



PROGRESSIVE  
INTERVENTIONS

*Creating pathways through education and psychology*

***Heading Difficult  
Behaviors Off at the  
Pass:***

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***An Introduction to a Proactive  
Model***

**Presented by:**

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# Goals For Today

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- ✦ Discuss factors that surround and support both positive and challenging behaviors
  - ✦ Discuss the role that relationship patterns and communication strategies play in developing and maintaining behavior patterns
  - ✦ Introduce practical and mindful strategies for using positive consequences to prevent difficult behaviors and improve behavior patterns
  - ✦ Application of these strategies: Q and A



# Where Do Behaviors Come From?

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- ✦ **Behaviors = Adaptive mechanisms that we use to get our needs met**
  - ✦ **Not typically isolated, unprompted occurrences...with the exception of truly impulsive behaviors**
  - ✦ **Applied Behavioral Analysis provides a structure that illustrates a general context from which Behaviors “sprout” (ABC Model):**
    - ✦ Antecedents
    - ✦ Behaviors
    - ✦ Consequences



# Antecedents and Setting Events

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**Situations and events that trigger or otherwise set the stage for a behavior to occur**

- ✦ Important to consider and recognize any context patterns in which the behavior(s) may be occurring
- ✦ Antecedents trigger challenging as well as positive behaviors
- ✦ External Antecedents (Overt) versus Internal (Covert) Antecedents



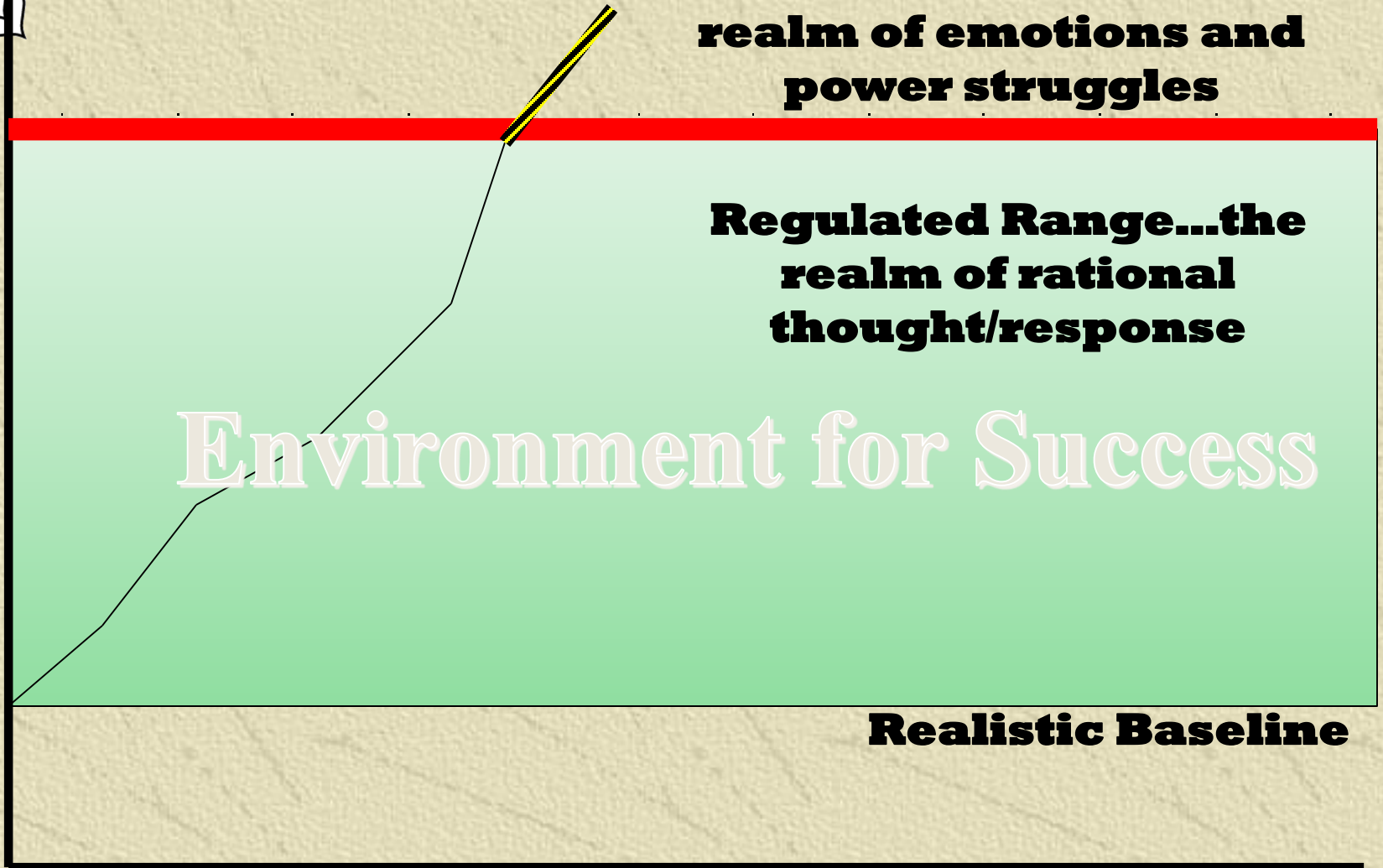
**Over the Threshold...the  
realm of emotions and  
power struggles**

**Regulated Range...the  
realm of rational  
thought/response**

**Environment for Success**

**Realistic Baseline**

**Absolute Baseline**





**Over the Threshold...the realm of emotions and power struggles**

**Regulated Range...the realm of rational thought/response**

**Adjusted Baseline**

**Absolute Baseline**



# *Behavior*

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- ✦ When the behavior is challenging or undesirable, this is the primary link in the behavior chain that gets a response.
- ✦ Possibly the most difficult level of the chain to successfully intervene on challenging behaviors
- ✦ Important to define in terms of the concrete action
- ✦ When behaviors are positive they rarely demand or receive any attention



# Consequence

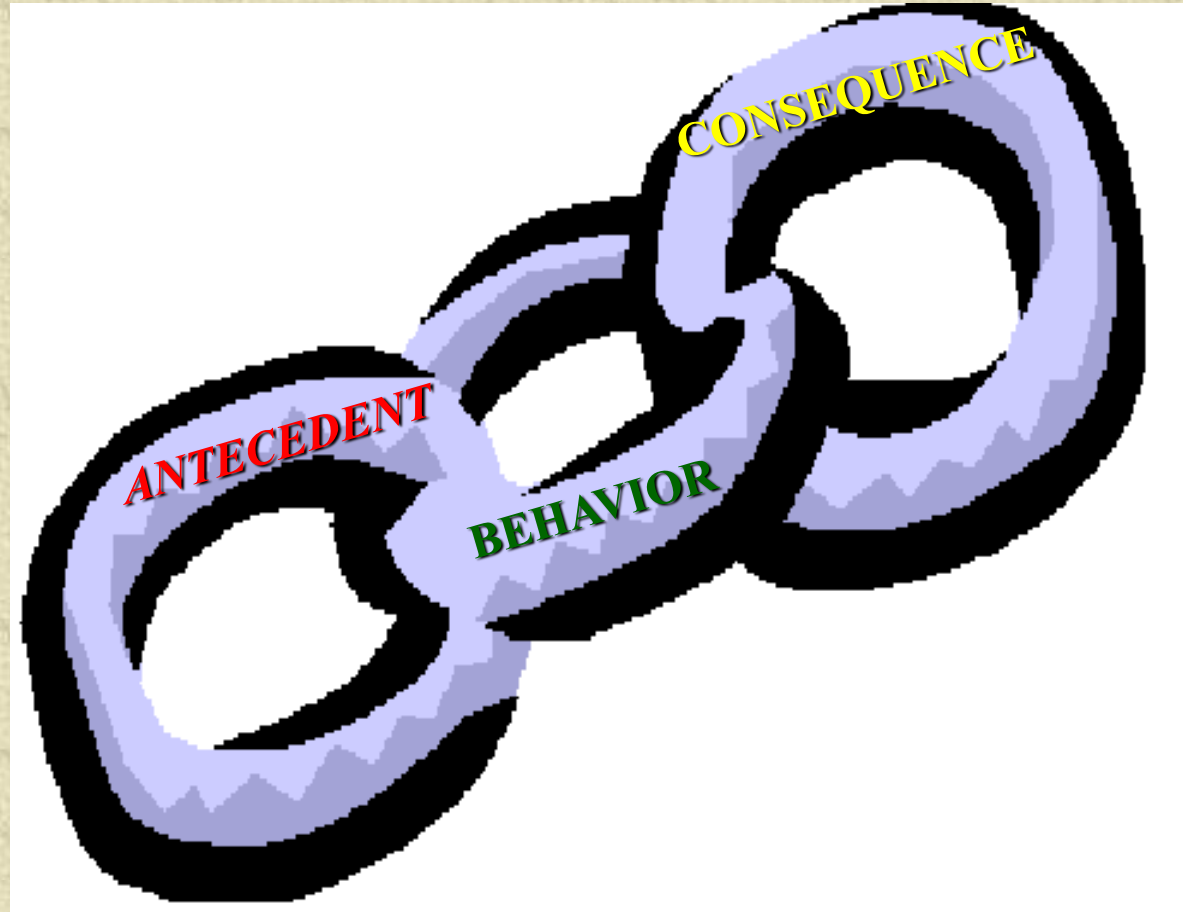
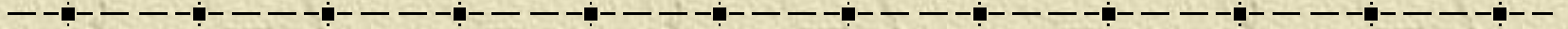
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**The events that follow a specific behavior**

- ✦ **Positive Consequences** encourage repetition of the behavior in the future
- ✦ **Negative Consequences** decrease likelihood that behavior will continue in the future
- ✦ Important to remember that consequences intended to be aversive can sometimes actually reinforce the challenging behavior!



# The “Behavior Chain”





**First line interventions  
should always involve  
“Catching them being  
good” and reinforce  
with positive  
consequences. This  
encourages those  
good behaviors and  
choices to be repeated**



# Attention and Recognition: Our Most Effective Reinforcement Tools

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- ✦ People of all ages thrive on recognition and attention from others
- ✦ We have limited resources, which prohibits providing everyone with high levels of attention
  - ◆ Most individuals can function (self-regulate) with brief, occasional attention
  - ◆ Some require more attention to help them self-regulate and positively guide behavior
  - ◆ Be proactive by keeping everyone's "attention tanks" topped off



# **The Foundation:**

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**Successful use of One's  
Attention to  
Encourage Positive  
Behaviors Relies on  
Effective  
Communication**



# Communicating Directions (Sears, 2002)

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- ✦ Establish a connection
- ✦ Stay brief and simple
- ✦ Have the child repeat directions
- ✦ Use the When-Then approach
- ✦ Utilize transitions
- ✦ Provide Choices
- ✦ Labeled Praise
- ✦ Respond to yelling with soft, calm voice
- ✦ Provide directions with neutral and directive tone
- ✦ Make things fun...use humor and games when possible and appropriate
- ✦ **BE CONSISTENT**



# Strategies for Preventing Challenging Behaviors

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- ✦ Provide a roadmap for success
    - ◆ Plan ahead
    - ◆ Clarify expectations focusing on what the person should do...avoid “Don’t” directives
    - ◆ Define success
    - ◆ BE CONSISTENT
      - Inconsistency leads to unpredictability and uncertainty
      - Uncertainty elevates anxiety and frustration
      - Anxiety/frustration are common triggers (antecedents) for challenging behaviors
  - ✦ Make an effort to catch and praise good behaviors
  - ✦ Provide alternatives to challenging behaviors



# Using Choice Strategies to Prevent Challenging Behaviors

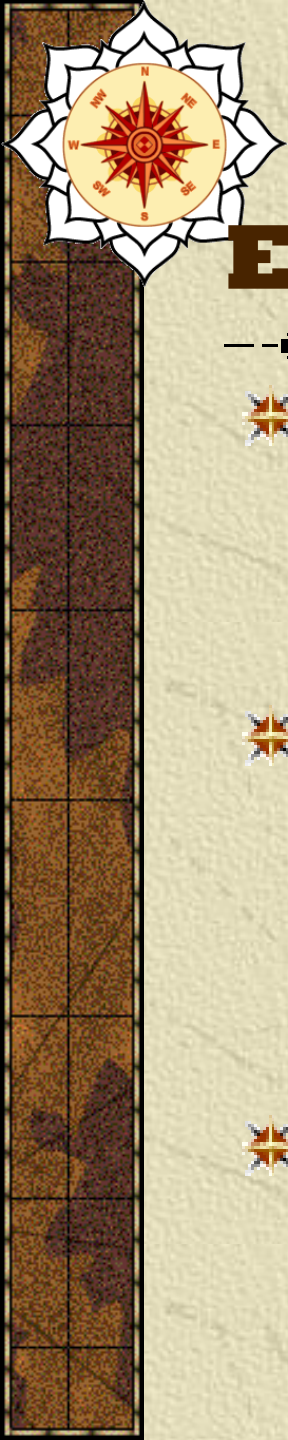
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- ✦ Offer real choices
  - ✦ Offer opportunities for choices throughout the course of the day
  - ✦ Limiting the number of alternatives may prevent child from becoming overwhelmed
  - ✦ If neither of the options is preferred, give child a choice in which of the activity he/she would rather complete (or complete first)
  - ✦ When the choice of activities is not an option, provide child with options of when she/he would like to complete the activity
  - ✦ If a non-preferred task can be broken down in smaller steps, give child choices as to the order of steps that the activity can be completed



# Additional Antecedent Strategies

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- ✦ Distraction with a preferred activity
- ✦ Collaboration-Joining the child and assisting with the activity
- ✦ Behavioral Momentum (i.e. “Simon Says”) using a series of high probability requests before giving target direction
- ✦ Embedding-camouflage request within an activity that the child enjoys



# Environmental Factors that Encourage Positive Behaviors

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## ✦ Physical Environment

- ◆ Arrange the environment to encourage success and positive behaviors

## ✦ Instructional Environment

- ◆ Maintain balance between **Social Density** (# of people) and **Spatial Density** (amount of space occupied)

## ✦ Organizational Environment

- ◆ Providing a consistent and predictable application of structure and rules



# QUESTIONS?

