ABA for Teachers & Paras
Beyond the Basics
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Effective Teaching Procedures
Use Proactive Strategies first!

- *Implement these prior to trying any of the behavioral procedures:*
  - Pair with Reinforcement
  - Teach functional communication skills (Manding)
  - Mix and vary tasks
  - Reduce learner errors
  - Intersperse easy and difficult tasks
  - Fade in effort and number of demands
  - Teach to fluency
Effective Teaching Procedures

- Pair yourself & teaching environments with reinforcement
- Initially, correlate the teaching environment with highly valuable and high-density reinforcement relative to the conditions that have typically been interrupted at the start of teaching sessions.

(Lalli, Vollmer, Progar, Wright, Borrero, Daniel, Barthold, Tocco and May, 1999; Michael, 1993).
Effective Teaching Procedures

- Mix and Vary Tasks
  - Presenting instructional demands in which the stimuli and response requirements vary from trial to trial appear to reduce the value of escape as a reinforcer compared to massed trialing and consistent task presentation.

Effective Teaching Procedures

- Reduce Learner Errors
- Errorless teaching procedures turn hard tasks into easy tasks without the adverse side effects

Effective Teaching Procedures

- Intersperse easy with difficult demands
- Interspersing “easy” tasks (mastered skills) which result in correct responding and therefore are correlated with a higher density of reinforcement with relatively more “difficult” tasks (target skills) will reduce problem behavior by reducing the value of escape as a reinforcer.

Effective Teaching Procedures

- **Teach to Fluency**

- Teaching skills to fluency (correct and quick) as opposed to just correct decreases the value of escape as a reinforcer relative to other reinforcers available for non-fluent responding.

- It appears that students who learn to respond quickly and accurately and not just accurately tend to exhibit greater endurance for longer duration sessions without problem behavior.

Effective Teaching Procedures

- Fade in number & effort of demands
- Present low frequency demands at first and fade in greater and greater response ratio requirements.

(Weld & Evans, 1990; Pace, Iwata, Cowdery, Andree, and McIntyre, 1993; Zaracone, Iwata, Vollmer, Jagtiani, Smith, and Mazaleski, 1993; Zarcone, Iwata, , Smith, Mazaleski, and Lerman, 1994; Pace, Ivanic and Jefferson, 1994)
Effective Teaching Procedures

- Use Extinction for problem behavior
- Deliver extinction for problem behavior that occurs when the EO was not manipulated precisely so as to “abolish” problem behavior.

(Weld & Evans, 1990; Pace, Iwata, Cowdery, Andree, and McIntyre, 1993; Zaracone, Iwata, Vollmer, Jagtiani, Smith, and Mazaleski, 1993; Zaracone, Iwata, Smith, Mazaleski, and Lerman, 1994; Pace, Ivanic and Jefferson, 1994)
More Effective Teaching

- Antecedent manipulations
- Motivative Operations
- Increase reinforcement
- Decrease demands
What is Applied Behavior Analysis?

- **Applied**
  - Change had to be socially meaningful

- **Behavior**
  - Behavior is the unit of focus and is specifically defined

- **Analysis**
  - Systematic assessments and interventions to maximize performance and accountability
What is behavior?

- Anything an individual can do
- Appropriate and inappropriate behavior
- Being quiet, riding a bike, eating with utensils, reading, yelling, hitting, etc.
What is Problem Behavior?

- Behavior that poses a danger or harm to self and/or others
- Behavior that causes property damage
- Behavior that interferes with an individual’s ability to learn and function in society
- Behavior that if not reduced, will decrease opportunities for an individual to contact reinforcement
What is Positive Reinforcement?

- A stimulus that when presented after a behavior *increases* the likelihood that behavior will occur again in the future.

- Examples:
What is Negative Reinforcement?

- A stimulus that when removed after a behavior increases the likelihood that behavior will occur again in the future.

- Example:
“What do I do with a child who spits?”

• TREAT FUNCTION, NOT FORM!
Function vs. Form

- The first goal is to identify **the cause or function** of the inappropriate behavior.
- Focus on *function* of the behavior not *form*.
- Ask yourself: WHAT is the student trying to communicate through the problem behavior?
Function = Purpose = Why?

Methods to Gather Functional Assessment Information
For more information on this topic and intervention planning, see O’Neill et al. (1997), Koegel et al. (1996) or Iwata.

1. Anecdotal Data - Good
Describe the entire situation in which the problem behavior occurred. Thinking in terms of the four functions of behavior, what did the child get for engaging in the problem behavior?

2. ABC Analysis – Even better!
Describe the entire situation and organize the information on an ABC sheet. Look at what happens just before and just after the behavior to see if there are any patterns. Use your observations to determine the function of the behavior.
ABC Data

- Direct and daily measurement of the target behavior is the single most important source of data collections (Tawney & Gast, 1984)
- Instructional decisions should be based on solid evidence, not intuition
- Antecedent – Behavior - Consequence
### ABC Data Sheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Setting Events</th>
<th>Antecedent</th>
<th>Behavior</th>
<th>Consequence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>An event that occurred earlier in the day that could affect the child’s behavior (e.g., earache, change in medication, favorite teacher not in school, lack of sleep, etc.)</td>
<td>What happened immediately before the behavior occurred? Where did it take place? Who was there? What time? How long?</td>
<td>Describe the exact behavior (frequency, duration, intensity)</td>
<td>How did you and others respond to the behavior? Did any other changes occur following the behavior?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
All behaviors serve a purpose. Sometimes the purpose is clear…

…other times, you may have to do some work to figure out why the person is engaging in a behavior.

- **Tangible:** “I want something (specific).” These behaviors happen when the person would like a specific item.

- **Attention:** “I want you to pay attention to me.” These behaviors happen when the person wants your attention.

- **Avoid or Escape:** “I don’t want to do this.” “I don’t like this situation.” “If I do this, I don’t have to do that.” These behaviors happen when the person is trying to avoid or escape a situation.

- **Self-Stimulatory/Stereotypic Behaviors:** “This feels good,” or “I don’t know what else to do.” These behaviors happen to increase pleasure or decrease discomfort. Finding the specific reason these behaviors occur is sometimes difficult.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Antecedent</th>
<th>Behavior</th>
<th>Consequence</th>
<th>What was learned?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher calls on Tommy</td>
<td>Tommy flicks object</td>
<td>Teacher takes Tommy to time out</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher turns to talk with John’s class-mate</td>
<td>John flicks object</td>
<td>Teacher turns back to John, grabs his hand and says “No flicking.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mom and Tina are waiting in the supermarket check-out line</td>
<td>Tina flicks object</td>
<td>Mom gives Tina a lollipop from aisle display.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chris is playing with “tinker toys”</td>
<td>Chris flicks object</td>
<td>Chris laughs and continues to play</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Fair Pair Rule

- For every behavior targeted to decrease choose at least one behavior to increase!
Example

- During play time, Donna sees her peers playing with play-doh, she starts to scream and flop to the floor because it is her favorite activity.

- Function

- What can you do?
Count and Mand

- Use when the student wants something and you are willing to give it, but NOT for inappropriate behavior.
- Approach the student and calmly state, “No ____”. Start counting using your fingers.
- If the maladaptive behavior continues say “no ____” & restart your count.
- Once the student is quiet for the count of 5 or 10 (set criteria) PROMPT the mand and deliver it.
Example

• Ricky is eating cookies for snack. His teacher says, “Snack is over, come do your work.” Ricky continues to eat his cookies and starts to pound the table, kick, scream and refuses to transition.

• Function

• What can you do?
Interruption Transition

- Use when the student refuses to transition from preferred to
 -unpreferred activity, maintaining possession of a toy, activity or
  item
- While the student is in a preferred activity tell him/her to
  transition to a less preferred activity
- If problem behavior occurs do NOT remove the demand. Keep
  the demand on the student and if needed use guided compliance.
- Once compliant with original demand, place other demands on
  child until they are responding within 2 seconds
- Reinforce by allowing them to return to preferred activity
Promise Procedure

- May need to be used for students who have a strong history of interruption transition
- Hold out a promise reinforcer and state the demand
- When student complies, deliver the reinforcer
- If student does not comply, immediately put the promise reinforcer away and continue to keep the demand on until compliant (follow interruption transition procedure).
Example

- During centers Jessica asks the paraprofessional, “Can I play on the computer?” The paraprofessional says “no.” Jessica stamps her feet and hits the paraprofessional.

- Function

- What can you do?
Accepting “No”

- Use only with students who have an extensive manding repertoire
- Use for students who exhibit problem behavior when told “No”
- As the student mands for an item tell him, “No but you can have ____” and offer an alternative
- If the student engages in problem behavior put the reinforcer away and place a demand on the student
- If problem behavior continues follow escape extinction procedure
Example

- Staff presents a writing assignment. Zach throws his pencil on the floor and rips the paper. Zach does not do the writing assignment.
- Function
- What can you do?
Escape Extinction

- Use when the function is ESCAPE or AVOIDANCE of demand
- Keep *original* demand on the student until compliance
- Remain calm and use a neutral voice – avoid eye contact
- When compliant, place other demands on child until they are responding within 2 seconds
- REINFORCE!
During Science, Jill yells, “this stinks!” The teacher tells Jill her name goes on the board for yelling out and not to say that. Jill leans back in her chair and laughs and yells again “I don’t care!”

Function -

What can you do?
Example

- Sam has 20 math problems. When he gets to the 14th problem he stops working and begins to read a preferred book. Sam does not finish.
- Function -
- What can you do?
Example

- Jordan is working on the computer. He is directed to give his peer a turn. Jordan scratches his peer. Staff gives Jordan another minute on the computer and then redirects him to another preferred activity.
- Function -
- What can you do?
What can I do?

- **Function:** ESCAPE-AVOIDANCE
- **Why?**
- **Is Task too difficult?**
  - Simplify task, increase $S_R$, change $S_D$
- **Is Task too easy?**
  - Increase complexity, increase $S_R$
- **Is Task not reinforcing?**
  - Increase reinforcement
- **Is there fear of situation?**
  - Graded exposure to feared stimulus
- **Is there a lack of an appropriate response?**
  - Teach functional equivalent
- **Other strategies**
  - Keep the demand on until compliance!! (Escape extinction)
What Can I do?

- **Function: ATTENTION**
- **Why?**
- **Is there insufficient competing reinforcement?**
  - Increase reinforcement
- **Is there not enough social attention?**
  - Increase attention, “catch being good”
- **Is there lack of appropriate response?**
  - Teach functional equivalent
- **Other strategies**
  - Extinction, time out
What Can I do?

- Function: TANGIBLE
- Why?
  - Is there lack of appropriate communication response?
    - Teach functional equivalent (DRC)
  - Is there an inability to delay gratification?
    - Teach waiting
- Other strategies
  - Structure environment
Behavior Analytic Lingo

- Reinforce = Increase, Strengthen
- Punish = Decrease, Reduce
- Look at the effects on behavior
Social Skills & ABA

- Pair peers with reinforcement by having them deliver existing reinforcers to the student non-contingently.
- **NOTE:** If the student has very few existing reinforcers, begin pairing those reinforcers with new toys or activities that he/she has shown previous interest in and are as age-appropriate as possible.
Once the peers are effectively paired with reinforcement, begin to have the student request his or her reinforcers from the peer.

You will need to CONTRIVE this

- Playdoh, art materials, kitchen, trains, dollhouse, bubbles etc
When the student is manding from the peers without prompting, have the peer ask the student to perform simple directions before giving the reinforcer.

- Pass me a crayon
- Give me the book
- Watch, do this
Peer to Peer Mands for Attention

- Prompt the student to request peer’s attention and have the peer pair their attention with the delivery of a reinforcer (gradually fade the tangible reinforcer out so that the student is only getting attention for the peer).
Peer to Peer Mands for Attention

- Have the peer pretend to be busy doing something else with the student’s known reinforcers. Prompt the student to say the peer’s name. Initially, after hearing his or her name, the peer should look up, give a verbal response & simultaneously present a reinforcer. Gradually fade to a look with a verbal response so the student can then mand for the reinforcers or other activities.
Parallel Play

- Activities that do no involve turn taking or sharing
- Start with adult led & fade to peer led
- Appropriate parallel play
Collaborative & Cooperative Play

- Focus on 2 peers with same project/activity
- Make a lego tower, marble maze, making pizza, floor puzzle, water balloons
Turn Taking Games & Activities

- Build upon everything
- Board games, video games, cooking, ball games, tag, hide & seek, bowling etc
- Gradually extend the duration of the activity. Start small & extend time.
Questions?