

SECTION 5:



ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS

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Lines 5, 6, 7

The Big Idea

Environmental Factors to Evaluate

Behaviors always occur within an environmental context and conditions within the environment may contribute, predict or “trigger” problem behaviors. Any of the following factors may act as possible triggers. This analysis is critical because these are the variables to alter later in your plan, to remove or reduce the student’s use of the problem behavior to achieve a desired outcome.

- Physical Setting
- Social Setting
- Instructional Strategies, curriculum and activities
- Scheduling Factors
- Degree of Independence
- Degree of Participation
- Social Interaction
- Degree of Choice

A Behavior Intervention Plan will not be effective unless it addresses the environmental factors which are contributing to the problem behavior.

Note: Specific setting events may increase the probability and/or the intensity of problem behavior. Setting events may affect the student’s ability to cope with the above environmental variables. The behavior plan may wish to provide an “if-then” contingency to address known setting events. Common setting events include: illness, pain, health issues, sleep, hunger, missing medication, seizure activity, different bus driver or other events that have occurred in the immediate past environments.

BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION PLAN

for Behavior Interfering with Learning of Student's Learning or the Learning of His/Her Peers

PREVENTION PART 1: ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS AND NECESSARY CHANGES

Observation & Analysis

Line 5. What are the Predictors for the Behavior?

Situations in which the behavior is likely to occur: people, time, place, object, etc. Those situations you can predict problems will occur, e.g., difficult task, transition time, when not working in group, with specific people, when alone, after a request, etc. If this is a behavior that has occurred only once, state any known connections between environmental conditions at the time and the student's use of this behavior.

Environmental Variables to Analyze	Examples of Environmental Variables
Physical Setting	Sensory under or over stimulation: noise, crowding, temperature, etc.; missing or present materials, configurations of furniture; work and work space organization
Social Setting	Interaction patterns in or around the student, people present or absent; substitute teacher
Instructional Strategies, curriculum and activities	Mismatch between learner accommodation needs and instructional components. This is one of the most common predictors, examine carefully. The team may discover evidence that an accommodation plan is necessary to increase student success.
Scheduling Factors	Specific times within the schedule; with or without sequencing and transition supports; absence of a visual schedule; unanticipated changes in routine
Degree of Independence	Reinforcement and/or prompting intervals-levels and types appropriate to foster independence; consider functional communication availability; availability of any necessary communication system, e.g. Assistive Technology, Picture Exchange Communication System, Augmentative Communication etc.
Degree of Participation	Group size, location, and frequency of participation
Social Interaction	Social communication needs of the student matches participation opportunity and provision of necessary supports for social interaction
Degree of Choice	Amount of choice making and negotiation options present in the environment.

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Line 6. What supports the student using the problem behavior? *In other words, what is missing in the environment that needs adding, or what is in the environment/curriculum that needs removing? This is the final analysis of the necessary environmental changes that will be specified later on line 7. Use the term, "not yet" in your summary. The analysis must relate to both the predictors you have listed on line 5 and your hypothesis of why the student is using the behavior under these conditions. This line is essentially the summation of the antecedent, behavior, consequence (A-B-C) analysis. What has not yet been provided in the educational environment that could change the probability of the problem behavior occurring? What has not yet been removed that could change the probability of the problem behavior occurring?*

Present in the environment: something is not being done, so remove something

- Problems with seating arrangement, noise level of the classroom, size of the desk, interactions going on around student, etc., so change these variables
- Peer status is gained for misbehaving, so arrange peer status for pro-social behavior

Missing in the environment: something is being done that should not be, so add something

- Student has not yet been taught how to transition quietly, so teach it.
- Rules, expectations, alternatives, consequences are not yet clear to the student, so explicitly re-teach and reinforce adherence.
- Task structuring and positive reassurance have not yet been provided to address anxiety issues, so provide these.
- Student is non-verbal and has not yet been taught a communication system (i.e. sign language, Picture Exchange System (PECS)), so teach a communication system.
- Conflict negotiation/resolution skills have not yet been taught, so teach them.
- A mentor relationship with a supportive adult at school has not yet been provided, so develop a mentor program.
- Student does not yet understand that a desired activity is forthcoming, so structure an individualized visual schedule to make the forthcoming desired activity apparent.

BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION PLAN

for Behavior Interfering with Learning of Student's Learning or the Learning of His/Her Peers

PREVENTION PART 1: ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS AND NECESSARY CHANGES

Intervention

Line 7. What environmental changes, structure and supports are needed to remove the student's need to use this behavior?

(Changes in time/space/materials/interactions to remove likelihood of behavior)

Key Concept: Any intervention specified in this section must be logically related to the analysis just completed on (5) the predictors of behavior and (6) what supports the student using the problem behavior. If the behavior does not occur in some environment, and does occur in others, look at the difference to determine variable to alter to increase desired behavior in the problem environment.

Time changes: Review environmental analysis for what to add or remove (see scheduling factors)

- Give more/less time on tasks
- Provide a break after 15 minutes of work
- Allow completion of tasks in parts; develop a pacing technique
- Give student time to finish assignments at home
- Teach a closure system to know when s/he is done
- Signals will be given to warn transition is forthcoming

Space changes: Review environmental analysis for what to add or remove (see physical setting)

- Student will sit near the front
- Student needs to sit near assigned support buddy
- Different work areas will be clearly identified, different work spaces for different tasks
- Study carrels will be provided to avoid distractions
- (Student is highly sensitive to touch)—teach other students “personal space”

Material(s) changes: Review environmental analysis for what to add or remove (see instructional strategies, curriculum, activities)

- Hands-on learning or manipulatives will be increased
- Tasks organized in sequencing trays; visual schedule provided on student's desk
- Notebook organizer for assignments (and instruction to use)
- Enlarged print size for texts
- Provide pictures for use in communicating needs and wants

Interaction changes: Review environmental analysis for what to add or remove (see social setting, instructional strategies, degree of independence, social interaction, degree of choice, degree of participation)

- Use specific supportive voice volume and words; prepare the student ahead of time for change
- Cue the student to use previously taught coping strategies when changes to routine create anxiety
- Model positive self-talk language and teach a calming count down, 10 to 1, to aid relaxation
- Verbally praise student's use of “time away” and give “walking away” praise and points
- Teach peers to provide a specific interaction; provide a seatwork peer buddy
- Student to go to alternate class when a substitute teacher is present
- Provide more reassurance before the lesson, e.g., “Remember to tell me if you want help.”
- Provide for better individual engagement through partial participation in whole class activities

Components to Evaluate	Scoring	Examples: All examples below relate to the same student and same behavior	Key Concepts
<p>B. PREDICTORS OF BEHAVIOR (line 5)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “What are the predictors for the behavior?” <p>Predictors occur in an immediate environment, or immediate past environment.</p> <p>Physical setting (i.e., sensory over/under stimulation: noise, crowding, temperature, etc.)</p> <p>Social Setting (i.e., interaction patterns with and around the student, people present/ absent)</p> <p>Instructional Strategies, Curriculum and Activities (i.e. a mismatch between learner accommodation needs and instruction components). This is one of the most common predictors. Examine carefully.</p> <p>Scheduling factors (e.g., specific times, with or without sequencing and transition supports)</p> <p>Degree of Independence (e.g., reinforcement and/or prompting intervals- levels and types appropriate to foster independence; consider functional communication availability, etc.)</p> <p>Degree of Participation (e.g., group size, location, and frequency of participation)</p> <p>Social Interaction (i.e., social communication needs of the student matches participation opportunities and provision of necessary supports)</p> <p>Degree of Choice (i.e., amount of choice making and negotiation present in the environment)</p>	<p>2 = One or more predictors from immediate or immediate past environments are described with at least one detail about one or more of the environmental variables in column one</p> <p>1 = One or more predictors from the environmental variable categories are given, but with no detail.</p> <p>0 = No predictors of problem behavior from any of the categories are given, or predictors are from other environments and are not triggers <u>in</u> the current environment, or internal thoughts or, presence of an internal state or behavioral history or disability is described.</p> <p>Long range triggers are not specifically addressed in Behavior Intervention Plans and if present, should be addressed through interventions such as counseling, mental health treatment, agency interventions, and so forth (see key concepts column).</p>	<p>2 = “Whenever Billy is requested to do work without peer support, occurring after recess, when he is by himself, when there is a substitute teacher, or for any seatwork that is longer than 10 minutes.” (Note: One or more details were given and this applies to categories: social interaction and scheduling factors.)</p> <p>1 = “Whenever Billy is requested to do work” (Note: The category Instructional strategies, curriculum and Activities is mentioned, but with no details given about what type of work, or how appropriately the work match the learner skills and support needs.</p> <p>0 = “Anytime,” “Billy has AD/HD” (no predictors from categories are given)</p> <p>“Billy’s parents won’t take him to counseling,” (This is not a predictor/trigger)</p> <p>“Billy refuses to do homework without an older sibling or parent present” (not a predictor for problem behavior in the current environment)</p> <p>“Billy has low self esteem about math skills.” (This is a hypothesis about internal thoughts or states)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When and where, and under what conditions can you most expect the behavior to occur? Be as specific and thorough in environmental analysis and examine all categories. The interventions described later in the plan address altering predictor variables to eliminate or reduce the student’s need to use the problem behavior. Assessment thoroughness is required. Sometimes the predictors will be obvious to casual observations and interviews; other times formal on-going observational data collection will be necessary. If the behavior does NOT occur in some environments, and DOES occur in others, look at differences in the specified environmental variables in each environment to identify what is supporting problem behavior. Identifying WHY the behavior occurs requires consideration of what the student gets or what the student rejects (avoids, protests) by the behavior (i.e., the behavior’s function) and what is in or not in the environment that prompts or inhibits the problem behavior’s occurrence. Start formulating the functional hypothesis now. Consider how the identified environmental predictors contribute to the continuation of the problem behavior (mismatch of academic skills and expectations contributes to avoidance of academic tasks.)

Components to Evaluate	Scoring	Examples: All examples below relate to the same student and same behavior	Key Concepts
<p>C. ANALYSIS OF WHAT SUPPORTS (PROMPTS) THE PROBLEM BEHAVIOR IS LOGICALLY RELATED TO PREDICTORS IDENTIFIED FOR CHANGE (line 6 links to 5)</p> <p>Identified antecedent environmental variables influencing behavior</p> <p><u>Why</u> does the predictor prompt the problem behavior? This lays the groundwork for what will be described in line 7, environmental change.</p> <p>The analysis of <u>why</u> the identified variable(s) are supporting (prompting) the student's use of the problem behavior is described. "What supports (prompts) the student using the problem behavior: What is in or missing in the environment and/or in the instruction" you have identified for change (line 6). Compare this assessment conclusion to the specified predictors you have observed (line 5) i.e., "Any current predictors for behavior?" (See key concepts column for elaboration.)</p>	<p>2 = Half or more of the environmental features targeted for change (line 6) are <u>logically related</u>, i.e., consistent with, one or more of the identified predictors (line 5) If only one feature (line 6) is given, it must be logically related.</p> <p>"Logically related" means identifying a relationship in which certain events or lack of certain events appear to lead to a particular outcome. For example, a scheduling problem is identified in the environmental analysis: Jill is requested to transition without transitional supports. The problem behavior then occurs (crawls under the table). This behavior occurs because of the teacher has not yet implemented a picture schedule specifically designed to match Jill's comprehension needs (line 6). A logical relationship between predictors (line 5) and analysis (line 6) is apparent.</p> <p>1 = Less than half of the features of the environment targeted for change (line 6) are <u>logically related</u> to one or more of the identified predictors (line 5). If only one is given, and it is not logically related, score 0.</p> <p>0 = None of the predictors (line 5) are logically related to the summary of why the problem behavior is occurring in the specific situation (line 6), OR if none of the Predictors (line 5), are related to the environmental factors (see Physical Setting, Social Setting, etc.) then no logical relationship can be determined and the environmental assessment analysis (line 6) is inadequate.</p>	<p>2 = Half or more are logically related. If only one is given (line 6) and it is logically related to line 5, score 2. Example of one logical relationship: Missing in Environment: Something not being done that should be—add something: requested to do work without peer support, occurring after recess, when he is by himself, when there is a substitute teacher, or for any seatwork that is longer than 10 minutes." (line 5) is logically related to (line 6) Billy needs to be allowed to work with a peer buddy under the conditions described on line 5. (1 environmental feature is listed, and it is logically related)</p> <p>Example of another logical relationship: Present in Instruction, Something being done that should not be—remove something: A different case: "Jay expresses the desire to work on his own and increased independence and reduction in prompt dependence should occur" (line 6) is logically related to "the problem behavior occurs when an adult closely monitors each seatwork task Jay is assigned" (line 5) (One environmental feature is listed, and it is logically related to the predictor.)</p> <p>1 = Example: Three variables are targeted for change (line 6) but two of the three are not logically related to predictors (line 5), but one variable is logically related. Score 1, (i.e., only 1/3 were logically related).</p> <p>0 = No environmental change is logically related. Examples of non-logical relationships: "The teacher doesn't use peer buddies" (line 6) does not logically relate to any variable on line 5 ("after recess, during long assignments, during math"), i.e., absence of peer buddy was not a predictor variable listed on line 5. OR time out is listed (line 6), but it is not logically related to when asked to complete assignments independently (line 5).</p>	<p>It is not enough to describe the situation or predictors of problem behavior. (line 5) The team must analyze what it is about that situation that results in the likelihood of problem behavior. Something is in the environment that needs to be added or increased, eliminated or reduced. Line 6 is the summative statement that drives development of interventions to address environmental conditions. Teams may identify multiple predictors (line 5) but ultimately must select key supporting predictors (line 6) prior to specifying environmental changes.</p> <p>The purpose of environmental changes is to remove the need for the student to use this problem behavior. In developing a plan, hypothesizing the behavior function before deciding on environmental changes will help the team identify the most critical variables to change. Knowing what to change in the environment is critical and must be based on an environmental analysis of the following key variables:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical setting • Social Setting • Instructional Strategies, Curriculum and Activities <p>If instructional strategies, curriculum and activities do not match learner needs, the student will require accommodation planning to support learning. An accommodation plan will need to be developed to support this student.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scheduling factors <p>Students with some disabilities require specific environmental structures to enhance comprehension of sequences and toleration of non-self selected activities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Degree of Independence • Degree of Participation • Social Interaction • Degree of Choice

Components to Evaluate	Scoring	Examples: All examples below relate to the same student and same behavior	Key Concepts
<p>D. ENVIRONMENTAL STRUCTURE (FOR PROBLEM PREVENTION AND PROMOTION OF REPLACEMENT BEHAVIOR) IS LOGICALLY RELATED TO WHAT SUPPORTS (PROMPTS) THE PROBLEM BEHAVIOR (line 7 links to 6)</p> <p>Specified environmental, curriculum and/or interaction changes to remove need to exhibit the problem behavior</p> <p><i>The environmental change(s) to be made to remove the student's need to use this behavior (line 7) is logically related to predictors on line 6: "What supports (prompts) the student using the problem behavior?"</i></p> <p><i>Note: Sometimes there is a logically related, consistent relationship between the identified predictors (line 5) and the specified predictors that need to be altered (line 6) which was analyzed in C above. But the team fails to logically relate that analysis to the interventions and changes on line 7. Therefore, in analyzing the strength and weakness of a plan, both are considered separately, i.e., C and D.</i></p>	<p>2 = One or more environmental changes, i.e., changes in time, or space, or materials, or positive interactions are specified (line 7) and are logically related, i.e., consistent with, what was identified as supporting problem behavior (line 6)</p> <p>1 = One or more environmental variable changes (time, or space, or materials, or positive interactions) <u>are</u> described (line 7) BUT they are not logically related to what was identified as supporting the problem behavior (line 6)</p> <p>0 = No change in any of the following four environmental variable is described. No change in time, or space, or materials, or positive interactions, are described. (line 7) Reactive strategies or interventions unrelated to the predictors are described.</p>	<p>2 = "Billy will be seated next to a peer buddy and they will receive instruction on peer supports for activities occurring after recess, when there is a substitute teacher, or for any seatwork that is longer than 10 minutes." " (line 7) is logically related to predictor analysis: "Billy needs to work with a peer under specific conditions and he repeatedly states he dislikes working alone and wants to work with peers." (line 6)</p> <p>1 = "Sam will be seated next to a peer buddy." (This is a change in positive interactions <u>and</u> space specified on line 7) BUT, this is not logically related to the environmental analysis given on line 6: "Sam is given long assignments and needs shorter assignments capable of being completed in a 30 min. period" (Sam's need for peer interactions in this example is not logically related to the identified predictor, long assignments.)</p> <p>0 = "Teacher should give 2 warnings, then send the student to the office when he isn't on task." (Line 7 did not specify a change in time, or space, or materials or positive interactions.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One strand of positive behavioral support entails altering the environment to reduce or eliminate the student's need to use problem behavior. (line 7) • Successful support of positive behavior typically entails a variety of environmental changes in how time is structured, space is organized, materials are selected and positive interactions are increased. (line 7) • Understanding the student's learning profile, personality, and disability (if any) will be helpful in determining typical environmental supports to consider to eliminate or reduce problem behavior. (line 7) • When there is a logical relationship between environmental changes to be made (line 7) and the predictor summary of what is supporting problem behavior (line 6) the likelihood of addressing the correct variables is increased. The team can now move on to the strand: specifying how to teach FERB(s) Lines 8 and 9.