Positive Behavior Support (PBS) Local Education Agency Toolkit

July 2013

Office of the State Superintendent of Education

Division of Specialized Education

810 First St. NE, Washington, DC 20002

OSSE

INTRODUCTION

OSSE *Vision*

All District residents receive an excellent education.

OSSE Division of Specialized Education *Mission*

The Division of Specialized Education's mission is to ensure that all District of Columbia children and youth with developmental delays and disabilities can access high quality services and a free appropriate public education. The Division is committed to excellence, joint accountability, reflective practice, and continuous improvement.

The ***District of Columbia Positive Behavior Support (PBS) Toolkit*** is a comprehensive guide which contains information and nationally recognized best practices to assist educators in effectively addressing the needs of students with behavioral challenges. This guide was developed using a range of publicly available research-based guidance documents and tools. Please see page 39 for a list of references.

This guide is intended to provide educators, school professionals, and others with meaningful, evidence-based strategies to support the full range of diverse learners who exist in the classroom. However, while this guide is intended to help educators understand and apply best practices; this guide **is not meant to:**

- Be a complete explanation of all special education laws and regulations;
- Give legal advice; or
- Supersede any local and/or federal law.

We hope that you find this toolkit useful and welcome your feedback.

Acknowledgements:

OSSE appreciates the leadership of Melanie Grant, Esq., Education Program Specialist, Division of Specialized Education, Training and Technical Assistance Unit, in compiling this resource. In addition, OSSE wants to thank Kirstin Hansen, Esq., Compliance Specialist, for her assistance in editing this document.

Table of Contents

Chapter I.   Assumptions and Characteristics of Positive Behavior Support

One of the most serious problems faced by educators is the presence of challenging behaviors. Problem behaviors such as aggression, defiance, swearing, repeated classroom disruptions, and self-stimulation can significantly interfere with a student's learning, social acceptance, and inclusion in everyday school and community life. In extreme cases, challenging behaviors can be dangerous or even life-threatening to the student and others. Chronic challenging behaviors can result in highly punitive interventions and removal from normal school routines.

In recent years, a data-based approach for managing challenging behaviors has emerged, gaining widespread national acceptance. The approach, termed effective or positive behavior support, grew out of the limitations of common behavior management interventions which typically rely on the use of unpleasant consequences for reducing problem behaviors. While standard classroom management procedures can help to improve behaviors for some students, they are often insufficient as the sole intervention for students who present significant challenging behaviors. When standard practices fail, it is often because they fail to address the purpose of the student's behavior or the environmental influences that produce the behavior problem. An intervention approach based in positive behavior support (PBS) strategies seeks to understand the nature of problem behaviors before intervening. Because behaviors are complex and are rarely attributable to one cause, this approach uses multiple intervention strategies in an effort to build long lasting behavioral change. It blends effective practices in both instruction and behavior management to produce meaningful results.

The PBS approach is anchored in an assessment process termed Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA). FBA is a process which looks at behavior in terms of what the behavior accomplishes for the individual child, rather than the effects of the behavior on others. The FBA assumes that behavior is a child's attempt to adapt to a specific situation. In conducting an FBA, we gather information that helps us to understand how the behavior serves a useful function for the child. FBA is a process for collecting information to help determine why problem behavior occurs and to serve as a basis for the development of behavioral intervention plans.

The purpose of this section is to introduce the underlying assumptions and characteristics of PBS. Subsequent sections will describe the model and the actual process for designing and conducting an FBA and for designing and implementing behavioral intervention plans (BIPs) based on the results of the FBA.

A. Underlying Assumptions

Challenging behavior results from unmet needs. PBS rests on several strong assumptions about

behavior and the effectiveness of interventions, as follows:

1.   Assumption 1: Challenging behaviors serve a function for the student.

Problem behaviors produce desired outcomes for the individual student. In essence, challenging behaviors exist because they serve a useful purpose for the student. This means that the behavior has worked in some way for the student in the past, and the student will continue to use it because it has worked. Although problem behaviors may be socially inappropriate, from the student's perspective, they are reasonable and logical responses to events that have occurred in their environment (e.g., responses to a reprimand, teacher direction, or a bad headache). Many students with significant skill deficits use challenging behaviors because they have no other means for successfully influencing their environment or communicating their needs.

Functions of behavior can be roughly divided into two purposes: "to get something" or "to avoid or escape something." When a student's behavior functions to avoid or escape something, it means that the teacher or the peers respond to a challenging behavior by stopping an event that the student finds unpleasant. For example, whining and complaining after each direction may result in the teacher's lessening her demands, and threatening to hit a peer may result in the peer's stopping his teasing.

It is important to note that the form of behavior (how a student acts) is not necessarily related to function. For example, a student may say "Leave me alone" in an effort to bring greater teacher attention (e.g., the teacher responds by saying, "Come on. You don't really mean that. Let's do…"). It is impossible to accurately identify function just by describing student actions. Function can only be determined by describing student's interactions within their environment. Following are some common functions:

a. Behaviors can be rewarded by something positive. This positive reward can be tangible, such as access to a toy or game, a preferred activity, or a privilege. The reward can also be a positive feeling, as when a child accomplishes or masters a task or gains a sense of belonging.
b. Behaviors can be rewarded by attention. From adults, positive attention can be provided in the form of help with work or resolving a conflict with a peer. Negative attention can be provided in the form of a reprimand or a display of anger, which may actually be desirable for some students. From other students, positive attention usually takes the form of laughter, recognition as someone who entertains the class or distracts the class from work. Negative attention can take the form of fear of the child by others or recognition as someone who breaks the rules.

In behavioral terminology, the above two types of attention can be described as "positive reinforcement." Behavior is rewarded by producing a positive event, and therefore the frequency of the behavior is more likely to be maintained or increased. For example, a child with learning difficulties raises his hand to ask for help on a challenging task. The teacher helps the child by providing one-to-one instruction. The child is more likely to raise his hand in the future when presented with a difficult task because this behavior was positively reinforced.

c. Behaviors can provide the relief of escape from something unpleasant. For example, when behavior results in expulsion from class during activities the child finds difficult or unpleasant, when behavior engages others in ways that distract from a task the child finds hard, or when behavior keeps people away and child feels more comfortable being alone.

In behavioral terminology, this is called "negative reinforcement." Behavior is rewarded by causing the termination or reduction of a negative event, and therefore the frequency of the behavior is more likely to be maintained or increased. For example, a child with learning difficulties curses at the teacher when given a complicated task. The teacher sends the child to the principal's office and the child is not required to finish the task. The child is more likely to curse at the teacher in the future to avoid completing work, because the initial behavior was negatively reinforced by allowing the child to escape the situation.

d. Behaviors can help to change a person's level of stimulation or mood. Some children have a heightened need for stimulation; they get bored easily, waiting is highly unpleasant, and they are often impulsive. Behaviors for these children may serve the function of generating excitement by getting a rise out of others. Some children become easily over stimulated or easily irritated. Their behavior may function to avoid high-stimulation situations. Sometimes behaviors themselves produce certain sensations that a child finds highly pleasurable. This is called "automatic reinforcement" and is more common among children with severe developmental difficulties. Examples include banging things, certain types of self-injurious behavior, and repetitive behaviors that have no clear purpose.

2.   Assumption 2: Challenging behaviors are context related.

We know that a behavior occurs because of what precedes or follows it. What this means is that problem behaviors do not occur in a vacuum. Behaviors occur because there are certain environmental variables that have induced them to occur. These variables can be identified through careful assessments.

There are several general classes of context variables that influence behaviors:

a. Immediate Antecedents. Immediate antecedents are events that occur just prior to a problem behavior. They trigger an immediate reaction from the student. Examples of immediate antecedents include a teacher direction, difficult work task, reprimand, or peer teasing.

b. Setting Events. Setting events refer to context variables that occur concurrently with the problem behavior or at an earlier time. Setting events work to "set the stage" for a problem behavior to occur. These types of events include setting characteristics such as seating arrangements or the schedule of classroom activities; prior social interactions such as a fight on the bus on the way to school; and physical conditions of the student such as illnesses, fatigue, or allergies.

c. Lifestyle Factors. Although often difficult to identify precisely, lifestyle factors contribute to one's overall quality of life. The presence or absence of such factors as participation in personally meaningful activities, the opportunity for choice and control, inclusion in typical school and community activities, friendships, and good relationships with family members and others can have a profound influence on the behaviors that we see day to day. Because positive life experiences provide the motivation for learning, they are necessary conditions for the success of behavioral interventions.

The FBA model takes into account the broad context (background) factors, antecedents that occur immediately before the behavior, the behavior itself, and the consequences the behavior elicits. The purpose of learning about these factors is to help determine the function the behavior serves for a particular child.[1]

A

Antecedents: Events that occur just before and trigger the behavior.

- **Setting Events**
- **Contextual Situation**

B

Behavior: What a student says and does.

C

Consequences: The action or response that follows the behavior.

- **Positive Reinforcement**
- **Negative Reinforcement**
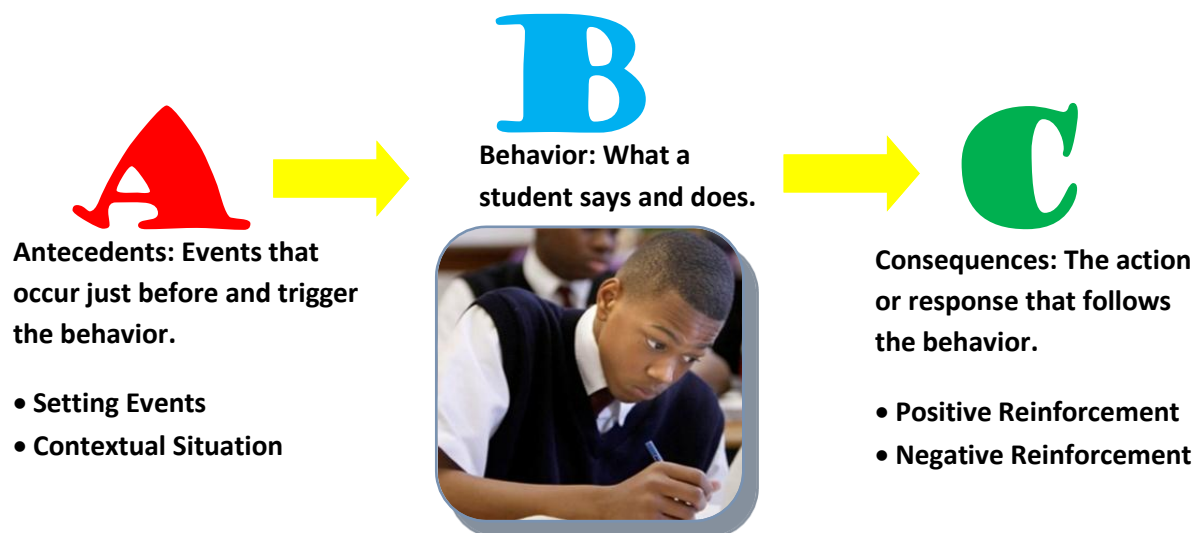
[1] Positive reinforcement: Behavior is rewarded by producing a positive event, and therefore, the frequency of the behavior is more likely to be maintained or increased.
Negative reinforcement: Behavior is rewarded by causing the termination or reduction of a negative event, and therefore, the frequency of the behavior is more likely to be maintained or increased.

3.	Assumption 3: Effective interventions are based on a thorough understanding of the problem behavior.

Effective interventions result in long-term behavior change. To produce these long-term results, effective interventions must directly address the function and contextual influences of the challenging behavior. Once challenging behaviors are understood in terms of the outcomes they produce for a student, the goal is to replace problem behaviors with socially acceptable alternatives that help the student to achieve the same outcomes. If we accept that challenging behaviors reflect a skill deficit, then the solution is to teach acceptable alternatives. Interventions that ignore function by simply trying to suppress (e.g., punish) a behavior are likely to fail because the student's needs remain unmet. Even students, who know how to behave appropriately, but do not, can benefit from instruction. They need to be taught that appropriate behaviors are indeed effective and efficient means for achieving desired results.

Effective interventions also address the contextual influences of behavior. Once the contextual influences of the problem behavior are understood, the goal is to **prevent** problem behaviors from occurring by changing the environment. Prevention strategies can be as simple as modifying or changing the pace of instruction to avoid student frustration, or as complex as modifying morning routines at home or learning experiences at school to match student needs. Interventions that focus on changing the student's behavior without also addressing the behavior contextual influences are likely to fail because the student's situation (the one that produces the problem behavior) remains unchanged.

4.	Assumption 4: BIPs should be guided by a strong value base.

The appropriateness of an intervention should be measured by its effectiveness and its social acceptability. The social acceptability standard held by PBS is that all students should be treated with the same dignity and respect as their peers. In the past, many students who have presented significant behavioral challenges have been exposed to treatments (e.g., mechanical restraints, exclusionary or locked time out, and electric shock) that would be considered objectionable for students without disabilities. Developing a BIP calls for a cessation of any behavior management intervention that dehumanizes, stigmatizes, or causes pain, physical or emotional distress.

A second value-based assumption is that all students have the right to be included in integrated activities. When addressing problem behaviors, this assumption means that behavioral interventions are concurrently implemented with strategies for increasing inclusion along with other strategies for enhancing quality of life. In other words, access to inclusive settings is not made contingent on appropriate behavior, but is rather facilitated through PBS.

B. <u>Characteristics of Positive Behavior Supports</u>

Taken together, the four assumptions underlying PBS should result in comprehensive interventions that are uniquely tailored to individual students. Some of the defining features of PBS are outlined below.

1. PBS is assessment based and hypothesis driven.

PBS is driven by a thorough understanding of the problem behavior and its function through conducting an FBA. All interventions are linked to address specific hypotheses that describe the "whys" of behavior.

2. PBS emphasizes skill building and environmental changes as the major strategies for intervention.

The reduction of problem behaviors occurs as a result of teaching alternative skills and by modifying the student's environment.

3. PBS is comprehensive, usually involving multiple intervention components.

Single intervention approaches to behavior management, particularly those that solely rely on consequence interventions, are unlikely to meet the complex needs of students with challenging behaviors. PBS draws upon multiple interventions to increase effectiveness. These may include teaching alternative skills, modifying antecedent and setting events, implementing consequence strategies, and designing crisis management procedures.

4. PBS holds a broadened view of intervention success.

Decreases in problem behaviors and increases in appropriate behaviors are traditional measures of behavior management success. However, although important and necessary, they alone are insufficient yardsticks for measuring effectiveness. Problem behaviors are problems because they have significantly interfered with the student's or another's learning or quality of life. Effectiveness must be measured by evaluating the impact of behavioral support on broader-based outcomes. Some criteria for effectiveness include (a) whether improvements in the problem and alternative behaviors have maintained across time and generalized across settings; (b) whether improvements have occurred in the student's quality of life (e.g., increased inclusion through better peer relationships, better grades); and (c) whether the intervention has positively impacted the student's health and well-being (e.g., fewer injuries, less need for counseling).

5.   PBS is process oriented, focusing on long-term solutions and not "quick" fixes.

Understanding the nature of problem behaviors and bringing about durable significant changes in a student's life cannot be expected to occur quickly. Although reductions in problem behaviors can occur rapidly, durable change with improved outcomes for students takes time. There are no quick fixes for complex challenges, nor is there any one behavior management technique that is appropriate for all situations, yet alone all individuals. PBS is process-oriented, requiring ongoing team problem solving for understanding the nature of the problem and for designing BIPs.

Chapter II. Conceptual Framework for Functional Behavior Assessments and Behavioral Intervention Plans

The primary goal of a BIP is to produce long-lasting behavior change by teaching alternative skills and building supportive environments. To achieve this goal, BIPs draw upon the strengths of multiple interventions. Table 1 presents a conceptual framework for the design of BIPs. Included are four major intervention components: Antecedent/Setting Events Strategies, Alternative Skill Training, Consequence Strategies, and Long-term Prevention Strategies. Each component has a specific role in the design of a BIP. Each component works in concert with one another to enhance overall effectiveness and produce long-lasting results.

BIPs are highly individualized and sensitive to cultural issues. Once the nature of a problem behavior is understood in terms of the outcomes it produces for a student and the environmental events that cause it to occur, planning teams consider specific interventions within each component. Consideration is given to the overall purpose of each component and how specific interventions can best address a student's immediate and long-term needs. Listed under each component in Table 1 are some examples of specific interventions that might be included in a BIP. While BIPs need not be exceedingly complex, most will involve multiple interventions from multiple components.

The data collected in the FBA process will help to identify ways to address the problem behavior. Once we understand what purpose the behavior serves for the child, we can work to:

1. Change aspects of the situation that give rise to the behavior,
2. Teach and promote more appropriate ways of meeting the same needs through the development of alternative behaviors,
3. Modify the responses of other people to the behaviors so that problem behaviors do not result in "payoffs" for the child, and
4. Make lasting changes in the effect of triggers, consequences, skills, and broad contextual factors to eliminate problem behaviors.

Table 1

Intervention Component	Examples of Interventions
Antecedent/Setting Events Strategies	• Change sequence of the student's daily routine • Alter the nature of interactions with the student • Modify/adapt the instruction and/or materials • Increase access to preferred activities
Alternative Skills Training	• Teach the student an alternative skill that will serve the exact same function as the problem behavior • Increase the student's general competence • Teach the student coping skills for stressful situations
Consequence Strategies	• Reinforce the student's use of alternative skills • Provide feedback regarding the problem behavior • Implement a crisis management plan to protect the student and others from harm
Long-Term Prevention Strategies	• Teach self-management skills • Provide the student with activities that are meaningful • Provide opportunities to interact with non-disabled peers to facilitate friendships

The four major components of a BIP are described in this section. However, a brief introduction to the assessment of problem behaviors is in order. It is the understanding of the "whys" of behavior that will drive the development of the BIP ("how to").

A. An Overview of Functional Behavior Assessments

A BIP must begin with an FBA of the problem behavior. An FBA is a process for gathering information. The word "functional" in this sense means a search for an explanation of the purpose of the problem behavior. It also means that the assessment information gathered will be used functionally to design a BIP. The first step in an FBA is to identify problem behavior(s) in specific, objective, measurable terms, and prioritize these problems.

The goal of an FBA is to achieve a comprehensive understanding of the student and the nature of the problem behavior in relation to the student's environment. A FBA is complete when at least three outcomes have been achieved.

1. Prediction of the times and circumstances under which problem behaviors are most likely to occur.
2. Identification of the function or purpose served by the problem behavior.

3. Identification of broad lifestyle factors and student variables (e.g., skills) that appear to be influencing the student's problem behavior.

The assessment process uses a variety of tools (e.g., interviews, rating scales, direct observations) in two stages to gather broad and specific information about the student and the circumstances surrounding the problem behavior. Once a problem behavior is understood in terms of the events that may be contributing to it and the outcomes produced by it, hypothesis statements are formulated about the behavior's function. Hypothesis statements summarize the assessment results by describing why a problem behavior is occurring. They identify environmental events and context that affect and influence the student to determine the function that the behavior serves.

Once developed, hypothesis statements drive the BIP. Specific interventions are designed to modify the events that influence the problem behaviors and to teach socially acceptable alternative skills that will address the same function as the problem behavior. (Further detail concerning the FBA and the development of hypothesis statements is provided in a Chapter III.c).

B. Antecedent Interventions

Antecedent interventions modify the contextual influence of behavior (i.e., setting events and immediate antecedent events). One goal of this component is to prevent problem behaviors from occurring by removing or modifying the circumstances that cause the problem behaviors to occur. Another goal is to modify the student's environment so that desired behaviors are more likely to occur. Thus, making changes in the triggers, consequences, skills, and broad contextual factures can impact behavior. Antecedent interventions can be very powerful, resulting in immediate reductions in problem behaviors. If the FBA process has thoroughly examined all of these influences on behavior, interventions can be selected that are tailored to the student's specific needs. Their effectiveness depends on an accurate assessment of environmental influences. Once specific events have been identified, they can be removed or altered to prevent problem behaviors from occurring. The goals of interventions are to make problem behaviors irrelevant, inefficient, and ineffective compared to a replacement behavior.

There are many examples of antecedent interventions. Effective interventions will be unique to the individual. Some common types of antecedent interventions are listed below:

a. Setting Events
   i. Change the sequence of daily routines
   ii. Alter seating arrangements

     iii.   Provide time to rest

     iv.   Allow time to calm down if the student arrives at school agitated

     v.   Rearrange staffing patterns

b. Curricular Modifications

     i.   Provide choice of learning activities

     ii.   Vary seatwork activities

     iii.   Break down work tasks into small units

     iv.   Slow the pace of instruction

     v.   Use errorless learning strategies for teaching new skills

     vi.   Intersperse complex tasks with easy ones

c. Interaction Changes

     i.   Reduce direct demands

     ii.   Increase praise

     iii.   Increase attention

     iv.   Change tone of voice

d. Increase of Desired Behaviors

     i.   Provide preferred activities

     ii.   Increase student control/choices

     iii.   Increase available materials and activities

Although antecedent interventions can be very powerful in reducing problem behaviors, their limitation is that their effectiveness is entirely dependent on environmental manipulations. Generalizations and maintenance are not likely unless the teacher can successfully change all environments that the student will encounter. Antecedent interventions provide powerful short-term solutions. However, long-term effects are established through other components of behavioral support (i.e., teaching alternative skill training and building supportive environments).

Common Antecedent/Setting Events

General Setting Events
- Specific Illness   - Poor diet, missed meal   - Upsetting experience occurring earlier in the day   - Sequence and nature of previous activities   - Lack of choice and control   - Setting characteristics (e.g., too crowded, too noisy, too hot)   - Poor night's sleep   - Lack of preferred, enjoyable, or meaningful activities

Antecedents Associated with Escape (To Avoid Something)
- Interruption of routines   - Transitions   - Lack of predictability (e.g., not knowing what happens next)   - Repetitive tasks (boredom)   - Lack of choice or control   - Nonpreferred activity   - Difficult tasks   - Easy tasks (boredom)   - Too much work, too little work   - Instructions, being told what to do   - A specific individual

Antecedents Associated with Getting Something		
Access to Attention	**Access to Objects, Activities**	**Self-Stimulation**
- Presence of favorite person(s) - Seeing someone else get attention or assistance - Unoccupied, unengaged - Participation in boring or undesired activity - Receiving low levels of attention - Poor quality of social interaction	- Presence of a favorite object, activity - Seeing someone else get a favorite object - Seeing someone else participate in a favorite activity - Unoccupied, unengaged, bored - Access to favorite object or activity is denied (tantrums)	- Unengaged for long periods of time - Boring Activity - Alone

e. Effective Interventions that Address Triggers

At times, it may be more efficient to work with a teacher on modifying aspects of the classroom and aspects of overall classroom management and teacher behavior to affect the class' overall level of behavioral control. The way that teachers give directions and assignments has a significant impact on classroom behavior results.

Class rules are helpful when they are developmentally appropriate, concise and clear, posted in a visible location, phrased to address what students should do as opposed to what they should not do, and limited in number.

Good directions to students with behavioral issues should be clear and concise and delivered in a firm, neutral tone of voice. The likelihood of compliance increases when directions can be given in close physical proximity as well. Last, adults should think about the complexity that students can manage and tailor their approach according. Some common problems with commands issued by teachers and parents, which significantly reduce the likelihood of compliance, are the following:

- **Question directions** are questions that appear to the child as if there is a choice when none really exists. These can be pleasant ways to request a child to do something, but lack the directness that some children need to get focused on a task. *Example:* "Sam, will you bring your reading book to the circle?" *Improvement:* "Sam, please bring your reading book to the circle."
- **Chained directions** are directions that link several directions together. It seems like extra work to give fewer directions more frequently, but in the end it feels more successful for the child as well as the adult. *Example:* "I want all of you to take out your spelling books, put your notebook paper on your desk, write your name at the top and number your paper from one to ten." *Improvement:* "Take out your spelling books and one piece of notebook paper." [Wait for class to follow through.] "Write your name at the top and number your paper from one to ten."
- **Vague directions,** which are not clear about the behavior that is to follow, can be confusing, leading students to not fulfill the request or ignore it entirely. *Example:* "I need everyone to behave right now!" *Improvement:* "Everyone needs to sit in their chairs now."

Transitions are a high-risk time for behavioral problems. Clear communication about the next activity and announcing when there are 10, 5, and 2 minutes left prior to the transition help to prepare students who become more disorganized when they face uncertainty or have to shift gears. Clear reminders about the class rules during transitions should also occur often.

When problem behaviors are elicited in performance- oriented academic situations, the nature of the child's learning activities may be altered to have a positive impact on behavior. Some specific areas include:

- **Content and process:** Embedding content in applications meaningful to the student can be helpful, such as teaching percentages by using baseball statistics. Inclusion of hands-on activities can also be helpful as they allow the student to manipulate tangible material in a concrete manner.
- **Directions for academic tasks:** Students may have difficulties processing task directions that are presented during whole-class instruction due to difficulty with attention span, language comprehension, or sometimes just a lack of confidence that they are going to do the right thing. These students may benefit from visual prompts, being in close physical proximity to the teacher when directions are given, and being "pre-taught" about the assignment prior to it being taught to the class.
- **Task complexity:** For many students, complex, multi-step tasks that may easily become automatic for their classmates continue to require a lot of effort to sequence properly. Interventions that may help these students include having a model available showing another correctly completed problem, providing recognition and encouragement at a more frequent rate, shortening the length of assignments, and providing organization hints such as color coding activities.

C. Alternative Skill Training

The goal of this component is to teach the student appropriate or desired behaviors as alternatives to the problem behavior. Once the student learns an alternative means for achieving the same outcomes previously achieved through the problem behavior, the problem behavior should cease.

Alternative skill training can be roughly categorized into three approaches:

1. Functional Equivalence Training. In this approach to reducing problem behaviors, the student is taught an alternative skill that will serve the exact same function as the problem behavior. For example, to replace acting out to gain teacher attention a student might be taught to ask, "Am I doing good work?" To replace acting out to gain peer attention, a student might be taught how to initiate appropriate social interactions with peers.

2. General Skill Training. With this approach, the student is taught alternative skills that alter the contextual influences for the problem behavior. For example, if a student engages in self-injurious behavior because he sits idly with nothing to do for long periods of time, an appropriate alternative might be to increase leisure skills so that he would have something to do during "down time." For students with significant communication deficits, a

comprehensive communication program would be targeted so that the students learn to express their needs appropriately across different situations.

3. Self-Regulation Training. This approach teaches students how to cope with difficult situations by learning how to manage their own reactions with specific self-regulation techniques. This includes self-assessment and management interventions such as anger control training, relaxation, and stress management as alternatives to problem behaviors.

Alternative skill training teaches skills from many domains including communication, social skills, self-management, leisure/recreation, as well as academic and daily life skills. Interventions for this component of a BIP look more like an instructional curriculum than behavior management intervention.

Because students are taught skills that they control, an important advantage of alternative skill training is that it contributes to the long-term effectiveness of the BIP. Generalizations and maintenance of skills are likely. A shortcoming of alternative skill training is that the effects on reducing problem behaviors may not be immediate. Learning alternatives will take time, especially for longstanding problem behaviors. Quick effects must be achieved by using other intervention components (i.e., antecedent interventions as previously outline and consequence strategies).

D. Consequence Strategies

Consequence strategies are included in effective BIPs. However, because other components contribute to the reduction of problem behaviors, consequence strategies should not predominate. Nevertheless, their role is still vital in shaping new alternatives and decreasing problem behaviors.

a. The Function of Consequence-Oriented Strategies

Consequence-oriented strategies serve three primary functions. The first is to strengthen alternative or desired behaviors. Planning teams will need to consider how to respond to alternative behaviors such that the outcomes produced by the alternative behaviors are more effective and efficient than the problem behavior. The ultimate goal is to teach the student that alternative skills are more effective in achieving desired outcomes than the problem behavior.

Strengthening alternative skills requires that teachers immediately and consistently reinforce the student's use of alternative skills, especially during acquisition. For example, in order to teach one student to appropriately recruit teacher attention, the teacher praises and acknowledges the student's request, "Am I doing good work?" immediately and each time the

student asks. In addition to immediacy and consistency, the strength of a reinforcer for the alternative behavior will need to be equivalent to or more powerful than the outcomes achieved by the problem behavior otherwise the student will continue to use inappropriate behaviors. In the above example, the teacher is careful to provide the same reinforcement as produced by the problem behavior – teacher attention.

The second function of consequence strategies is to weaken the effectiveness of the problem behavior. The goal here is to teach the student that the problem behavior is no longer effective in producing desired outcomes. If the problem behavior occurs during the intervention, the team member (e.g., teacher, paraprofessional) will need to consider how to respond (or arrange consequences) such that the problem behavior will no longer produce a reward for the student.

Behavior reduction strategies are familiar to most educators. They include ignoring inappropriate behaviors and redirecting the student to more appropriate alternatives. They may also include setting limits for behaviors, firm feedback, and more intrusive interventions such as fines, revoking privileges, or time out. Whatever strategy is used, planning teams should assure that (a) negative consequences appropriately address the function of behavior; (b) the least intrusive, but most effective strategy is employed; and (c) negative consequences are acceptable for same aged peers.

The third function of consequence strategies is to protect the student and others from harm. All the components of an effective BIP work together to reduce the likelihood that serious problem behavior will occur. Nevertheless, severe behavioral challenges (e.g., aggression, self-injury, property destruction) may still occur for some students despite proactive programming. For students who have the potential for engaging in serious behavioral challenges, the planning team will need to develop a crisis management plan. The crisis management component of a behavior support plan includes specific steps that describe how to deescalate serious problem situations and how to protect the student and others from harm should the serious problem behavior occur.

A crisis management plan might include steps for "talking a student down" from threatening aggression, physically removing the student from a setting (or moving others away from the student), and appropriately applied physical restraint to prevent the student from striking others. Crisis management is only a short-term emergency strategy. Its intent is to stop a serious situation. It is not meant as a punishment intervention.

There is no expectation that crisis management will prevent problem behaviors from occurring in the future. Frequent use of crisis management procedures would mean that the other

components of the intervention plan have not been effective and will need to be revised by the team.

b.   Interventions that Address Consequences

Class-wide incentive systems are designed to reward positive behaviors while discouraging unproductive or negative ones. The specific behavioral goals and the rewards are general to the class, and may or may not take into account the specific function of the problem behavior for any given child. For example, a teacher may have implemented a system whereby children can earn extra computer time for completing work within an allotted amount of time. This intervention will be of little use for the student whose desire to avoid the work at hand outweighs the value of computer activities. However, class-wide approaches do have the potential to sustain the motivation of some at-risk children and engage the interest of the entire class in more appropriate behaviors, particularly because they build upon our natural motivation to seek belonging to a group of peers. Examples of whole-class interventions include:

- **Public recognition:** A weekly awards ceremony that recognizes who worked to get along with and respect others or set a good example can be a strong motivator for younger children in particular. Ribbons or stickers are tangible signs of recognition that kids enjoy. However, intangible rewards, such as line-leader for the day or teacher assistant are highly powerful and cost-efficient rewards as well.
- **Simple token economies:** In this type of program, a grid on the blackboard or a poster has rows for students' names, and the columns show a few important behaviors. Points are earned and lost for positive and problem behaviors. A pre-determined amount of points are then traded in at the end of the day or week for a reward.

It is important to note that whole-class interventions are equally powerful for older students. The distinction is that rewards should be developed with student input to ensure that they are meaningful/relevant. When thinking about a consequence-based plan for an individual student, the same considerations apply as for a class-wide intervention. The most common individual approach is a daily report card which is completed at school by the teacher and rewarded at home by the parents. Daily report cards are most effective when the goals are limited in number (3 to 5) and range from more easily accomplished goals (to provide a sense of success) to more challenging goals.

E.   Long-term Prevention

This intervention component addresses broad quality-of-life factors in an effort to build long-term supports for new alternative behaviors and to prevent problem behaviors from

reoccurring in the future. There are three interrelated goals for this intervention component. The first goal is to make permanent or long-term adaptations that will help to maintain desired alternatives. Students who have a long history of engaging in challenging behaviors are likely to need ongoing support to maintain their newly learned skills. Consideration is given to what changes in the student's daily routines can be made to support new skills. Examples of interventions include teaching the student to self-monitor and self-evaluate his or her use of alternative skills, ongoing teacher feedback and shared problem solving with the student, and providing opportunities for the student to relax and regroup during stressful situations.

The second goal is to improve lifestyle factors related to overall quality of life. Student's satisfaction with the daily events in their life (e.g., opportunities for engagement in meaningful activities, participation in varied community activities, opportunities for choice and control, and personal relationships with others) is essential for intervention success. A deprived quality of life may not only prevent intervention success, but more importantly may contribute directly to the student's problem behaviors.

For example, a behavioral intervention designed to reduce the acting out behaviors of an adolescent working in a vocational program is not likely to be successful if the youth hates his job. In fact, the reason for his acting out might be to get thrown out of a program! A BIP must take into account how lifestyle factors influence a student's problem behaviors and how they may be improved to ensure long-term success.

The third goal of long-term prevention is to facilitate inclusion. Many students with persistent behavioral challenges have been excluded from everyday school and community activities due to their problem behaviors. A BIP works to facilitate the inclusion process. However, inclusion is not an "after program" to be addressed once the student's behavior is under control. Rather, it needs to be viewed as an integral part of the program. When inclusion is considered as an after program, many students are forgotten and integration does not occur. Moreover, when integration is attempted, failure occurs because behavioral interventions designed for segregated settings do not match inclusive environments.

When designing BIPs, consideration is given to strategies for facilitating inclusion at the onset of programming. Consideration is given to both the steps to be taken to facilitate inclusion and how to make behavioral support interventions portable and acceptable within inclusive settings.

Long-term prevention includes student skill-building strategies (e.g., training in self-monitoring and self-evaluation), but more typically involves action plans for student support. Interventions will generally cluster around the following themes:

- Adaptations to support desired behaviors
- Interventions to improve quality of life
  - Access to varied and meaningful school and community activities
  - Opportunities for choice and control
  - Positive social relationships (friends, family, teachers)
  - Safe and healthy environments
- Strategies to facilitate inclusion

Individualized behavioral support plans typically reflect a multi-component approach that employs both proactive and reactive strategies. An FBA is conducted from which hypothesis statements are generated. These hypothesis statements guide the team in the selection of appropriate antecedent/setting event strategies, alternate skills training, consequence strategies, and long-term prevention of problem behavior.

Chapter III. Design and Delivery of Behavioral Intervention Plans

The process to design and deliver effective BIPs includes five major steps.

Step One	**Conduct** A Functional Behavior Assessment
Step Two	**Develop** Hypothesis Statements
Step Three	**Design** A Behavioral Intervention Plan
Step Four	**Evaluate** Effectiveness
Step Five	**Modify** Behavior Intervention Plan As Needed

This five step process places great emphasis on determining the function of the problem behavior in order to design and deliver an effective and comprehensive behavioral support plan. A team approach is required throughout this process.

Specifically, the team should be comprised of people who know the student well across the essential life domains of home, school, and community. It is important to include individuals from across these domains who either are currently involved or have been involved with the student. Examples include, but are not limited to, parents, educators, other service providers, and relevant community members with parent approval (e.g., neighbor, civic leader).

For students with IEPs or 504 Plans, behavioral support teams can be built into the IEP or 504 student support team. Students who demonstrate challenging behavior may be teamed within the IEP or 504 student support team framework based on the student's educational circumstances and the point in time when the problem behavior surfaces.

Beyond the mandated minimal requirements for team composition, it is essential that the planning team be comprised of significant individuals in the student's life. Further, team members must work collaboratively with one another in all stages of the development of the behavioral support plan. While reaching consensus on tough issues is not an easy task, the development of a BIP is often contingent on the team's commitment to a common vision and collaborative problem solving.

A. <u>Step 1. Conduct a Functional Behavioral Assessment</u>

Step 1: Conduct a Functional Behavioral Assessment
Gather Broad Information   1. Identify and define the problem behavior   2. Describe student strengths, interests, and skill deficits   3. Describe student's general health and well being   4. Describe the student's quality of life   5. Identify tentative hypotheses to guide specific assessments   Assessment Tools: Team discussions, interview, rating scales, review of records, person/family centered planning processes
Gather Specific Information   1. Identify specific settings, activities, and situations that describe when problem behaviors are likely to occur (e.g. inappropriate materials/pace of instruction)   2. Identify the function or functions of the problem behavior   3. Identify specific student variables that may be contributing to the problem behavior (e.g. skill deficits, physical condition)   Assessment Tools: A-B-C Analysis, Scatter Plot, Function Test, Specific Skills Assessments (see Appendix A on page 40)

The purpose of an FBA is to gather both broad and specific information that will be used to develop the BIP. The role of the planning team during the FBA is to collect, interpret, and synthesize information. While the team works collaboratively, specific responsibilities for assessment are assigned to individual members for efficiency.

a. Gather Broad Information

The FBA process is conducted in two stages. In the first stage, the team gathers broad information about the student, the student's environment, and the nature of the problem behavior.

The first step in this stage is to identify and operationally define the problem behavior and to determine the social significance for changing the behavior. This step is critical to the

assessment process because it provides a standard description of the problem behavior. The definition is written on all assessment forms when collecting information.

Once agreement is reached on a definition, the team collects broad contextual information about the student's strengths, interests, and skill deficits; the student's health; and the student's quality of life. At this stage, the team considers whether the problem behavior is related to specific skill deficits. The group thinks over what student strengths and interests may be used to teach or enhance desired alternative behaviors. The team also studies whether the student's problem behavior may be related to health issues. It recommends whether this possibility should be explored by medical professionals.

Further, the team gathers information about the student's quality of life along lifestyle dimensions:

- Inclusion in school and community activities
- Safety and well being
- Participation in varied and meaningful activities
- Opportunities for choice and control (appropriate to the student's chronological age)
- Relationships with friends, family, and teachers

Within these dimensions, the team considers the possible relationships between the student's life experiences and the problem behavior. It considers how these experiences may be modified or enhanced. Be thoughtful and ensure that questioning about experiences outside of school is respectful and culturally sensitive. Follow the family's lead and assess their comfort level.

As a third step in this first stage of the FBA, the team gathers more detailed information about the problem behavior in order to formulate tentative hypotheses about the events that are regularly associated with the concerning behavior. The student, where appropriate, is interviewed by teachers, parents and family members, as well as other relevant individuals. The team attempts to describe the frequency, intensity, and duration of the problem behavior; when the problem behavior is likely and not likely to occur; and what events typically happen before and after the problem behavior occurs. Although only tentative conclusions can be drawn on the basis of self-reports, the information gleaned from these interviews is essential for guiding and focusing the specific assessment used in gathering specific information.

While in the process of gathering broad information, the planning team is guided by key questions such as the following:

- How effective are the student's communication and social interaction skills? (student skills)
- Does the student have alternative skills for meeting his/her needs? (student skills)

- When is the problem behavior likely to occur? When is it not likely to occur? (tentative hypothesis)
- What events are regularly associated with the occurrence of the problem behaviors? (tentative hypothesis)
- What are the student's likes and dislikes? What opportunities does the student have to pursue interests? (quality of life)
- Does the student have friends? What is the nature of the student's relationships with peers? (quality of life)
- Are there possible psychological or physiological conditions that could be causing or contributing to the problem behavior? (e.g., allergies, vision problems, hearing problems, mental illness, undiagnosed acute illness) (student health)

Answers to these questions are generated through team discussions and interviews with the student, family members, teacher assistants, and others who have had the opportunity to observe the student in various activities and settings.

Review of the student's records is also useful at this stage of assessment to provide information on the student's achievements, skills, medical history, and history related to problem behaviors. For example, it is particularly important for the team to be aware of any student history of mental or physical illness with behavioral manifestations as such circumstances could directly impact the design and delivery of an effective support plan (e.g., an adolescent who is depressed based on abnormalities in brain chemistry requiring medical treatment or a youth who appears alternately agitated and lethargic as a result of wide swings in blood sugar associated with diabetes).

b. Gather Specific Information

The purpose of this stage of the FBA is to identify specific variables that are regularly associated with the occurrence and nonoccurrence of the problem behavior. Three basic questions are answered through this process:

- What are the specific circumstances that will predict when a problem is likely to occur?
- What are the specific circumstances when the problem behavior is not likely to occur?
- What are the consequent events that typically follow the problem behavior?

When events surrounding the occurrence of a problem behavior are identified, this assessment is relatively straightforward. However, when the events are not clear, answers to these questions will require quite a bit of investigation and problem solving by the team.

The process for gathering specific information is through direct observation of the student's behavior. The tentative information gathered in the broad information gathering stage can help to narrow the direct observations to specific activities or times of the day when the student is most likely to engage in a problem behavior. However, if this information is unknown or unclear, a scatterplot assessment is useful (see page 54). In a scatterplot assessment, the team member keeps a record of the number of times the student engages in the problem behavior within each daily classroom activity (e.g., transition into schools, reading group, individual seatwork, math group, transition to specials) across several days until a pattern emerges. When problem behaviors occur more often in some activities than others, the team then asks, "What is happening in these activities? What specific events appear to be contributing to the problem behavior?" conversely, "What is happening in the activities in which little or no problem behaviors occur? What specific events appear to contribute to more desirable behaviors?"

An A-B-C Analysis (see page 41) is an assessment tool used to identify the specific events surrounding the problem behavior. In this assessment, the team member observes the student during the activities in which the problem behavior is mostly likely to occur. A member of the team records each episode of the problem behavior with descriptions of events that were antecedent to the problem behavior and those that were consequences. Records are made for several days until a pattern of events emerges.

When recording antecedents and consequences, a team member records events that occur in the immediate activity. Because there are potentially a multitude of antecedent variables to consider, assessments may be focused by attending to the relevant events identified during stage one (broad information) and the common events associated with problem behaviors presented in the appendices.

For example, characteristics of the task (level of difficulty, student preference), the rate and delivery of teacher instructions, the amount of teacher attention or praise, the presence of absence of materials and factors within the activity setting (noise level, distractions, peer proximity) are all variables that have been known to trigger problem behaviors. If the frequency of problem behaviors fluctuates across days, then the team should consider and record the possible influence of setting events that occur prior in the school day (e.g., the nature and sequence of activities, previous interactions with peers and teachers) even before the school day starts (e.g., did the student have breakfast, a good night's sleep?).

In addition to antecedents, team members record consequences following the problem behavior in order to identify its function. Specifically, the team member attends to immediate or eventual events (the responses of others, what the student gets) that suggest that the

problem behavior functions to get something (teacher or peer attention, access to an activity or object, self-stimulation), or to escape something unpleasant or aversive.

Like antecedent events, there are several commonly occurring consequent events associated with problem behaviors that are useful for identifying function. These are also presented in the appendices. For example, events that would suggest an escape function include whether after a problem behavior occurred an activity was terminated, a task was made easier, the student avoided something unpleasant, and/or the behaviors of others stopped.

In order to verify the specific events believed to influence the problem behavior, the support team may want to consider conducting a function test. In this assessment process, team members present an event and then take it away, observing the effects on the problem behavior.

For example, if the teacher believes that difficult work assignments might trigger a student's resistance to work, she might present a difficult set of math problems on one day, observing whether the student worked diligently or was off-task, and then present easy math problems on another day, also noting the occurrence of problem behaviors. This test might be conducted over several days, presenting difficult tasks then easy ones, until a clear pattern of student behavior emerges. This relatively simple test can provide powerful information about the specific situations that are problems for the student. However, this assessment is not recommended for severe problem behaviors for ethical and safety reasons.

Finally, in addition to the direct observation of problem behavior, the support team might consider conducting other specific assessments of the student's academic performance, social and language skills, as well as pursuing more thorough medical evaluations if necessary. The information obtained from these assessments might provide further clues about the nature of the problem behavior as well as provide useful information for planning intervention strategies.

B. Step 2. Develop Hypothesis Statements

Step 2: Develop Hypothesis Statements
Develop a Specific Hypothesis
1. Identify events and circumstances associated with the problem behavior 2. Identify the function of the problem behavior
Develop A Global Hypothesis
1. Identify student variables that appear to contribute to the problem behavior 2. Identify lifestyle/quality of life variables that appear to contribute to the problem behavior

Once the FBA is completed, the support team works to synthesize and summarize the gathered information. The team looks for common patterns and themes across all assessments to formulate hypothesis statements that will later guide the development of the behavioral support plan. Hypothesis statements are informed, assessment-based explanations of the problem behaviors. There are two types, specific hypotheses and global hypothesis.

c. Specific Hypothesis

Derived from the direct observation assessments, specific hypothesis statements offer an explanation of the problem behavior in terms of the antecedent and setting events that precede it. These statements indicate the possible function or functions served for the student. Specific hypotheses consist of three components:

- A statement describing the antecedent and/or setting events
- A statement identifying the problem behavior
- A statement describing the believed function of the behavior

Some examples of specific hypothesis statements are listed below:

- Rob will engage in self-injurious outbursts (identification of the problem behavior) when he comes to school with a cold (setting event) or when during an unstructured activity such as snack and free time, he is unengaged for 10 minutes or more (antecedent events). Rob's self-injury appears to help him gain his teacher's attention (function), since his self-injury always results in immediate teacher interaction.
- Whenever Jenny encounters a problem situation, such as difficult work tasks or when something is lost (antecedent events), she is likely to scream, curse, and hit her peers (behavior identification) to avoid the problem situation (function). Problem behaviors typically result in the situation being terminated or made easier by teacher intervention.

d. Global Hypothesis

A global hypothesis statement pulls together the assessment information gathered during the first stage (broad information) of the FBA. It offers a broad contextual explanation of the problem behavior. It may address possible lifestyle or quality of life influences, medical issues, the student's learning history, and overall skill deficits. In effect, global hypotheses provide a contextual rationale for why the events identified in the specific hypotheses are relevant for the student.

An example of a global hypothesis for Rob is:

- Rob, a student with severe cognitive disabilities, has no formal system of communication and has a limited repertoire of play skills. He has never been observed to initiate social interactions with others in conventional ways. He attends a self-contained classroom for students with similar needs. His classmates also do not have the skills to sustain peer social interaction. Rob's self-injury may be his only effective means for communicating these needs.

In this example, the global hypothesis suggests that Rob's problem behaviors are a result of a lack of skills: no formal system of communication, limited repertoire of play skills, and a lack of social interaction skills. It also suggests that his classroom environment is contributing to the problem. He is dependent on his teacher to meet his needs in a classroom that has many children with high needs. Further, other than his teacher he has no other opportunity for social interaction.

Hypothesis statements logically lead to specific intervention strategies that should be included in the behavioral support plan. Global hypothesis statements lead to contextual modifications that could be made for long-term prevention, as well as additional skills that could be targeted for intervention. Specific hypothesis statements lead to antecedents/setting events that could be modified and alternative skills that could be taught.

It is possible to incorporate multiple specific hypotheses in a BIP. Multiple specific hypotheses are warranted under the following conditions:

1. The team wishes to address several different problem behaviors that serve different functions for the student;
2. The same problem behavior (or group of problem behaviors) serves different functions in different situations (e.g., screaming may serve as an attention getting function during free play and an escape function during seat work); and
3. The same problem behavior (or group of problem behaviors) serving one function for the student is set off by many different situations. In this case, it makes sense to address each situation with separate strategies.

Generally, only one global hypothesis is necessary, as one description can offer a satisfactory explanation for all the events expressed in each specific hypothesis statement. Interventions and strategies will need to be developed for each specific hypothesis included in the behavioral support plan.

C. Step 3. Design and Implement a Behavioral Intervention Plan

Step 3: Design and Implement a Behavioral Intervention Plan	
Component 1.	Antecedent/Setting Event Strategies
Component 2.	Alternative Skill Training
Component 3.	Consequence Strategies
Component 4.	Long-term Prevention

At this step of the process, the support team is ready to design and implement a BIP. BIPs are driven by hypotheses. This logically requires linking all intervention strategies back to the specific and global hypotheses developed in Step 2 (Developing Hypotheses Statements). Interventions directly address the functions that are believed to be contributing to the problem behavior.

Interventions should be instituted when they have the greatest likelihood of success. This means starting when there will be at least two weeks of uninterrupted, fairly regular school routine. This also allows time for the teacher to anticipate and accommodate to being a bit overwhelmed while becoming comfortable with the execution of the behavioral plan. Family involvement is a critical component for success. Every effort should be made to collaborate with the family throughout all steps of the FBA and BIP. It is essential that teams developing plans think through every aspect of what needs to be done and designate an individual to manage each element.

Each plan requires monitoring and evaluation to determine how accurately the intervention is being implemented and how effective it is in improving the targeted behavior. It is common for plans to be tinkered with at this stage to fine tune the reward system or alter some other aspect of the plan to ensure greater success.

a. The Behavioral Intervention Plan

A BIP includes a description of the problem behavior, global and specific hypotheses that explain the nature of the problem behavior, and specific intervention strategies derived from each of the four major intervention components: Antecedent/Setting Events Strategies, Alternative Skill Training, Consequence Strategies, and Long-term Prevention.

Appendix A presents a template Behavior Intervention Plan on page 42 and an example of a Behavior Support Plan on page 46. This appendix consists of a summary document which overviews the entire multicomponent support plan. It contains worksheets which guide the team through the development of specific interventions strategies for each of the four major components.

An essential feature of the BIP is the design of supports for team members. BIPs can be complex, requiring that team members learn new skills, make modifications in their schedules or daily routines, and work with others while implementing the plan. Ultimately, a BIP can only be effective when teams build supportive environments for themselves that will enable them to do their jobs well.

Once a BIP is developed for a student, the team will need to formally discuss and document the supports each team member will need in order to effectively carry out the plan. Some examples of team supports include expanded skill development, changes in staffing patterns, additional instructional resources, and respite from difficult or trying situations. Planning teams should consider appropriate supports for implementing each of the four intervention components of the support plan.

The four intervention components, antecedent/setting event strategies, alternative skill training, consequence strategies, and long term prevention strategies were described in detail in Chapter II. Presented here is a table overviewing: (a) the purposes and limitations of each intervention component, (b) guiding questions for the selection of intervention strategies, (c) examples of specific interventions for each component, and (d) special considerations for planning and instruction. Planning teams are encouraged to use this overview when designing a behavioral support plan.

Antecedent/Setting Event Strategies

Purpose	Contributions	Limitations	Guiding Questions
• To prevent problem behaviors from occurring • To increase desired behaviors	• Provides an immediate strategy for reducing problem behaviors and making desired behaviors more likely • Critical when teaching alternative skills – allows teaching before problem behaviors occur	• Usually considered to have short-term effects because antecedent strategies are dependent on teacher knowledge and action • Permanent adaptations must be built through long-term prevention in a concurrent manner	• What arrangements can be made to remove or modify antecedent or setting events that provoke the problem behavior? • What arrangements can be made to increase antecedents or setting events that will increase more desired behaviors?
Examples			
• Take the antecedent setting event away • Do not provide difficult independent work tasks • Avoid crowded lunch rooms • Do not present non-preferred activities • Work with parents to ensure student sleeps well at night • Change the nature of the antecedent event • Change the pace of instruction		• Provide choices of activities • Intersperse hard tasks with easy ones • Increase praise • Increase attention before the student needs to ask • Increase preferred activities • Enrich the classroom setting with materials to avoid down time • Provide clear expectations	

Special Considerations: using antecedent strategies can result in an engineered environment where most difficult situations are avoided. While this may be sometimes necessary in the short term, this is not necessarily ideal over the long term. The goal is to find a healthy balance between teaching alternative skills and building adaptive environments.

Alternative Skill Training

Purpose	Contributions	Limitations	Guiding Questions
• To teach alternative replacement skills that serve that same function as the problem behavior • To teach other skills that will prevent the problem behavior from occurring	• Contributions to long-term maintenance and generalization of behavior	• Effects on problem behaviors are not immediate • Must be implemented simultaneously with antecedent strategies and consequence strategies to be immediately effective	• What alternative skill(s) can be taught that would serve the same function as the problem behavior? • What other academic, social, or communications skills could be taught that would prevent the problem behavior from occurring? • What self-regulation skills could be taught to help the student cope with difficult or frustrating situations?
Examples			
• Functional Communication Training: Teach an alternative communication skill. "I need help." "Am I doing good work?" • Independence Training: Teach student how to address needs independently (i.e., take a short break from work when frustrated) • Teach problem solving skills to reduce work difficulty		• Teach social skills to increase peer interactions • Teach independent play skills to avoid long periods of down time • Anger Control Training • Relaxation Techniques	

Special Considerations:

1. Be sure alternatives are possible for the student, otherwise the student will in all likelihood resort back to the problem behavior.
2. Be sure alternatives are acceptable across settings.

Consequence Strategies

Purpose	Contributions	Limitations	Guiding Questions
• To strengthen alternative skills • To weaken or reduce problem behaviors • To protect the individual and others from harm (crisis management)	• Contributes to the development of alternative skills and the reduction of problem behaviors	• Must be used in combination with other interventions for long-term effectiveness • Crisis management is not an intervention—it is a short-term emergency strategy	• How will you maximize reinforcement for the alternative skills? • Are planned responses to alternative skills as powerful as the outcomes of the problem behavior? • Are planned responses immediate? • Are rewards necessary for strengthening desired alternatives? • What will you do if the problem behavior occurs? • How will you teach the student that the problem behavior is no longer effective? • How will you teach that problem behavior is not acceptable? • Is a crisis management plan necessary?

Examples	
• Respond immediately to the student's appropriate requests for attention • Praise the student for remembering to work through difficult situations • Ignore the problem behaviors and redirect the student back to the desired activity	• Provide feedback • Redirect the student • Revoke privileges or have student make restitution • Deescalate the situation • Protect people and property from harm

Special Considerations:
1. All consequences should be age-appropriate and non-stigmatizing.
2. Crisis management plans and consequences to weaken problem behaviors should be as least intrusive as possible.

Long-Term Prevention

Purpose	Contributions	Limitations	Guiding Questions
• To build permanent adaptations to maintain desired alternatives • To improve lifestyle factors related to overall quality of life • To facilitate inclusion	• Contributes to the long-term maintenance of alternative skills and the prevention of problem behaviors	• It takes time to build supportive environments and effects are not likely to be immediate	• What permanent adaptations (supports) are needed to help the student maintain desired behaviors and reduce the changes that problem behaviors will return? • What lifestyle improvements can be made to improve the student's quality of life? How can we improve the student's health and general well-being? How can we increase the student's participation in meaningful school and community activities? • How can we increase the student's opportunities to acquire a sense of belonging within their school and community?

Examples	
• Establish an acceptable mode/method of communication • Coordinate multiple service delivery supports • Teach student to self-monitor/evaluate use of alternative skills • Increase access to preferred community based experiences	• Expand and build upon natural supports (e.g., friendships) • Improve nutrition and proper eating habits • Change the array or services to support further integration •Move toward a more integrated placement in the local school/community

Special Considerations:

1. The behavioral support plan, and the student's IEP where applicable, need to be ultimately focused on long-term prevention.
2. Person and Family Centered Planning processes can facilitate long term prevention concerning challenging behavior.

b. General Considerations

Behavioral Intervention Plans are comprehensive. While each of the four components should be considered by the support team, not all components will carry equal weight for all individuals (one size does not fit all). Further, the balance of emphasis placed on one particular component over another may shift over time as the individual's needs and life circumstances change. For example, when a student is in crisis, a support team will need to respond quickly by implementing strategies that will result in the immediate prevention of the problem behavior, protecting the individual and others from harm.

This response might include modifying the antecedent and setting events believed to set the stage for the problem behavior, modifying broad ecological or lifestyle factors that are having an acute effect on the student, and developing a crisis management plan. Later, once the frequency and intensity of the problem behavior have decreased, the support team should reconvene to develop a support plan with more long-lasting focus. Here, emphasis would be placed on teaching alternative skills and building supportive environments to maintain desired behaviors and to prevent problem behaviors from developing in the future. The important point is that BIPs should be used flexibly adapting to individual needs, short and long-term goals, student growth, and changes in the student's environment.

Finally, PBS is more than a cookbook of interventions or a bag of tricks. Choosing effective intervention strategies requires that the support team has a good working understanding of the basic principles of learning and effective teaching. Viewing PBS as simply a group of techniques can lead to the use of a "one size fits all" approach which will impede effectiveness. Effective support teams know what they are doing and why. They can explain how each selected intervention will address the student's needs expressed in the hypothesis statements.

D. Step 4. Evaluate Effectiveness

Step 4: Evaluate Effectiveness
1. Reductions in problem behaviors
2. Increases in alternative behaviors
3. Meaningful outcomes

Two critical questions that the planning will need to address are:

- Is the BIP effective?
- How should success be documented?

Effectiveness is evaluated in at least three important ways. First, is there a reduction in the problem behavior? Support teams should consider whether the reductions are socially acceptable, appropriate, and generalizable across settings and situations. Second, are there increases in alternative skills? Support teams should consider whether the student is now using alternative skills as replacements for the problem behaviors, and whether these skills are being maintained and used (generalized) across all appropriate situations. Third, did the BIP result in meaningful outcomes and improvements in quality of life, such as: increased participation in social activities, friendships, participation in a general education classroom, better grades, and fewer days in detention?

Documentation of effectiveness can occur in a variety of ways. Recording and graphing the frequency of the problem behavior and the student's use of alternative skills is one of the most informative methods for evaluating initial decreases in the problem behavior and the acquisition of new skills. Documenting the broader outcomes of intervention success can be accomplished by making use of common evaluation methods familiar to teachers. These include recording student activity (e.g. participation in social groups) in documentation logs, noting changes in the student's grades, using progress notes to evaluate teachers' and parents' perception of student progress, summarizing behavioral incident reports, and keeping records of student progress and placement within integrated settings. The choice of measures will depend on the outcomes that are most important for the student and his/her family. Reductions in problem behaviors and the acquisition of new skills should, at least initially, be recorded daily and summarized weekly. Documentation of broader outcomes may be summarized monthly by the team.

E. Step 5. Modify Behavior Intervention Plan as Needed

Step 5: Modify Behavior Intervention Plan as Needed
1. Reassess   2. Strengthen strategies   3. Expand plan

The last step in this five-step process is to modify the support plan as needed. Based upon the evaluation of effectiveness, the team will need to consider whether further evaluation is necessary, whether individual components should be modified or strengthened, and wither the plan should be expanded to address new goals.

When the BIP is effective, reductions in problem behaviors and increases in alternative skills should occur. Progress towards broader outcomes should also be evident. When progress is not

satisfactory, teams should simply ask, "Why not?" It may be possible that the hypotheses about the problem behavior are inaccurate, the plan does not satisfactorily address the student's needs, the plan is implemented inappropriately, or other significant events have altered the effectiveness of the plan. The team begins a process of trouble-shooting. When necessary, the team starts the five-step process again by reassessing, formulating new hypotheses, and developing another plan.

When the BIP is effective, teams should ask, "What else?" Does student progress justify maintaining the status quo or should the BIP be expanded to achieve greater goals? Special consideration should be given to ensuring that the student will maintain and generalize their newly learned skills, that they learn how to self-manage for maximal independence, and that the goals under long-term prevention are truly being achieved.

Designing, evaluating, and modifying a BIP is an ongoing process. A BIP evolves as the student learns new skills, life circumstances change, and broader outcomes are achieved. If part of the IEP, it is recommended that the BIP must be reviewed every six weeks. Likewise, the annual IEP review process should provide IEP teams with the needed information to modify the plan as needed.

Specifically, the formal review process has three broad purposes:

1. Evaluation of the efficacy of the student's current educational program,
2. Evaluation of the appropriateness of current interventions in affecting student progress and determination of future needs, and as appropriate,
3. Determination of eligibility, or continued eligibility or 504 services for special education.

Accomplishing these three purposes requires a flexible assessment process.

F. Conclusion

The Positive Behavior Support (PBS) framework provides a way of analyzing behavior that leads to an understanding of problem behavior in terms of its meaning to the individual child. A core component and clear advantage of PBS is that it provides information about the specific function or "why" of behavior, the context of behavior, and the consequences the behavior evokes. The strong emphasis on the factors that precede problem behavior is a major distinguishing characteristic of PBS. Therefore, when teachers and parents use information obtained throughout the PBS process to help a child learn new skills, aspects of the situation that give rise to or reinforce the problem behavior may be changed. PBS has proven to be an effective strategy for anyone working to improve the lives of children with behavior problems.

Chapter IV. References

Child Study Center, *Problem Behaviors in the Classroom: What They Mean and How to Help*, The NYU Child Study Center Letter (November/December 2002).

Functional Behavior Assessment, Center for Effective and Collaborative Practice (2001) http://cecp.air.org/fba/default.asp.

Gagnon, A. Lawrence, et al., *Guidelines: Effective Behavior Support*, The Pennsylvania Department of Education (1995).

Jordan, Dixie, *Functional Behavioral Assessment and Positive Interventions: What Parents Need to Know*, PACER Center (2006).

PACER Center, Inc., *Person-Centered Planning: A Tool for Transition*, Parent Brief (2004).

SmartStart: Functional Behavioral Assessments, LRP Publications (2010).

Starin, Stephen, *Functional Behavioral Assessments: What, Why, When, Where, and Who?*, Wrightslaw (2011) http://www.wrightslaw.com/info/discipl.fab.starin.htm.

Chapter V.   Appendix A: Tools for Positive Behavior Support

ABC Recording Form

Student Name _____   Date_____   Observer _____

Date/Time	Others Present	Antecedents	Behaviors	Consequences
General Notes:				
Interpretation:				

Behavioral Intervention Plan
Planning Form

IEP teams can use this form to guide them through the process of developing the Behavioral Intervention Plan

Student_____ Grade_____

Teacher(s) _____ Date_____

Reason for intervention plan:

Participants (specific names):
☐Student _____   ☐Special Education Coordinator _____
☐Family member _____   ☐School Psychologist _____
☐Special Education Teacher _____   ☐Behavior Specialist _____
☐General Education Teacher _____   ☐Other _____

Fact Finding

1. **General learning environment:** Describe the student's class schedule, including any special programs or services

2. **Problem behavior:** Define the problem behavior(s) in observable, measurable, and quantifiable terms (i.e., event, duration, seriousness, and/or intensity). Include several examples of the behavior.

3. **Setting Events:** Describe important things that are happening in the student's life that may be causing the behavior(s) of concern.

4. **Review existing data:** Summarize previously collected information (records review, interviews, observations, test results, etc.) relevant to the behavior(s). Attach additional sheets if necessary.

Possible Explanations

5. Identify likely antecedents (precipitating events) to the behavior

6. Identify likely consequences that may be maintaining the behavior(s).

7. Identify and describe any academic or environmental context(s) in which the problem behavior(s) does <u>not</u> occur.

Validation

8. **Functional assessment:** Do you already have enough information to believe that the possible explanations are sufficient to plan an intervention?

   a. If yes, go to Step 9. If no, then what additional data collection is necessary?
      ☐ Review of IEP goals and objectives
      ☐ Review of medical records
      ☐ Review of previous intervention plans
      ☐ Review of incident reports
      ☐ ABC analysis across time and situations
      ☐ Motivational analysis
      ☐ Curricular analysis
      ☐ Scatter plot
      ☐ Parent questionnaire/interview
      ☐ Student questionnaire/interview
      ☐ Teacher questionnaire/interview (specify who) _____
      ☐ Other (explain)_____
      _____

   b. Summarize data. Attach additional sheets if necessary.

Planning

9. **Formulate hypothesis statement:** Using the table below, determine why the student engages in problem behavior(s), whether the behavior(s) serves single or multiple functions, and what to do about the behavior(s).

	Internal	External
Obtain Something		
Avoid Something		

Hypothesis statement: _____
_____
_____
_____

10. **Current level of performance**: Describe problem behavior(s) in a way the team will recognize onset and conclusions of behavior.

11. **Replacement behavior:** Describe replacement behavior(s) that are likely to serve the same function as the behavior(s) identified in Step 9.

12. **Measurement procedures:**
    a. Describe how (e.g., event recording, scatter plot), when, and where student behavior(s) will be measured.

    b. Summarize data by specifying which problem behavior(s) and replacement behavior(s) will be targets for intervention.

13. **Behavior Intervention Plan:**
    a. Specify goals and objectives (conditions, criteria for acceptable performance) for teaching the replacement behavior(s).

b. Specify instructional strategies that will be used to teach the replacement behavior(s).

c. Specify strategies that will be sued to decrease problem behavior(s) and increase replacement behavior(s)

d. Identify any changes in the physical environment needed to prevent problem behavior(s) and to promote desired (replacement) behavior(s), if necessary.

e. Specify extent to which intervention plan will be implemented in various settings; specify settings and persons responsible for implementation of plan.

14. **Evaluation plan and schedule:** Describe the plan and timetable to evaluate effectiveness of the intervention plan.
    a. Describe how, when, where, and how often the problem behavior(s) will be measured.

    b. Specify persons and settings involved.

    c. Specify a plan for crisis/emergency intervention, if necessary.

    d. Determine schedule to review/modify the intervention plan, as needed. Include dates and criteria for changing/fading the plan.

15. **Describe plan and timetable** to monitor the degree to which the plan is being implemented.

Behavior Support Plan

Student Name _____   Date_____

Define the problem behavior and identify why it is important to change:

Hypotheses regarding the problem behavior:
 	
    Specific:
 	
    Global:

Behavior Support Plan, Continued

Student Name _____   Date_____

Antecedent/Setting Event Strategies	Alternative Skills to be Taught	Instructional Consequence Strategies (how to reinforce alternative skills)	Reduction Oriented Consequence Strategies (what to do when problem behaviors occur)	Long-Term Prevention Strategies	Supports for Team Members

Communicative Response Modality Checklist

Student's Name_____ Date_____

Respondent's Name _____

1. Does the student use one of the following methods of communication on a regular basis? (if more than one is used, circle the preferred method)

   VERBAL   SIGN/GESTURAL   SYMBOLIC   NO

   If one of the above methods is circled, this may be the modality used for the communicative response. If NO is circled, go to question 2.

2. Does the student use one or more verbal response to communicate on an occasional basis (e.g., cookie, no?)

                    YES   NO

   If YES, then the communicative response might be verbal. If NO, go on to question 3.

3. Does the student use one or more signs or understandable gestures to communicate on an occasional basis?

                    YES   NO

   If YES, then the communicative response might be signed/gestural. If NO, go on to question 4.

4. Does the student use one or more verbal symbolic forms of communication to communicate on an occasional basis (e.g., points to pictures in a picture book)?

                    YES   NO

   If YES, then the communicative response might be symbolic. If NO, go on to question 5.

5. Is one method of communication being emphasized in speech/language training?

                    YES   NO

   If YES, then the communicative response might be verbal in the modality currently used in training. If previous speech/language training has been unsuccessful with all modalities, attempt simple gestures or symbols to start.

Identifying Home, School, and Community Supports

This worksheet is useful because…

This is a useful beginning activity for several important reasons. First, it gives team members a chance to discuss and focus in on what the student needs within and across home, school, and community environments. Team members can then look at the whole student, and begin to comprehensively address support needs. Second this activity gives the team a basis for determining if additional members need to be added to the team. For example, if it becomes apparent that a paid job is a priority need for the student, the team might consider adding a vocational education or transition specialist to the team. Finally, this activity forms a basis for the team to develop realistic and meaningful goals for both the team and individual team members. This should help guide the team when developing the more detailed plan for addressing those needs. Completion of this worksheet represents a summary of the student's priority needs at home, in school, and in the community.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Briefly discuss who the student is and provide general information about the student (e.g., age, where the student lives, student's major strengths and likes to the team).
2. Ask the questions:
   a. What do the student's peers (same age) typically need at home? Is this a need for this individual student?
   b. What do the student's peers typically need in school? Is this a need for this individual student?
   c. What do the student's peers typically need in the community? Is this a need for this individual student?

   Record all of the student's identified needs in the corresponding circles on the next page.

3. Identify which of those needs are priorities.
4. Review each priority needs, and mark who on the current team can support that need. Circle the needs that cannot be addressed with the current team composition.
5. Identify who needs to join the team to address the circled needs.
6. Develop a plan to elicit the support from others to comprehensively address the student's priority needs.

Identifying Home, School and Community Supports

Student: _____ Date: _____
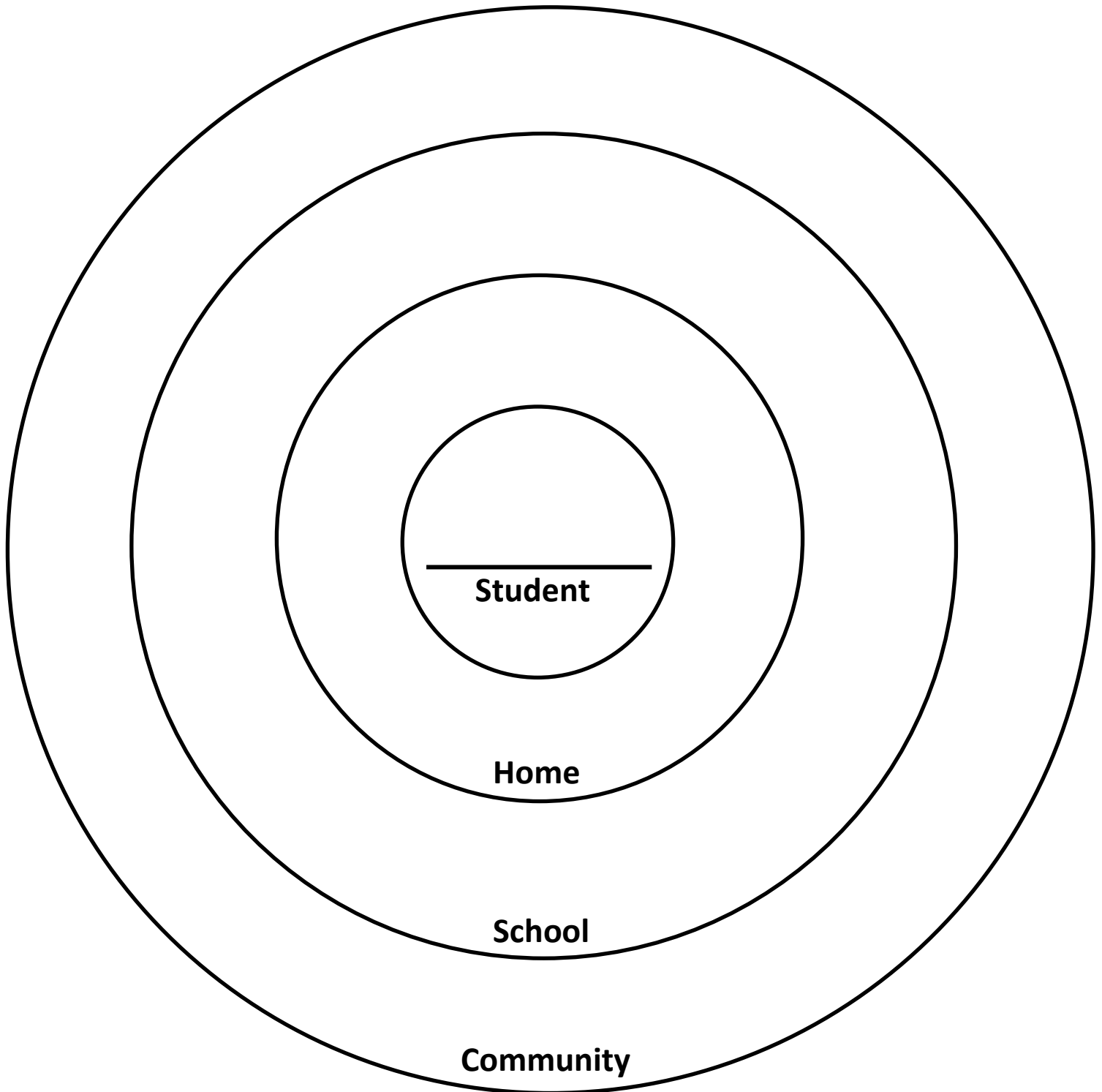
Functional Assessment Observation Form

Name:

Starting Date:	Ending Date:

			Perceived Functions			
	Behaviors	Antecedents	Get/Obtain	Escape/Avoid		Conseq. [2]

Time	Describe the behavior(s) using observable and measureable terms	Demand/Request	Difficult Task	Transitions	Interruption	Alone (no attention)		Attention	Desired item/Activity	Self-Stimulation		Demand/Request	Activity	Person		Other/Don't Know	Observable consequence? Y/N	Comments
Total																		

[2] Consequence: Was there an observable consequence from an authority figure or the student's peers?

Motivation Assessment Scale

Name_____   Rater_____   Date_____

Behavior Description _____

_____

Setting Description _____

Instructions: The Motivation Assessment Scale is a questionnaire designed to identify those situations in which an individual is likely to behave in certain ways. From this information, more informed decisions can be made concerning the selection of appropriate reinforcers, interventions, and alternative skill training. For more information on alternative skill training see page 16. To complete the Motivation Assessment Scale, select one behavior that is of particular interest. It is important that you identify the behavior very specifically. *Aggressive*, for example, is not as good a description as *knocks over chairs*. Once you have specified the specific behavior to be rated, read each question carefully and circle the one number that best describes your observations of this behavior.

	Never	Almost Never	Seldom	Half the Time	Usually	Almost Always	Always
1. Does the behavior involve tactile sensation? (for example, rocking back and forth)	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. Does the behavior occur following a request to perform a difficult task?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. Does the behavior seem to occur in response to your talking to other persons in the room?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. Does the behavior ever occur to get a toy, food, or activity that this person has been told that he or she can't have?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
5. Would the behavior occur repeatedly, in the same way, for very long periods of time, if no one was around? (For example, several hours)	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
6. Does the behavior occur when *any* request is made of this person?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
7. Does the behavior occur whenever you stop attending to this person?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
8. Does the behavior occur when you take away a favorite toy, food, or activity?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
9. Does it appear to you that this person enjoys performing the behavior? (It feels, tastes, looks, smells, and/or sounds pleasing).	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
10. Does this person seem to do the behavior to upset or annoy you when you are trying to get him or her to do what you ask?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6

Motivation Assessment Scale, Continued

	Never	Almost Never	Seldom	Half the Time	Usually	Almost Always	Always
11. Does this person seem to do the behavior to upset or annoy you when you are not paying attention to him or her? (For example, if you are sitting in a separate room, interacting with another person.)	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
12. Does the behavior stop occurring shortly after you give this person the toy, food, or activity that he or she has requested?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
13. When the behavior is occurring, does this person seem calm and unaware of anything else going on around him or her?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
14. Does the behavior stop occurring shortly after (one to five minutes) you stop working or making demands of this person?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
15. Does this person seem to do the behavior to get you to spend some time with him or her?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
16. Does the behavior seem to occur when this person has been told that he or she can't do something he or she had wanted to do?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6

Sensory Reward	Escape	Attention	Tangible Reward
1. _____	2. _____	3. _____	4. _____
5. _____	6. _____	7. _____	8. _____
9. _____	10. _____	11. _____	12. _____
13. _____	14. _____	15. _____	16. _____

Total Score = _____ _____ _____ _____

Relative Ranking = _____ _____ _____ _____

Scatter Plot Form

(Event Recording of a Single Behavior)

Student Name _____   Behavior _____

Observer   _____   _____

Setting or Class	Time or Interval	Day/Date _____	Day/Date _____	Day/Date _____	Day/Date _____	Day/Date _____	Total Responses

Sample Scatter Plot Form

Student Name _Mary Ann Smith_____   Behavior   _verbal outburst of anger followed by refusal to follow directions_

Observer   _Joanne Jones_____   _____

Setting or Class	Time or Interval	Day/Date Mon. 10/7	Day/Date Tues. 10/8	Day/Date Wed. 10/9	Day/Date Thurs. 10/10	Day/Date Fri. 10/11	Total Responses
Reading	8:30 – 9:20	II	I	III	II	III	11
Transition	9:20 – 9:25		I			I	2
Language	9:25 – 10:15	I	II	II	II	I	9
Recess	10:15 – 10:35						0
Transition	10:35 – 10:40				I		1
Math	10:40 – 11:30	I	II	I	II	II	8
Lunch	11:30 – 12:10			I			1
Transition	12:10 – 12:15				I		1
Social Studies	12:15 – 1:05	III	I	I	II		7
Transition	1:05 – 1:10						0
Science	1:10 – 2:00		I		I	II	4
TOTAL		**7**	**8**	**8**	**11**	**9**	

Some Examples of Common Consequences Associated with Specific Functions

Escape (To Avoid Something):
 	
After a problem behavior occurs, the student avoids something unpleasant or terminates a negative situation. The problem behavior may serve as an escape function if after the problem behavior any one of the following occurs:
	• The teacher provides assistance with difficult or unpleasant activities
	• The task is made easier or modified in some way
	• The student gets out of the task immediately or eventually
	• Time out for inappropriate behaviors increases
	• Demands are lessened
	• The behaviors of others stop:
	    ○ Adults stop nagging, demanding, directing
	    ○ Peers stop teasing, pushing, yelling
	• Student is left alone

To Get Something: Access to Social Interaction, Preferred Objects or Events, Self- Stimulation:
 	
After a problem behavior occurs, the student gets something that he/she desires. The problem behavior may serve to get something if after the problem behavior and one of the following occurs:
	• Social Interaction/Attention
	    ○ The student gets one-on-one teacher interaction; teacher contact increases
	    ○ The teacher verbally responds (even neutral or negative comments may be desirable)
	    ○ Peers respond by laughing or making comments
	    ○ Student gets more intense reactions from teachers or peers
	• Preferred Objects or Events
	    ○ The student is redirected to a more enjoyable activity
	    ○ The student gets a preferred object or activity either immediately or eventually (usually the problem behavior stops when the student gets what is wanted)
	• Self-stimulation
	    ○ The student gets enjoyment from the sensory feedback derived through self-stimulation.
	(This function is difficult to determine because sensory feedback is not observable. However, self-stimulation may be hypothesized when the student engages in the problem behavior when alone or unoccupied, and there doesn't appear to be any other consistent consequences [e.g., attention, escape] associated with it.)

Chapter VI. Appendix B: Effective Behavior Support – Legal Foundations for Behavior Frequently Asked Questions

A. Section 504 Discipline

1. **Are discipline provisions the same under either IDEA[3] or Section 504[4]?**

   As a general rule, suspension and expulsion of students with disabilities have been treated the same way under both the IDEA and Section 504. *Suspension of handicapped Students – Deciding Whether Misbehavior is Caused by a Child's Handicapping Condition, 307 IDELR 07 (OCR1989); Long-Term Suspension or Expulsion of Handicapped Students, 307 IDELR 05 (OCR 1988); OSEP Memorandum 95-16, 22 IDELR 531 (OSEP 1995).*

2. **Are manifestation determinations required for Section 504?**

   The term "manifestation determination" does not appear in the regulatory language of Section 504. However, OCR interprets Section 504 as requiring a manifestation determination review in connection with disciplinary actions that constitute a significant change in placement under 34 CFR §104.35. An exclusion of more than 10 consecutive school days or 10 cumulative school days resulting from a pattern of behavior constitutes such a change. *See Dunkin (MO) R-V School District*, 52 IDELR 138 (OCR 2009).

3. **Can a student with a 504 plan receive school-based physical therapy, occupational therapy, or speech-language therapy?**

   A student may qualify to receive related services under his or her 504 Plan. The student's 504 Plan may include, but not be limited to:

   School health services, Counseling/social work services, Transportation, Audiology services, Speech-language services, Physical and occupational therapy, Psychological/behavioral services, Assistive technology device and/or service, Orientation and mobility services. *See Chattahoochee County (GA) School District*, 108 LRP 57787 (OCR 2008); 34 CFR §104.33(b).

4. **Does OSSE have a documented Section 504 process and guidelines?**

   Yes. For more guidance on the Section 504 process see our toolkit at:
   http://osse.dc.gov/publication/section-504-lea-toolkit

---

[3] The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C. §1400 *et eq.*
[4] Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. §794.

5. **Would in-school suspensions and/or buddy classes be considered short term removals?**

   When in-school suspensions result in the student's removal from the educational program and/or there is failure to provide services as specified in a student's accommodation plan, then the in-school suspension would be counted in determining whether a significant change in placement has occurred.

   An in-school suspension counts toward a change in placement when students attending the in-school suspension room were permitted to work on classroom assignments but were excluded from educational program and regular school activities. *See e.g.*, *Millcreek Township (PA) Sch. Dist.,* 16 IDELR 741(OCR 1989).

   OCR found that in-school suspension did not count toward change in placement when the nature and quality of the educational services provided during in-school suspension were comparable to those provided prior to in-school suspension. *Chester County (TN) Sch. Dist.,* 17 IDELR 301 (OCR 1990).

6. **Once a student has been removed for 10 consecutive school days or more than 10 cumulative school days resulting from a pattern of behavior, can he or she still be removed if he or she commits a subsequent infraction?**

   Yes. After a child with a disability has been removed for 10 days in a school year, during any subsequent days of removal the public agency must provide services to enable the child to participate in the general education curriculum and work toward meeting IEP goals. Once a child has been removed for more than 10 days in a school year, a manifestation determination review must be held to determine whether the behavior that gave rise to the violation of the school code is a manifestation of the child's disability or not. In addition, the child should receive a functional behavioral assessment, as appropriate, and behavioral intervention services designed to address the behavior so it does not reoccur. 34 CFR §300.530(b)-(d).

7. **Do you add up the time the student may be removed due to disruptive behaviors, for example to cool down or reset?**

   Cool down or reset time does not necessarily constitute a removal. However, if the cool down period is being used as a regular intervention strategy, it is important to incorporate this intervention into the student's IEP if appropriate. To the extent the use of cool down or reset time is inconsistent with the student's educational programming, as documented in his IEP, it is considered a denial of an appropriate education. 34 CFR

§300.536; *Honig v. Doe*, 484 U.S. 305, 325–26 (1988). See *OSEP Memorandum 95-16*, 22 IDELR 531 (OSEP 1995).

In addition, if a student is suspended for portions of a school day, these suspensions should be considered when determining whether there is a pattern of removals. 34 CFR §300.536.

8. **If a student with a disability causes harm to the classroom environment, would this be reason to remove the child from the general education setting? (i.e. throwing chairs, hitting, destructive, etc.)**
   Your school's code of conduct should outline disciplinary infractions and their consequences; and, for students with disabilities, follow the procedural safeguards outlined in the webinar and in the answers outlined within this document. A student with a disability can be removed on an emergency basis to an interim alternative educational setting for up to 45 days without regard to whether the behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the disability if the removal is for weapons, drugs, or serious bodily injury under 34 CFR §300.530(g).

   To qualify as "serious bodily injury," the conduct must involve:

   1. A substantial risk of death;
   2. Extreme physical pain;
   3. Protracted and obvious disfigurement; or
   4. Protracted loss or impairment of the function of a bodily member, organ, or mental faculty. 18 U.S.C. 1365(h)(3).

9. **Who ultimately decides if a removal for more than 10 cumulative days constitutes a pattern of behavior?**
   The determination of whether the series of suspensions create a pattern of exclusion that constitutes a significant change in placement must be made on a case-by-case basis by the local education agency. Among the factors considered in making this determination are the length of each suspension, the proximity of the suspensions to one another, and the total amount of time the student is excluded from school. A district may also consider any other relevant facts, such as the pattern of exclusions in the previous school year, the evaluation, and the IEP. 34 CFR §300.536(a)(2).

10. **What are the appropriate actions when the IEP team decides that the student's behavior is not a manifestation of his or her disability?**
    The determination of the degree to which the behavior is a manifestation of the student's disability is the responsibility of the IEP team, based on a thorough review of

data. If the IEP team determines that the behavior is not a manifestation of the child's disability, school personnel may apply the relevant disciplinary procedures to children with disabilities in the same manner and for the same duration as the procedures would be applied to children without disabilities. However, the child must continue to receive education services that allow the child to progress toward the goals set forth in the IEP, and receive, as appropriate, a functional behavioral assessment and behavioral intervention services that are designed to address the behavior violation so that it does not recur. 34 CFR §300.530(c)-(d).

11. **How do you determine the amount of time for services provided during removal?**
This is a determination that should be made by the IEP team. An LEA is not required to provide children suspended for more than 10 consecutive school days or 10 cumulative school days resulting from a pattern of behavior in a school year exactly the same services in exactly the same settings as they were receiving prior to the imposition of discipline. However, the special education and related services the child does receive must enable the child to continue to participate in the general curriculum, and to progress toward meeting the goals set out in the child's IEP. *Questions and Answers on Discipline Procedures,* 52 IDELR 231, Question C-3, (OSERS 2009); 34 CFR §300.530(d)(1).

12. **What options are available to LEAs in addressing the misconduct of students with disabilities whose misconduct was a manifestation of his or her disability?**
If a group of persons knowledgeable about the student determines that the student's misconduct was a manifestation of his or her disability, the student may not be expelled or suspended from school for more than ten school days. However, it is recommended that school officials review the student's current educational placement to determine whether the student is receiving appropriate instructional and related services in the current placement and whether behavior management strategies should be implemented for the student. A change in placement, if determined appropriate, could be implemented subject to applicable procedural safeguards. For example, the school district could propose to place the student in another class in the same school or in an alternative setting, in light of the student's particular learning needs, and dependent upon the change in placement process. *See OSEP Memorandum 95-16*, 22 IDELR 531, Question 10, (OSEP 1995).

13. What is an example of a manifestation determination review?

A manifest determination for a student with disability is a process that involves a review of the student's misconduct, the student's disability, and the services provided to determine if (1) the conduct in question was caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to, the child's disability; or (2) if the conduct in question was the direct result of the LEA's failure to implement the IEP. 34 CFR §300.530(e).

For more guidance on how to ensure that your LEA is conducting thorough manifestation determination review see: http://nichcy.org/schoolage/placement/disc-details/manifestation

14. Is there a standard way to determine if behavior/offense is a manifestation of the child's disability?

There is no standard way to determine if the behavior is a manifestation of the child's disability. The determination that a behavior is a manifestation of the child's disability can be a complex process. It must be determined by qualified professionals, on an individual, case-by-case basis. It cannot be determined by the child's label or category. For example, a label of "emotionally disturbed" does not by itself imply a manifestation of the disability. A behavioral goal or its absence does not determine manifestation. It is not decided by the "ability of the child to determine right from wrong." As noted above, the expectation is that the review is data driven and comprehensive.

Under IDEA, a manifestation determination must include an analysis of the child's program as well as the child's physical, cognitive, developmental, mental and emotional challenges. The child's behavior may be considered unrelated to the disability if the disability did not impair the child's understanding of the impact of the serious consequences of the behavior and if the disability did not impair the ability of the child to control the behavior. These factors must be viewed in the context of ecological variables and IEP services and goals. It is best practice that the school psychologist assisting in such a determination knows the child and the child's program. *Doe v. Maher*, 793 F.2d 1470 (9th Cir. 1986); *In re: Student with a Disability*, 52 IDELR 239, (WV SEA 2009).

15. If a student is caught bringing a weapon to school, does the IEP team need to conduct a manifestation determination meeting?

Yes. Within 10 school days of any decision to change the placement of a child with a disability because of a violation of a code of student conduct, the LEA, the parent, and

relevant members of the child's IEP team must conduct the manifestation determination. However, when the removal is for weapons, drugs, or serious bodily injury under 34 CFR §300.530 (g), the child may remain in an Interim Alternative Educational Setting (IAES), as determined by the child's IEP team for not more than 45 school days, regardless of whether the violation was a manifestation of his or her disability. *Questions and Answers on Discipline Procedures,* 52 IDELR 231, Question F-4, (OSERS 2009); 34 CFR §300.530(g).

D. Miscellaneous

16. **Can a student with disability be removed if he/she is absent for more than 10 consecutive days?**
A student's persistent absence should not be associated with a code of conduct violation.

Pursuant to 5-A DCMR 2103, Compulsory Education and School Attendance, each LEA has to develop and implement a protocol for absenteeism that focuses on prevention of unexcused absences.

2103.3 (c)(3): A referral process whereby within two (2) school days after a student has accumulated five (5) or more unexcused absences in one (1) marking period or other similar time frame, the student shall be referred to a school-based student support team which will meet within two (2) days of the referral and regularly thereafter to:
- Review and address the student's attendance and determine the underlying cause(s) for the student's unexcused absences;
- Communicate and/or collaborate with the parents or guardian;
- Provide timely response to the student's truant behavior;
- Make recommendations for academic, diagnostic, or social work services;
- Use school and community resources to abate the student's truancy including referral to a community-based organization when available; and
- Develop and implement an attendance intervention plan in consultation with the student's parents or guardian.

2103.3 (c)(4): If a student accumulates ten (10) unexcused absences at any time during a school year, the school-based student support team assigned to the student shall notify the school administrator within two (2) days after the tenth (10th) unexcused absence with a plan for immediate intervention including delivery of community-based programs

and any other assistance or services to identify and address the student's needs on an emergency basis.

E. References

- National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) Communique, October 1997 (vol. 26-2)
- Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services: Questions and Answers on Discipline Procedures, Revised June 2009
- Office of the State Superintendent of Education: Policies and Procedures for Placement Review, Revised, January 2010.