



Topic 7: Review of FBA/BIP Best Practices and Replacement Behavior

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

1. How can using vague terminology in FBAs and BIPs be harmful?

Vague terms used to explain student behavior may include inappropriate/appropriate, insubordinate, rude, aggressive, tantrum, loud, polite, and dis/respectful. Instead of using unclear terms like these, school personnel must aim to operationally define target behaviors and provide context like antecedents, setting events, and consequences.

2. How can I figure out if the definitions I create for student behavior are clear?

Use the “Stranger Test” or the “Dead Man’s Test” to determine if the words included in your FBAs and BIPs are specific and effective. If the description of the student’s behavior can be understood and their response to the intervention was or was not demonstrated, the definitions/descriptions pass the “Stranger Test.” If the description of the student’s behavior can be understood, present and engaged in the intervention, the definitions/descriptions pass the “Dead Man’s Test”.

3. What are the classic functions of behavior when trying to figure out the why’s of specific problem behaviors of students?

Some of these classic functions of behavior include (1) social attention and connections, (2) access to tangibles or preferred activities, (3) escape, delay, reduction of aversive tasks, activities or other individuals, and (4) internal stimulation.

- (1) Social attention and connections- Positive social reinforcement.
- (2) Access to tangibles or preferred activities- Material or activity reinforcement.
- (3) Escape, delay, reduction of aversive tasks, activities or other individuals- Negative reinforcement.
- (4) Internal stimulation- Automatic or sensory reinforcement

See this link to see examples of evidence-based interventions for student behavior from the CEEDAR Center: [Examples of Evidence-Based Behavior Interventions - CEEDAR Center](#)

4. How do I teach my students replacement skills?

Replacements skills and behaviors can be identified both formally and informally. Formal methods of identifying replacement skills involve implementing evidence-based curriculum and assessments including PEAK Relational Training from Dixon, Skill-Based Treatment from Hanley, Star & Links, VB-MAPP, ABLLS-R, and Socially Savvy. Collaboration with team members such as your school's psychologist and social worker is necessary when utilizing formal assessments.

Informal methods of identifying replacement skills start with developing an "approximation" of the desired behavior. The approximation of the desired behavior is an estimate of how we want the student to behave. To reach the desired behavior, the function of the target behavior must be met by the replacement skills the student learns. Next, we must review the antecedent list and create a list of triggers. The State of Illinois [Social and Emotional Learning \(isbe.net\)](#) standards and programs such as [What Is the CASEL Framework? - CASEL](#) should be used to address problem behaviors and teach replacement skills to students.

5. How do I write replacement behaviors in the BIP?

When formatting replacement behaviors, it is important to align the behavior directly with the student's functional abilities. A goal statement must be written in the student's BIP to make sure that progress monitoring and data collection are maintained. The goal must also be included in the student's IEP with a plan for monitoring progress. An explanation of how the replacement skill will be taught, when, and by whom is required. Progress monitoring should not occur over just a day or two. Rather, progress monitoring should take place over a timeframe of several weeks so that the replacement skill can be practiced and reinforced. Instruction and reinforcement of the goal will take place during weekly social work sessions, daily check-ins with the special education teacher, and push-out settings with general education classroom teachers.

6. If we are also trying to eliminate bias, how do we define the behaviors without sounding punitive?

One way to work towards eliminating bias in our writing of IEPs and BIPs is to be objective in the words we choose by describing what we see and hear without assigning a value judgement by using words like "inappropriate" and "angry." Another example of making a value judgement towards student behavior is saying that students just need to "make better choices" or "they should know better". Instead of responding by yelling at the student and telling them to "make better choices", we as educators must focus on teaching replacement behaviors while understanding executive functioning and child development.

7. How often should the team review the IEP?

The IEP team is required to meet annually to discuss student progress with academic and functional goals, determine whether interventions are working and to review the BIP. Best practices recommend that if the target behavior is not reduced by 50%, an IEP meeting should be conducted at least every 3 months to monitor progress. If the student's PLAAFP (present levels of academic and functional performance) is on an upward trend, then meeting for the annual review typically is enough. If a BIP continues to be ineffective reducing behaviors, the team may need to review the FBA and determine if a new FBA needs to be completed.