

Function of Behavior

Today's Agenda

01

**STUDENT
BEHAVIOR**

02

WHAT'S THE FUNCTION

03

STRATEGIES

04

RESOURCES

01

Student Behavior

Beneath every behavior there is a feeling. And beneath every feeling is a need. And when we meet that need rather than focus on the behavior, we begin to deal with the cause, not the symptom.



Reasons Students Commonly Show Behaviors

- Students have not explicitly been taught expectations
- Students don't know how to exhibit expected behaviors
- Student is unaware he/she is engaged in the misbehavior
- Misbehavior is providing student with desired outcome
 - obtaining attention/connection from adults/peers
 - escape from difficult task or non-desired activity

Understanding Chronic Behaviors

- If a student *repeatedly* engages in a **problem behavior**, he/she is most likely doing it for a reason, because it is paying off for the student

The behavior is Functional or serves a purpose

- Behavior is a form of **communication**. Some students learn that *problem behavior* is the best way for them to get their needs met.

Understanding Chronic Behaviors

- Recognize that recurring misbehavior occurs for a reason, and take this into account when determining how to respond.
- We can understand how to intervene most effectively with a student by identifying the **function (or purpose)** of their behavior

02

What's the Function?

Behavior is Functional, Not GOOD or BAD

- Functional= it pays off for the student in some way...so they do it again
 - We may see the behavior has being "good" or "bad", but the student does it because it is effective, it pays off for them

What is the Pay Off?

- We need to understand behavior from the student perspective...
 - What is the student gaining, or trying to get, from engaging in this behavior
 - What is the most important thing that the student is **gaining** or **avoiding** from using this behavior

What's the Function?

There are four main functions of behavior – attention/connection, escape or avoidance of demands and activities, access to tangible items or preferred activities, and sensory (this could be seeking or avoiding sensory input).

The Functions of Behavior

Pull up a **SEAT** to learn WHY challenging behaviors occur and how to respond most effectively.

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sensory why? These behaviors provide access to sensory stimulation. It "feels good to engage in the behavior." when? Sensory behaviors occur at any time, in the presence or absence of another person. How to Respond: Teach a functional replacement behavior that provides compatible sensory input. For example: If a child puts non-edible things in their mouth, provide them with access to a chew tube or gum.	Escape why? These behaviors remove an undesired situation or person. when? Escape behaviors occur at a time in which something is viewed as being too hard, too boring, or too loud. How to Respond: Teach the child to request a break when needed. Divide tasks into small parts or give within activity choices. For example: If a child flops out of their chair during a work session, provide them with access to a break card.	Attention why? These behaviors provide a reaction from others. They are often described as "acting-out" behaviors. when? Attention seeking behaviors occur at a time in which the child desires a social interaction with another person. How to Respond: Teach the child to request and receive positive attention through engaging in desirable behaviors. For example: If a child screams to gain attention, provide them with access to praise for having a quiet voice.	Tangible why? These behaviors provide access to highly preferred items or activities. when? Tangible seeking behaviors occur at a time in which the child desires a specific item or activity. How to Respond: Teach the child to ask for, wait, and/or exhibit a specific behavior prior to granting access to the item. For example: If a child begs to use the iPad, allow them access following the completion of a task or chore.

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Sensory

Behavior occurs when it stimulates a person's senses – either by providing or removing sensory input. This behavior functions to give the child some kind of internal sensation that pleases them or removes an internal sensation they don't like.

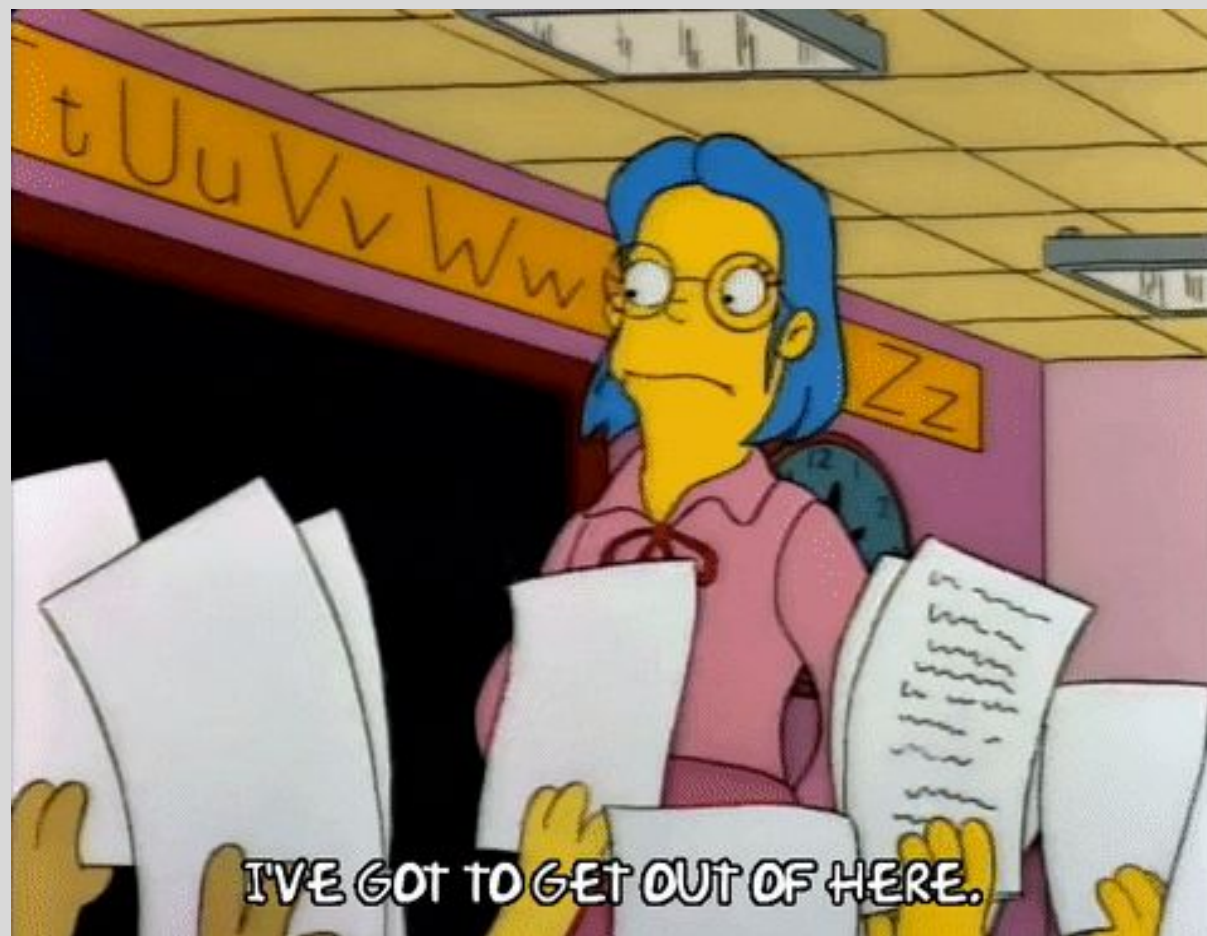


Examples of Sensory may include:

- Self-harm or scratching themselves for a bug bite or article of clothing bothering them.
- Elopement or running away because they may enjoy and feel sensory stimulation from fast sports.
- Rocking back and forth to de-stimulate their senses.
- Screaming or yelling to block out sensitive noises or sounds.
- Consult with OT

Escape

When a child engages in an escape behavior, the goal is to try to get away from something or avoid it altogether. Keep in mind the item that a child is trying to escape or avoid could be a task, a tangible item, or even a person.



Examples of Escape may include:

- Elopement. The child may run away if they don't want to complete an activity/transition.
- Place their head down on their desk when presented with an assignment or work.
- Intentionally will call out, antagonize, or display inappropriate behaviors to go to the office to escape the classroom.
- Ripping up or destroying materials.
- A student is a truancy concern with tardiness or absenteeism.

Attention

The goal of attention-seeking behavior is to gain the attention/connection of a nearby adult or another child. This goal could be seeking positive or negative attention.

Examples of Attention may include:

- When a child might whine to get attention from their parents.
- Calling out or making inappropriate comments to get others to laugh at them.
- Engage in certain behaviors to get others to play with them.
- Cry or whine to feel comfort or affection from loved ones.
- The child might be behaving to elicit anger or scolding from their parent or teacher.



Tangibles

Similar to the attention function where the child is trying to gain something; however this time what they are trying to gain is an item or activity. Behaviors in this category may be appropriate or inappropriate.



Examples of Gaining Tangibles may include:

- The child is screaming and crying at a store so the adult will buy them the toy they wanted.
- A child will push or hit another if they are playing with a toy that they want.
- A child completes all their chores quickly so they can go out to play.
- Displays a tantrum if they do not get the item that they originally wanted.

03

Strategies

Sensory Strategies

Could include:

- ❖ Self-harm
- ❖ Elopement
- ❖ Rocking
- ❖ Screaming
- ❖ walking into furniture/people



Strategy

Offer headphones/earplugs if there is too much noise.



Strategy

Offer chew toys or gum for student with oral fixation.



Strategy

Provide a fidget or putty



Strategy

Provide sensory breaks or movement breaks within the classroom

Sensory Strategies

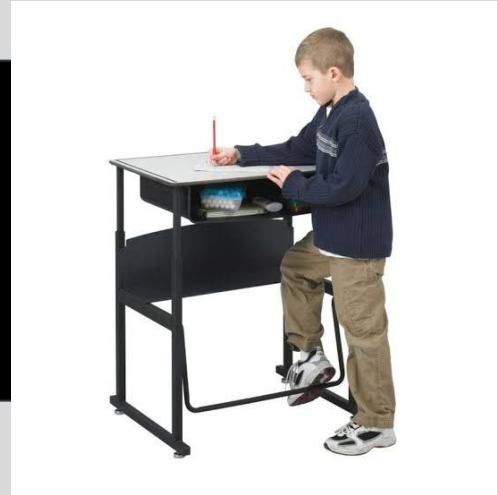
Could include:

- ❖ Self-harm
- ❖ Elopement
- ❖ Rocking
- ❖ Screaming
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Strategy

Resistance bands on
chair



Strategy

Standing desk
allow to stand instead of
sit



Strategy

Carry weighted
backpack



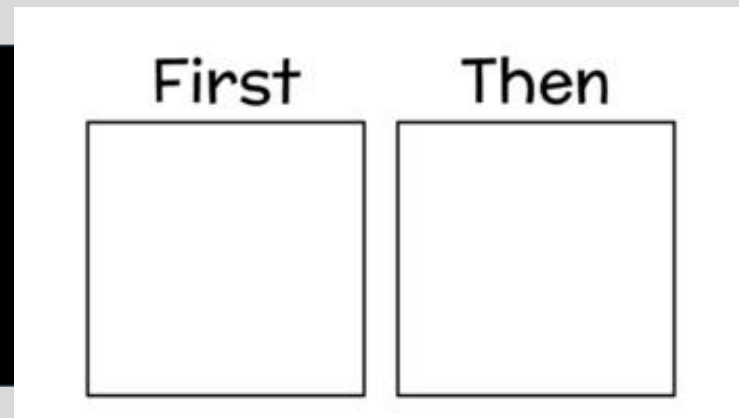
Strategy

Music breaks

Escape Strategies

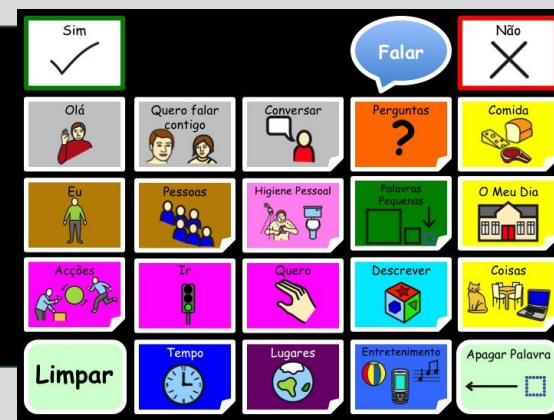
Could include:

- ❖ Elopement
- ❖ Placing their head on their desk
- ❖ Intentionally inappropriate behavior to go to office
- ❖ Ripping or destroying materials
- ❖ Chronic truancy



Strategy

Use a First - Then board for the student.



Strategy

Using a visual schedule or checklist



Strategy

Offer controlled choices: pencil/marker, even/odd, sit or stand, etc



Strategy

Maintain clear expectations

Escape Strategies

Could include:

- ❖ Elopement
- ❖ Placing their head on their desk
- ❖ Intentionally inappropriate behavior to go to office
- ❖ Ripping or destroying materials
- ❖ Chronic truancy



Strategy

Teach phrases “I need a break”, “I need help” and add visuals



Strategy

Behavior Specific Praise:
Great job asking for a break, you finished one problem!, etc



Strategy

Predictable Breaks:
Break, then return



Strategy

Reduce Power Struggles: Stay calm, validate their feelings while keeping limits

Attention Strategies

Could include:

- ❖ Crying out
- ❖ Whining
- ❖ Calling out to make others laugh
- ❖ Behavior that elicited anger or scolding from adults.



Strategy

Teach child appropriate way to gain teacher's attention:

- ❖ Raising hand
- ❖ phrases to use



Strategy

Give positive attention throughout the day, even for the little things.



Strategy

Roles and responsibilities within the classroom/building



Strategy

Thoughtful seating options

Attention Strategies

Could include:

- ❖ Crying out
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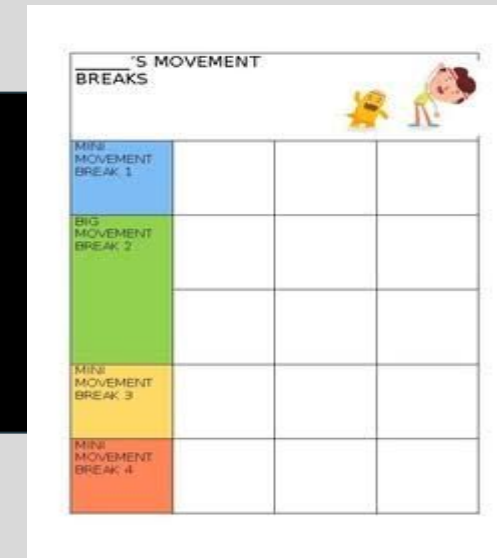
Strategy

Planned ignoring: ignore minor attention-seeking behaviors (whining, noises, dramatics) Ignore the behavior NOT the child



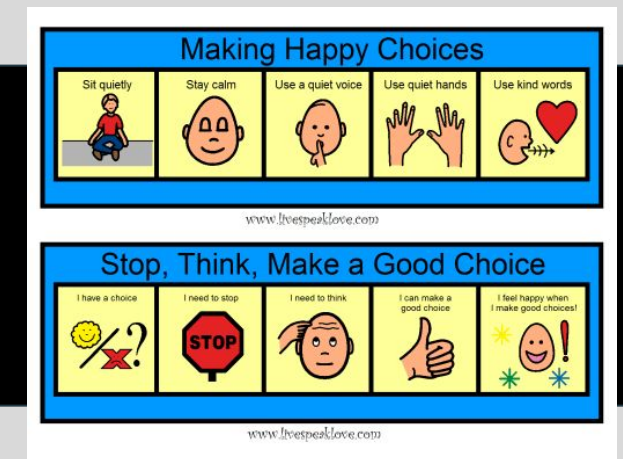
Strategy

Private Correction



Strategy

Scheduled movement breaks



Strategy

Nonverbal Cues/Visuals

Tangible Strategies

Could include:

- ❖ Screaming when told “no”
- ❖ Pushing or hitting to get a toy they want
- ❖ Throwing a tantrum to get what they want



Strategy

Offering opportunity for choices



Strategy

Modeling asking for a turn and sharing. Circles on sharing



Strategy

Transition warnings- using timer



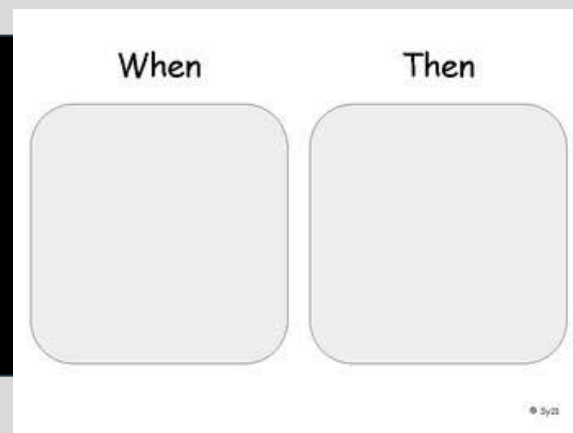
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Modifying the physical setting such as putting preferred tangibles away

Tangible Strategies

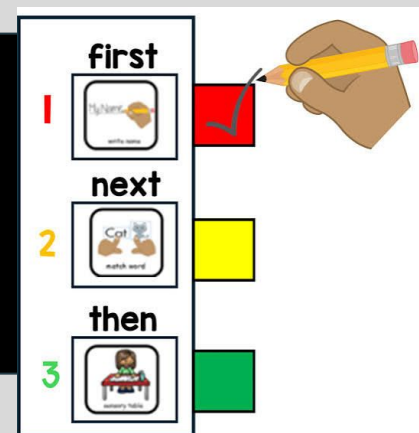
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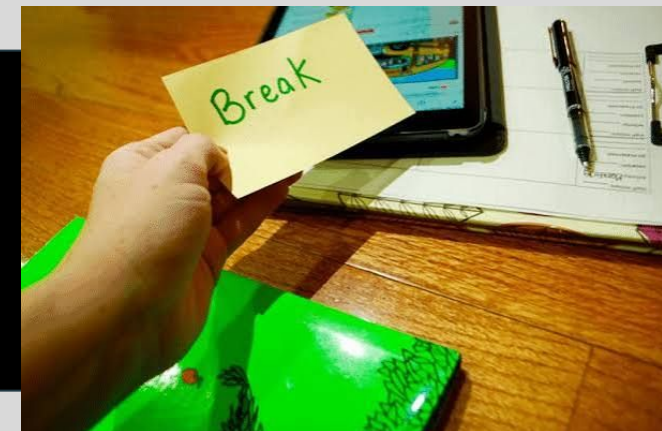
Strategy

First/Then visual
When/Then Visual



Strategy

Visual daily schedule



Strategy

Functional
Communication: “Can
I have a turn?”, “Break
please.”



Strategy

Teach Waiting: start
small, use supports
(timer, visual), specific
praise

Scenarios

- Identify the behavior
- Provide strategies to assist student



1

Susan will put her head down on her desk when presented with an assignment in Math.

2

Tracy wants a toy from her friend. During playtime, Tracy hits a peer which results in the peer dropping the toy and crying.

3

Joey is drumming fingers on desk and tapping pencils repetitively.

4

James calls out during independent work, making inappropriate comments to get his peers to laugh at him.

No matter how challenging the student's behavior,
all students want the same thing:

***To be loved, valued
and understood.***

04

Resources

Resource

4

Replacement Behavior- Elopement

Questions About Behavioral Function

PBIS World

Center for Intensive Behavioral Supports

Functionally Aligned Interventions

Thank you!

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Credits

SLIDESCARNIVAL

for the presentation template

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for the photos

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Education to the Core