIDE THE APPROACH...

Case 5: Alex

- 2nd grade student
- Uncertain whether on grade level
- Currently attending school less than 3 days per week
- Area of concern:
  - Intensive school refusal due to separation anxiety and school phobia

YOU DECIDE THE APPROACH...
Take Away Messages

- Some students require a BIP to maintain LRE
- Some students require CBT as a related service
- Some students require both

Problem Behavior: IEP/504

BIP to maintain LRE

CBT as a Related Service to Benefit from SE

Both

Requires organization and building of capacity to address all needs