Teaching your child with ASD to comply

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Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network

PaTTAN's Mission

The mission of the Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network (PaTTAN) is to support the efforts and initiatives of the Bureau of Special Education, and to build the capacity of local educational agencies to serve students who receive special education services.

PDE's Commitment to Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)

Our goal for each child is to ensure Individualized Education Program (IEP) teams begin with the general education setting with the use of Supplementary Aids and Services before considering a more restrictive environment.

Skill Strengths & Weaknesses

- The strategies for gaining compliance will depend to a huge degree on the skills the child has (HFA vs. children with more significant language and social attention deficits).
- The strategies demonstrated are just a sample.
- Generally speaking, regardless of functional levels and language abilities of an individual, language-dense discussion is not recommended when intervening with an escalated child.

Why Children with Autism may not Listen

- Some general examples:
  - Skill deficits related to "receptive language"
    - They don't know how to do what they are asked
  - Their agenda isn't the adult's agenda
    - They don't want to follow the directions
  - Direction may interfere with established pattern of behavior
    - Interferes with a repetitive behavior or intense area of interest
  - Haven't learned to handle interruptions and transitions
  - No value or motivation for following the direction given (it isn't clear to the child how complying will make things better for them!)
  - Not attending to the direction

Applied Behavior Analysis

TOOLS TO GUIDE DECISIONS

What is Applied Behavior Analysis?

- ABA ➜
  - The scientific analysis of human behavior
  - ABA over 70 years old, with trace areas over 100 years old
  - Modern founder: B.F. Skinner

- Behavior is anything that is measurable/observable
- Does not mean "bad" behaviors, instead any behavior
- When we think about changing behavior we should focus just as heavily on increasing the good behaviors as decreasing the less desired behaviors.

Reinforcement vs. Punishment

- Reinforcement ➜ something that happens immediately after a behavior that increases the future probability of the behavior occurring again in the future
- Punishment ➜ something that happens immediately after a behavior that decreases the future probability of behavior

- Is giving a child cookies reinforcement or punishment?

What are the A-B-Cs?

- Antecedent- Something that occurs immediately before a behavior
- Behavior- the actual behavior that occurs (observable/ measurable)
- Consequence- Something that happens immediately after the behavior
- Other considerations- Satiation & Deprivation (lack of food, sleep, attention...)

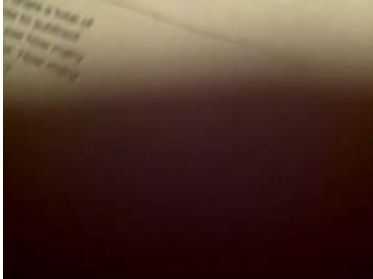## Functions of Human Behavior

- To gain something
  - (Socially mediated positive reinforcement)
    - Attention
    - Access to item or activity
- To remove an undesired circumstance
  - (Socially mediated negative reinforcement)
    - Escape or delay
    - Demand
    - Attention/person
    - Item

Let's Watch - Am I Invisible?
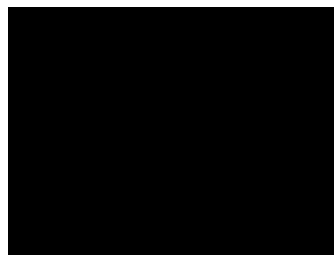
What is the function of child's behavior?

Let's Watch - Homework Time

What is the function of child's behavior?

Let's Watch - Baby with Keys

What is the function of child's behavior?

Let's Watch – A Birthday Surprise

What is the function of child's behavior?

Why Identify Function?

- Identification of functions of behavior can help us
  - identify patterns in behavior.
  - limit access to reinforcement for problem behavior.
  - to modify the environment to make problem behavior less valuable.
- Careful attention to the environment in particular situations can lead us to predict when problem behavior is likely to occur.

Increasing your odds

SETTING UP FOR SUCCESS!

What to Do?

- Focus on stopping behavior before it starts!

- How can you ensure that your child does not demonstrate problem behavior?
  - When does your child show the best behavior?
  - What qualities of that can you increase in times you anticipate as being difficult?

Less is More:
Word your Directions Carefully

- Use simple, direct, and specific language
- Tell them what to do, <u>NOT</u> what not to do
- Don't ask them to do stuff that you are not willing to follow up on!
- Avoid use of questions in directions unless there is really a choice
  - "Would you like to go take a bath now?"
  - "Its time to take a bath now"
- If words won't or can't work: show them

Know What is Easy for your Child…

- If you can establish a momentum of responding you may have a lot more success.
  - What does your child like to do?
  - How can you incorporate these things into following directions?
- Practice following directions they can do and want to do

Know What is HARD for your Child…

- Don't ask your child to do things that they can't do
- If there are things they need to do that they can't do, provide as much support as needed
- Identify what he/she can't do and teach him/her (may need support of professionals on this one).

Elements of a Calm Direction

- Calm body movements
- No exaggerated movements or facial expressions
- Avoid sighing or other out cries
- Limit expressing frustration to others in the environment
- Try to keep voice volume steady
- Know your limit…
- To the greatest extent possible, finish what you start…

Social Distance and Eye Contact

- May not be best to require eye contact
  - "look at me"
- May also want to stay away from using the child's name in compliance related situations.
  - "Bobby, get over here… Bobby… Bobby your not listening… Bobby come here….Bobby, Bobby…
- May be wise to be closer to the child when direction is given.
- Teach "come here" for children (will review & practice in a bit)

Focus on what you want to see more of…

- Give your attention frequently, balanced, and judiciously
  - Think of yourself as a card dealer, splitting attention equally to children ONLY when you see things you would like to see more of
- Consistency
  - Consistent responses to child/adolescent actions will allow for faster learning
  - Consistent responses between caregivers and support teams will also cause for increased learning.

Thoughtful use of Reinforcement is Key

- Set clear expectations for activities, especially when entering new environments.
- Use of tangible and edible reinforcers is okay, and even incredibly helpful, if used appropriately and with the ultimate goal of fading.
- At least initially giving small fast-delivery rewards more frequently is shown to increase desired behaviors more quickly and with more success than delayed/token reinforcement systems for earning larger rewards.

Increasing Desired Behaviors

REINFORCEMENT

Strategy 1: Reinforcer Identification

- Reinforcer identification should be something regularly addressed in the natural environment.
- Many formats of preference assessment
  – Multiple stimulus w/ replacement,
  – paired stimulus,
  – multiple stimulus without replacement,
  – free operant.
- Model reinforcer identification
- Model pairing and conditioning reinforcers

Reinforcement

- Remember that motivation changes over time, and just because something was motivating in the morning does not mean that same thing will be motivating in the afternoon.
- Changes in conditions often alter the reinforcing value of items/activities/people.
- Mix and vary the type, magnitude, and delivery of reinforcement to keep it strong and engaging.

Simple Strategies

- Set clear boundaries and stick to them
- Give directives not questions
  – "Would you like to go take a bath now?"
  – "Its time to take a bath now"
- Give lots of attention to the behaviors you would like to see more of, give little attention to the behavior you want to see less of.

Make things get better when your child complies

- 5 to 1 positive ratio
- Descriptive praise
- Praise is often not enough!
- Practice compliance. Have them do stuff they are going to do anyway and then reinforce!
- Use of a promise reinforcer– 1st you have to _____ (less preferred activity), then you can do_____ (preferred activity).

Use of Promise Reinforcers

- Offsetting value of escape by advertising the value of compliance!
- When we follow directions life gets better!

Increasing Value of Compliance

USE OF PROMISE REINFORCER

Strategy 2: Promise Reinforcer

- Determine a reinforcer that the child will want at that moment. (Example: the student just had a salty snack and likes to have a drink)
- Hold the reinforcer so the child can see it but do not make it too obvious.
  - (You don't have to wave it around and say "Look what I have etc".)
- Give the instruction (example: "It's time to _____", or "Come here we're going _____")
- If he follows the direction he gets the reinforcer.
- If he doesn't follow through the first time the direction is given, he does not get the reinforcer but the direction needs to be followed.

Promise Reinforcer Protocol & Fidelity

	YES	NO	N/A
Did I determine a reinforcer that the child wanted at the moment?			
Did I hold the item so that it was visible to the child just before and as I presented my instruction?			
Did I present a clear instruction I wanted the child to follow? (ie: "It's time to_____")			
If the child complied with my instruction within 4 seconds, did I immediately deliver the item?			
If the child did NOT follow the instruction within 4 seconds, did I remove the item and follow through on the demand given (repeat instruction and prompt as necessary until compliance without problem behavior)?			
If follow through was needed, did I make sure to have the child engage in at least 2 more easy responses before I re-instated reinforcement?			
Did I provide better reinforcement for those response with immediate compliance free of problem behavior?			

What if…

THE CHILD DOESN'T COMPLY?

What to do if child doesn't comply

- Plan for this!
- Prevention is best policy…if you can do everything possible to make sure child will comply you will be better off
  - (but in the real world, that will not always be possible)
- Strategy for once the demand is placed and the child is not following the direction…
  - Keep "demand on" until fulfilled (escape-extinction).

Stick to it!!

- Best not to withdraw demand in many situations
- Will get worse first few times you do this
  - May require stick to-itiveness for awhile but will pay big dividends
- This process may not always be possible: better to withdraw demand earlier than later (if it has to be withdrawn)…although it is not best to move to easier direction, there are times that this will be necessary.
- Better consequences for compliance than non-compliance.
- Do NOT pull out reinforcers AFTER direction has been given
- If no compliance when promise SR+ used, withdraw promise SR+

Escape-Extinction Checklist

	Y	N	N/A
1. If problem behavior occurred when you presented a demand/ instruction, did you keep demand on (escape extinction) until the direction was completed while maintaining safety of child?	Y	N	N/A
2. Once the child complied with original demand without problem behavior, did you present at least 2 other easy tasks?	Y	N	N/A
3. If child complied with tasks presented without presenting problem behavior, did you reinforce him?	Y	N	N/A
4. Did you make sure to reinforce less after running the escape extinction than when you reinforce during cooperative responding?	Y	N	N/A
5. If during the presentation of easy tasks, Student reverted to problem behavior, did you repeat steps1 through 4?	Y	N	N/A
6. After having used escape extinction, did you evaluate your demand and situation to determine the possible reason why problem behavior occurred and what you need to change in the future to increase compliance?	Y	N	N/A
Percent correct steps		____/6	

Strategy 3: Keeping the "demand on"

- Model "demand on" procedure.
- Hint: control of the environment and materials may be a very important element to successful implementation of the procedure.

Let's Watch

It's always been a challenge to get Allison inside after we get out the car

Considerations: Addressing PB

- Don't delay addressing the problem… Behaviors are shown to respond much more quickly over time if responses from parents/care-givers occur immediately after a behavior of concern.
- What you may consider a reward or a punishment is not necessarily what your child may consider a reward/punishment.
- Avoid any unnecessary language/ discussion with escalated child
- Avoid bargaining and negotiating

Over for now vs. Over FOREVER!

- Be careful!! Ending a behavior in a particular moment does not mean you've decreased the likelihood of the behavior happening in the future.
- Avoid big extremes for taking away desired things & items that last for long periods of time and are disconnected.

Let's Watch- At the Store

How long is too long to take a toy away?

- "The punishment should match the crime," but maybe not in the traditional sense
  - If the kiddo wouldn't get off the x-box, take away the x-box immediately, but not for a month…
    - Depending on the level of the student, variety of reinforcers, etc. the duration of removal from desired related things will differ.
  - Avoid unrelated extremes
    - Ex: Child had a tantrum at grandmas because he wanted candy and now you say he can't go to the amusement park in 2 weeks.

Hold your ground…

- Don't make any promises or ultimatums you can't keep or don't intend to keep.
- Don't provide access to a desired items/ activity/ or attention while children are demonstrating problem behavior or directly following behaviors of concern.
- This is one reason it is so important to stay calm when giving directions.

Get Support!

- There is NO one is an expert on this issue
- BUT what works best is known…careful control of what parents and caregivers do before before they give a direction and what they do after the direction is given is vital.
- Parents and families working as team members with service providers and educational personnel allows the best set up for optimal outcomes.

Popularized Interventions

CLARIFYING PROCEDURES

Clarification of Strategy: Picture Schedules

- May be of some benefit, but also can lead to problems such as
  - When picture schedule indicates non-preferred activities that evoke problem behavior.
  - When the picture schedule does not adequately "show" what the child is to do.
- Sometimes the right picture isn't available and picture schedules can be a lot of work!
- Are we trying to adapt the rest of the world for them or are we preparing them to adequately interact with the real world?

Clarification of Strategy: Social Stories

- Social stories work only when the child benefits form a verbal description of what will happen and can follow the "rules"…
- Setting clear rules and following up with consistent consequences is generally even more effective.
- As a general rule, simple is better-
  - This will improve clarity, consistency!

Clarification of Strategy: Aversive Control

- AKA the "bad cop"
- Aversive control often does not transfer to other people, environments, or situations.
- Examples of aversive control yelling, spankings…
- How you might recognize aversive control
  - "I am going to tell your Dad/ Mom/ Grandma and then you'll be in real trouble."
- We want our children to respond the same way to all individuals that they encounter, other approaches tend to be more successful and transference across people and environments.

Clarification of Strategy: Use of "time out"

- Use of "time out" as a general strategy has its strengths and weaknesses.
- It is important to avoid use of time out in a removed location if a child is in an undesired environment or situation.
- If timeout is used at these times, you are likely strengthening the problem behavior and increasing the likelihood it will happen again in the future.
- If the student is demonstrating problem behavior during a non-preferred task or activity, delaying the activity by implementing time out, may be actually giving the child what they want.
  - Think about procrastination….

Clarification of Strategy: Advanced Warning

- Although a warning can be helpful in some situations, generally speaking, overuse of the advanced warning procedure can be problematic.
  - If you know some thing bad is coming, it typically does not make you want to do it any more.
  - Sometimes in life we don't have warning.
  - We want all children to be able to flexibly transition throughout various environments in a moments notice.
    - How can we instead teach them to do this?

Teaching Alternative Behaviors: Interruption- Transitions Procedures

- **Step 1→** Approach the learner (within 3-5 feet) and ask them to leave that activity and comply with a demand to do something else.

- **Step 2→** You may have to use a *promise reinforcer* if you are working with a learner who has a strong history of being reinforced for engaging in problem behavior.

Interruption Transition- Procedures

- **Step 3→** If the learner complies and does not engage in any problem behavior, reinforce by delivering the *promise reinforcer* and deliver other reinforcers as needed to maintain the learner in the present activity.

- **Step 4→** If the learner engages in problem behavior as soon as you request the transition, you **MUST NOT REMOVE THE DEMAND** or allow access to the preferred item or activity the child is being asked to give up. In addition, remove the *promised reinforcer.*

Interruption Transition- Skills Tracking

Criteria	Date Introduced	Date Mastered
Briefly moves to one chair right next to the transition activity.		
Moves to one chair right next to the transition activity for a count of 5.		
Moves to one chair right next to the transition activity and completes two easy demands		
Moves 2 feet to another chair.		
Moves 2 feet to another chair and waits for a count of 10.		
Moves 2 feet to another chair and completes 2 easy tasks.		
Moves 2 feet to a chair, then 2 feet to another chair.		
Moves 2 feet to a chair, then 2 feet to another chair for a count of 10.		
Moves 2 feet to a chair, then 2 feet to another chair complete 2-3 easy tasks		

Sample Skills Tracking Sheet

Criteria	Date Introduced	Date Mastered
Transition from computer class to classroom/mat area w/ promise reinforcer.		
_____ without promise reinforcer		
Transition from instructional area to music class w/ promise reinforcer.		
_____ without promise reinforcer		
Transition from music class to classroom/mat w/ promise reinforcer.		
_____ without promise reinforcer		
Transition from instructional area to art w/ promise reinforcer.		
_____ without promise reinforcer		
Transition from art to classroom/ mat w/ promise reinforcer.		
_____ without promise reinforcer		
Transition from instructional area to gym w/ promise reinforcer.		
_____ without promise reinforcer		

Elements of Transition Programming

- Interruption transition protocol requires a lot of practice of known skills.
  - Practice transitions 25-50 times/ day!
- You want to practice known skills the student is likely to be successful 80% of the time and difficult skills only 20% of the time.
- As the student makes progress, the promise reinforcers are faded away.
- As skills are acquired, new more difficult skills are introduced.
- This continues until flexible transitioning from highly preferred to significantly less preferred activities can occur without difficulty.

Success is Ahead!

- Setting up for success is possible and you have the tools.
- Let us know if you have any questions.
- Thank you for your time!!

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