Behavior in Young Children with Visual Impairments

Foundation for Blind Children
Parent to Parent Program
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Desired outcomes

- Incidental learning and behaviors
- 2 key points when thinking about behavior in young children with visual impairments
- What is behavior and the 4 functions of behavior
- Teaching strategies that you can use right now to replace undesirable behavior
Incidental learning

- Obtaining information “accidentally” by watching what is happening around us
- Research has shown that 80% of what we learn is through our vision
- Due to this lack of visual information we have to teach our children in a different manner, from a very young age
- This includes behavior- decreasing undesirable behavior and increasing desirable behavior
- Children require direct instruction to learn desired behaviors
- Children require MANY opportunities to practice new skills in all areas
What is behavior?
80% of behavior is communication
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANTECEDENT</th>
<th>WHAT EVENT OR ACTION OCCURRED IMMEDIATELY BEFORE THE BEHAVIOR?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BEHAVIOR</td>
<td>WHAT DID THE STUDENT/CHILD DO? (SHOULD BE AN OBSERVABLE ACTION)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONSEQUENCE</td>
<td>WHAT ACTION OR RESPONSE IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWED THE BEHAVIOR?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Example: throwing of materials
### Functions of Behavior

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Attention</strong></th>
<th><strong>Escape</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>An individual may be engaging in a behavior in order to access attention from other students, teachers, or other people. The attention can be positive or negative.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do I know if the behavior is an attention behavior?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refer to your ABC data. If the consequence that follows the target behavior usually involves another person, it may be an attention function. The consequence may be a teacher noticing, other students laughing, or a paraprofessional providing extra help.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do I know if the behavior is an escape behavior?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refer to your ABC data. If the consequence that follows the target behavior usually involves another person, it may be an escape behavior. The consequence may be a break from a task, a time out, or access to an area of the classroom away from other students.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<tr>
<th><strong>Sensory</strong></th>
<th><strong>Access to Tangibles</strong></th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>An individual may be engaging in a behavior to give himself some type of internal sensation that is pleasing or remove an internal sensation that is aversive. These behaviors are sometimes known as self-stimulatory.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do I know if the behavior is a sensory behavior?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refer to your ABC data. If the behavior is occurring in a wide range of settings, with a wide variety of consequences, and sometimes occurs while the individual is alone, it may be a sensory behavior.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do I know if the behavior is maintained by access to tangibles?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refer to your ABC data. If the consequence that follows the target behavior consistently involves access to a preferred item or activity, it may be an access to tangibles behavior.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 4 functions of behavior

- Gain Attention
- Escape or avoid an activity
- Get something that they want
- Sensory needs
Keep in mind

- There is a 5th unofficial function for behavior - medical
- Control is not a function - we have to figure what it is they want, or why they want control in that situation
- Children at this age are not trying to make us mad or frustrated
- Behaviors are taught and reinforced - both good and bad
- Your small child will get bigger
Once you have determined the function of the behavior, you can then teach a replacement behavior that will fulfill the same function as the challenging behavior.

Example: Chair dive
Key points: Meet me where I am

- Where am I in all developmental areas?
  - Physical - fine motor and gross motor
  - Cognitive and brain development
  - Language - does the child understand what is being asked? Are they able to communicate in response
  - Social
  - Adaptive - self help and independence, participation in activities

- When pushed beyond developmental readiness our children get frustrated
- Example: standing during circle
- Is this activity developmentally appropriate?
Meet me where I am continued

- Do I feel safe?
- Am I healthy today?
- Am I positioned appropriately?
- Are there distractions? Can I focus on the task being asked of me?
- Have I just learned a new skill that is more important to me right now than what you are asking me to do?
- How do I process sensory information?
Key point: Adult role in developing desired behaviors

- We have to adjust to meet the child where they are
- Developmentally children can not adjust their behavior to meet our style or preference (ex: my toddler)
- We have to adjust our expectations in order to meet them where they are
- Invest the time to teach the desired behavior in order to diminish the undesirable behavior (ex: MP at work time, or “Make him happy”)
- Advocate for the needs of your child and what you know works for them... even when talking to professionals!!
Adult role: final thought

Reflective thinking:
Take a moment to gauge your own emotional state
Quick Review

1. Be mindful of and have an open mind in regards to where your child is in all developmental areas
2. Believe that you have a role in creating desirable behavior in your child. It is within your control to support your child and provide them a way to meet their needs in an appropriate manner
3. Determine the A,B,C’s of the undesirable behavior
4. Now plan to teach a new and desirable behavior
Teaching Strategies

And Examples

- Start small!!
- Take time to truly analyze and determine the function of the behavior (ex: M: not escape!)
- When teaching a new behavior, forget your agenda
- Make it routine!! (ex: make him happy)
- Use a calendar system
- Beat them to the punch! (ex: all done)
- Offer choices
Teaching Strategies

Continued

- Teach the desired behavior (ex: “wait”)
- Reinforce good behavior with specific praise and positive reinforcement
- Build from things that they already know and enjoy
- Ignore attention seeking negative behaviors when you can
- Use hand under hand to support their learning of skills and involvement in activities
- From your examples:
THE STRUGGLE IS REAL
Challenges

- Agenda’s- ours and those that serve our children
- Teaching the desired behavior in the mix of a busy life/home
- TIME!!!
- Being consistent
- Getting others on board
- What else?....
Questions?