

Behavior Management Strategies

Supporting Behavior & Communications

Crystal Martinez, BCBA, Behavior Program Specialist

Viviene Indick, Behavior Program Specialist



Fontana Unified School District

SELPA / SPECIAL SERVICES

Agenda

- Overview of Behavior Concepts
- Behavior Strategies
- Group Activity
- Available Resources
- Navigating through CAPTAIN/AFFIRM Website
- Questions



ABC's of Behavior



ABC's of Behavior

- What are the ABC's?
 - Antecedent
 - What happens directly before the behavior occurs?
 - Behavior
 - Behavior is anything an individual does
 - Behavior needs to be observable and measurable.
 - Consequence
 - What happens immediately after the behavior occurs?
 - Consequences increase or decrease the behavior.
- Why are ABC's important? What do they tell us?
 - Identifies triggers (antecedent)
 - Identifies possible function of the behavior





Functions of Behavior



Functions of Behavior

- Why is the child engaging in this behavior?
- What need is the child trying to get met?
- Functions:
 - **S**ensory
 - **E**scape/Avoid
 - **A**ttention
 - **T**angible (Access to)



Functions of Behavior

- **S**ensory- Doing something that feels good. It can be automatic, like rocking back and forth, tapping a pencil, hand flapping, etc.
- **E**scape- A behavior in which the child is trying to get out of or avoid doing something.
- **A**ttention- When a child engages in a behavior to gain attention from others (peers or adults).
- **T**angibles- Gaining access to something, or some activity.



Replacement Behavior



Replacement Behavior

CHALLENGING BEHAVIOR



REPLACEMENT BEHAVIOR



Same need, better way to communicate

What is a Replacement Behavior?

- A socially acceptable action that replaces an inappropriate behavior while serving the same purpose.

Functionally Equivalent Replacement Behavior (FERB):

- Meets the same need or function as the challenging behavior.
- Something the child can learn and use in everyday life.



Functional Communication Training (FCT)



- A strategy that teaches children to communicate their needs in appropriate ways instead of using challenging behaviors.
- Knowing the **function** of the behavior (WHY?) is important because we want to ensure the new communication truly meets the child's needs.



When/How to use FCT?

- During routines and activities where challenging behaviors occur.
- Manipulate the environment to prompt communication opportunities.
- Create natural chances for the child to use the replacement behavior.
- Reduce barriers that make communication harder.
- Model and exaggerate the replacement communication to support learning.

When is FCT Appropriate?

Behavior Serves a Clear Function

If problem behaviors are triggered by identifiable needs (e.g., wanting a toy or avoiding a task), FCT is a good fit.



Alternative Communication is Feasible

The individual should have the capacity to learn replacement behaviors, whether through speech, gestures, or devices.



Consistency Can Be Ensured

FCT requires consistent reinforcement across environments, including home, school, and therapy settings.



How to Support FCT in the Home

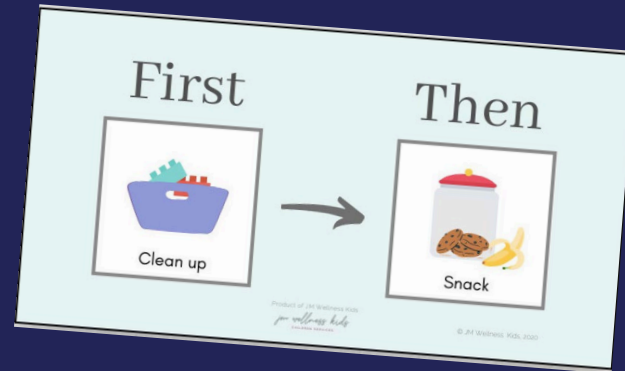
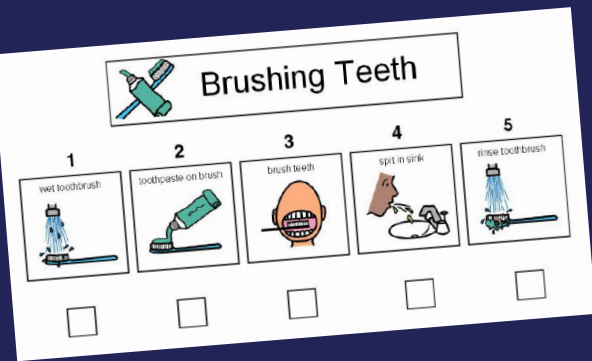
- **Be Consistent** – Make sure everyone (parents, teachers, siblings) reinforces the same communication methods.
- **Model Communication** – Show your child how to use the replacement communication in everyday situations.
- **Reinforce Right Away** – Respond promptly and positively when your child uses their new skill.
- **Work with the Team** – Stay connected with your child's in-home and school team to keep strategies and progress on track.



Visual Supports

Visual supports are concrete cues that are paired with or used in place of a verbal cue to provide the learner with information about a routine, activity, behavioral expectation, or skill demonstration.

- Visual Schedule
 - AM/PM Routines/Daily Schedule
 - First/Then Schedule
- Choice board
- Labels



Visual Supports

Individual Schedule



Labels



When to Use Visual Supports

1. **Daily Routines**- increase independent, reduce anxiety and support with transitions
2. **Behavior Expectations**- Provides clear, consistent expectations; reinforces positive behavior
3. **Transitions Between Activities**- prepares child for change and reduces meltdowns
4. **Learning & Task Completion**- Breaks tasks into manageable steps
5. **Communication**- Supports expressive communication



Routine Schedule



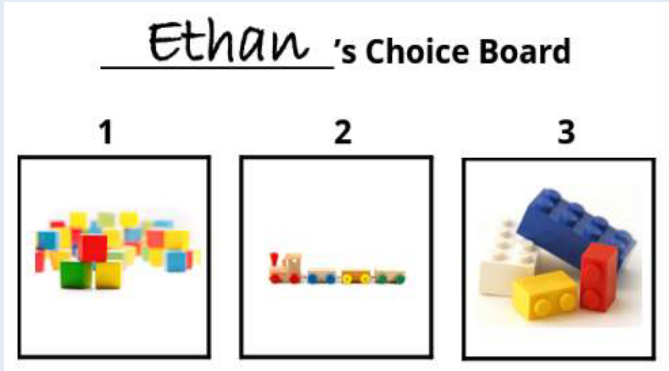
- identify challenge
- breakdown the steps
- prep/introduce materials
- display at eye level/accessible
- practice together
- reinforce & adjust

First/Then



- prep choice board
- introduce concept
- model the process
- practice together
- reinforce & celebrate
- fade gradually
- reflect & adjust

Choice Board



- prep choice board
- introduce concept
- model the process
- practice together
- reinforce & celebrate
- fade support slowly
- reflect & adjust

Modeling

A demonstration of the desired behavior or skill to the learner

WHEN TO USE IT?

When you notice that your child is struggling with a skill or behavior

Used to generalize or maintain of a skill or behavior



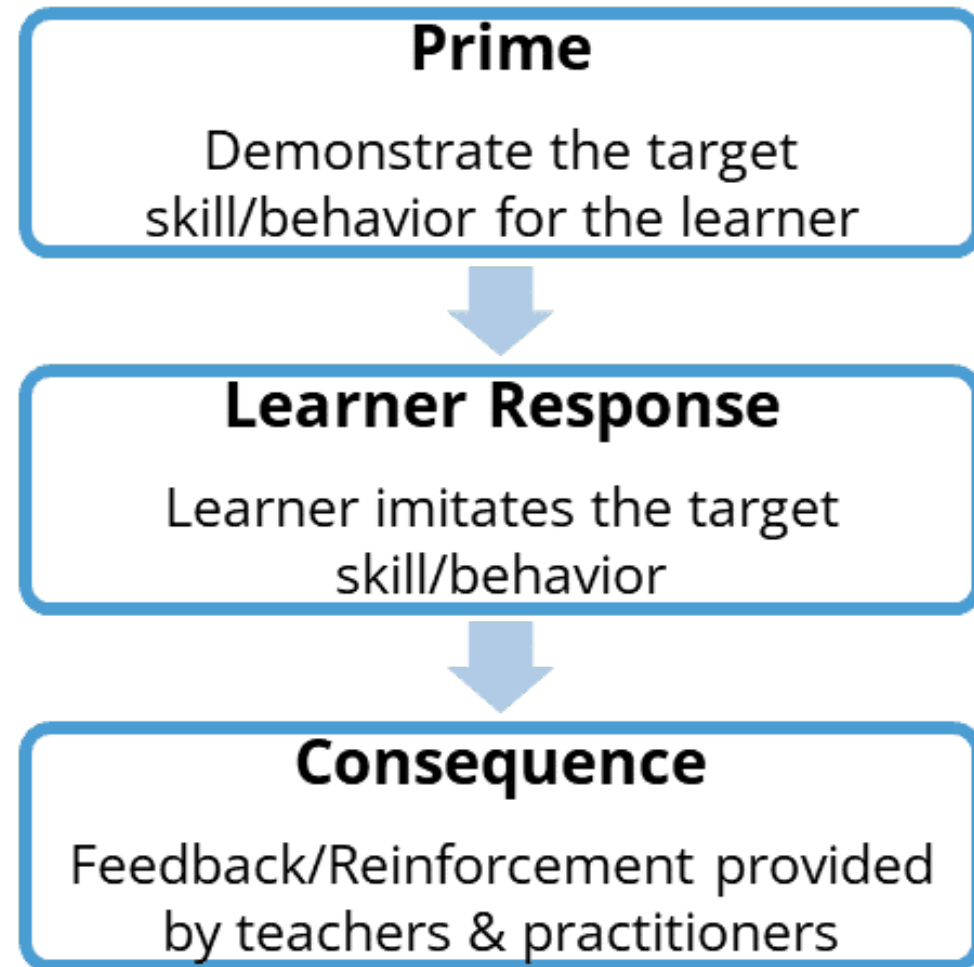
When to use it?

Consider times & activities throughout the day where modeling can be used to address the target skill or behavior.

- Manipulate the environment
- Create opportunities

Reduce any distractions in the environment

Exaggerate movement & verbal descriptions



Examples:

Scenario 1: Your child is trying to zip up her jacket but is struggling with pulling the zipper up. She starts to cry and kick the floor.

Response: Model “Help me” or “I need help please”

(self-advocacy when overwhelmed, ask for help instead of getting frustrated)

Scenario 2: Your child gets upset when he has to give up a highly preferred toy to his sibling/peer. (creating opportunities, manipulating your environment)

Response: Model “My turn” (pause) “Your turn”

(social skills/communication, turn-taking, waiting)

Scenario 3: Your child is upset and is crying and screaming on the floor

Response: “I feel upset. I’m going to take deep breaths” Model deep breathing or other coping strategy

(emotional regulation, coping strategy, naming feelings)



Modeling

Use simple clear language

Use calm, supportive tone

Narrate your own actions to show problem-solving and communication (self-talk)

Repeat key phrases often so that your child can learn them

Reinforce with praise and encouragement



Case Study 1: Liam and the Snack Meltdown

Liam is 5 years old. He often cries and screams when he wants a snack but doesn't know how to ask. His parents usually guess what he wants or gives in quickly to stop the meltdown.

Challenge for parents: How can they help Liam communicate his needs more functionally?



Case Study 2: Sophia and the Morning Routine Battles

Sophia is 6 years old. She resists getting dressed and brushing her teeth every morning. She often throws her clothes or hides under her bed.

Challenge for parents: How can they use structure and modeling to support independence?



Case Study 3: Johnny and the Tablet Tantrum

Johnny is 7 years old and gets upset when tablet time ends. He screams, throws the tablet and refuses to transition to another activity.

Challenge for Parents: How can they use functional communication and visual supports to ease the transition?



Resources

- [AFIRM Modules | AFIRM](#)
- [Inland Regional Center | Serving Individuals with Developmental Disabilities in San Bernardino and Riverside Counties](#)
- [Diagnostic Center, Southern California](#)





Feedback & Evaluation

<https://bit.ly/SELPFeedback>

