

# WHEN BEHAVIOR and/or EMOTIONS IMPACT LEARNING

## Special Education Behavior Plans & Counseling Services



*Empowering families of children with special needs to understand and access the systems that serve them*

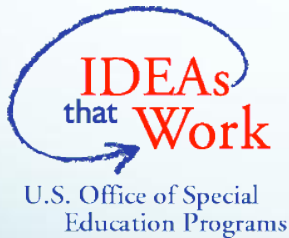
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# Matrix Parent Network

**A Parent Training and Information Center** through the Office of Special Education, U.S. Department of Education and a **California Family Empowerment Center** through the California Department of Education



The content does not necessarily represent the position of the U.S. Department of Education or the California Department of Education.

# Matrix Parent Network

Providing support and information to help parents learn about their rights and options, and to find referrals and resources.

*Staff are not attorneys, and we do not give legal advice or advise a course of action.*



Behavior Plan information is from the  
work of:

**Diana Browning Wright, M.A.**

PENT (Positive Environments, Network  
of Trainers)

California Department of Education

[www.pent.ca.gov](http://www.pent.ca.gov)

# Training Overview

- Special Education KEY POINT
- DIS counseling KEY POINTS
- Behavior KEY POINTS
- Developing the Behavior Plan
- Evaluating the Plan
- Parent Role
- Resolving Disagreements

# KEY Principles

Students in Special Education are entitled to valid assessments and a

- Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)
- in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)
- with necessary supports and services

# A Behavior Plan is.....

a supplementary support  
that  
can support a child to be in the  
Least Restrictive Environment  
(LRE)

# DIS Counseling is....

a related service to address emotional issues that are

- *getting in the way of a student's ability to access the curriculum*
- *make progress in their IEP goals.*



# DIS Counseling is NOT....

...counseling given through  
General Education.

Be sure to clarify which type of  
counseling the school may be  
discussing!

# DIS Counseling....

Available regardless of eligibility category if emotional challenges get in the way of learning and making progress in an IEP.

***KEY:*** *A student does NOT need to be eligible as emotionally disturbed to have this service. Services are based on NEED not eligibility category.*

# Adding DIS counseling...

- starts with an assessment to determine need
- If a need, the IEP Team uses the assessment to determine goals, amount of service and service location
- A continuum of service options must be considered

# DIS counseling goals....

Baselines/present levels & goals address areas of need & should be:

- **Specific**
- **Measurable**
- **Action oriented**
- **Realistic and relevant**
  - **Time limited**

# DIS counseling...options

- Weekly counseling: group, individual
- Family counseling
- Class on a general education campus with counselor. In Marin these are called Counseling Enriched Classes.
- Day treatment program on a separate site with counseling available all day
- Residential

# What is a Behavior Plan?

A plan based on  
the individual needs  
of a student  
in a specific  
environment

# What is a Behavior Plan?

A plan for school staff to:

- **change the environment**
  - **teach new skills**
- **reinforce positive skills**

so negative behaviors don't get  
in the way of learning

# Behavior: IEP Requirement

The IEP team must discuss at each annual review if a student's behavior impedes his/her learning or that of others.



# Behavior Plans & Counseling

Sometimes a student has BOTH a behavior plan & DIS Counseling.

The counselor could be the staff who is teaching the student new behaviors.  
Other staff also could be listed as responsible for the behavior plan  
(psychologist, teacher)

# KEY CONCEPT

Behavior plans  
are

**POSITIVE**

and not punitive

# KEY CONCEPTS

Behavior plans focus on...

- Support NOT management
- Function of the behavior NOT consequences
- Antecedents NOT consequences
- Teaching NOT controlling

# KEY CONCEPTS

**Positive**: The child **HAS** a problem

This creates concern and empathy,  
support and help

**Negative**: The Child **IS** a problem

This creates punishment,  
ultimatums, anger and threats

# KEY CONCEPT

Behavior occurs in a context

....in response to the environment

- Classroom environment (seating, noise, disruptions)
- Curriculum (too hard/too easy, directions, length)
- People (peers, teacher)

# Behavior occurs in a context

...in response to ecological events

- Medication
  - Fatigue
  - Sickness

# Key Concept...

The behavior plan  
supports the child in  
managing the environment

# KEY CONCEPT

“A behavior plan will NOT be effective unless it addresses the environmental factors which are contributing to the problem behavior.”

Diana Browning Wright

PENT, California Department of Education



# KEY CONCEPT

All behavior serves a function for a person

- To get something
- To avoid/escape something
- To protest something

# What is the Process?

The IEP team

**uses data**

to discuss

if a behavior is interfering with  
learning

# What is the Process?

If “Yes”

the behavior is interfering with learning,

the IEP team uses data

to decide

the level of behavior support

# What is the Process?

Decide level of support:

- Behavior Goal only
- Behavior Intervention Plan & Goal

**Note:** The term “Behavior Support Plan” are no longer in use given change in Ed Code as of July 2013

# Changes as of July 2013

*The Hughes Bill which governed how California provided behavior services was rescinded. California Education Code now matches Federal Code.*

# Changes since July 2013

- Behavior Support Plan (BSP) term no longer used. All plans are now Behavior Intervention Plans (BIP)
- Behavior Intervention Case Manager no longer required

# Changes as of July 2013

- Functional Analysis Assessment not required for behavior previously designated in Ed Code as serious & extreme
- Functional Behavior Assessments are required for serious behavior in a timely & appropriate manner

# Changes as of July 2013

## Emergency interventions:

- Can't be used as a substitute for a Behavior Intervention Plan
- Can only be used to control behavior that is unpredictable and spontaneous
- Can only be used if the behavior poses a “clear and present danger of serious physical harm to self or others”



# Not Changed

## Emergency Interventions:

Parent/guardian must be notified within 1 school day if emergency intervention is used or if there is serious property damage

# Goals

I.E.P. goals should be S.M.A.R.T

- **S**...specific
- **M**...measurable
- **A**....action
- **R**....realistic and relevant
- **T**....time limited

# Goals

Goals should define the anticipated outcome after 1 year and:

- Have a baseline or present level
- Be written so one can form a picture of what the student is doing or not doing

# Behavior Goals

Focus may be to

- reduce the problem behavior
- increase the alternate behavior
- develop new skills that remove the need for the problem behavior

# Steps to write a Behavior Plan

Identify:

- The problematic behavior
- The triggers or antecedents
- The function the behavior serves
- The desired behavior – set a goal

# More Steps....

- Changes to the **environment** to prevent the behavior
- Strategies to **teach** the desired behavior
- **Reinforcement**/rewards for the desired behavior
- What to do if the negative behavior occurs again
- **Communication** around the plan

# Know the Student

- Current developmental stage
- Skill mastery levels
- Disability impact & personality, temperament, and other unique characteristics

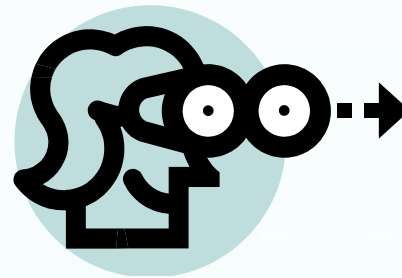
*Team members must know the student well to develop an effective plan*



# What is the Problem Behavior

The description should be:

- clear (as if a camera took a picture)
- observable
- Non-judgmental



Would anyone reading the description have a clear image of what the student is doing?



# Sample Behaviors

- Poor Attendance
- Not completing assignments
- Off task behavior, not paying attention
- Argumentative verbal interactions
- Crawls under the desk
- Verbal threats
- Leaves classroom without permission
- Inappropriate play
- Hands in pants



*Any behavior getting in the way of learning*

# How does the behavior get in the way of learning?

Examples:

- Unavailable for instruction
- Disrupts others
- Requires full adult attention
- Reduced work production
- Reduced attainment of skills

# 2013 Changes removed these levels and FAA

Early stage

Moderate

*The levels below REQUIRE a functional analysis assessment (FAA) by a behavior intervention case manager*

Serious

Extreme

# Serious or Extreme Definition

California Education Code

“Assaultive, self-injurious or is another pervasive maladaptive behavior that significantly impacts the student’s mastery of IEP goals”

**AS OF JULY 2013 the above is  
NO LONGER PART OF EDUCATION  
CODE**

# Functional Analysis Assessment (FAA)

If the behavior is serious or extreme

AND

is interfering with mastery of IEP goals

AND

The behavioral/instructional approaches in the IEP have been ineffective, a functional analysis assessment **MUST** be conducted

**AS OF JULY 2013 the above is NO LONGER  
PART OF EDUCATION CODE**

# Functional Analysis Assessment → B.I.P.

If the behavior is serious or extreme  
the FAA is used to develop a  
BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION PLAN

**AS OF JULY 2013 the above is NO LONGER  
PART OF EDUCATION CODE**

# Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA)

Name now used for an assessment done to understand a serious behavior.

An FBA must also be done before a change in placement to address a behavior

# Hughes Bill is a Calif. law

Which prohibits

the use of aversive behavior interventions

and

mandates the development and implementation of POSITIVE behavior intervention plans from a functional analysis assessment for serious/severe behaviors

**AS OF JULY 2013 the above law was rescinded**



# Frequency, Duration, Intensity

Is the description of the behavior specific?

- How often does it occur? i.e. 3 times a day
- How intense is it? i.e. screams heard in other classes
- How long does it last? i.e. 20 minutes or entire free choice time

★ *Specific baseline data is needed to measure and track progress and change*

# Antecedents: What triggers or predicts the behavior?

- People
- Place - physical conditions
- Time
- Objects
- Assignments, Curriculum, Instructional Method
- Schedules
- Physical or Emotional State

# Environmental Triggers

“A behavior support plan will NOT be effective unless it addresses the environmental factors which are contributing to the problem behavior.”

Diana Browning Wright

PENT, California Department of Education

# What is present or missing in the environment?

What has not yet been done that if done could prevent this behavior?

*i.e. hasn't yet been taught conflict resolution skills or tasks haven't yet been structured into manageable parts*

What is in the environment that contributes to the student's problem behavior?

*i.e. noise level, peers who tease*

# What is needed to prevent the behavior?

Changes, structures and supports in the environment might include:

- Time
- Space
- Materials
- Interactions

# What is the Function of the Behavior?

- Getting something

*i.e. attention, fun, physical need, status, an object*

- Protesting or avoiding something

*i.e. work that is too hard, an environment in which I don't feel valued, over-stimulation*

# Replacement Behavior

Identify the replacement behavior that is positive and ***meets the same function*** as the problem behavior

How can the student escape, protest or avoid or get his/her need met in an acceptable way?

*i.e. ask for help, take a break, use language instead of action, join a club*

# KEY CONCEPT

“A behavior support plan will not be effective unless it addresses development of a functionally equivalent behavior. Otherwise the behavior will continue to occur.”

Diana Browning Wright

PENT, California Department of Education



# Teaching the desired behavior...

through...

Methods, Curriculum or Materials

What is needed to teach the student  
the replacement behavior?

List successive teaching STEPS

# KEY CONCEPT

The behavior plan must include:

- What the school will do to teach your student the new behavior
- What the school will do to change the environment to prevent the undesired behavior

# Who is responsible?


The behavior plan should state who is responsible to implement the plan.

This might be:

- Counselor/psychologist
- Behaviorist
- Educator

*It is NOT the parent or the student*

# What will reinforce the new behavior?

 The new behavior must get a pay-off as big or bigger than the problem behavior.

What is proven to increase behavior?

- What does the student seek?
- What does the student enjoy?
- What does the student say he/she wants?
- What motivates the student?

# Reinforcers – Rewards

- Intrinsic
- Praise
- Social Status or Recognition
- Privileges
- Contingent Access (*if there is one star left at the end of the day, then\_\_\_\_\_*)
- Closure (*liking to finish something*)
- Tangibles
- Primary – edibles, physiological

# What will be done if the challenging behavior occurs?

- How to handle the student
  - How can we prevent escalation
  - What calms the student
- Who will do it & what will the method be?
- Should other agencies get involved?
- How to debrief the student afterward



***This is not just: “send student to office”***

# COMMUNICATE: It's a team effort

- What system to use (chart, phone call, email)
- To whom (teacher, parent, principal, psychologist, recess staff...)
- How often (daily, weekly, when problem behavior occurs)

# Things Parents Can Ask

- Is this the simplest intervention?
- Might the intervention produce any negative side effects? Example: embarrassment
- Is the person implementing the plan in agreement with the plan?
- How will any staff who have to implement the plan be trained?
- How will you explain the plan to my child?

Center for Effective Collaboration and Practice



# KEY TO REMEMBER

Reinforcements are of value to your child and may need to be changed if no longer reinforcing the desired behavior.

The communication plan will give you the information you need as often as you feel it is needed to track progress.

# KEY TO REMEMBER

The plan is **POSITIVE** not punitive

and

the plan includes what staff will do to  
**TEACH** your child

and

**CHANGE** the environment

# KEY TO REMEMBER

The behavior is clearly and specifically  
described

and

the function understood

# Key to Remember

For a student with both emotional & behavior needs:

- the counseling goal might be part of the behavior plan
- The counselor might be the one to teach the skills needed for the desired behavior

# Other Related Issues

- School Discipline: Suspension, Expulsion – *if any of these are occurring behavior plan review is KEY*
- Shortened School Day – *short term only, need behavior plan*

# The Rogers Brothers

Fred Rogers

“I like you just the way you are”

Carl Rogers

“Unconditional positive regard”



*No intervention will work if the implementers don't genuinely care about the student and the student believes that*



# SUMMARY:

## Behavior Plan Parts:

- Description and function of the behavior
- Environmental triggers
- Goal(s) with desired behavior
- Environmental changes to prevent problem behavior
- Teaching strategies for new behavior
- Reinforcement for new behavior
- Handling of negative behavior if it occurs again
- Communication among the team

# Evaluation

- Be sure the team monitors the effectiveness of the plan &/or goals
- If the plan &/or goals aren't resulting in positive change, request in writing an IEP meeting. Upon request, an IEP meeting must be held within 30 days.



# Tips for Managing Disagreements

## Use the Chain of Command

- Start at the lowest possible level – with the person with whom you have a concern
- Describe your concern
- Problem Solve: ask for possible options vs. telling the person what to do
- If a resolution can't be reached, let the person know that involving someone on the next level up may help with resolution

# PROBLEM SOLVING

## Procedural Safeguards

- Prior Written Notice
- Informal or another IEP Meeting
- Facilitated IEP Meetings
- Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)
- Compliance Complaint (Calif. Dept of Ed)
- Due Process (Office of Admin Hearings)  
which includes STATE mediation

# Being Your Child's Advocate

- Build your skills, learn, be informed
- Take care of yourself
- Get organized, focus, develop a plan
- Look for possibilities – be creative
- Reflect and evaluate to get perspective

# Work to Support a team effort as....

Behaviors are complex  
Emotions are emotional

