

## Behavioral Approaches to Crisis Management

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## Goals of Presentation

1. Review essentials of safety training
  - Goals and content
  - Training methods
  - Maintenance concerns
2. The Role of ABA in Safety Management
  - Traditional Role of Behavior Analysts
  - Potential Contributions
3. Recommendations

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## 'Safe' Assumptions About Restraint

1. Restraint is always risky
2. Restraint doesn't directly teach [desirable] skills
3. The more effective the restraint, the higher *abuse potential*
4. Restraint is often physically and emotionally traumatic
5. Restraint is 'elicitive' and/or evocative

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## Goals of Safety Training Curricula

1. Prevent behavioral crises.
2. Reverse the momentary escalation and intensity of crisis behaviors.
3. Safely and therapeutically manage crises without injury and trauma.
4. Terminate crises as quickly as possible.
5. **Evolve, teach, and strengthen behaviors that are incompatible with crisis behaviors.**
6. **Reduce the future likelihood of behavioral crises.**

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## Essentials of a Safety Curriculum

- ✓ **Regulations, Philosophies, Policies**  
*Federal & state regulations, organizational philosophy regarding use, policies, procedures, practices*
- 1. Incident Prevention**  
*Environmental, social, staffing, and activity methods to decrease the likelihood of challenging behavior.*
- 2. Incident Minimization**  
*Strategies for early anticipation and detection of challenging behavior and methods to stop, minimize, and reverse the progression of challenging behavior.*
- 3. Incident Management**  
*Strategies and techniques for the safe, therapeutic management, termination, and future prevention of challenging behavior.*
- ✓ **Reporting and Analysis**  
*Immediate recording of event and surrounding variables, reporting of outcome, injuries, recommendations*

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## GAO Seclusion & Restraints, 2009

### Goals of the Report

- Overview of seclusion & restraint laws in schools
- Determine whether allegations of abuse are widespread
- Examine facts & circumstances of cases involving either abuse or death

### Methodology

- Reviewed federal & state laws and abuse allegations from groups, parents, media over last 2 decades
- Examined documents related to closed cases including police & autopsy reports, and school policies
- Interviewed parents, attorneys, school officials

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## GAO Selected Findings

1. No *federal* laws restricting [regulating] use of seclusion & restraints in public and private schools
2. Existing state laws are widely divergent
3. “Hundreds of cases of alleged abuse and death ... with these methods.”
4. No single source (web site, agency, etc.) that collects information on use of these methods

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## Examples of ‘Divergent’ Practices

- From 1-2 paragraphs to 15-20 pages of regulations
- “*Impedes learning by other students*” to “*To prevent severe injury to self or others*”
- “*Training in de-Escalation*”, to officially approved multi-day programs with required content
- No reporting requirement, to reporting of any use of ‘limiting’ procedure.
- No ‘authorization’ mechanism, to specific procedures and individuals must authorize.

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## Commonalities of Abuse & Fatalities

1. Involved restraint and/or seclusion where no physical aggression occurred
2. “Restraints that block air to the lungs can be deadly”
3. Teachers & staff were often not trained in the use of seclusions and restraints
4. Involved restraint and/or seclusion in the absence of parental consent

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## General Consensus re: Policy

- Only if serious & imminent risk of self-injury or harm to others
- Only as last resort, after less restrictive techniques have failed
- Only as long as the serious & imminent risk is present
- Never for threat, punishment, compliance, control, convenience, low-staffing ratios
- Only by individuals trained & competent and trained in prevention
- Immediate de-briefing and analysis by participants

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## Essentials of Incident Prevention

1. Significant focus upon environmental features and safety
2. Basic staff safety ‘habits’ such as interaction skills, clothing, proximity, materials, etc.
3. Non-verbal (i.e., ‘body language’) communication
4. Avoiding power struggles, conflicts, etc.

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## Essentials of Incident Minimization

1. Clarifying classes or categories of behaviors – crisis vs. non-crisis
2. Identification and analysis of antecedents – ‘Triggers’ and ‘Signals’
3. Planning and teamwork – identifying a leader, etc.
4. De-Escalation model applicable to verbal and non-verbal individuals

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## De-Escalation Strategies



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## Essentials of Incident Management

1. Non-invasive protection skills – safety-stance, blocking, etc.
2. Releases for commonly encountered grabbing – e.g., wrist, hair pull, etc.
3. Physical hold procedures specific to target clientele and target staff
4. When, how to release and recover

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## Reporting and Analysis

1. Immediate de-briefing and documentation of incident
2. Review of sequence of events leading up to incident
3. Identification of mistakes, errors and/or possible alternatives
4. Recommendations regarding future actions

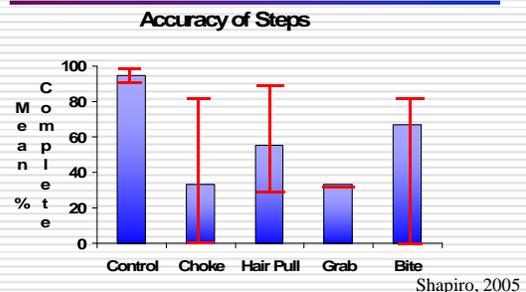
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## Training Safety Skills ‘Highlights’

1. Trainer : trainee ratio
2. Repeated trials for all procedures
3. Physical competency requirements
4. Active engagement in all elements
5. Role-plays of common scenarios
6. Written testing of critical concepts, principles, etc.

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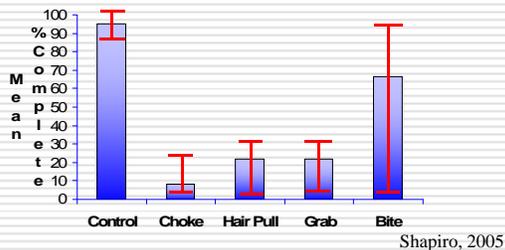
## Performance at 6 month follow-up



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## Performance at 1 year follow up

### Accuracy of Steps



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## Maintaining Safety Skills

1. Annual re-certification with rigorous correction procedures
2. Regularly scheduled competency assessments e.g., "Technique-of-the-Week"
3. Training review after every use
  - ✓ Of utilized techniques
  - ✓ Preventive, antecedent strategies
4. Develop Peer Observers-Trainers
  - ✓ Peer Trainers (van den Pol, Reid, Fuqua, 1983)
  - ✓ Peer Feedback (Alvero & Austin, 2004)

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## Traditional Behavior Analysis Role

### Safety Training and ABA – different domains?

1. Curriculum content
  - ✓ Borrowed techniques for use in BSP
    - E.g., 'Brief contingent restraint'
  - ✓ Immediate management vs. future change
2. Trainers' credentials
3. FBA's analyze problem behaviors, often not within crisis context, few exceptions
4. BSP include 'Emergency Procedures', often not analytic or element of FBA procedure

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## Potential ABA Contributions

1. Understanding of reinforcers supporting 'crisis'– Why do crisis behaviors occur?
2. Understanding the reinforcers supporting the use of crisis interventions
3. Additional antecedent analyses
  - Identification vs. Analysis, Control
4. Utilizing empirically-based procedures within crisis management framework
5. Evaluation & measurement of efficacy

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## Motivational Analysis of Crisis Behaviors

Consider the common reinforcement contingencies responsible for some challenging behaviors:

For example, "Tantrums" vs Aggression

1. Are the reinforcers (if any) for engaging in crisis behaviors different from the reinforcers for engaging in the pre-crisis behaviors?
2. If so, do crisis behaviors require:
  - A separate functional assessment & analysis?
  - A different behavioral intervention?

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## A Common/Likely Sequence

Humming	>>>>	Staff don't notice, busy, etc.
Rocking	>>>>	Close proximity, direct back to work
Pounding	>>>>	Firm directive, look nervous,
Screaming	>>>>	Call other staff, gloves, remove other students, remove dangerous objects, attempt de-escalation
Severe Aggression (Crisis)	>>>>	Physical Hold, Escorts, changed verbal behavior, etc.

## Motivational Analysis of Crisis Intervention

### *For the Recipient (Student)*

- Possible negative reinforcement effects
- Possible social reinforcement effects
- Possible sensory reinforcement effects

### *For the User (Staff)*

- Possible negative reinforcement effects
- Possible socially reinforcement effects
- Possible sensory reinforcement effects
- Possible faulty & inaccurate RGB/CSS

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## A Classic Behavioral Trap

### *Recipient – Escape Contingency*

Instruction ➔ Aggression ➔ Restraint

Aggression ➔ Restraint ➔ Safety

### *User – Escape Contingency*

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## Beware of the 'Military Industrial Complex' *D.D.E.*

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## Antecedent Assessment Contributions

1. Observation & identification of:
  - ✓ Proximate environmental antecedents
  - ✓ Proximate behavioral antecedents
  - ✓ Context, activity, temporal, other variables
2. Development of antecedent-based interventions:
  - ✓ Remove or attenuate antecedent(s)
  - ✓ Alter immediately preceding conditions
  - ✓ Reinforcement characteristics – e.g., NCR

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## Evidence-Based Training Strategies

1. Minimize number of technique alternatives
2. Interspersed and/or spaced trials
3. Errorless learning techniques
4. Program for Generalization
5. Program for Maintenance

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## Evidence-Based Enhancements (to/within safety procedures)

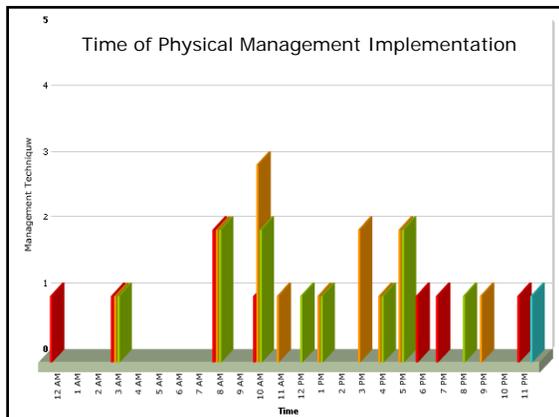
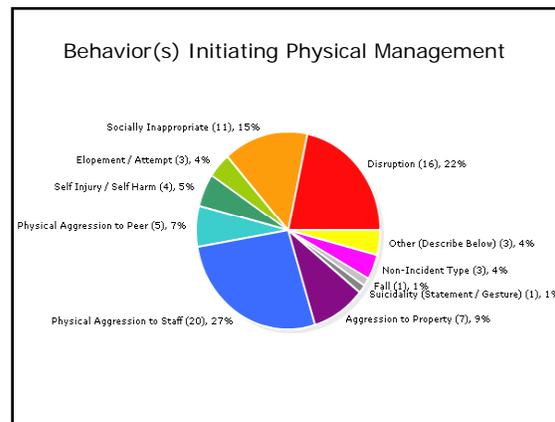
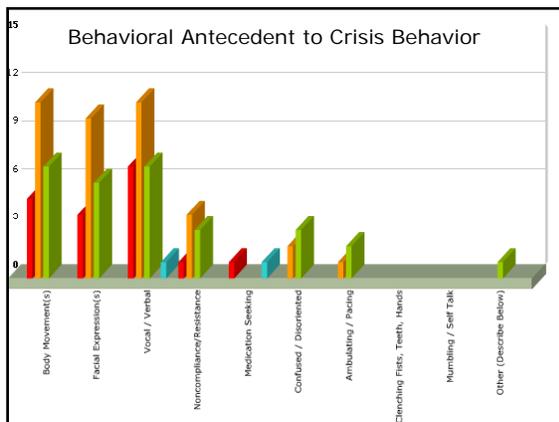
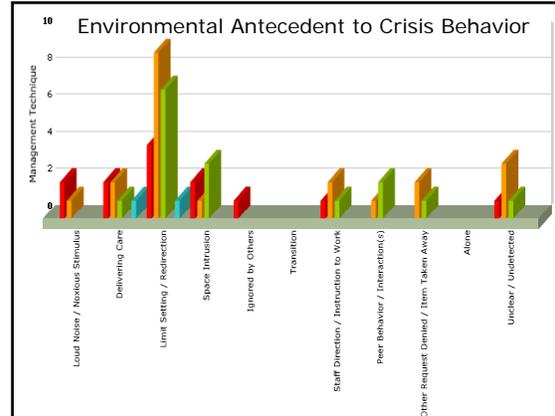
1. Motivationally-based alternatives  
e.g., Functional Communication Training  
(Luiselli, et al, 2000)
2. Reinforcement of incompatible behaviors  
e.g., DRI, DRO
3. Generating compliance of *high p* behaviors  
e.g., Behavioral Momentum
4. Reinforcement for 'progress' during emergency hold procedures  
e.g., Differential Reinforcement of 'Calm'

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## Comprehensive Behavioral Safety System

1. Create Behavioral Safety Culture – ala SW-PBIS
2. Ensure competency-based staff training
3. Establish rigorous criteria for & after use to reduce need for safety procedures:
  - ✓ Operationally-defined criteria for application (Luiselli, et al., 2000)
  - ✓ Allowable # of holds (Singh, et al., 1999)
  - ✓ Mandatory behavioral consultation (Donat, 1998)
4. Behavioral Risk Review
  - ✓ Systems-based, not exclusively student-based
  - ✓ Measurement and Trending
  - ✓ Plans of correction

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## Promising Finding

### Analyses of Precursor Behaviors

(Borrero & Borrero, 2008)

- Illustrated method for analyzing temporally-close precursors
- High Probability of precursor behavior 1-second prior to 'crisis' behavior
- FBA of precursor & target resulted in similar functions

### Conclusion & Implications

Although FBA's on crisis behaviors are problematic, FBA's on precursors (or others in response class) may be in identifying and managing motivational variables

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## Promising Findings (cont'd)

### **Fixed-Time Release**

(Luiselli, et al., 2006; Luiselli, 2008)

- Release from hold has traditionally been based upon 'calm behavior' criteria
- Changing to Fixed Time Release (FTR) decreased duration (2006, 2008)
- FTR fading (2008) can further reduce and, possibly eliminate holds

### **Conclusion & Implications**

Establishing FTR criteria may decrease duration and may decrease risk and decrease, possibly eliminate holds

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## Common, Critical P&P Omissions

1. Behaviorally-based criterion for application
2. Review each procedure regarding each child prior to need to use
3. Obtain prior "*informed*" consent or acknowledgement that emergency procedures may be necessary
4. Distinguishing safety restraint from treatment-based restraint
5. Non-participating observer during restraint

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## Regulatory Additions to Consider

1. More rigorous policies & procedures
2. Enhanced behavior-analytic requirements:
  - ✓ Behavior-analysis as training component
  - ✓ Behavior analysis of crisis events
  - ✓ To change goal from management to behavior change
3. Sequential (functional) analyses of each restraint event:
  - ✓ Behavioral Observer for descriptive account
  - ✓ Confirmation of analysis after event

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## Regulatory Additions (cont'd)

4. Regular, comprehensive risk management analyses
  - ✓ Trend analysis of minimum variable set
  - ✓ Program Improvement, plans of correction
5. Ratio of Trainer-Trainee to enhance as resource
  - ✓ During training exercises
  - ✓ In general, within organization
    - No more than 2 organizational levels away
    - No more than 1:100 Trainer-Trainee ratio

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## Summary Critical Recommendations

1. Must become more 'functionally-minded' in our consideration and use of Behavioral Safety
  - ✓ Conduct functional assessments whenever possible – crisis behavior and precursors
  - ✓ Utilize behavioral technology during application
    - Analyses of events
    - Utilization of applicable evidence-based procedures
2. Must train toward increased competence and maintenance
3. Must engage in comprehensive restraint reduction analysis and programming, including
  - ✓ Trend analyses
  - ✓ Reduction and Elimination initiatives

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## 'Framing' Restraint Prevention Efforts

- Consider the continued use of physical intervention as a *treatment failure*
- Reducing use of physical restraint requires a proactive management strategy
- Routinely require external review & recommendations of sample or all restraints
- Even rigorous training in prevention and de-escalation does not constitute a restraint prevention program.

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## **Behavior Approaches to Crisis Management**

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## **Top Ten Things Said About or During Behavioral Safety Training**

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- 10. "I just use duct tape!"**
  - 9. "What's so therapeutic about this hold?"**
  - 8. "When do we learn how to wrassle?"**
  - 7. "What exactly do you mean when you say De-Brief?"**
  - 6. When my 2-year old bites me, I just bite him back!"**
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## **Top Ten Things Said About or During Behavioral Safety Training (cont.)**

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- 5. "What color belt are you?"**
  - 4. "If I knew there was a video camera, I would've done it right!"**
  - 3. "If this doesn't work, can I hit him back?"**
  - 2. "What if he farts on my head?"**
  - 1. "Is this the restraint course?"**
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