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Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) Click here for information on FBAs from Bridges4Kids. For a discussion of issues related to "adequacy" of FBAs and BIPs synthesized from recent research, click here. Publication containing basic information for those interested in learning more about FBA and effective intervention. It is a very nice FREE publication in PDF format written by Carl Liaupsin. Functional Behavioral Assessments - Felix is an inquisitive, resourceful 15-year-old high school student with traumatic brain injury. He has struggled academically and behaviorally for years. In middle school, when presented with a difficult or complex assignment, he would frequently whine, stomp his feet, or hit his teacher or another student. When reprimanded, Felix would often run out of the room and, on several occasions, left the school grounds without permission. Click here to download this brief (pdf version) and to learn about the behavior plan developed for Felix. Sample Letter: Letter requesting Functional assessment of behavior and positive behavior support plan - click here. Introduction to Functional Behavior Assessments (FBA) and Behavior Intervention Plans (BIP) by Tricia Luker Excerpt: IDEA '97 uses two tools, the functional behavior assessment [FBA] and the behavior intervention plan [BIP] to promote positive supports to a child's behavior difficulties. We're fetching your file...Please wait a moment while we retrieve your file from its home on the internet Suspensions and expulsions of young children are not developmentally appropriate practices. Yet, recent data indicate that suspension and expulsion occur regularly in early childhood settings. These exclusionary practices, which disproportionately impact children of color, deprive children of valuable learning experiences and have a negative impact on children's development that extends into grade school and beyond. Eliminating all forms of exclusion is urgent and vital to preparing all children for success. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and U.S. Department of Education (ED) have made this a key priority and issued a Joint Policy Statement on Expulsion and Suspension Policy in Early Childhood Settings. View the video below for an introduction to the issue and this guide. The purpose of this guide is to provide relevant, specific recommended policies and practices that are actionable and address the underlying root causes and provide effective alternatives. The recommended policies and practices are based on the most important research for eliminating suspensions and expulsions in early childhood settings and were developed with guidance from a panel of national experts. Using the interactive guide, program leaders can find resources on supporting social-emotional development, reducing challenging behavior, recognizing the role of cultural differences and implicit biases, and more. The guide is intended for those most likely to make an impact and with a great need for resources: early education program leaders in center-based settings who implement policies and procedures and promote practices; however, anyone seeking to learn more about strategies for eliminating suspension and expulsion in early childhood settings can benefit from using the guide. Get Started What recommended policies and practices are most important for you and your program? To help you prioritize, take the optional self-assessment that will provide you with a tailored roadmap to navigating the guide. Start the Self-Assessment The Introduction describes the contents of the guide and provides tips for how to get the most out of the guide. The guide can be read from start to finish, or the individual recommended policies and practices can stand alone. We recognize that implementing all recommended policies and practices may be overwhelming and that programmatic changes often need to occur in stages. To help you prioritize what recommended policies and practices are most necessary and timely to implement in your program, we have developed a self-assessment. The self-assessment is an optional tool that includes a brief questionnaire to help you reflect on your program's policies, practices, and needs. The results of the self-assessment will help you reflect on your strengths and needs and provide you a roadmap to navigating the guide. Citation Suggested citation for this guide: Schachner, A., Belodoff, K., Chen, W-B., Kutaka, T., Fikes, A., Ensign, K., Chow, K., Nguyen, J., & Hardy, J. (2016). Preventing Suspensions and Expulsions in Early Childhood Settings: An Administrator's Guide to Supporting All Children's Success. SRI International: Menlo Park, CA. Accessed from A FBA is not completed in the same way every time. The type of information that is collected varies depending upon the individual student's problem behavior, strengths, and needs. In some cases, specific tools are needed in a FBA to collect information about medications, sleeping patterns, or social and interactional skills. The level of complexity needed to complete a FBA varies as well. A teacher may conduct a simple and time efficient FBA to better understand a student's minor disruptive behaviors. However, a student who engages in serious aggression or self-injury at home, in school, and in the community may need higher levels of support from his teacher, parents, and other important people in his life. In this case, the FBA may require more time and energy to complete. Even though the FBA tools and level of intensity vary, the process remains the same. The FBA is considered complete when the following products have been documented:a clear and measurable definition of the problem behaviorevents that predict when problem behaviors will occur and will not occurconsequences that maintain problem behaviorsone or more hypotheses about the function maintaining problem behaviordirect observations data supporting the hypotheses. Hypothesis Statements The hypothesis about the function maintaining a student's problem behavior is a very important outcome of the FBA. The hypothesis statement starts with any setting events that increase the likelihood of problem behavior that have been identified in the FBA. Setting EventsAntecedents(Triggers)Problem BehaviorConsequencesSetting events affect how a student will respond to situations by temporarily increasing or decreasing reinforcers in the environment. For instance, a classroom activity a student usually enjoys may not be as reinforcing right before the holidays. Math class may be difficult for a student who has a learning disability, but on most days the student copes well. However, on days when this particular student has a bad headache, the presentation of math problems may be more aversive than usual. Setting events can occur immediately before a problem behavior or days in advance. Some setting events are obvious while other setting events can be more difficult to identify. For example, the death of a close family member that occurred before school started can increase the likelihood the student will engage in problem behavior a few months later when school starts. Setting events can be social (e.g. arguments), physiological (e.g. illness), or environmental (e.g. noisy or crowded rooms). Setting EventsAntecedents(Triggers)Problem BehaviorConsequencesEvents that directly precede and serve as a "trigger" for a problem behavior are called antecedents. Antecedents serve as cues signaling when a behavior will be reinforced. A substitute teacher can sometimes be an antecedent for problem behavior. In this situation, the presence of someone other than the students' teacher signals that talking loudly, pretending to have homework already turned in, and off task behavior in general will be reinforced, allowing the students to escape from their school work. Antecedents can be related to the physical setting, materials, time of day or social situations. Examples of common antecedents include verbal demands, criticism, teasing, the absence of attention, and the presence or absence of specific people, materials, or events. The difference between an antecedent and a setting event is that setting events increase the likelihood that an antecedent will trigger problem behavior. Setting EventsAntecedents(Triggers)Problem BehaviorConsequencesOne or more problem behaviors identified within a hypothesis statement may be maintained by the same function. Sometimes problem behaviors occur in a chain with less intense behaviors (complaining, tapping pencil loudly, placing head on desk) starting first and leading to more serious problem behavior (shouting, throwing pencil or books, pushing desk over). This important information can be used to intervene early in an escalating sequence of problem behaviors. Setting EventsAntecedents(Triggers)Problem BehaviorConsequencesA student's problem behavior may increase to obtain or avoid something. Consequences are the events that directly follow a behavior. Toys, praise, physical attention, and even "negative" attention are examples of events or items that may be identified as reinforcers. These events, items, or people immediately following a behavior are considered positive reinforcers if behavior increases when the consequence is presented. A behavior can also be reinforced by escaping or avoiding an event, item, or activity. If the consequence following a behavior results in escape or avoidance of events, items, or activities and behavior increases, it is referred to as negative reinforcement. Punishment, on the other hand, results in a decrease in behavior. A common mistake is to assume that a consequence is punishing for a student without considering whether the student's behavior is increasing or decreasing when the consequence is presented. The use of consequences such as time out, detention, and in-school suspension may actually be increasing the likelihood of problem behavior for students who engage in problem behavior to escape class or obtain attention from teachers and peers. At times, there is not a clear social function for problem behavior. In these situations, internal sensory feedback can be positively or negatively reinforcing a person's problem behavior. Behaviors that continue to occur when the students are alone or occur across many situations and settings are sometimes maintained by internal reinforcers. Challenging behavior can interfere with a child's own learning and that of the child's classmates. It can also be stressful for teachers and caregivers at home and may even be harmful to the child or others. Tier 3 recommendations focus on establishing and implementing a process for providing children with persistent challenging behavior with an assessment-based behavior support plan. Functional behavioral assessment (FBA) is a systematic process for collecting information about why a child's challenging behavior occurs. The information gathered from the FBA is then used to develop an individualized behavior support plan. The process is most successful when it uses a team-based approach. This team may include the child's parents, teachers, school administrators and directors, child care providers, behavior specialists, and other caregivers. An FBA gives a clear description of the challenging behavior and its context and helps the team understand why the child engages in that behavior. The use of FBA is mandated by law and, if used appropriately, can stop or reduce challenging behaviors before they lead to suspensions and expulsions. The implementation of an assessment-based behavior support plan is most suitable for addressing challenging behaviors that are persistent and impede a child's learning or that of others, when other appropriate approaches (at the universal or targeted level, for example) have not been successful. These interventions specifically target a child's skills in order to help him or her succeed and participate in daily activities and routines. How Do I Do This? Step 1. Discuss and reflect. Discuss with your teachers the importance of using a systematic process to understand how, why, and when a child's challenging behaviors occur, and how this information can be used to develop an effective behavior support plan. It is also important to recognize what systems and practices are currently in place to address challenging behavior. Teachers and staff should be supported in reflecting on their own practices. It may be helpful to ask questions such as: What do you currently do when there is a child in your classroom who engages in challenging behavior? What strategies do you use to address the challenging behavior? What's working well when you use these strategies? Have you encountered any challenges in using these strategies? It can also be helpful to discuss to what extent practices that are specifically relevant to FBA may or may not be present. Teachers may already be engaged in the steps for conducting an FBA, but might call it something different. You may want to ask: Do you have a process for collecting information about: Whom do you typically work with when trying to support a child with challenging behavior? Do you have experience conducting an FBA? Do you encounter any challenges? Are there any supports you would want in the future to help you conduct an FBA? When a challenging behavior occurs in your classroom, how is it being documented? Do you use specific tools or forms to describe the behavior and keep track of the frequency and intensity at which it is occurring? Has an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) been developed for this child? If so, how can the existing goals/outcomes of the IEP/IFSP be integrated into this discussion? In what ways can we align the outcomes/goals of the IEP/IFSP with the goals of the proposed behavior support plan? Step 2. Support teachers and providers in documenting the behavior. The nature of the behavior. The first step of the FBA process is to clearly describe the concerning behavior. What specifically does the child do or say? The behavior should be observable, measurable, and precise. Vignette 1: Shaun's disruptive behaviors include hitting, pinching, and kicking other children and adults. Vignette 2: Sophie's disruptive behaviors include crying, lying on the floor, refusing to participate (e.g., saying, "no,"), and leaving the assigned area. What happens just before the behavior. Writing down what events lead up to a challenging behavior can help teachers and caregivers understand what predicts or triggers the behavior. Vignette 1: Shaun is playing with the blocks and a dump truck, and another child reaches for a block. Vignette 2: Sophie's teacher announces that it's time to transition to circle time activities. Under what conditions is the behavior likely to occur. It's important to understand what setting event (experience, physical or emotional state) increases the possibility that the challenging behavior will occur. Examples include unexpected loss or change in activity, absence of a person, or hunger. Vignette 1: Shaun tends to exhibit challenging behavior in the block area or sandbox when another child tries to take a toy he's playing with or a toy that is near him. Vignette 2: Sophie tends to exhibit challenging behaviors during non-preferred activities like circle time. What adults and peers do when the problem behavior occurs. Observing what events happen right after a challenging behavior occurs can help teachers and caregivers understand what is maintaining the challenging behavior. Vignette 1: After Shaun hits, kicks, or pinches other children, they drop the toy and pick a new one. Vignette 2: Sophie's teacher, Mr. Brown, tries to convince Sophie to join the group on the carpet but eventually asks the teaching assistant to talk and work with Sophie quietly at a table. Why the child might be exhibiting the behavior. It is important to understand the reason or function of the child's behavior. How is it "working" for the child, and what does the child get out of it? There are two main functions of children's behavior: To obtain something (positive reinforcement), such as A preferred activity (e.g., playing with a favorite toy) Sensory input (e.g., interesting lights and sounds) Attention (e.g., time with an adult or peer, physical contact) To escape something (negative reinforcement), such as A non-preferred activity (e.g., a difficult task, a boring group activity) Sensory input (e.g., hunger, pain) Step 3. Use the information to develop a hypothesis. The information from this documentation can then be used to develop a hypothesis statement, or "best guess," about why the child's behavior is occurring. It should describe when or under what circumstances the behavior occurs, a description of the challenging behavior, and a statement about the function of the behavior. For example: Vignette 1: When another child tries to take his toy or a toy that is near him, Shaun hits and pinches the child, and as a result the child drops the toy and finds a new one. Shaun uses this behavior to obtain desired toys. Vignette 2: When the teacher announces it's time to transition to circle time activities, Sophie lies on the ground and cries, and as a result, the teaching assistant calmly talks and works with Sophie. Sophie uses this behavior to escape non-preferred activities and obtain attention from an adult. Step 4. Identify training needs. Support your teachers as they identify their professional development goals and training needs so they feel prepared and comfortable conducting an FBA. Take into account if teachers are brand new to the process of conducting an FBA or if they have some experience. For teachers who have not done this before, an in-person training led by a trained specialist who goes over each step of the process with hands-on exercises may be helpful. A free online module on determining the meaning of challenging behavior is available on the Center for the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL) website (see Module 3a). Discuss with teachers what they see as their strengths in conducting FBAs, as well as what they might find more challenging. For example, do staff understand how to systematically record information about the challenging behavior? Or are they struggling to analyze and interpret the data? It's also important to ensure that staff have adequate support (time and assistance) to conduct an FBA. Vignette 1: Shaun's teacher, Ms. Johnson, sees the value in collecting information about what predicts and maintains Shaun's challenging behavior but explains that she needs help with how to record this information. Her director, Ms. Holloway, helps Ms. Johnson develop the following goal: I will work with my team to gather and document in a systematic way information about what predicts and sustains Shaun's behavior. Ms. Holloway and Ms. Johnson then discuss possible strategies to accomplish this goal. Ms. Holloway proposes that she can give Ms. Johnson forms to record the appropriate information about Shaun's behavior. Ms. Johnson thinks this will help but also admits that she's most likely to use these forms if there's designated time for someone to go over the forms with her to ensure she's using them properly. Vignette 2: Mr. Brown describes how he and his team have completed different observation and interview forms documenting Sophie's challenging behavior but that he's not sure how to make sense of all the information they've collected. His director, Ms. Anderson, and he jointly decide on the following goal: I will work with my team to analyze the information collected about Sophie's challenging behavior to develop a hypothesis statement. They then brainstorm ways Mr. Brown can accomplish this goal. Ms. Anderson thinks that the school psychologist, Ms. Espinosa, can help Mr. Brown with analyzing the FBA data. Mr. Brown thinks the larger team he works with would also benefit from meeting with Ms. Espinosa. Step 5. Plan a course of action. After identifying professional development goals and needs, you should work with teachers to identify action steps to help them accomplish their goals. Vignette 1: The director, Ms. Holloway, reaches out to the program's behavior specialist, Ms. Flowers, to arrange a time to hold a training session about how to use FBA tools (e.g., ABC (Antecedents, Behavior, Consequences) Form, Context Card Form, and Functional Assessment Interview Form) for Ms. Johnson and her team members. Ms. Flowers leads a 1-hour training session with the entire team. They watch video clip vignettes and practice completing the FBA forms. Ms. Flowers also observes Shaun in the classroom during free play time and recess across two days, and works with Ms. Johnson to complete the ABC form. Ms. Flowers encourages Ms. Johnson to reach out to her with any further questions. Ms. Flowers then instructs the team to use these FBA tools to collect data about Shaun's behavior that will help them design an individualized intervention or behavior support plan for Shaun. Using the ABC Form and Context Card Form, the team is instructed to record each instance of Shaun's challenging behavior for the next 2 weeks. They then schedule a follow-up meeting to evaluate the data they collect and come up with a behavior hypothesis statement: "When another child tries to take Shaun's toy or a toy that is near him, Shaun hits and pinches the child, and as a result the child drops the toy and finds a new one. Shaun uses this behavior to obtain desired toys." Vignette 2: Ms. Anderson asks Ms. Espinosa, the school psychologist, to join Mr. Brown's next FBA team meeting focused on Sophie to help the team analyze the data they collected last week. Ms. Espinosa and the team review the information collected on the scatter plot, which shows how frequently Sophie exhibited any challenging behaviors and during which classroom routines. Ms. Espinosa facilitates a discussion about the data, and the team notices that Sophie's challenging behaviors are most likely to occur during transitions to circle activities. They discuss how Sophie loses interest, especially during songs and stories she doesn't like. The group also reviews the Antecedents, Behavior, Consequences (ABC) form they completed to further examine what happens during circle time activities for Sophie. Collaboratively, the team uses the data to develop the following behavior hypothesis statement: "When the teacher announces it's time to transition to circle activities, Sophie lies on the ground and cries, and as a result, the teaching assistant calmly talks and works with Sophie at a table during circle time. Sophie uses this behavior to escape non-preferred activities and acquire attention from an adult. Step 6. Acknowledge progress. It is important to recognize teachers and members of the functional behavior assessment team as they make progress, as well as for team members to acknowledge one another's achievements. For example: In regular staff emails or newsletters, add a "shout out" section where administrators and other staff can submit a brief comment about the progress made in conducting an FBA for a given child (e.g., "Thanks Ms. Johnson for working diligently with the behavior specialist to complete an ABC Analysis for one of your children. Your time and dedication to this process are greatly appreciated!"). Administrators can personally call or send handwritten notes to thank family members who are participating in the functional behavior assessment team. For example, Ms. Holloway could thank Shaun's grandmother for coming in after school to answer interview questions about her grandson's behavior at home, and for her commitment to working with the teachers to support her grandson's success at school. Administrators can develop a system so parents or other caregivers at home can send handwritten notes to teachers and staff on the behavioral assessment team thanking them for working with their child and family. During functional behavior assessment team meetings, team members can also acknowledge one another by periodically presenting selected team members with a treat (e.g., gift card for a local coffee shop) and a few words thanking them for a specific task (e.g., "Thanks Mr. Brown and Ms. Peterson for carefully recording information about Sophie's behavior on the scatter plot form. It really helped us figure out during which classroom routines Sophie's challenging behavior is most likely to happen."). Step 7. Assess progress and new needs. It is important to remember that implementing the use of FBAs is an iterative process that should be continually assessed to understand what is and is not working well, and to make adjustments and refinements as needed. For example, the FBA team my misinterpret the function of the behavior (e.g., the team thinks that the child is seeking attention when in actuality the child is trying to avoid attention). This could impose a consequence that actually reinforces the behavior instead of reducing it. Administrators can regularly meet with FBA teams to hear about what's working well and the challenges the team has faced. It may be helpful to have a midpoint check-in to identify and troubleshoot challenges. It is also valuable to hold a reflection session once the FBA is complete to compile a list of pluses (what worked well) and "deltas" (what the team would like to change in the future). Equally important is to brainstorm strategies for addressing deltas. FBA teams can also learn from each other by meeting or creating a document to share lessons learned and effective strategies. Vignette 1: Ms. Johnson explained she's really struggling with recording the frequency of Shaun's challenging behavior on the scatter plot form because she's too busy helping her other children. Vignette 2: Mr. Brown shared that he's encountered the same problem, and that he asked his teaching assistant, Ms. Peterson, to help with observing and documenting the information for Sophie's scatter plot. Mr. Brown also commented that Ms. Peterson was eager to help and has been a key player on their functional behavior assessment team. What Barriers Might I Run Into and What Are Solutions? Potential Barrier: Teachers lack the time and expertise to conduct a functional behavior assessment. Solution: It is important to remember that the FBA process is most successful when conducted by a team. Team members may include the teacher and teaching assistant, family members (e.g., parents, grandparents, extended family caregivers), behavior specialist, other school- or clinic-based related service professional (e.g., occupational therapist, speech and language pathologist), and school administrators. If possible, teachers should be supported by a trained specialist when conducting FBAs. Administrators can also communicate to teachers that conducting FBAs is a program priority. Teachers should be given enough time and support to collect and analyze the information for an FBA. Providing teachers with the right training and an easy-to-use, time efficient, and clear system is key. Potential Barrier: It's challenging to really engage the families and make sure they are on board with providing the same kinds of behavior supports at home. Solution: Time constraints can be a challenge for the entire team. However, in order to accurately conduct a FBA, full participation from all team members is recommended. Parents and family members can give insight to how, when, and why a child's challenging behavior happens because they may observe it at home, on the playground, at a family member's house, at the grocery store, with siblings, etc. Administrators and directors can be more involved by attending periodic parent-teacher conferences and making the effort to learn more about the child and what's going on at home. Communication is the first step to engaging families. Another possibility is to integrate the functional behavior assessment process into already existing IEP/IFSP meetings. One or both parents are required to attend IEP/IFSP meetings, so this will help ensure their participation in the FBA process. Where Do I Go for More Resources? To learn more about the reasons for challenging behavior and effective strategies for responding, watch this video by the Connecticut Office of Early Education. To learn more about the step-by-step process for conducting an FBA, visit this Technical Assistance Center on Social Emotional Intervention (TACSEI) web page. If you are looking for training resources on FBAs, visit the Center on the Social and Emotional Foundation in Early Learning (CSEFEL) Module 3a: Individualized Interventions: Determining the Meaning of Challenging Behavior. It includes PowerPoint presentations, handouts, presenter scripts, and video clips. For more information about practical strategies for helping young children with challenging behavior, visit the Center for Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation web page on Creating on Creating Teaching Tools for Young Children with Challenging Behavior. References Artman-Meeker, K., & Hemmeter, M. L. (2014). Functional assessment of challenging behaviors. In M. 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Contact us Client's InformationClient's NameDate of AssessmentReason for ReferralBackground InformationRelevant HistoryMedical/Mental Health Concerns:Developmental Milestones:Interviews:Direct Observations:Records Review:Target Behavior(s)Specific Behavior(s) of Concern:Verbal Outbursts:Leaving Classroom:Noncompliance:Assessment CriteriaCriterionDescriptionRating(High/ Moderate/ Developing)Frequency of BehaviorVerbal outbursts occur daily; leaving the classroom occurs 2–3 times weekly.Intensity of BehaviorVerbal disruptions significantly interfere with peers' focus and group activities.Duration of BehaviorOutbursts and off-task behaviors average 5–10 minutes per incident.Triggers/AntecedentsStructured activities requiring focus or group participation often precede the behaviors.Consequences of BehaviorBehaviors typically result in removal from group settings, providing temporary escape.Setting FactorsNoisy or overstimulating environments appear to exacerbate behaviors.Replacement BehaviorsUsing hand signals to request breaks instead of leaving the classroom or shouting.Section 5: Observational DataObservation SummaryDate(s): March 8, 10, and 12, 2086Location(s): Classroom and cafeteriaObservation Notes:March 8: Verbal outburst occurred during a group math task after being asked to wait for his turn. Erica Price shouted, "This is stupid!" and left his seat.March 10: During reading time, Erica Price left the classroom without asking and was found wandering the hallway.March 12: During art, Erica Price refused to follow instructions, repeatedly saying, "No, I don't want to," disrupting peers.RecommendationsIntervention Strategies:Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP):Ongoing Monitoring:Evaluator's SignatureAssessment Templates @ Template.net This site was developed for general and special education teachers, related service personnel, para educators, parents and other professionals engaged in the meaningful inclusion of students with special needs in the general education curriculum. For returning visitors, many of you can see the site has changed. The site is currently under construction and we are progressing to get all the features up and running.At this time, all pages should be active minus the case studies. We are working to bring these case studies back online and should have all text-based information back to pre-October 7th status no later than November 4, 2011. If there is something that is needed/required before then, please email Sean J. Smith at seanj@ku.edu.We hope to have a new and improved site up and ready for full use very soon. In the meantime, the information we have provided still exists and is there for your use. Thank you and we apologize for any inconvenience. Share — copy and redistribute the material in any medium or format for any purpose, even commercially. Adapt — remix, transform, and build upon the material for any purpose, even commercially. The licensor cannot revoke these freedoms as long as you follow the license terms. Attribution — You must give appropriate credit , provide a link to the license, and indicate if changes were made . You may do so in any reasonable manner, but not in any way that suggests the licensor endorses you or your use. ShareAlike — If you remix, transform, or build upon the material, you must distribute your contributions under the same license as the original. No additional restrictions — You may not apply legal terms or technological measures that legally restrict others from doing anything the license permits. You do not have to comply with the license for elements of the material in the public domain or where your use is permitted by an applicable exception or limitation . No warranties are given. The license may not give you all of the permissions necessary for your intended use. For example, other rights such as publicity, privacy, or moral rights may limit how you use the material. A functional behavior assessment template is a process through which we can identify the problems of certain behavior and the ways through which we can eliminate or improve the source of those problems. This assessment is a method developed by applied behavior analysis, whether it may be desirable or undesirable. Moreover, this process includes the identification of antecedents and consequences. Stimulus that may have been found to be reinforcing original behavior is called antecedent and the result due to deviation from original behavior is called consequences. The timing and place of a functional behavior assessment can work with other factors to help us understand a certain behavior and can be used to verify or detect a disability in an individual.Steps for Conducting Functional Behavior Assessment:Step 1: Identifying the problem's behavior. To conduct functional behavior assessment, it is important to observe the behavior of an individual and record it down to facilitate intervention plans. Observing an individual under different environmental conditions or setting helps in identifying the problem's behavior easily. The displayed behavior can then be defined and noted down to help understand the situation better. Step 2: Collecting Information on individual behaviorCollecting information on an individual's behavior through an indirect functional behavior assessment process and direct functional behavior assessment process will greatly help in recording the problem a behavior and will assist in analyzing the information gathered on an individual.Step 3: Make a HypothesisOnce the problem is recorded and analyzed, it is best to find out why exactly the behavior is occurring and for what reason. This step helps us to move towards a proper intervention plan. To form a hypothesis, it is best to determine why the individual is demonstrating such behavior and for what reason. Through a proper hypothesis, the (functional behavior assessment) conductors can come up with a statement that explains the reason for problem behavior and also as to why the problem behavior is occurring.Step 4: Intervention PlanOnce the problem's behavior is analyzed and hypothesized, a plan is formulated that shows ways to eliminate or improve the problem's behavior. This is called a behavior intervention plan. This plan provides the functional behavior assessment team with clear instructions to improve or eliminate the problem behavior and also a way to monitor its effects.Step 5: Evaluating the PlanThe recorded data from monitoring the plan is used to determine the effectiveness of the plan. Observations are made through which the (functional behavior assessment) conductors analyze whether the behavior has been eliminated or discontinued. This step determines whether the plan was successful or not. If the conductors failed to evaluate the intervention, the steps are reconstructed to give a proper result. Types of Functional Behavior Assessment:There are two types of assessment procedures used to detect a suspected behavior, called the direct functional behavior assessment process and indirect functional behavior assessment process.• Direct functional behavior assessment process: the direct functional behavior assessment process is recommended when the targeted or suspected is severe or frequent. This method works well when an individual shows an intense or complex behavior pattern.• Indirect functional behavior assessment process: the Indirect functional behavior assessment process is recommended when a situation needs immediate attention and the behavior is not severe. This process is less time-consuming and less technical and uses simple language.Templates for Functional Behavior Assessment:ww2.montgomeryschoolsmd.orgospi.k12.wa.usmovementdisorders.ufhealth.org Be sure to visit our Behavior Resources webpage to better understand the process. What is a FBA? A functional behavioral assessment/analysis (FBA) is a process for collecting information/data to help understand why problem behaviors occur. The data will also help identify ways to address the behaviors. A FBA is then used to develop a behavior intervention plan (BIP). How do I request a FBA? Make your request in writing. You might want to use a sample letters as a reference. Letter Requesting FBA and PBIS Plan Planning ahead for a meeting about your child's behavior needs will help you explain your own ideas about the best way to help your child in addition to listening to the ideas of others. Once a request for an evaluation has been made, Parents can request additional evaluations be done if there are concerns that areas of need are not being identified and addressed. Under MARSE R 340.1721b, the same 30 school day timeline applies. What is an ABC assessment? This is a popular feature of many behavior assessment forms. Your school district will have a specific format they use for behavior assessment, and you can request a copy. Parents might also use the ABC technique for challenging behaviors at home. A is for Antecedents – the events occurring prior to the problem behavior. Often, time and location are noted in this area too. What was the child doing immediately before the behavior? Who else was there? B is for Behavior – the problem behavior such as tantrums, hitting, etc. A note about the intensity or duration of the behavior can be noted here. What specifically happened? Was anyone the target of this behavior? C is for Consequences – the consequences for the child of his behavior – the results which follow the child's behavior (e.g., attention, power, or a correction such as time-out). How did others react? Did the child get what they wanted by doing this behavior? Some forms include a section to mark the perceived function of the behavior, broken down into four sections: escape/avoidance get attention get desired object/activity self-stimulation Remember that this is a best-guess as to why the behavior is occurring. Sensory Processing ABC Behavior Record What does the law say? You may request a FBA at any time if your child's problem behaviors are becoming worse, or when the team cannot explain to you why the problem behaviors occur. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires a FBA whenever a child with a disability has his or her current placement changed for disciplinary reasons. The evaluation requirements of IDEA make it clear that children must be evaluated in all areas related to the suspected disability. This means that if your child has problem behaviors that are not improving, your child may need an evaluation to examine the behaviors more closely. It is important for teams supporting students with behavioral needs, to understand the powerful role a properly conducted functional behavior assessment can have in reducing a student's behaviors. The purpose of an FBA is to identify the function or purpose behind a student's behavior. Understanding what may be motivating a student's behavior, will assist districts in the development of a BIP, which when implemented with fidelity should effectively reduce or eliminate the behavior. -from Conducting a Manifestation Determination Review MDE What do you do with the data from a FBA? The data gathered during the FBA will be analyzed. It is important to look for any patterns or common trends, such as patterns in the days of the week, or times of the day when the problem behavior occurs. You will also want to think about when the behavior does not occur. This may give you additional clues about contributing factors. The team should consider many factors, including: Is the behavior happening during the same activity and/or with the same materials? Does the behavior occur with specific people? Are there certain events/conditions that lead up to (or happen before) the behavior? Is there a consistent consequence? Does the behavior stop after a particular consequence? If this is consistent, does this mean anything about the function/ purpose of the behavior? Are there other personal factors that may be influencing the behavior such as illness, tiredness, or hunger? What if I disagree with the results of the evaluation? If you do not agree with the results of the individualized evaluation of your child, as conducted by the school system, you have the right to obtain what is known as an Independent Educational Evaluation (IEE). Data based individual decisions require quality, tested tools – check out this chart for behavioral progress monitoring tools. Could refusing to go to school be considered a behavior? School refusal (including chronic absenteeism, truancy, and school hesitancy) is a complex behavior that can lead to serious consequences. As with any behavior, the first step is understanding what's going on beneath the surface. Identifying the function of school refusal is critical to selecting an appropriate intervention to support the goal of returning to school. The underlying setting events, antecedents, consequences, and functions of behavior are unique to the student and require an individualized solution. School Refusal – Assessment and Intervention What comes after the FBA? Once you have data, the next step is to plan for change with a Behavior Intervention Plan. We also have a series of webpages to help understand behavior: Accommodations/Modifications Sometimes an accommodation or modification to the classroom or the curriculum is the solution to a challenging behavior Behavior Intervention Plan A written plan that identifies problem behaviors and how they will be addressed. Behavior is Communication All behavior happens for a reason, but why? Bullying Definitions, actions to take, specific protections for students with disabilities. Discipline Covering discipline, suspension, expulsion, manifestation determination review. Functional Behavior Assessment/Analysis A process for collecting data and analyzing the function of (ie- the reason why) a challenging behavior is occurring. Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports An approach to addressing challenging behaviors that teaches positive behavior skills rather than just using punishment. Seclusion and Restraint "Seclusion" means the confinement of a pupil in a room or other space from which the pupil is physically prevented from leaving. "Restraint" means an action that prevents or significantly restricts a pupil's movement. Sensory Processing dysfunction can be seen as noncompliance or bad behavior. School-Wide PBIS A building-wide initiative to support all students in school.

A FBA is not completed in the same way every time. The type of information that is collected varies depending upon the individual student's problem behavior, strengths, and needs. In some cases, specific tools are needed in a FBA to collect information about medications, sleeping patterns, or social and interactional skills. The level of complexity needed to complete a FBA varies as well. A teacher may conduct a simple and time efficient FBA to better understand a student's minor disruptive behaviors. However, a student who engages in serious aggression or self-injury at home, in school, and in the community may need higher levels of support from his teacher, parents, and other important people in his life. In this case, the FBA may require more time and energy to complete. Even though the FBA tools and level of intensity vary, the process remains the same. The FBA is considered complete when the following products have been documented:a clear and measurable definition of the problem behaviorevents that predict when problem behaviors will occur and will not occurconsequences that maintain problem behaviorsone or more hypotheses about the function maintaining problem behaviordirect observations data supporting the hypotheses. Hypothesis Statements The hypothesis about the function maintaining a student's problem behavior is a very important outcome of the FBA. The hypothesis statement starts with any setting events that increase the likelihood of problem behavior that have been identified in the FBA. Setting EventsAntecedents(Triggers)Problem BehaviorConsequencesSetting events affect how a student will respond to situations by temporarily increasing or decreasing reinforcers in the environment. For instance, a classroom activity a student usually enjoys may not be as reinforcing right before the holidays. Math class may be difficult for a student who has a learning disability, but on most days the student copes well. However, on days when this particular student has a bad headache, the presentation of math problems may be more aversive than usual. Setting events can occur immediately before a problem behavior or days in advance. Some setting events are obvious while other setting events can be more difficult to identify. For example, the death of a close family member that occurred before school started can increase the likelihood the student will engage in problem behavior a few months later when school starts. Setting events can be social (e.g. arguments), physiological (e.g. illness), or environmental (e.g. noisy or crowded rooms). Setting EventsAntecedents(Triggers)Problem BehaviorConsequencesEvents that directly precede and serve as a "trigger" for a problem behavior are called antecedents. Antecedents serve as cues signaling when a behavior will be reinforced. A substitute teacher can sometimes be an antecedent for problem behavior. In this situation, the presence of someone other than the students' teacher signals that talking loudly, pretending to have homework already turned in, and off task behavior in general will be reinforced, allowing the students to escape from their school work. Antecedents can be related to the physical setting, materials, time of day or social situations. Examples of common antecedents include verbal demands, criticism, teasing, the absence of attention, and the presence or absence of specific people, materials, or events. The difference between an antecedent and a setting event is that setting events increase the likelihood that an antecedent will trigger problem behavior. Setting EventsAntecedents(Triggers)Problem BehaviorConsequencesOne or more problem behaviors identified within a hypothesis statement may be maintained by the same function. Sometimes problem behaviors occur in a chain with less intense behaviors (complaining, tapping pencil loudly, placing head on desk) starting first and leading to more serious problem behavior (shouting, throwing pencil or books, pushing desk over). This important information can be used to intervene early in an escalating sequence of problem behaviors. Setting EventsAntecedents(Triggers)Problem BehaviorConsequencesA student's problem behavior may increase to obtain or avoid something. Consequences are the events that directly follow a behavior. Toys, praise, physical attention, and even "negative" attention are examples of events or items that may be identified as reinforcers. These events, items, or people immediately following a behavior are considered positive reinforcers if behavior increases when the consequence is presented. A behavior can also be reinforced by escaping or avoiding an event, item, or activity. If the consequence following a behavior results in escape or avoidance of events, items, or activities and behavior increases, it is referred to as negative reinforcement. Punishment, on the other hand, results in a decrease in behavior. A common mistake is to assume that a consequence is punishing for a student without considering whether the student's behavior is increasing or decreasing when the consequence is presented. The use of consequences such as time out, detention, and in-school suspension may actually be increasing the likelihood of problem behavior for students who engage in problem behavior to escape class or obtain attention from teachers and peers. At times, there is not a clear social function for problem behavior. In these situations, internal sensory feedback can be positively or negatively reinforcing a person's problem behavior. Behaviors that continue to occur when the students are alone or occur across many situations and settings are sometimes maintained by internal reinforcers.