

# FUNCTIONS OF BEHAVIOR AND STRATEGIES USED

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# THE FUNCTIONS OF BEHAVIOR

A BRIEF OVERVIEW TO FIGURING  
OUT THE "WHY" OF BEHAVIOR



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It's all fun and games  
until someone figures  
out the function of  
your behavior.



som<sup>ee</sup>cards  
user card



# ATTENTION

- A child engages in specific behaviors to gain attention or a reaction from others.
- Examples of attention can include:
  1. Praise, words of affirmation
  2. Reprimands such as telling a child "no" or to "stop".
  3. Showing your frustration through body language and facial expressions.



# TANGIBLE

- A child engages in specific behaviors to gain access to tangible items such as food, toys or other items/activities.
- Examples:
  1. A child asks for candy in the store, you tell your child "no" and then your child begins to cry.
  2. Joey wants a toy from his friend. During playtime, Joey will hit a peer which results in the peer dropping the toy and crying. As a result of the hit, Joey now has access to the toy he wanted. This hitting behavior will continue because he realizes when he hits a friend, more than likely he will then have access to the toy he wanted.






# ESCAPE

- A child engages in behavior to escape or avoid something that they do not like, or do not want to do.
- Example:
  1. You tell your child to put their toys away, your child drops to the floor and engages in tantrum behavior.
  2. You tell your child to take 3 bites of their vegetables, and they toss them on the floor during meal-time.



# SENSORY/AUTOMATIC

- An individual engages in behavior because it feels good or relieves something that may feel bad.- The behavior itself is reinforcing!
- Examples:
  1. Rubbing your head when you have a headache because it feels good and alleviates some of the pain.
  2. A child may twirl an object and watching the object twirl around is pleasurable and reinforcing to them

<b>Antecedent</b> What happened before the behavior	<b>Behavior</b> What the behavior was	<b>Consequence</b> What happened after the behavior
		
Sean is sitting in class bored	Sean taps his pencil on his desk repeatedly	The sight or noise provides pleasurable sensory input



# NAME THAT FUNCTION!

- [Video: Setting the stage for success: Positive behavior support in school, home and community](#)





# How Do We Determine Functions of Behavior?

Finding patterns to help support your child



# Determining Function with a Functional Behavior Assessment

- A Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) is a systematic procedure used to identify problem behaviors & the specific circumstances under which the behaviors & more likely and less likely to occur.
- FBAs are based on the principles of Applied Behavioral Analysis. FBA is the process of determining the causes of behavior before developing an intervention.
- Understanding why a behavior occurs facilitates a more targeted and effective intervention (Behavior Therapy Associates)



# Finding Patterns to Help Determine Function

- Does the behavior intensity change depending on different circumstances, like time of day or location?
- Does the behavior usually involve other people?
- What happens right before the behavior?
- What happens right after the behavior?



# ABC Data for Patterns

## ANTECEDENT

**What event or action occurred immediately before the behavior?**

## BEHAVIOR

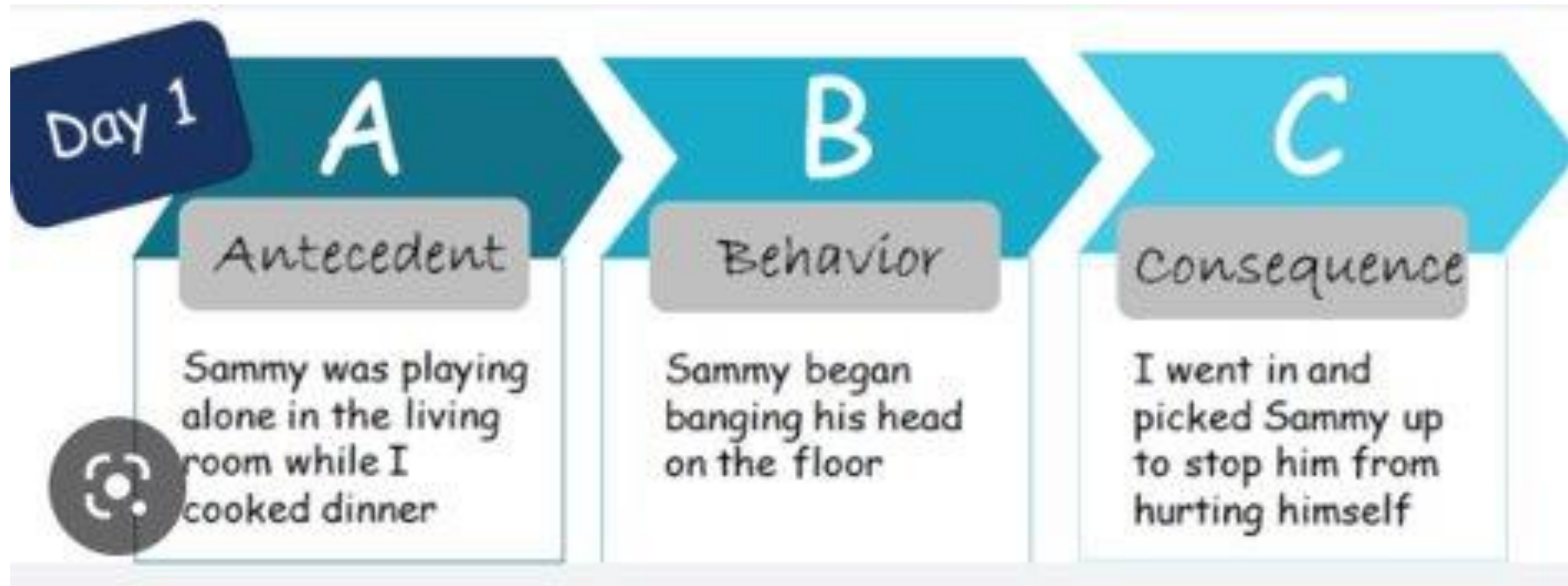
**What did the child say/do?  
\*Make sure it is observable!\***

## CONSEQUENCE

**What event or action occurred immediately after the behavior?**



# ABC Example



# ABC DATA

## ABC Analysis

Date \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_ Name of Person Observed: \_\_\_\_\_ Observer: \_\_\_\_\_

Behavior(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Date	Time	Antecedent	Behavior	Consequence	Possible Function



# Function Based Intervention Strategies



# Attention

- Non contingent attention
- Increase proximity to child
- Teach appropriate ways to gain attention
- Self-reflection
  - How much time and I spending on my phone
  - Spending purposeful time together
  - Am I giving more positive attention than negative attention?





# Tangible

- Teaching functional communication
- Use as reinforcement (set expectation ahead of time)
- Create a schedule







## My Morning Routine

<b>1. Wake Up</b>  <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>2. Meditate</b>  <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>3. Eat Breakfast</b>  <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>4. Brush Teeth</b>  <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>5. Play with Toys</b>  <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>6. Snack Time</b>  <input type="checkbox"/>

I am working for

computer



	=	1 point
Use your points to buy treats:		
 candy 5 points	 ipod break 8 points	 break area 5 points
 ipod break 10 points	 computer 10 points	 coloring break 8 points



# Escape

- Alter length or difficulty level
- Use Behavior Momentum
- Give Choices
- Use Reinforcement
- Incorporate interests. How can we make this activity more appealing to the student?



# Sensory



# Sensory/Automatic

- FIRST-How disruptive is the behavior? Only target behaviors that are potentially dangerous, extremely disruptive, or limits the child's opportunities for inclusion/socialization.
- Is there any medical reason this behavior is happening? Check with medical professionals.
- Refer to an Occupational Therapist or related professional to assist with sensory related needs as further evaluation may be necessary. With the help of an Occupational Therapist, individualized strategies can be developed for your child.



# Sensory/Automatic

- Provide Alternative Sensory Reinforcement- Offer stimuli matching the type of sensory reinforcement that is maintaining the problem behavior (e.g., auditory, visual, tactile)
  - Examples :
    - Fingers in ears=offering headphones
    - Chewing on clothing=offering chew necklace
    - Picks at skin or clothes= offering a kooshball or tape on a desk to pick
- Teach/offer alternative calming strategies



# Remember.....

- Functions of behavior Escape, Attention, Tangible, Sensory
- Look for patterns
- ABC Data is just a step in hypothesizing functions of behavior.
- If you feel behavior is unsafe/unmanageable seek further support.
- Consult with other professionals



# Questions/Comments/Discussions...





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THANK YOU



# REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

- <https://cedar.education.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/Handout-16-Function-Based-Intervention-Strategies.pdf>
- <https://behaviortherapyassociates.com/adhd/functional-behavior-assessments/>
- ABC Data Sheets: <https://theautismhelper.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/abc-pic-2.png>
- Sensory Behavior: <https://autismclassroomresources.com/3-ways-to-teach-replacements-or-coping/>
- <https://www.simplyspecial.ed.com/how-to-take-abc-data/>
- <https://masteraba.com/abc-data/>

