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Behavior change strategies are important components of nearly every established form of therapy. Different techniques have different targets: thoughts, emotions, even your environment. An important first step is to pick the right technique. Suppose you want to eat healthier, exercise more, or avoid getting in arguments with your partner. Each of these requires behavior change, but changing behavior can be challenging. An important first step is to pick the right technique. Behavior change strategies are important components of nearly every established form of therapy—such as cognitive behavioral therapy, person-centered therapy, and solution-focused therapy— and some behavior change strategies appear across different types of therapies. But which one should you choose, exactly? Today, we're sharing a simple taxonomy of behavior change strategies that we think should be better known, because it’s so useful. The strategies aren't mutually exclusive. You can (and, arguably, should!) try combining several of them if you're aiming to change the way you behave on a daily basis. How to change behaviors according to psychology The framework here, along with many of the ideas and terms contained herein, comes from James Prochaska, John Norcross, and Carlo DiClemente's book Changing For Good, which we'd strongly recommend reading. For your benefit, we've modified and expanded their useful list of behavior change strategies somewhat, using findings from other aspects of our research. Strategy 1: Consciousness-Raising This strategy is the most common therapeutic approach to behavior change. Despite its rather airy-sounding name, consciousness-raising is also one of the simplest and most straightforward behavior change strategies. Its premise: Increase your level of knowledge and awareness around the issue in question so that you're better equipped to make good decisions about it. This strategy can involve arriving at deep revelations about yourself during therapy sessions or something as simple as learning more about the principles of sleep hygiene to improve sleep quality. Possible forms of consciousness-raising: Developing new interpretations of your thoughts, feelings, or behavior with a therapist's help Learning more about how to navigate the world (e.g., financial info, info about how to seek mental health treatment, etc.) Revelations about the consequences of your behaviors or beliefs (e.g., realizing that you take your problems out on people, and that this behavior undermines your personal relationships) Picking up technical information that may be useful in pursuing a behavior goal (e.g., how to best implement a specific sleep hygiene plan) . Strategy 2: Social Liberation In many cases, the circumstances of daily life— the types of environment you operate in and the behaviors considered acceptable in those environments—can help or hinder efforts to change your behavior. Consider, for example, how difficult it would be to quit smoking if you spent all of your time in places where many people around you were smoking regularly. The social liberation strategy aims to facilitate positive behavior change by changing the social environment, to make such changes easier. On a personal level this can mean thinking carefully about who is a good influence to spend time around (and who brings out a worse version of yourself) and in what social settings to seek out or avoid. At a society-wide level this approach may focus on altering the legal/ regulatory frameworks that govern public behavior. In the case of smoking in the United States, social liberation has taken the form of indoor smoking bans and restrictions on where people can smoke outside. Forms of social liberation at a society-wide level include: Top-down public health policy interventions (e.g., smoking ban laws) Efforts to change social mores (e.g., implementing educational programs that promote trans-inclusivity, helping to change societal attitudes towards trans people). Forms of social liberation at a personal level include: Specifically choosing environments that support a behavior change (e.g., avoiding bars, if you want to drink less) Joining supportive communities and actively participating in groups that share your goals (e.g., joining a book club, if you want to read more) Curating your media consumption to reflect the values and changes you want to see in yourself (e.g., following social media accounts that critically evaluate the news, if you want to be more engaged with current affairs). Strategy 3: Emotional Arousal The emotional arousal strategy is a cousin to consciousness-raising. Instead of working by providing useful information, it aims to aid behavior change by creating emotional momentum in the direction of the desired new behavior. Typically, this strategy works by evoking a strong emotional experience related to the problem at hand. One very common method for producing this effect is through media—"scared straight" instructional programs that dramatize the negative consequences of certain behaviors are a common example. (This specific emotional arousal tactic has been known to backfire and produce more drug usage among youth.) This strategy can take less contrived forms, too; real-life personal experiences can emotionally highlight the need to change your behavior more effectively than virtually anything else. Possible forms of emotional arousal: Psychodrama (guided drama and role-playing to work through issues, often involving re-enacting and exploring past situations from the client's life or future situations they might find challenging) Grieving (e.g. allowing yourself to feel the full pain of loss of a loved one and to express the emotion you feel) An intense emotional experience that motivates change (e.g. losing a friendship over a past behavior) Reflecting on why you deeply care about making this behavior change. Strategy 4: Self-Re-evaluation Sometimes the key to changing your behavior is to consider what kind of person your current behavior makes you, what kind of person you'd like to be, and how adopting new behaviors might help you achieve that goal. The process of frank emotional reflection on your current state and how it differs from your preferences is the crux of the self-re-evaluation strategy. As DiClemente puts it in Changing For Good, this process often entails asking yourself a series of difficult questions: How do you perceive yourself as a gambler, a drinker, or a sedentary person? How do you see yourself if you change your behavior? What will be the cost of that change, in time, energy, pleasure, stress, or image? What, overall, are the pros and cons of trying to overcome your problem? Possible forms of self-re-evaluation: Value clarification (e.g. putting your priorities in a new order based on what you deeply value. Future visualization (e.g. "What will I be like after I make this change?") Pros vs. cons analysis Exploring desired identities (e.g., “What sort of person do I want to be? What would it look like if I started being that person today?”) Strategy 5: Commitment Ultimately, in many contexts, the one with the most influence over changing your own behavior is you. This fact can make behavior change attempts seem daunting, but it also creates an opening that can actually help you push yourself to reshape your ways. The commitment strategy involves announcing your intentions to the public or to members of your social circle. By doing so, you commit your social credibility to achieving your goal, thereby creating a powerful incentive to follow through and avoid the shame of public failure. New Year's resolutions are a common commitment strategy example. Possible forms of commitment: Resolutions Posting your intentions on social media Publicly tracking behavior change performance (e.g. social fitness apps) Frequently discussing behavior change efforts with friends/colleagues. Strategy 6: Countering The countering strategy works on a very simple premise: When the urge to engage in an unhealthy behavior strikes, substitute a healthier behavior. Countering strategies are popular among dieters; think of tactically opting for a healthy fruit snack when a potato chip craving strikes. Another famous example: Smokers often try to aid their efforts to quit by popping a mint or a piece of gum whenever they find themselves longing for a cigarette. Possible forms of countering: Relaxation tactics used to reduce stress and physical tension, which can help diminish the urge for unhealthy behaviors (e.g., deep breathing exercises, meditation, or progressive muscle relaxation) Systematic desensitization, to gradually reduce anxiety or fear, making you less likely to resort to unhealthy behaviors as a coping mechanism Substitution (as described above). Strategy 7: Environment Control The environment control strategy is similar to the social liberation strategy in that it involves altering your environment to make behavior change easier. In this case, though, the strategy focuses on changing the environments that you yourself directly control, such as your home or your workspace. The most common and obvious type of environment control tactic is removing unhealthy temptations—such as junk food, tobacco, or alcohol—from your home. But environment control tactics can take more positive forms, too, such as a reminder placed in your workspace to go straight to the gym after work instead of going home. Possible forms of environment control: Removing risks from your own environment Making your environment more conducive to new behavior Equipping your environment with supplies for a new behavior. Strategy 8: Rewards This strategy is one of the simplest and most intuitive of the bunch but can also be effective. Rewarding good behavior is a time-tested method for supporting efforts to change habits. Commonplace examples abound, such as rewarding oneself with a fun trip after hitting a big goal, enticing yourself to exercise by limiting your TV-watching time to when you're on an exercise bike. Possible forms of rewards: Reward for achieving a milestone Reward for beginning individual instances of behavior practices Self-praise for adherence to a new behavior. Strategy 9: Helping Relationships Although you can't control the behavior of your friends and family members, they can be an invaluable source of assistance. If you let your close, trusted confidantes in on your efforts, they can often help you achieve your goals. Possible forms of helping relationships: Asking people for logistical help (e.g., partnering for accountability in a study schedule, sharing resources for learning a new language) Asking for moral support in the form of encouragement or compassion. Asking for constructive feedback regarding your progress or ways you could improve your behavior. Consider trying out combinations of these nine strategies and seeing which ones work best for you. Or, if your desired behavior change relates to a mental health challenge, consider contacting a licensed practitioner (such as a cognitive-behavioral therapist) to help you choose the behavior change strategies most likely to help you.. Find an Addiction Therapist Get the help you need from a therapist near you–a FREE service from Psychology Today. Atlanta, GA Austin, TX Baltimore, MD Boston, MA Brooklyn, NY Charlotte, NC Chicago, IL Columbus, OH Dallas, TX Denver, CO Detroit, MI Houston, TX Indianapolis, IN Jacksonville, FL Las Vegas, NV Los Angeles, CA Louisville, KY Memphis, TN Miami, FL Milwaukee, WI Minneapolis, MN Nashville, TN New York, NY Oakland, CA Omaha, NE Philadelphia, PA Phoenix, AZ Pittsburgh, PA Portland, OR Raleigh, NC Sacramento, CA Saint Louis, MO San Antonio, TX San Diego, CA San Francisco, CA San Jose, CA Seattle, WA Tucson, AZ Washington, DC More from Clearer Thinking More from Psychology Today In order to continue enjoying our site, we ask that you confirm your identity as a human. Thank you very much for your cooperation. Most kids get in trouble now and then at school. But when they act out over and over again, it can be hard for them (and their classmates) to learn. To help a student behave, a school may put in place a behavior intervention plan. (You may also hear it called a positive behavior intervention plan.)A behavior intervention plan (or BIP) is a formal, written plan that teaches and rewards good behavior. The purpose is to prevent or stop misbehavior.A BIP can be a single page or many pages. It has three key parts. The plan: Lists the problem behaviorDescribes why it’s happeningPuts in place strategies or supports to helpTo make a BIP, the school puts together a school team to look into the behavior. The team may interview the student, the teacher, and other staff. They should also observe the student and talk to the family to figure out what’s happening. Testing might be used, too, as well as a review of past report cards or incidents.Since kids change over time, the school should review the BIP every so often. If there’s new information or if the student needs a change, the school should adjust the plan as needed.How a BIP works in practice Who gets a behavior intervention plan?Why BIPs don’t always work A Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP), sometimes referred to as a Behavior Plan or Positive Behavior Support Plan provides a roadmap for how to reduce problem behavior. Usually, the BIP is part of a larger overall treatment plan or IEP, contributing to the learner’s long-term success in an important way. It provides a written plan or instructions for addressing challenging behavior and teaching skills that help the learner get what he wants in a more appropriate way (a functionally-equivalent replacement behavior). Behavior Plan: A roadmap for behavior change A BIP should be based on a functional behavior assessment (FBA), which is a process of identifying the causes of a behavior. The BIP should include a description of the target behavior, the replacement behavior, and the antecedents and consequences of the behavior. The BIP should be written in a way that is easy to understand by the people who will be implementing it. The BIP should be reviewed and updated regularly. Contents What Is a Behavior Intervention Plan?Functions of BehaviorThe Difference Between FA and FBAWriting an Effective Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP)Evaluating the Effectiveness of the Behavior Intervention Plan A BIP is a blueprint for changing behavior. In a formal setting, it guides treatment and ensures that everyone responds to behaviors consistently. It includes interventions selected based on the hypothesized or demonstrated function of the behavior with the intention of reducing challenging behaviors (what the learner “gets” by engaging in the behavior). Less formally, it can be used by parents and caregivers to ensure everyone interacting with the learner remains on the same page about a behavior strategy. Although the written document feels like a final product, it’s actually a fluid, even dynamic part of treatment. Throughout treatment professionals monitor the learner’s response to interventions and determine their effectiveness. The professional adjusts the plan based on the progress, or lack of progress, of the learner. The written plan may include criteria for gradually shaping behavior, but it typically requires multiple revisions over time. No matter how well-written, a piece of paper cannot change the behavior of a learner alone. In fact, a well-written behavior plan actually changes the behavior of the adults who interact with the learner as much as or even more than the learner himself. Learners are not puppets and their behavior does not change unless the environment changes. A behavior plan provides strategies for others to utilize to help the learner prepare for and react to triggers when they come up. It offers antecedent strategies for minimizing exposure to or the impact of common triggers, setting the learner up for success and reducing the learner’s need to rely on the target behaviors to get what they need or want. It includes strategies for teaching alternative ways of accessing the maintaining reinforcer (often through the use of functional communication training). The plan only works if the adults who interact with the learner actually implement the strategies in the plan. It’s common to write a behavior plan expecting parents, teachers and RBTs to implement it with fidelity on a regular basis, but the author should account for conditions that are unpredictable. It might be possible to achieve a high degree of fidelity in a clinic setting, but in a chaotic home environment, this is nearly impossible to achieve. A plan that speaks to the right audience with realistic expectations and clear strategies has the greatest chance of changing the behavior of the adults who will implement the plan. It’s these adults who ultimately are responsible for improving behavior. Not all learners need a behavior plan. Learners who respond well to group contingencies or who receive services primarily for skill acquisition likely don’t need a BIP. If ABA is funded through an insurance company, they often require a formal, written plan. You must know the requirements of the funding source as well as the specific needs of the learner to determine if a plan is needed. If the learner engages in challenging behavior at school, the school staff should conduct a functional behavior assessment (FBA) and write a behavior intervention plan (BIP). The Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires an FBA when a child with disabilities engages in behavior that threatens his current school placement and that behavior is a manifestation of the child’s disability (IDEA, 2004). This includes suspension and removal from class as these impact the learner’s exposure to the curriculum. top The process of developing an effective BIP starts long before you put pen to paper (or start typing on you laptop). You must collect relevant information from a variety of different sources to make sure you develop a thorough understanding of the behavior before you decide which interventions to include in your plan. Do not rely on only one source of information. This mistake can mean you miss important, relevant variables that impact the learner’s behavior. Acquire the following information through direct observations, interviews and document reviews: Comorbid diagnoses Family composition and history Target behavior(s) and operational definition(s) Relevant environmental variables including antecedents, consequences and setting events Additional information (reinforcers, interests, strengths, cultural variables, etc.) Get to know your audience. Adapt your plan to the person (or people) who will be reading or implementing the plan including school staff, parents, RBTs, or insurance companies. Your audience should dictate the language you use in your plan. Make it easy to read yet technical enough to be effective. A study conducted by Tarbox, et al. (2013) found that professionals who used a web-based tool for creating behavior intervention plans produced a significantly higher rate of including function-based interventions. The Master ABA Dojo provides all the tools and resources you need for efficiently creating effective behavior plans! Keep in mind that before you create your BIP, you must conduct a functional behavior assessment (FBA) or a functional analysis (FA) to identify the function of the target behavior(s). All behavior occurs because the individual gets something out of it (gets something good or escapes something bad). In Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA), the reason a behavior continues is called the function of that behavior. These functions serve as reinforcers for the learner. If the behavior no longer works for that purpose, the behavior will stop and a new behavior will take its place. Identifying the function of the behavior is critical in developing an effective BIP. The goal of the BIP is always to teach the learner adaptive ways to access the reinforcer maintaining the target behavior and may also include a plan for teaching the learner to tolerate when that reinforcer is not available. To meet this goal, you must accurately identify the specific functions maintaining the behavior. The functions of behavior are discussed in depth in our post Functions of Behavior in ABA: Complete Guide. Want a resources that will help you conduct an FBA and create a function-based BIP? Check out our Master ABA Dojo membership! * The field of Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) offers wonderful tools and techniques to help us understand behavior and teach new skills. With this comes an abundance of terminology and acronyms. Functional Analysis (FA) and Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) are two terms that are often confused. Do you know the difference between these important assessments? Functional analysis and functional behavior assessment both help professionals identify the function of a behavior. The difference lies in the degree of confidence in the results and the intrusiveness of the assessment. A functional analysis demonstrates control over the behavior thus providing the professional with reliable results. While a functional behavior assessment allows the profession to develop only a hypothesis of the maintaining variables. In school, we are often taught that the functional analysis (FA) is the “gold standard” when it comes to identifying behavioral function. This is due to the degree of confidence in the results of the assessment. By contriving and controlling different variables, the assessor demonstrates specific control over the behavior. In recent years, the ethics of exerting this type of control over a learner has come into question. A functional behavior assessment (FBA) returns less reliable results and requires collecting information from a variety of sources including observation of the behavior as it occurs to gather data that then gets analyzed. This again requires the learner to be subjected to potentially aversive conditions that provoke the target behavior so that it can be measured. Again, in recent years, the ethics of this practice has been questioned by autistics and caring professionals alike. Dr. Greg Hanley identified a third option that he calls the Practical Functional Assessment (PFA) (Hanley & Gover, 2018). In this process, he combines aspects of each of these processes in an effective and ethical practice. He relies heavily on interviews with people who know the learner. He uses the interview process to dig into the underlying function of the behavior to form a hypothesis then he tests the hypothesis by essentially demonstrating that he can effectively “turn the behavior on and off.” top When choosing among the different available methods of identifying the function of the target behavior, consider how confident you must be in the results of the assessment. In many situations, forming a hypothesis that turns out to be incorrect or incomplete is completely acceptable as, over time, you will collect and analyze data to measure the effectiveness of your interventions. There may be specific circumstances where even a small margin of error could harm the learner. In these instances, an FA may be the most ethical of assessments. A functional analysis manipulates environmental conditions to evoke challenging behavior. This is done to demonstrate control over the behavior. If the professional can predictably create a condition that evokes the behavior, they identify the function of the behavior within a reasonable degree of certainty. A functional analysis must be completed by an experienced professional as it requires contriving conditions in specific ways in an attempt to elicit behavior. When conducting a functional analysis, the professional contrives conditions in an attempt to elicit target behavior, reinforce, then measure how frequently the behavior occurs during subsequent conditions. Conditions align with potential functions: demand, restricted attention, preferred items withheld, and play (control). The professional measures the occurrence in each condition and demonstrates control when behavior repeatedly occurs more often in one condition over the others. While this interview is long, it’s well worth the time invested. Brian Iwata, a major contributor to the field of ABA, describes functional analysis in detail. Any professional seeking to understand functional analysis should watch this. A functional behavior assessment collects a variety of data about an identified behavior to evaluate the conditions in the context within which it’s already occurring. Professionals collect these data through both direct and indirect methods such as observation, interviews and data collected by collaterals without manipulating any existing variables. When a pattern emerges through the evaluation of these data, the professional forms a hypothesis about the function. Professionals must express clearly that their conclusions are a hypothesis and should not assume their conclusions are fact. The key behind the FBA process is collecting data from a variety of sources. Begin with indirect assessment via review of incident reports and interviews or questionnaires completed with parents, teachers or caregivers. This guides the rest of the process by providing target behaviors and some insight into when the learner is most likely to engage in the behavior. Antecedent Behavior Consequence (ABC) data are fundamental elements of the functional behavior assessment; however, these data rely on observation of the behavior as it occurs in the natural setting, exposing the learner to potentially aversive circumstances to learn more about the behavior. Scatterplots also rely on observing behavior in the natural environment and provide critical information about the occurrence of behavior during components of the day such as a specific time of day or during specific activities within the day. Additionally, several other documents assist in working through the information collected during the assessment. The ABC data sheet allows you to record what happens right before and right after the behavior you want to learn more about. The data sheet could include check boxes of common antecedents, behaviors and consequences or be more free-form allowing for more detail. Don’t forget to consider setting events as a potential influence over behavior. ABC and SABC Data SheetsDownload Below is an example of a scatterplot. The scatterplot offers a visual representation of the occurrence of behavior across different times of the day (or activities) and days of the week. This provides an opportunity to spot trends in the data you might otherwise miss. Sample ScatterplotDownload Blank ScatterplotDownload The Competing Behavior Pathway begins to put all of the information you collect together while also considering replacement behaviors you might teach. It provides a visual display of common setting events, replacement behaviors and the ultimate desired behavior. Working through the process, allows you to consider both short- and long-term goals. How will the learner access the same reinforcer as the target behavior (short-term goal including a functionally-equivalent replacement behavior) and how will the learner engage in behavior that contacts reinforcement in the natural environment (long-term desired behavior)? Competing Behavior PathwayDownload Collecting and analyzing the data for a functional behavior assessment takes time and patience. Professionals must consider all variables that might impact the behavior. Despite all of this, the professional cannot say for certain that they have identified the function of the behavior. The result of a FBA is always a hypothesis of the most likely function. Many advantages and disadvantages exist for both functional analysis and functional behavior assessment. Understand the risks and benefits of each before you begin. If you are unsure about whether or not you should conduct one of these assessments, seek supervision from an experienced Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA®). Advantages DisadvantagesFunctional Analysis ~Provides greateraccuracy, predictive control~”Gold standard” foridentifying function~Requires extensivetraining to implement~Risk of reinforcingundesired behaviorFunctional Behavior Assessment~Easier to implement~Information can be gathered from varioussources~More efficient in somecircumstances~Avoids reinforcingpotentially dangerousbehavior~Less accurate foridentifying function~Form a hypothesis of function Both of these assessments are tools in the professional’s toolbox that should be utilized when appropriate. Each assessment should be carefully considered before being implemented. Choosing between a functional analysis and functional behavior assessment can be confusing, especially for professionals new to the field. In general, professionals should choose the simplest, least intrusive intervention available that is likely to be effective. In addition, professionals must ensure they collect the most accurate data available to them. Often these 2 requirements would lead to very different choices. That being said, here are some general guidelines: Choose a functional analysis when: It is within your scope of competency to do so or you have access to a supervisor willing to support you You have access to an environment that you can sufficiently control so as to be successful in contriving the conditions There’s limited risk of danger associated with the behavior The risks of not correctly identifying the function of the behavior outweigh the risks of conducting the FA Choose a functional behavior assessment when: A functional analysis is outside your scope of competency and you don’t have supervisory support to conduct one safely The behavior presents potential danger to the client or someone else You are not likely to be successful in contriving the conditions with sufficient efficacy to obtain reliable data You are required by law to conduct one Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires that schools conduct a functional behavior assessment (not a functional analysis) if the child’s behavior impacts his learning, the learning of others, or puts his placement at risk. Sacramento State University published this Fact Sheet that answers some frequently asked questions about when schools are required to conduct a functional behavior assessment. As mentioned earlier, Dr. Greg Hanley presents a third option that offers some of the benefits of a functional analysis while ameliorating some of the disadvantages. Although the technique requires some training to ensure efficacy of implementation, the risks are greatly reduced. Essentially, the professional collects information through interviews in order to form a hypothesis. The professional then takes this information to recreate a situation that will trigger and subsequently terminate the behavior (i.e. removing a preferred item then giving it back contingent on target behavior) thus demonstrating control over the behavior. For more information on the Practical Functional Assessment click here. Want a resources that will help you conduct an FBA and create a function-based BIP? Check out our Master ABA Dojo membership! * top Effective BIPS require some practice to write. Remember the purpose behind your plan. Typically, you create a BIP for someone else to implement. Write it so that person understands exactly what you want him/her to do. Be as specific as possible using clear, jargon-free language. Many different factors impact the usability of your BIP from the overall structure and framework of the BIP to the smallest detail so it’s worth taking time to consider each component as you go along. When building your BIP, you can create a framework around a whole response class (multiple behaviors serving the same function), common antecedents/functions, or individual topographies of behavior. Choose the framework that you are most comfortable with or that best meets the needs of your learners, but make sure that your interventionist understands your plan. Although there isn’t one correct framework, it’s difficult to switch between them for different learners. Constantly changing the structure of your BIPs becomes confusing for your interventionists. Choose one that is appropriate to most of your learners and stick with it. Consider the following when choosing a framework: The antecedent structure requires that the interventionist correctly identify the antecedent and then react accordingly, potentially utilizing different strategies across different antecedents. The antecedent structure may include some redundancy when the same interventions are used across different antecedents. Using a topography structure often creates redundancy as you often implement interventions across more than one topography when they serve the same function. When you are dealing with behaviors that are part of different response classes, using a structure around response classes requires multiple different plans. A plan written for a specific response class directs the interventionist to address each of the target behaviors in that plan as though they were the same behavior. This means that you cannot include behaviors in the plan that are not part of that response class (and thus would be addressed differently). Here are some templates to help you compare the different options: Generally, agencies have a template they use when documenting behavior plans. Often the template dictates which framework you must use. This information will help you if you start your own business, provide contract or consultation services, or have the liberty to choose your own format when working for an agency. If you must use an agency template, consider how the format impacts implementation. Provide training to your interventionists to ensure treatment fidelity. Below is an example of a behavior plan written in an antecedent framework. BIP-Antecedent Framework Formatting a behavior plan is a matter of structuring the information in a way that is easy for the interventionists to refer back to when needed. The image above shows an example of a behavior plan written in the antecedent framework. Each section provides interventionists with strategies for common antecedents (i.e. difficult task, low attention, etc.). The formatting of this plan allows the interventionist to quickly find the antecedent and then scan to find the interventions they should implement. There are limited instructions for implementing the intervention, but if the interventionist is familiar with the interventions, these might be sufficient. When creating your plan, utilize headings and tables to allow interventionists to quickly scan to find the information they need. Bulleted lists break up text and distinguish one intervention from the next. The Master ABA Dojo delves further into creating behavior intervention plans. Here, let’s look at how to write a detailed plan. Writing a behavior plan consists of many steps that do not involve sitting behind a computer screen. This is an active process that requires substantial data collection and planning. The steps below are a guide, but remember that you may need to add steps depending on your setting and the rules in your area. Acquire informed consent from the parent or guardian Collect baseline data Collect FBA or FA data Analyze the data to identify a hypothesized or tested function of the target behavior(s) Research appropriate interventions Assemble the components of the plan Review the plan with the human rights committee if the plan includes any form of seclusion or restraint or if otherwise required (know the laws and rules for your specific area) Review the plan with the parent or guardian and obtain a signature Train staff to implement the plan Several components come together to create a complete treatment package to address maladaptive behavior and each component builds the foundation for positive behavior change. While some elements may be optional based on the setting or other supporting documentation, all plans should include the following components. Ensure that all staff know without a doubt whose plan they are reading. Include sufficient identifying information to make this crystal clear. Appropriate identifying information includes: Child’s name and any nicknames Child’s date of birth Date of the plan (to ensure staff recognize the most recent plan) Date of plan revisions Author Supervisor Setting (if appropriate) Clearly identify the goal for the plan. Anyone reading the plan should understand the purpose behind the plan. Why is this behavior intervention plan necessary? What benefits do you hope to see for the child? Take a look at the following examples: Good: Goal: To help Beth stay in the classroom without disruptive behavior. Better: Goal: To increase Beth’s ability to remain in the classroom and participate in classroom activities with her peers with a decrease in target behavior and an increase in adaptive alternative behavior. Best: Goal: To increase Beth’s ability to remain in the classroom to 95% of the school day and actively participate in activities with her peers with a decrease in noncompliance to