



Simple Solutions Educational Services Phone: 708-845-2343 Fax: 815-469-8455

Taking a Bite Out of Difficult Behavior in Young Children: Effective Functional Assessment Strategies



***Presented by
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What is Functional Assessment?

Functional assessment takes into account the idea that ALL behavior has meaning and that it is up to the adults who care for children to find out what the reason or function a negative behavior might be. It then uses this reason for the behavior (**not the nature of the behavior itself**) to help guide strategies and interventions. It involves the application of basic scientific principles of behavior, such as, shaping, prompting, reinforcement and so on, to understand and modify behavior.

It relies on careful observation to identify the purpose of negative behavior. Functional assessment forces professionals to look beyond the negative behavior itself to identify the reason for the behavior, and the specific social, environmental, and cognitive factors associated with the behavior

What can help foster functional assessment in your setting?

Observation should be routine

It should be objective

It should be from many sources.

Describe what the child did **not a judgment** –

for example :

The child hit –not the child was angry

The child cried for 3 hours --not the child was uncontrollably sad

Use sticky pads, index cards or even dry erase boards to collect data in 5-10 minutes intervals Here is an example for Cursing, Hitting and Yelling

	9	9-9:10	9:10-9:20	9:20-9:30	9:30-9:40
Sept 13	h c c c c y	h	hh	c c c c y y y	h
Sept 14	H y c c c y	h	c	c c c c y y y y	h

C=Curse word

H=Hitting

Y=Yelling

This child above is really having trouble at 9am and 9:20 am! Use graphs and charts to pin point patterns in behavior

View more charts, graphs and scatter plots at the web site for The Center for Effective Collaboration and Practice www.cecp.air.org go to functional assessments and at The Center for the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning web site www.csefel.uiuc.edu



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MOTIVATION ASSESSMENT SCALE

Name _____ Rater _____ Date _____

Behavior Description _____

Setting Description _____

Instructions: The Motivation Assessment Scale is a questionnaire designed to identify those situations in which an individual is likely to behave in certain ways. From this information, more informed decisions can be made concerning the selection of appropriate reinforcers and treatments. To complete the Motivation Assessment Scale, select one behavior that is of particular interest. It is important that you identify the behavior very specifically. Aggressive, for example, is not as good a description as "hits his sister." Once you have specified the behavior to be rated, read each question carefully and circle the one number that best describes your observations of this behavior.

Questions	Answers						
	Never	Almost Never	Seldom	Half the Time	Usually	Almost Always	Always
1. Would the behavior occur continuously, over and over, if this person was left alone for long periods of time? (For example, several hours)	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. Does the behavior occur following a request to perform a difficult task?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. Does this behavior seem to occur in response to your talking to other persons in the room?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6



4. Does the behavior ever occur to get a toy, food, or activity that this person has been told that he or she can't have?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
5. Would the behavior occur repeatedly, in the same way, for very long periods of time, if no one was around? (For example, rocking back and forth for over an hour.)	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
6. Does the behavior occur when any request is made of this person?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
7. Does the behavior occur whenever you stop attending to this person?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
8. Does the behavior occur when you take away a favorite toy, food, or activity?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
9. Does it appear to you that this person enjoys performing the behavior? (It feels, tastes, looks, smells, and/or sounds pleasing.)	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
10. Does this person seem to do the behavior to upset or annoy you when you are trying to get him or her to do what you ask?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
11. Does this person seem to do the behavior to upset or annoy you when you are not paying attention to him or her? (For example: if you are sitting in a separate room, interacting with another person.)	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
12. Does the behavior stop occurring shortly after you give the person the toy, food or activity he or she has requested?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
13. When the behavior is occurring, does this person seem calm and unaware of anything else going on around him or her?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
14. Does the behavior stop occurring shortly after (one to five minutes) you stop working or making demands of this person?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
15. Does the person seem to do the behavior to get you to spend some time with him or her?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
16. Does this behavior seem to occur when this person has been told that he or she can't do something he or she had wanted to do?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6



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	Sensory	Escape	Attention	Tangible
	1. _____	2. _____	3. _____	4. _____
	5. _____	6. _____	7. _____	8. _____
	9. _____	10. _____	11. _____	12. _____
	13. _____	14. _____	15. _____	16. _____
Total Score=	_____	_____	_____	_____
Mean Score=	_____	_____	_____	_____
Relative Ranking=	_____	_____	_____	_____

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Easter-Seals G.M. Head Start - Challenging Behavior Observation Worksheet

Child's Name: _____

Observer(s): _____

What happened Before?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Told or asked to do something | <input type="checkbox"/> Told "No", "Don't" or "Stop" |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Playing alone | <input type="checkbox"/> Difficult task |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Moved from one activity/location to another | <input type="checkbox"/> Attention given to others |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Changed or ended activity | <input type="checkbox"/> Object out of reach |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Removed an object | <input type="checkbox"/> Not preferred activity |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Setting changes (too cold, too hot, too loud, etc.) | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify): | |

Date/Time _____

Activity _____

Behavior _____

Tips: Be specific, use descriptive words and label what the child DID –do not judge behavior, i.e. "child cried" NOT "child was sad"

Bx Frequency _____ **Bx Duration** _____ **Bx Intensity** (scale: 1-5)

	Never	20%	40%	60%	80%
Always					
1. Does the Bx occur in the presence of specific peers/teachers? 5	0	1	2	3	4
2. Does the Bx stop when peers stop interacting with the student? 5	0	1	2	3	4
3. Does it appear that this student enjoys performing the Bx? 5	0	1	2	3	4
4. If the student engages in the Bx, do students stop interacting 5 with the student?	0	1	2	3	4
5. Does the Bx most likely occur during or following unscheduled 5	0	1	2	3	4



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event/disruptions/transitions?

6. Does the student seem to perform Bx to get you/others to spend 0 1 2 3 4
5
time with him or her?

What happened After?

- ☐ Given social attention
- ☐ Given object/activity/food
- ☐ Removed from activity or area
- ☐ Ignored
- ☐ Given assistance/help

- ☐ Put in "time out"
- ☐ Punished or scolded
- ☐ Request or demand withdrawn
- ☐ Request or demand delayed
- ☐ Other (specify):

Purpose of Behavior:

To Get or Obtain:

- ☐ Activity ☐ Food
- ☐ Object ☐ Attention
- ☐ Person ☐ Place
- ☐ Help ☐ Sensory stimulation
- ☐ Other (specify):

To Avoid:

- ☐ Activity ☐ Demand/request
- ☐ Object ☐ Food
- ☐ Person ☐ Transition
- ☐ Attention ☐ Sensory
- ☐ Other (specify):

Parent Interview:

Does your child or has your child ever received any therapy services? If so, with whom and for how long?

How does your child communicate at home? Do they follow your verbal requests?

What medical complication (if any) does your child experience that may affect behavior (i.e., asthma, allergies, seizures, infections, rashes, etc.)? Do your child take any medications that may affect behavior?



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Describe the **sleep cycles**, **eating routines**, and **diet** of your child and the extent to which these routines may affect behavior.

Note any changes in lifestyle:

- ☐ Absence of person ☐ Absence of activities or toys ☐ Unexpected loss of object
☐ Change in routine ☐ Recent illness (family member illness) ☐ New baby/family member
☐ Other (specify):

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Strategies Worksheet

Build A Strong Foundation For Learning	Always	Never
I encourage the child's positive behaviors throughout the day and attend to children in positive ways when children are not engaging in challenging behaviors	<----->	
The child can count on being recognized for positive contributions	<----->	
I use encouragement to give children information about their behavior	<----->	
I recognize different learning styles and know the brain learns best through interaction and involvement	<----->	
I know attention comes from the brainstem and use multi-sensory teaching approaches/I know the average attention span of the age I teach and use that as a guide for lesson planning	<----->	
I know the brain learns best when process, not product, is emphasized	<----->	
I know emotions and cognition should not be separated and I should let the children's interests guide curriculum	<----->	

To Structure The Environment For Success	Always	Never
The play space encourages the behaviors that are the most acceptable	<----->	
When I rearrange the environment behavior changes	<----->	
When I change the schedule, the child's behavior changes	<----->	
There are enough interesting and challenging materials for the child	<----->	
When I take some of the materials OUT of the environment, the child's behavior changes	<----->	
The child has plenty of time to play	<----->	
I use visual, and auditory cues to communicate to the child	<----->	
I never give directions while music is playing	<----->	
When I use visual cues (gestures, pictures) the child's behavior	<----->	



changes	<----->
The child has choices throughout the day	<----->
Transitions from one activity to the next are easy for this child	<----->
The child has a productive alternative to waiting times	<----->
When I eliminate waiting time, the child's behavior changes	<----->
The child decides when to be finished with an activity/I have space to save activities or time to take pictures of the activity	<----->
Utilizes peers as models of desirable behavior	<----->
Encourages peer partner/buddies (ie, clean-up partner, center partner ,etc.)	<----->
Effectively selects and arranges materials that promote social interactions	<----->
Designs centers so that only a small number of children can spend time there at one time/traffic patterns are not wide open spaces that allow children to run	<----->
I provide explanations(verbal and visual) when changes in schedule occur	<----->
I make sure I gain attention before giving directions	<----->

Dealing With Unacceptable Behavior	Always	Never
The child understands the rules/guidelines for behavior in the program	<----->	
The children help make the rules and the rules are posted with words and pictures at eye level	<----->	
These rules and guidelines are reasonable for this child	<----->	
This is a behavior I can ignore	<----->	
The natural consequences for this behavior would help the child learn	<----->	
There is another activity I could suggest that is satisfying for	<----->	



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the child	<----->
The child is not forced to work in large groups	
Appropriate behavior is taught through social stories, pictures and dramatizations	<----->
Children are provided with visual supports to help change behavior	<----->
Children are not given attention (positive or negative) for inappropriate behaviors	<----->
Teachers model in the classroom how they want children to behave (ex: teachers do not scream across the room)	←-----→
I make sure all adults in the classroom know the rules and consequences	<----->
I teach problems solving and strategies for self-regulation and self monitoring	

To Resolve Problems When They Occur	Always	Never
I have been teaching this child problem solving	<----->	
This is an opportunity for teaching problem solving skills	<----->	
The child understands the impact this behavior has on other children	<----->	
I help the child get back on track when he disrupts a group activity	<----->	
I involve the family in the problem solving process	<----->	
The behavior needs to stop immediately because of imminent danger --the child will be "shadowed" by staff	<----->	



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Behavior Observation Worksheet

Child's Name: _____

Observer(s): _____

Date: ____ / ____ / ____

Time: _____

Antecedent

(What happened before?)

Describe:

or

Check all that apply:

Teacher/Student Interactions

- ☐ Told or asked to do something
- ☐ Told "No," "Don't," or "Stop"
- ☐ Attention given to others
- ☐ Touched by student or teacher
- ☐ Student/teacher took away object
- ☐ Other student had object the child wanted
- ☐ Child wanted to play with others
- ☐ Other student(s) upset child
- ☐ Student(s) refused to play with child

Activity

- ☐ Difficult activity
- ☐ Child did not like activity
- ☐ Changed or ended activity
- ☐ Moved from one activity or place to another

Environment

- ☐ Uncomfortable Environment (too cold, hot, loud, etc.)

* Students or teachers around when behavior occurred:

Behavior

* Describe:

* How often? ____/week

* How long? ____ min

* Intensity: 1 2 3 4 5
(circle) minor severe

Describe:

Check all th

- ☐ Given atten
- ☐ Given help
- ☐ Child was c
- ☐ Child was c
- ☐ Ignored by
- ☐ Ignored by

How did the t

How did the s



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Adapted from: O'Neill, R. E., Homer, R. H., Albin, R. W., Sprague, J. R., Storey, K., & Newton, J. S. (1997).
Functional Assessment and Program Development for Problem Behavior. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/ Cole Publishing.

FUNCTIONAL ASSESSMENT INTERVIEW FORM—YOUNG CHILD

Child with Problem Behavior(s): Pablo
Date of Interview: 1/15
Age: 2 Yrs 6 Mos
Sex: M * F
Interviewer: Rochelle Respondent(s): Teacher

A. DESCRIBE THE BEHAVIOR(S)

1. What are the behaviors of concern? For each, define how it is performed, how often it occurs per day, week, or month, how long it lasts when it occurs, and the intensity in which it occurs (low, medium, high).

	Behavior	How is it performed?	How often?	How long?	Intensity?
1.	Hits children & adults	Open handed on limbs, face, chest	2-4 x/day	10-20 sec	High
2.	Pinches children	Usually on arms and legs, leaves a welt	3-5 x/wk	5-15 sec	High
3.	Bites children	Leaves a mark, but never has broken skin	4-10 x/day	Brief	Medium-high
4.					
5.					
6.					

2. Which of the behaviors described above occur together (e. g., occur at the same time; occur in a predictable "chain"; occur in response to the same situation)?

Hits then bites
Hits then pinches

B. DEFINE POTENTIAL ECOLOGICAL EVENTS THAT MAY AFFECT THE BEHAVIOR(S)

1. What medications does the child take, and how do you believe these may affect his/ her behavior?

Takes asthma meds daily (flovent, singular, nasonex). Also takes additional meds as needed (proventil, nebulizer with albuteral, and prednisone). When he needs to take

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any of the additional meds we see an increase in problem behavior. If he takes all of the meds it is guaranteed that he will be in an agitated and hyper state and problem behaviors increase.

2. What medical complication (if any) does the child experience that may affect his/her behavior (e. g., asthma, allergies, rashes, sinus infections, seizures)?

Asthma, allergies, ear infections, bronchitis, occasionally pneumonia

3. Describe the sleep cycles of the child and the extent to which these cycles may affect his/ her behavior.

When asthma and allergies are under control, parents report that he sleeps through the night. When his asthma and allergies are at a heightened state, he is up 2-5 times during the night. Medications and/ or coughing and wheezing can waken him.

4. Describe the eating routines and diet of the child and the extent to which these routines may affect his/her behavior.

He is on a special diet due to multiple food allergies. With asthma and sinus infections he tends to eat less. When on prednisone, he can't seem to get enough food.

5. Briefly list the child's typical daily schedule of activities and how well he/ she does within each activity.

DAILY ACTIVITIES

	Activity	Child's Reaction
8:40 AM	Dad drops off at preschool	says good-bye and joins kids in open play
9:00 AM	Circle (Instruments, puppets, story)	When manips are handed out will hit or pinch
9:20 AM	Centers	Wanders/hits, pinches and bites
10:00 AM	Outside play	Wanders/hits
10:40 AM	Circle (wiggle time)/Bathroom	Sometimes hits waiting in line at bath
11:00 AM	Lunch	Usually eats O. K. unless sick
11:30 AM	Nap	Naps well, unless on additional meds, then he's restless
12:00 PM	Nap	Sometimes wakes coughing and needs a nebulizer treatment, then he will hit an adult.
1:30 PM	Quiet Play	Plays/reads nicely on mat
1:45 PM	Bathroom	Sometimes hits waiting in line



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2:00 PM	Snack	Sits nicely
2:20 PM	Art/ Water table/Table toys	Wanders/hits, pinches, and bites
3:00 PM	Outside play	Wanders/hits, pinches
3:40 PM	Centers	Wanders/hits, pinches, and bites
4:15 PM	Late small snack	Sits nicely
4:30 PM	Outside play	Wanders/hits, pinches
5:00-5:15 PM	Mommy picks up	Runs to her, hugs her. Leaves holding hands.

6 Describe the extent to which you believe activities that occur during the day are predictable for your child. To what extent does the child know what he/ she will be doing and what will occur during the day (e. g., when to get up, when to eat breakfast, when to play outside)? How does your child know this?

The routine is pretty much the same daily. The teacher announces to the class when it is time to clean up and get ready to go to the next activity.

7. What choices does the child get to make each day (e. g., food, toys, activities)?

Snack choices, art material choices, centers, toys, instruments.

C. DEFINE EVENTS AND SITUATIONS THAT PREDICT OCCURRENCES OF THE BEHAVIOR(S)

1. Time of Day: When are the behaviors most and least likely to happen?

Most likely: - When instruments are handed out, centers, bathroom time, and outside

- More intense in the afternoon

Least likely: - Arrival and dismissal

2. Settings: Where are the behaviors most and least likely to happen?

Most likely: -The block area, sand box, in lines

Least likely: -Circle/ wiggle time, snack

3. Social Control: With whom are the behaviors most and least likely to happen?

Most likely: - With a child who takes a toy that he is playing with or takes a toy that is near him.

- With the teacher if she is on the floor nearby and playing with another child.

Least likely: - Teacher Assistant and parents and girls.



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4. Activity: What activities are most and least likely to produce the behaviors?

Most likely: - Blocks, waiting in line, instruments

Least likely: - snack and lunch

5. Are there particular situations, events, etc. that are not listed above that "set off" the behaviors that cause concern (particular demands, interruptions, transitions, delays, being ignored, etc.)?

No

6. What one thing could you do that would most likely make the problem behavior occur?

Take a toy he is playing with

7. What one thing could you do to make sure the problem behavior did not occur?

Let him play with anything he wants and sit right with him.

D. DESCRIBE THE CHILD'S PLAY ABILITIES AND DIFFICULTIES

1. Describe how your child plays (With what? How often?).

He likes to put all the blocks in the dump truck, push it, then fill it again. Usually plays with it daily during centers.

2. Does your child have problem behavior when playing? Describe.

Yes, he will hit, pinch or bite to get toys that he wants.

3. Does your child play alone? What does he/ she do?

Most of the time. He will parallel play, but now the other children seem scared of him

4. Does your child play with adults? What toys or games?

Yes, he prefers playing along side adults and if you try to leave he will hit you.

5. Does your child play with other children his/ her age? What toys or games?

He will play "ring-around-the-rosie" and chase when outside. Otherwise he does mostly parallel or solitary play.

6. How does your child react if you join in a play activity with him/ her?



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If you join without taking the toys that he is using he loves it. If you try to take a toy he will hit.

7. How does your child react if you stop playing with him/ her?

He will reach for you. If you don't come back he will hit you.

8. How does your child react if you ask him/ her to stop playing with a toy and switch to a different toy?

He will hit, especially if you take the toy in front of him and put it out of reach. But if he is going from a less desirable toy, like a baby doll to a more desirable toy, like a dump truck, he will make the switch.

E. IDENTIFY THE "FUNCTION" OF THE UNDESIRABLE BEHAVIOR(S)

1. Think of each of the behaviors listed in Section A, and define the function(s) you believe the behavior serves for the child (i. e., what does he/ she get and/ or avoid by doing the behavior?)

	Behavior	What does he/she get? Or What exactly does he/she avoid?
1.	Hits children Hits adults	Gets toy back and/ or adult attention (scolded then redirected) Gets adult attention (talks with then plays with)
2.	Pinches children	Gets adult attention (scolded then redirected) sometimes gets the toy back
3.	Bites children	Gets adult attention (scolded then adult will hold until he calms)
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		
9.		
10.		

2. Describe the child's most typical response to the following situations:

a. Are the above behavior(s) more likely, less likely, or unaffected if you present him/ her with a difficult task?



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More likely

b. Are the above behavior(s) more likely, less likely, or unaffected if you interrupt a desired event (eating ice cream, watching a video)?

More likely

c. Are the above behavior(s) more likely, less likely, or unaffected if you deliver a "stern" request/ command/ reprimand?

More likely

d. Are the above behavior(s) more likely, less likely, or unaffected if you are present but do not interact with (ignore) the child for 15 minutes.

Unaffected, (unless the change means that center time is cut.)

e. Are the above behavior(s) more likely, less likely, or unaffected by changes in routine?

More likely

f. Are the above behavior(s) more likely, less likely, or unaffected if something the child wants is present but he/ she can't get it (i. e., a desired toy that is visible but out of reach)?

More likely

g. Are the above behavior(s) more likely, less likely, or unaffected if he/ she is alone (no one else is present)?

Less likely

F. DEFINE THE EFFICIENCY OF THE UNDESIRABLE BEHAVIOR(S)

1. What amount of physical effort is involved in the behaviors (e. g., prolonged intense tantrums vs. simple verbal outbursts, etc.)?

When Pablo bites, an adult needs to physically hold him. Otherwise he is redirected and played with for a bit.

2. Does engaging in the behaviors result in a "payoff (getting attention, avoiding work) every time? Almost every time? Once in a while?

Almost every time. An adult needs to attend to the situation. Sometimes he will hit or go to hit and the child will just give him the toy he wants.



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3. How much of a delay is there between the time the child engages in the behavior and gets the "payoff"? Is it immediate, a few seconds, longer?

Most of the time it is immediate or a few seconds. Concerned about children getting hurt.

G. DEFINE THE PRIMARY METHOD(S) USED BY THE CHILD TO COMMUNICATE

1. What are the general expressive communication strategies used by or available to the child? (e. g., vocal speech, signs/ gestures, communication books/ boards, electronic devices, etc.) How consistently are the strategies used?

He says 2-4 word combination

2. If your child is trying to tell you something or show you something and you don't understand, what will your child do? (repeat the action or vocalization? modify the action or vocalization?)

He will first take your hand or direct you physically. Sometimes he will try to restate it. If not understood, he will hit and grunt in frustration (but this is rare).

3. Tell me how your child expresses the following:

Function s	Means															
	GRAB & REACH	GIVE	POINT	LEAD	GAZE SHIFT	MOVE TO YOU	MOVE AWAY FROM YOU	HEAD NOD/HEAD SHAKE	FACIAL EXPRESSION	VOCALIZE	IMMEDIATE EC-HC	DELAYED EC-HC	CREATIVE SINGLE WORD	CREATIVE MULTWORD	SIMPLE SIGNS	COMPLEX SIGNS
Requests an Object	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X			X		
Requests an Action	X			X		X				X				X		
Protests or Escapes							X	X	X	X				X		
Requests Help	X	X		X		X				X			X			



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Requests a Social Routine	X			X		X			X	X			X					X				
Requests Comfort				X		X				X			X									
Indicates Illness						X								X				X		X		
Shows You Something	X	X	X	X	X					X				X				X				

4. With regard to receptive communication ability:

a. Does the child follow verbal requests or instructions? If so, approximately how many? (List, if only a few).

He can follow simple one step directions

b. Is the child able to imitate someone demonstrating how to do a task or play with a toy?

Yes, but will not share or turn-take.

c. Does the child respond to sign language or gestures? If so, approximately how many? (List, if only a few.)

"come" gesture, "tap on chair" for sit

d. How does the child tell you "yes" or "no" (if asked whether he/ she wants to do something, go somewhere, etc.)?

He can say yes and no and shake his head. Although he will hit if asked to give up a toy or told to go play (rather than stay with the teacher).

H. WHAT EVENTS, ACTIONS, AND OBJECTS ARE SUPPORTIVE OR PRESENT CHALLENGES TO THE CHILD?

1. Describe the things that your child really enjoys. For example, what makes him/ her happy? What might someone do or provide that makes your child happy?

Sitting in the teacher's lap, block play (dump/ fill), sand play



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2. What kinds of things have you or your child's care providers done to try and change the problem behaviors?

Holding him until he is calm, redirection.

I. DEVELOP SUMMARY STATEMENTS FOR EACH MAJOR PREDICTOR AND/ OR CONSEQUENCE

Distant Setting Event	Immediate Antecedent (Trigger)	Problem Behavior	Maintaining Consequences	Function

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Natural Consequences And Teaching New Skills

Teach New Skills

Teach a child to ask for a break ---the break is timed

Teach a child to identify his/her Triggers—share with group

Teach children to monitor OWN behavior with self-evaluations—keep in portfolio

Teach children how to behave through cooperative learning

Natural Consequences

Use detention time to teach anger management

Use out of school suspensions for “scared straight” field trips

Use “community service” instead of detentions

Make bullies work on at the counseling program for victims of other bullies

If gangs are the problem –pair up bullies with former gang members for anger management

If there is a worry drugs/alcohol involved contact local treatment centers

The Bully may have poor role models –does this child to be in a big brother program

**Does this child has a natural interest or talent –set up time for them to shadow a professional who has turned a similar interest into a career—
Allow for an opportunity for POSITIVE attention or outlet**

Give a positive physical outlet—like boxing classes so children learn a positive way to use physical force

Make alliances with community resources ---Alternative schools, jails, social service agencies, drug rehab centers, etc



SCRIPTED STORIES FOR SOCIAL SITUATIONS– TIP SHEET

The rules or expectations of social interactions are typically learned by example. Children with communication difficulties and/or behavior challenges often do not learn these interactions incidentally, but may need more explicit instructions through a scripted description of the social situation.

Scripted stories for social situations help children understand social interactions, situations, expectations, social cues, the script of unfamiliar activities, and/or social rules. As the title implies, they are brief descriptive stories that provide information regarding a social situation. When children are given information that helps them understand the expectations of a situation, their problem behavior within that

situation is reduced or minimized. Parents, teachers and caregivers can use these simple stories as a tool to prepare the child for a new situation, to address challenging behavior within a setting or situation, or to teach new skills. The following is an example of a scripted story explaining when it's appropriate to run.

RUNNING

I like to run. It is fun to go fast.

It's okay to run when I am playing outside.

I can run when I am on the playground.

Sometimes I feel like running, but it is dangerous to run when I am inside.

Running inside could hurt me or other people.

When people are inside, they walk.

Walking inside is safe.

I will try to walk inside and only run when I am outside on the playground.

My teachers and parents like it when I remember to walk inside.

WRITING A SCRIPTED STORY

Begin by observing the child in the situation you are addressing. Try to take on the child's perspective and include aspects of his or her feelings or views in the story. Also, include usual occurrences in the social situation, clear "expectations", and the perspective of others, along with considering possible variations.

There are three types of sentences used in writing Scripted Story:

1. Descriptive sentences: objectively define anticipated events where a situation occurs, who is involved, what they are doing and why. (e.g., When people are inside, they walk.)



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2. Perspective sentences: describe the internal status of the person or persons involved, their thoughts, feelings, or moods. (e.g., Running inside could hurt me or other people.)

3. Directive sentences: are individualized statements of desired responses stated in a positive manner. They may begin "I can try..." or "I will work on..." Try to avoid sentences starting with "Do not" or definitive statements. (e.g., I will try to walk in inside.) A Scripted Story should have 3 to 5 descriptive and perspective sentences for each directive sentence. Avoid using too many directive sentences.

Write in first person and on the child's developmental skill level. Also remember to use pictures that fit within the child's developmental skill level to supplement text.

Reference: Broek, E., Cain, S.L., Dutkiewicz, M., Fleck, L., Grey, B., Grey, C., et al. (1994). The Original Social Story™ Book.
Arlington, TX: Future Education. www.thegraycenter.org



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VISUAL STRATEGIES

Reasons to use:

Visuals can be very helpful for communicating expectations to young children. Often children with challenging behavior have a difficult time processing and using language or may have developed the habit of “tuning out” the adult when talking. A visual provides the child with a static symbol of the word or idea. When we say words, they “disappear” once we have completed our verbal expression. When you present a visual, the visual can be held out for the child to examine and process.

Educators use many visuals in their classrooms. You might label centers with pictures, place pictures on bins to depict the contents that will be found inside, and you may use pictures to help children make the link between a visual symbol and word. The suggestions that you will find in this section of the tool kit provide ideas for ways to use visuals in the support of individual children who have challenging behavior.

1. Visual strategies can cue or teach positive behavior or new skills.
2. Visual strategies support both receptive and expressive communication.
3. Visual strategies enhance memory (e.g., they are reminders for verbal direction).
4. Visuals strategies can portray expectations (e.g., wash hands, stop, etc.).
5. Visual strategies teach routines (e.g., activity steps through pictures).



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**HOW TO MAKE A VISUAL SCHEDULE
TO SUPPORT YOUNG CHILDREN
WITH CHALLENGING BEHAVIOR**

Rochelle Lentini and Lise Fox
University of South Florida

GETTING STARTED!

1. Gather Materials such as scissors, glue stick, poster board, clear contact paper, Velcro, pictures (photographs, pictures from magazines, computer programs, food labels, etc.).
2. Choose pictures for the schedule you wish to create. Keep in mind that a visual schedule helps children anticipate transitions and activities. It may outline parts of a day, half-day or an entire day.
3. Cut your pictures. Mount (glue) on same size poster board or manila folder for durability. Keep in mind your child's developmental level.
4. Laminate or cover the pictures with clear contact paper.
5. Put a small piece of Velcro on the back center of each picture. Use the same type of Velcro for the back of the pictures and the opposite type for the schedule board.
6. Create a strip to hold the pictures using poster board. Make it long enough to hold pictures for several activities. Laminate and put a Velcro strip across or down the center. Put Velcro on the backs of the pictures to attach to the strip on the schedule. If needed add a pocket at the end that represents "finished" or "all done." Otherwise pictures can be turned over to indicate "all done." In this case, a piece of Velcro goes on the front of the picture and on the back. TIP: The schedule may be vertical or horizontal.
7. Velcro the pictures to the schedule in the order activities occur. Depending on the child, use only a few pictures on at a time (e.g., part of a day) OR individually present the pictures to the child by pulling them off of the schedule to show them.



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8. Show the schedule to the child. Orient the child to the schedule and model

by hand over hand, touching, or pulling off the pictures. Remove pictures

with the child at the end of each activity and place in pocket or turn them over.

9. Use the schedule! Keep the schedule near the child and at eye level.

Use the

schedule as part of the class routine. Praise child for following the schedule

appropriately.

PHOTOGRAPH TIPS

1. Children communicate and understand at different symbolic levels.

First,

determine your child's "visual stage" (or combination of):

Symbolic Level Description of Symbolic

Object Stage: Use of actual objects to communicate

Photograph Stage: use of real photographs (photo, digital, scanned, magazines, catalogs, coupon

adds, etc.) for communication needs

Picture Symbolic Stage: use of colored line drawings (hand drawn or commercially produced) for

communication needs

Line Drawing Stage: use of black and white line drawings

(hand drawn or commercially

produced) for communication needs

Text Stage: use written form of words and/or numbers for communication

2. Add text to photographs, pictures, and line drawings to promote reading

also helps adults use the same language for a particular item.

3. Present visuals from left to right if your child scans horizontally or top to

bottom for vertical scanners. The orientation depends on how the child scans.

4. Photographing tips:

Place item or object on a solid/high contrasting background when

taking photo. Note: If you want to communicate, "go potty" take a

photograph of the toilet, avoid including other items in the picture to help

the child focus on the main item.

Try to take the photograph from the child's perspective.

5. Preparing the picture visuals:

Make the "picture" sturdy, easy to handle, and durable by using



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cardstock or glue to a manila file folder, then cover with contact paper or laminate.

6. Pictures can be obtained from a variety of places:

Photographs: camera, digital, computer scanning, magazines, catalogs, coupons, advertisements, Izone Camera, internet sites, commercial computer programs...

Picture Symbols & Line Drawings: computer scanning, magazines, catalogs, coupon adds, internet sites, commercial computer programs, coloring books and dittoes, hand drawn pictures, etc.

SAMPLE SCHEDULES

Binder with schedule pictures from catalogs and glued to index cards. Flip picture over to indicate "all done."

Class photo schedule in clear pockets for easy removal.

Boardmaker . schedule pictures with removable miniatures to carry while transitioning from one location to another.

Mini photo album used for carrying visuals when traveling from one location to another.



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Triggers	Behaviors	Maintaining Consequences
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Preventions	New Skills	Responses

Parent responsibilities: _____

_____ Target date of completion

Teacher/Therapist responsibilities _____

_____ Target date of completion

Follow-up meeting _____



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