Functional Behavioral Assessment

The purpose of the Functional Behavioral Assessment is to improve student achievement by understanding the functionality of a behavior by considering all factors or variables that may or may not influence it. A behavior intervention plan is developed based on the data collected from the FBA. To complete a FBA the following is particularly useful (and required for this assignment):

1. Determine the target behavior
2. Operationally define target behavior
3. Complete indirect assessment (interviews, checklists, & rating scales)
4. Complete descriptive analysis
5. Create behavior Intervention plan (always implement the least restrictive program)
6. Record data from direct observation & graph information
7. Collect interobserver agreement data

Identifying Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name: Jonny</th>
<th>Parents: DSHS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age: 17:4</td>
<td>Ethnicity: Caucasian</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grade: 10th</td>
<td>School: Specialty School</td>
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Cultural Considerations: Out of home placement; strained familial relationships; adjudicated sex offender; currently living in a residential treatment facility; has lived in 10 different placements in the past 2 years.

Reason for Referral

I requested permission from the Specialty School to perform a Functional Behavior Assessment to fulfill course requirements. Permission was approved. A student was identified, and Jonny agreed to participate.

Mrs. Smith, Jonny’s special education teacher requested additional support with Jonny as his behaviors have been increasingly difficult to manage. She estimated 80% of her time is devoted to behavior management and she is concerned that Jonny’s academics are not progressing.
Background Information

Jonny receives special education services for reading comprehension, written comprehension, written expression, math, and oral expression. Jonny receives services from a Speech language Pathologist three times a week. Jonny also participates in a social skills class. Due to the nature of the Specialty School at the residential treatment facility, the class sizes are small and Jonny receives a lot of one on one instruction with a paraprofessional.

Operational Definition of Targeted Behavior

Jonny’s non compliance behavior is indicated when he refuses to comply with teacher instruction/direction after the teacher as restated and/or clarified the prompt one or more times and/or he verbalizes his refusal to do what is asked. Behavioral indicators of non compliance include, Jonny putting his head phones on and listening to music, Jonny walking out of the class room, Jonny putting his head on his desk, Jonny swearing at the teacher, Jonny verbalizing “I won’t and you can’t make me,” “I don’t want to,” or “No, I’m not going to read, I’m going to listen to my music.” These behaviors must occur directly after the teacher asks him to do something for it to be considered, noncompliance.

Indirect Assessment

I met with Jonny on 2/6/09 and our interview lasted for approximately ½ hour. Jonny had agreed to participate in this assessment initially, but appeared frustrated when asked to meet with me. Behaviors that indicated frustration include, asking several times when the interview was over, and stating that he would rather be listening to music. Jonny was asked if he had changed his mind about participating in the FBA assessment, but he stated that he would despite his dislike for such things. Jonny had a lot to say. He was fairly articulate when discussing emotionally charged subjects (such as, “I hate it when Mrs. Smith calls on me in class”). Jonny said that he generally does not like school and doesn’t see the need for it because, “I already know how to read and write and do real life math, the rest is crap.” Jonny said that school has never been enjoyable. Jonny was not able to identify specific reason as to his dislike for school, other than “Teachers hate me, and they are always picking on me.” He elaborated by saying that he feels that teachers call on him for class participation, specifically when he doesn’t know the answers. He said, “The teachers never call on me for the easy stuff, they want to see me mess up.” He “hates” homework and he estimated thinking about ways to get out of homework or class related activities “70%” of the time. He said, “I learn best by teaching myself the things I think I need to know…. and that’s worked fine for me.” Jimmy was asked why he was sent out of class approximately three to four times a week, and Jonny said, “Mrs. Smith hates me.” Jonny was asked if he has ever had a teacher that he liked, and Jonny said that he has but was unable to elaborate.

When the interview was over, Jonny was thanked for participating and he was given a granola bar, and Jonny said “Thanks for the snack, it’s ok if we need to keep talking I’d rather be here than in class.”
I met with Mrs. Smith on 2/6/09 to collect information pertaining to Jonny’s disruptive behavior. We met for approximately a ½ hour. She was asked to complete the Problem Behavior Questionnaire. The interview and questionnaire provided detailed information as to the situations and conditions that prompt or promote oppositional behavior. See attachment for the teacher’s responses to this questionnaire. As indicated in the graph below, Jonny’s behavior appears largely motivated by attention by the teacher, and more specifically engaging in escape behaviors.

Not indicated on this chart is Setting Events. Jonny scored 13/18 on the Setting Events scale on the Problem Behavior Profile. This indicates that the classroom environment is a contributing factor to Jonny’s non-compliance.
Direct Observation Data

I observed Jonny’s class on 2/9, 2/10, and 2/11 for approximately one hour each time. The Functional Assessment Observation Form was used to collect data. This form tracks the problem behaviors, predictors (antecedent), consequences, and perceived functions. The Functional Assessment Observation Form as been attached for your review. It should also be noted that the observations occurred from 8:50am-9:55am.

On 2/9 a second observer was present to establish the percentage of agreement between independent observers. An inter-observer agreement of 75% was achieved. This percentage was calculated by using the Event or Frequency Recording Formula as indicated in your book.

Jonny’s targeted behavior was consistently triggered when asked to work on his assignment. In addition, Jonny would make inappropriate requests, such as “Can I make a call to my girlfriend, it’s important” and would become agitated and refused to do his class work when his request was not approved. Jonny was sent out of the classroom as a consequence two of the three days I observed. Jonny’s inappropriate requests appear to serve the function of avoiding or trying to escape class work and discussion. Jonny receives a lot of negative attention in the class, which may be a contributing factor to his oppositional behavior.
A mini study is needed to establish a better understanding of the functionality of the problem behavior as well as useful interventions. The following mini study is purposed. It should be noted, that a baseline behavior is needed for comparative data.

First....

Then.....
Behavior Intervention Plan

Objective: To decrease non-compliance behaviors (as indicated in operational definition) by 50% within 3 weeks of individualized intervention.

PT as indicated in the “Consequence” section stands for personal time. Jonny can participate in an activity of his choice for five minutes after he satisfactorily completes the assignment the teacher requested. During PT he can listen to music or draw. The only stipulation is that he cannot disrupt other students or the teacher during PT.

In reference to replacement behavior as indicated on the chart, the goal is to establish an alternative behavior plan that serves the same function as the problem behavior. In his case, Jonny’s behavior is understood as escape behavior. Therefore, we allow Jonny to momentarily escape before he quits altogether. It will be important that Jonny learns to request to take a break before he becomes deregulated.

If a behavior persists, Johnny will receive in-class detention with his teacher. In-class detention will occur directly after school and it will last for a ½ hour. The Specialty School has a designated “study hall” that occurs every day so Jonny’s special program will not be an inconvenience the teacher.

Jonny can “cash in” his points at the end of every week for tangible goods. There is a “goodie store” in the class specifically designed for this purpose. Jonny will receive 5 points for every assignment that he satisfactorily completes.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Additional monitoring and evaluation of Jonny’s intervention plan is needed to assess efficacy. The Functional Assessment Observation Form will be used to continue to collect data. Data will be collected for 1 week, 1 hour a
day. This information will be reviewed with the teacher every morning during that week to review outcomes. During the second, third, and fourth weeks of the intervention monitoring, anecdotal information will be collected from the teacher on a weekly basis. This information will help determine additional supports needed, and/or alternative/revised behavior intervention plan.
References


This article completes an FBA on a student with dual diagnoses of ADD and ODD. The article outlines how to complete a comprehensive FBA specific to disruptive behaviors typically associated with ADD and ODD. It was a great resource.


Article presents various interventions in response to disruptive classroom behaviors. Study examines the efficacy of FBA across various settings. Treatment interventions are suggested. The importance of identifying the functionality of a behavior is stated. Function-based intervention improves academic achievement and decreases problem behaviors.


Article provides detailed information pertaining to the misuse of labeling students, the importance of family collaborations and communication, the importance of the FBA, the need to address the student’s learning and motivational difficulties, the need for social skills instructions, the importance of a healthy student/teacher dynamic, and contingency management recommendations.

More training and education is needed for all school personnel in the development and utilization of a FBA. Article outlines ways to complete a FBA with accuracy and efficiency. Article identifies the need for a school-based FBA, a team-based approached, a need for behavior support teams, and individualized student teams.


This article examines noncompliance behavior in 2 preschool children. Noncompliance was triggered when a preferred activity was terminated. Results suggest that noncompliance was maintained by positive reinforcement. Coupons were used purchase preferred activities.