

# FUNCTIONAL BEHAVIORAL ASSESSMENT

Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports  
Virgin Islands Department of Education



# FUNCTIONAL BEHAVIORAL ASSESSMENT

FBA:



The process of gathering and analyzing information about a student's problem or disruptive behavior



in order to determine the purpose or intent of the actions.



# FBA was designed to help us:


- 1 determine the appropriateness of placement and services
- 2 identify positive interventions to reduce the undesirable behavior
- 3 develop appropriate behaviors to be substituted in replacement of the inappropriate ones







“Under the 1997 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, schools have a legal obligation to conduct functional behavior assessments (FBAs) when developing intervention plans for students with disabilities whose behaviors lead their individualized education program teams to consider a change in educational placement, including suspension and expulsion.”



## FBA's are based upon these 5 assumptions:

Challenging behaviors do not occur in a vacuum; there is a reason.

Behaviors occur in response to an identifiable stimuli (event).

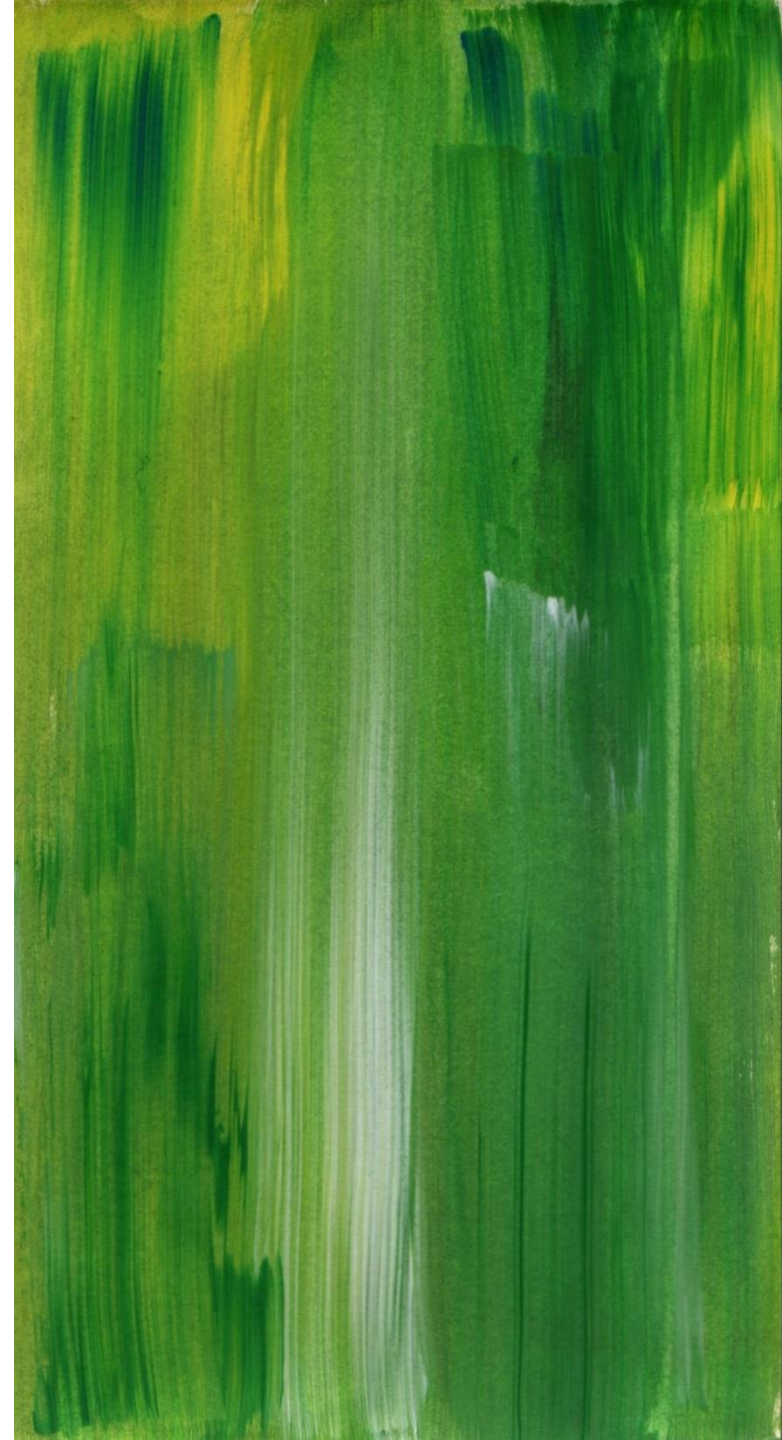
Behaviors are weakened or strengthened by consequences.

Behavior is a form of communication (i.e., we need to figure out what a particular behavior is communicating).

"Misbehavior" might actually be adaptive (justifiable and understandable) given the circumstances.

# What we know about behaviors:

- All behaviors serve a function and have a purpose.
- If benefits didn't result from showing certain behavior, then individuals would stop doing them.
- Our behaviors are meant to do one of two things:
  - obtain something desirable, or
  - avoid or escape something unpleasant or punishing







# CONDUCTING A FUNCTIONAL BEHAVIORAL ANALYSIS

# Stage 1 ~ Hypothesis Development

- Identify the behavior & define it in terms that are:
  - specific
  - observable
  - measurable
- Identify:
  - times when the student is:
    - most likely to engage in the behavior
    - least likely to engage in the behavior

Immediate  
Antecedents

AND

Preceding  
Events





# How do we gather the information

Interview knowledgeable individuals about events and circumstances associated with:

- occurrences
- non-occurrences

## Conduct systematic direct observations in natural settings

- Behavioral recording
- Frequency recording
- Duration/momentary time sampling
- Scatterplots
- A-B-C sequencing
- Behavior logs

[illegible]

# How do we gather the information?

3

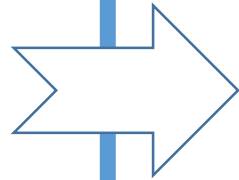
Analyze the information, looking for patterns & indications, and develop hypotheses regarding:

- behavior's function/purpose
- factors (immediate & setting events) affecting the behavior
- physical environment variables
- curriculum, instruction & work demands
- social interactions & individuals involved
- biological contributors (wearing off of medication, ADHD, etc.)
- state of mind/emotional influences (recent illness/death, divorce, moving, etc.)

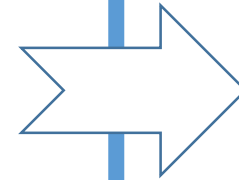
# Write your hypothesis:



Describe the relationship between the behavior and the environment.



What are the setting events, antecedents & consequences?



Defend the hypothesis with a description of the data that support them.



# 2 Types of Hypotheses

- Specific hypotheses:
  - explain the function or purpose of the undesirable behavior
  - identify the fast (antecedent) & slow triggers (events)
- Global hypotheses provide us with a **greater understanding** of the student and the **complexity of his/her situation**. Broad.
  - skills/talents
  - health (physical and emotional)
  - preferences/likes and dislikes
  - daily routines
  - relationships with others in his/her life
  - general quality of life

# Test Your Hypothesis

- **Conduct experiments. Verify/revise the hypotheses** (regarding which variables maintain the undesirable behavior) **by manipulating circumstances & events:**
  - present different degrees and types of the hypothetical stimuli
  - prevent the occurrence of the hypothetical stimulus
  - present other stimuli that might have an effect on the behavior
  - promote the demonstration of a new, replacement behavior that we suspect would meet the student's needs and thus replace the inappropriate behavior

**Remember :**

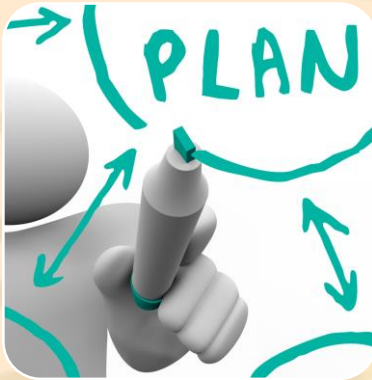
\*the replacement behavior must meet the needs/desires of the learner to at least the same extent as the inappropriate action.



Now you need  
a Behavior  
Intervention  
Plan







BIP –  
Behavior  
Intervention  
Plan

Plan  
designed  
to teach  
and  
reward  
positive  
behaviors

Helps  
prevent  
and/or  
stop  
problem  
behaviors

Based on  
the  
results  
of an FBA

# Developing a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP)

note any change in  
placement/setting

note any changes in  
services provided

list replacement behaviors and how  
they will be taught to the student

identify prescribed responses to  
displays of problem behaviors

describe direct interventions

set goals and objectives







# Implement the Plan

- Teach positive (or less negative) alternative behaviors that will serve the same purpose(s) as the inappropriate behaviors, and hopefully promote their use.
- Assess for progress/change
- Modify events/circumstances associated with problem behaviors so that inappropriate behaviors are no longer prompted or rewarded.

# In Summation:

## Definition:

**A functional behavior assessment is a comprehensive and individualized strategy to:**

- Identify the purpose or function of a student's problem behavior(s).
- Develop and implement a plan to modify variables that maintain the problem behavior.
- Teach appropriate replacement behaviors using positive interventions.

## Things to Do

- ✓ Define the problem behavior.
- ✓ Devise a plan to collect data.
- ✓ Compare and analyze the data.
- ✓ Formulate the hypothesis.
- ✓ Develop and implement a behavior intervention plan.
- ✓ Monitor the plan.



# References

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*Thank you!*