

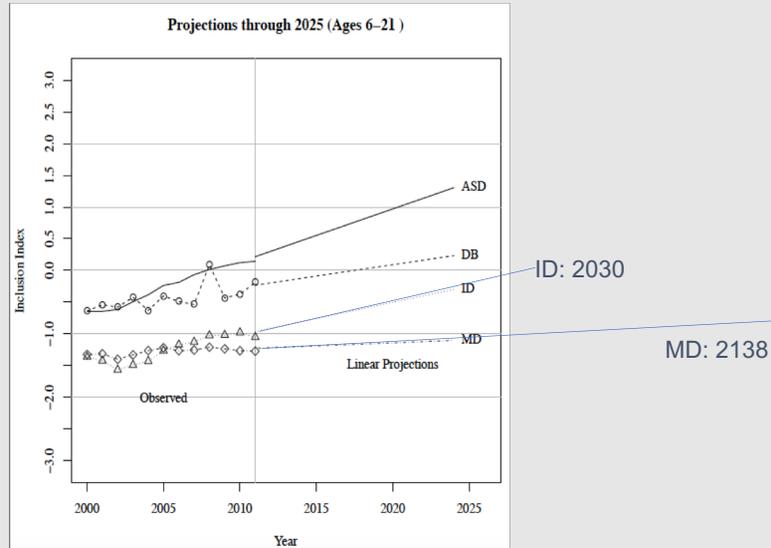
PARENTS AND
EDUCATORS IN
PARTNERSHIP,
EPISODE 5:
BEHAVIOR
SUPPORTS

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WHO AM I?



INCLUSIVE EDUCATION



Morningstar, Kurth, & Johnson, 2015

SUSPENSION, SECLUSION AND RESTRAINT

- Students with disabilities disproportionately impacted (U.S. Government Accountability Office, 2019)
- A survey of parents – 65% reported their child had been restrained, secluded, or subjected to aversive procedures at school (Westling et al., 2010). These procedures are most likely to occur in special education classrooms (nearly 41% of occurrences)
- Seclusion, restraint, and aversives always result in harm (physical and psychological); and in too many cases, death (Trader et al., 2017)

WHY ARE THESE PRACTICES USED?

- It's a tool – if you have the tool, you will use it (Craig & Sanders, 2018)
- Control and compliance are too often primary aim of persons working with students with disabilities (Sanders, 2009)
- Teachers misattribute causes of problem behaviors (Alevriadou & Pavlidou, 2016)
- Females may be more likely to respond to aggressive challenging behaviors with fear (Hastings, 1997)
- This is a particularly vulnerable population

OVERALL IMPACT OF PROBLEM BEHAVIORS

- People with disability more likely to experience abuse, loss of preferred living or school placements, staff turnover, and staff stress (Allen et al, 2013)
- Reactions to problem behaviors tend to be reactive and restrictive, resulting in the person feeling stress, anger, fear, anxiety, and desperation (Heyvaert et al., 2015)
- People feel loss of control in own life, without power or power imbalanced against them (Griffith et al., 2013)

BACKGROUND

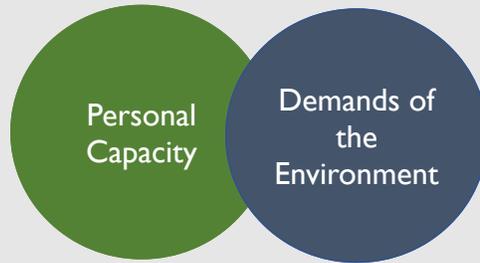
- Everyone behaves. All of the time.
 - Some behaviors are problematic
- Problem behaviors can be externalizing (e.g., hitting, kicking, spitting, throwing computers across the room, threatening others)
- Problem behaviors can be internalizing (e.g., aloofness, depression, withdrawing, lacking motivation)

WHY DO THESE PROBLEM BEHAVIORS OCCUR?

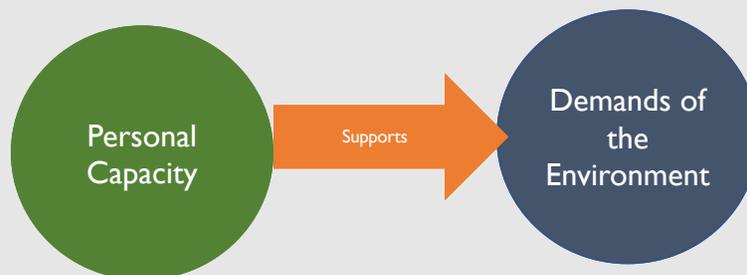


Personal Capacity

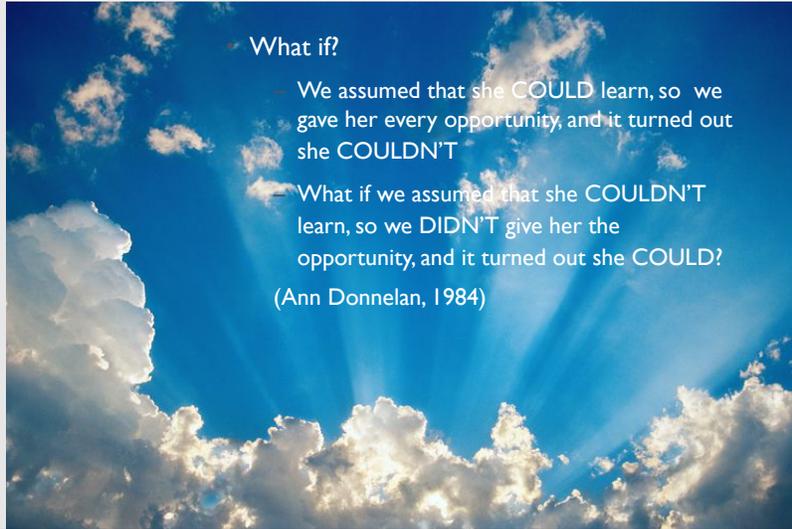
WHY DO THESE PROBLEM BEHAVIORS OCCUR?



WHY DO THESE PROBLEM BEHAVIORS OCCUR?



LEAST DANGEROUS ASSUMPTION



LEAST DANGEROUS ASSUMPTION

- What's the least dangerous assumption we would make when a person is displaying problem behavior (internalizing or externalizing)?

Everyone wants and needs a dignified, happy life.

This behavior is more reflective of the situation than the person.

This person is valued and important. This behavior does not reflect their lack of effort, will, or worth

LEAST DANGEROUS ASSUMPTION

- How might a teacher enact the least dangerous assumption about problem behaviors?

What would I want somebody to do for me if I were in a behavior crisis?

How would I want somebody to think about me if I were in a behavior crisis?

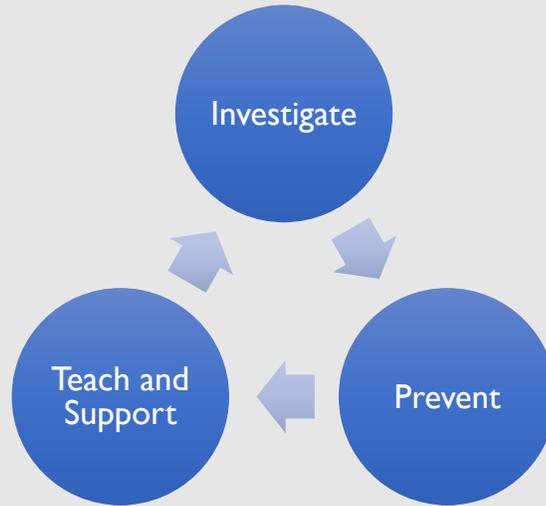
How would I want somebody to treat me if I were in a behavior crisis?

POSITIVE BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTIONS AND SUPPORT

- Assumes problem behaviors serve a function
- Aims to teach students alternate means to achieve their needs
- Holistic approach (psychological, biological, and environmental)
- Effective in reducing problem behaviors and teaching functionally equivalent replacement behaviors
- Positive impact as reported by persons with disability (impact on quality of life, “made me feel like a human” (McKenzie et al., 2018)



PBIS WITH LDA IN MIND, IN INCLUSIVE SETTINGS



UNDERSTANDING PROBLEM BEHAVIOR

WHAT YOU SEE:

Hitting
Kicking

Spitting
Throwing

Depression
Withdrawing



Arguing
Avoiding

Whining
Complaining

UNDERSTANDING PROBLEM BEHAVIOR

WHY YOU SEE IT:

- Health (toothache? Chronic headache? Side effects of medication? Lack of sleep?)
- Setting events – home life, weekend activities, interactions last hour, etc.
- Quality of life – having choices, being valued and respected, happiness
- “FBA” reasons – obtain tangibles or attention, avoid/escape, sensory stimulation (it feels good)



INVESTIGATE

- “The behavior just happens, for no reason!”
- “He was fine, and then boom!”
- “There is no function to the behavior”
- “She’s just a bad kid”

INVESTIGATE

1. Health. Many of our students cannot effectively tell us they do not feel well. Some have chronic conditions and do not know what feeling good feels like. Collaborate with families or school nurse, if needed, to rule out health problems.

- **Teeth** (when was the last dental appointment? Does the child need support to go to the dentist?)
- **Food or other allergies.** Is there something that is making the child feel unwell?
- **Overall health.** Headaches. Stomachaches. Joints. Fatigue. Medication side effects.
- **Sleep patterns.** Enough sleep? Wake up too early or too late. Bus schedules that impact sleeping.
- **What else is true for you?** When are you not at your best? Could this child be experiencing something that makes them feel not well enough to take it all on?

INVESTIGATE

2. Setting Events. Is there something going on that makes the person feel like they are not at their best?

- **Home life** - parent stress, finances, conflict, living conditions, death or birth in the family, visitation or living with alternating families. Really fun or really dreadful weekend activities. Et cetera.
- **Relationships** – who is around now? Who were they recently interacting with? Is this person still thinking about a recent interaction?
- **Environment** – Is it crowded? Spacious? Noisy? Quiet? Preferred activity? Dreaded activity? Preferred people?
- **Other setting events** that tip the scales of how a person will react?

INVESTIGATE

3. Quality of Life.

- **Environment** – It is unethical and immoral to force a person to comply with and conform to an environment that is unsafe or undignified.
 - Impact of segregation
- **Communication** – can this person make choices? Express agreement and disagreement? Is their communication respected, or is it redirected?
- **Dignity** – is the person treated with dignity and respect? Or are they treated as infants? Talked about, instead of to? Are their preferences and interests sought and respected? Do they live an enviable, flourishing life? Would you trade places with them?
- **Relationships** – Does this person have meaningful, valued, respected relationships with others?
- **What else** is important to your quality of life? For students of a similar age who do not experience disability?

INVESTIGATE

4. What works

- **Places and Activities that are Good**– When is the child feeling successful? Valued? Happy? Esteemed?
- **Who brings out the best in the child?** What are these people doing? How are they doing it? What joy is shared with the child and this person?
- **What strategies work?** Where do they work? With whom? For what?

LASTLY, INVESTIGATE

5. **Traditional 'functions' of behavior.** If all else has been ruled out (health and quality of life in particular):

- **Obtain** - What might this person be attempting to obtain (**tangibles** – materials, time, food) or **attention** (from whom? About what?)
- **Avoid** - What might this person be attempting to avoid or escape? Activities (difficult tasks, long tasks, tasks with no end in sight)? People (including you, other teachers or paraprofessionals, peers)? Environmental factors (hum of the A/C, fluorescent lights, crowded space)
- What **sensory stimulation** might this person be attempting to gain or avoid? This could be visual, hearing, proprioceptive, sexual, motor, etc.
- What **other factors** might we want to consider when figuring out the functions (purpose) of a behavior? What need is being unmet currently?

PREVENT

- How do we prevent problem behaviors?

Health

Setting Events

Quality of Life

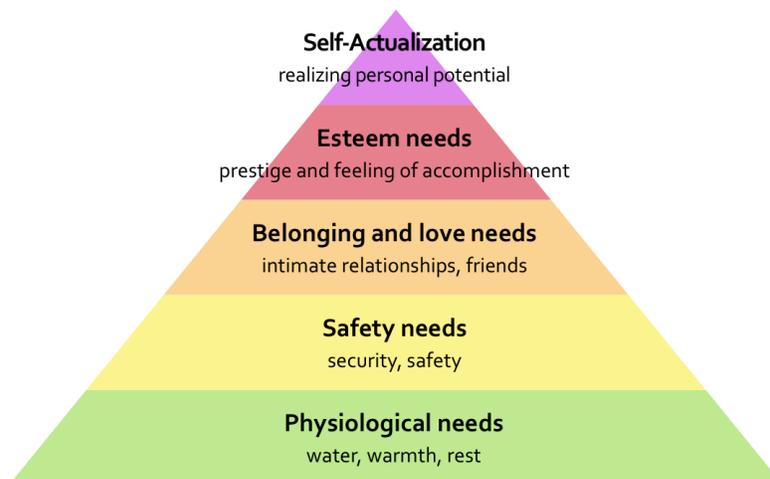
Traditional Functions

REMEMBER: HUMANITY

- **People with disabilities have human needs, not special needs.**
- **People need attention.** They need to be heard, seen, valued, and acknowledged.
- **All behavior is communication.**
All of it. All of the time.



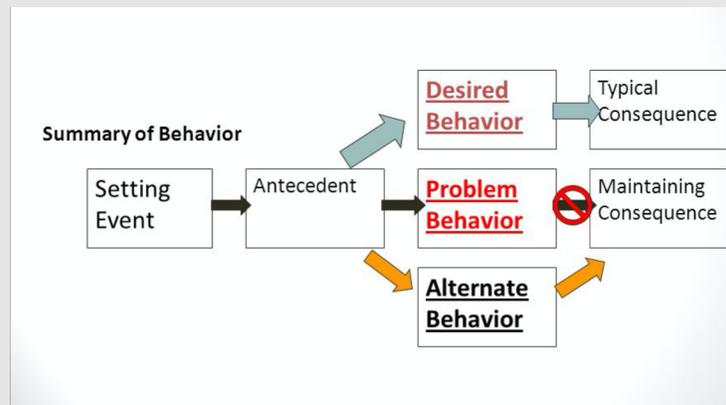
PREVENT: ENSURE NEEDS ARE MET



PREVENT – OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- Reward flexibility and self-control
- Pick your battles
- Respect and make least dangerous assumptions (maybe he's running away because he needs to get his energy levels up?)
- Be positive and specific (good job for what?)
- Use behavioral momentum – 80% / 20%
- Give choices
- Provide breaks
- Provide information and structure (transitions, what, who, where, how long)

WHAT IS THE LINK BETWEEN COMMUNICATION AND CHALLENGING BEHAVIOR?



PREVENTION TOOLS

- Environmental – Remove unnecessary environmental problems (e.g., visual clutter)
- Communication and collaboration – what do we need to know? How will we share it?
- Improve quality of life – friendships, dignity, provide access to communication, choices, fun
- Provide health care – communicate and collaborate with families and school personnel
- Other?

TEACH AND SUPPORT

- Use natural supports
- Teach skills that meet needs (i.e., communication, replacement behaviors).
 - It is unethical and ineffective to eliminate skills that serve an important function to a person. Must teach functionally equivalent behaviors.

COMPETING BEHAVIOR ANALYSIS

- What is hypothesis (function) of behavior?
- What are needed replacement behaviors (what should student do instead)?
- What interventions can we do to make old behavior irrelevant, ineffective, and inefficient?
- Which of these interventions are most likely to be sound, comprehensible, sustainable, contextually appropriate?

TEACH AND SUPPORT

- When do you learn best?
 - When you are feeling good, or feeling tired / angry / sick?
 - During a crisis? Or when you are feeling calm and safe?
- Who do you learn best from?
 - People you trust? Feel safe with? Can take risks with?
 - People who punish, belittle, or ignore you?
- How do you learn best?
 - When you are rewarded for your effort or only rewarded for success?
 - Does repeated failures and frustration make you want to keep trying?
 - Does lack of respect and choice make you do your best?
 - Does having a choice in time, topic, tools make a difference?

WHEN TO TEACH REPLACEMENT BEHAVIORS?

- Teach in a positive learning situation, which is NOT while a behavior is occurring.
- As part of a comprehensive educational plan.
 - Just like math facts, they may need to be practiced many times during the day when the learner is calm and attentive.

TEACH AND SUPPORT

Communication



TEACH AND SUPPORT

Make meaningful choices

- Where (e.g., at this desk or that one?)
- When (e.g., math or reading first?)
- Within (e.g., red pencil or yellow pencil?)
- Who (e.g., work with Bobby or Sally?)
- Between / Among (e.g., start at #1 or #10?)
- Terminate (e.g., take a break after 10:30 or 10:35?)
- Future (e.g., first we have to do reading, but do you want to finish math or type after that?)
- Alternative (e.g., do you want to write or type?)
- Refusal (e.g., do you want to watch or play?)

TEACH AND SUPPORT

Self-Regulation

My 5 point scale		
Feels like:		What it looks like:
MAD	5	
FRUSTRATED	4	
JUST RIGHT	3	
QUIET	2	
SLEEPY	1	

TEACH AND SUPPORT

Self-Monitoring

Self-Talk: how to talk myself through an activity or a problem. Did – Next – Now strategy

Self-schedule: Select enjoyable and necessary tasks, plan when to do them, and initiate doing them

Instructions: Circle the number each time you asked a friend for help during class in the morning (before lunch) and in the afternoon (after lunch).

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Morning	<u>1</u> 2 3 4				
	5 6 7 8	5 6 7 8	5 6 7 8	5 6 7 8	5 6 7 8
Afternoon	<u>1</u> 2 3 4				
	5 6 7 8	5 6 7 8	5 6 7 8	5 6 7 8	5 6 7 8

TEACH AND SUPPORT

Self-Evaluation

Did I know what I was supposed to do?
Yes / No

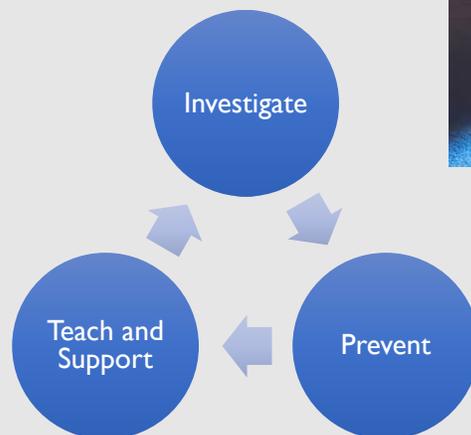
How well did I do what I was supposed to do?
What is the criteria?

TEACH AND SUPPORT

Self-Reinforcement

- Behavior monitoring – did I do what I wanted to do? If so, how will I reward myself?
 - Seek praise or feedback from others
 - Check that off the list
 - Give myself a treat (time, activity, tangible)

AND REPEAT!



SIX FINAL THOUGHTS

1. LEAST DANGEROUS ASSUMPTION

- Failure to learn is not failure in student ability, it is in my failure as a teacher to not understand how to teach this student.

2. WOULD I BE OK IF MY ACTIONS WERE PUBLIC?

- What if everyone saw and heard how I interacted with this student?
- What if everyone saw and heard how I interacted with this family?
- What if everyone saw this email?

Would I feel proud or ashamed?



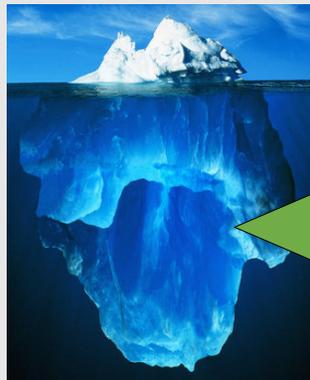
3. HOW DO I WANT MY STUDENTS TO FEEL WHEN THEY SEE ME COMING?



4. DON'T BE THE GPS VOICE



5. PROBLEM BEHAVIOR IS JUST THE TIP OF THE ICEBERG



Specific Behavior

Underlying support needs

6. BE WILLING TO DO DIFFERENTLY.

Do the best you can until
you know better.
Then when you know better,
do better.

-Maya Angelou



THANK YOU!

- Jennifer Kurth, Ph.D.
- jkurth@ku.edu

SOME RESOURCES

- Compliance and Control TED talk: <https://www.uri.edu/tedx/talks/amy-laurent-rethinking-support-for-autistic-individuals/?fbclid=IwAR2DEsHxqqHxYy4-3hB7zID9SqcrllVji8nljj6B8wISHmf26jRgZp22PA>
- Seclusion and Restraint testimony: <https://docs.house.gov/Committee/Calendar/ByEvent.aspx?EventID=108967>
- PBIS in the classroom: <https://www.pbis.org/school/pbis-in-the-classroom>
- Least dangerous assumption: http://www.uwosh.edu/coehs/cmagproject/readings/documents/Least_Dangerous_Assumption.pdf