



# Behavior 101

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# Behavior Basics

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- All children ages birth – 5 exhibit behaviors
- Children with challenging behaviors may be:
  - More intense, More persistent, Sensitive, Perceptive, uncomfortable with change
  - Behavior is communication
  - There is always a reason for challenging behavior

# What's their story?

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- Does the child know the expectations?
- Do they have the skill?
- Trauma?
- Are there cultural influences?
- Changes in the child's life?
- Language barrier?
- Setting event?
- Temperament?

# Temperament

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Intensity

Persistence

Sensitivity

Perceptiveness  
or  
distractibility

Adaptability

Regularity

Energy

First  
reaction(new  
situations)

Mood



# The Big 5: Preventing Challenging Behavior

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- **5:1 Ratio** of Positive Attention to Redirection
- **Predictable Schedules**
- Establishing **Routines within Routines**
- **Directly Teach Behavior Expectations**
- **Directly Teach Peer Related Social Skills**

# Preventative Behavior Strategies

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## **Build a Relationship**

If they feel safe/respected, they will more likely demonstrate positive behaviors



## **Praise**

Children will repeat behaviors that are acknowledged  
Use descriptive praise



## **Be Positive**

Children feed off of your energy  
Enjoy the moment  
Smile and have fun!

# Preventative Behavior Strategies

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## Front load students

Anticipate transitions that may be difficult



## Catch them “being good”

The more praise for pro-social behaviors, the more likely they will repeat them



## Use visual supports

Often, students tune out language



## Reinforce often

Let them know when they are demonstrating “wanted behaviors”

# Preventative Behavior Strategies

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Give	<b>Give Choices</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Offering choices helps children feel empowered</li></ul>
Use	<b>Use when/then</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Follow non-preferred tasks with preferred tasks</li></ul>
Provide	<b>Provide breaks</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Anticipate behaviors and provide a break before hand</li></ul>

# ABC's of Behavior

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**A**  
Antecedent

What happened  
before the  
behavior  
occurred?

**B**  
Behavior

What is the  
behavior?

**C**  
Consequence

What  
happened after  
the behavior?

# Functions of Behavior

## Attention/Access

- To gain attention or get a reaction from adult/peer
- To gain access to an object/activity

## Avoidance/Escape

- To get out of something non-preferred
- To avoid a situation or activity

## Sensory

- To meet their own level of stimulation
- To meet a physical need

# Maintaining or Decreasing the Behavior

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How does the adult maintain behavior?

- Attention/Access
- Escape/Avoidance
- Sensory

How does the adult decrease the behavior?

- Attention/Access
- Escape/Avoidance
- Sensory

# Responding in the moment:

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- Remain calm
  - Ask for help/break if feeling overwhelmed
  - Understand function
  - Use position/blocking
  - Ignore behavior that is attention seeking
    - No eye contact/no words
  - Praise/reinforce other students
  - Praise/Reinforce for ANY wanted behavior
  - Wait them out

# Things to Keep in Mind



Children do not “misbehave” on purpose

They are communicating something



Behavior often increases before it decreases

Stay consistent



Remain Calm

Students pick up on our frustration



Remain positive

They did not wake up to ruin your day



They are little people!

We are the adults!

## Bob

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Bob is playing with Duplos. He tries to attach a block to his stack of 3. He can't quite get the blocks to connect. He looks up at the adult and begins to whine. He holds up the stack of blocks, looks at the blocks, and looks at the adult. The adult helps him put the blocks together.

# Shana

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Shana is riding a trike on the playground bike path. She sees a child move to the sandbox where Shana had just finished building a road-way. She leaps off her trike and hits the child. An adult comes over to comfort the child and scold Shana. Shana goes to the sandbox and continues construction on her road way.

# Madison

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Madison is in housekeeping, putting on high heels and a hat. Emily moves into the area and selects a purse from the dress-up box.

Madison shouts, “no” and bites Emily. A teacher comes over; she asks Madison to go to the quiet corner and then takes Emily to the bathroom to look at the bite. After 4 minutes, Madison leaves the quiet corner and returns to the house center. She grabs the purse Emily had selected and continues to play. Emily leaves the bathroom with the teacher and then begins an art activity with the teacher.

## Tim

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Tim is sitting at snack. He is prompted to take out his snack and eat. He tries to open the Ziploc but is unable. He cries and whines. The instructional assistant opened the Ziploc and handed it to Tim. Tim stopped crying and started eating.

## Behavior

Antecedent (Prevent)

Behavior (Teach)

Consequence (Reinforce)

Function of Behavior?

We must still fulfill the function of the behavior

## Functions of Behavior

Attention/Access

To gain attention from adult/peer

To gain access to an object/activity

To gain access to sensory input

Avoidance/Escape

To get out of something non-preferred

To avoid a situation, person, or activity

To avoid sensory input

# Resources

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- Early Childhood:
  - National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations (NCPMI)
  - <https://www.challengingbehavior.org>
- School Age
  - Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports (PBIS)
  - <https://www.pbis.org>