



# Student Resource Guide

## 9. Positive Behavior Support, Part 1





# Student Resource Guide: SESSION 9

## Positive Behavior Support, Part 1

### OUTCOMES

When you finish this session, you will be able to:

- ▶ Identify specific problem behavior and the function it is serving.
- ▶ Identify and assess antecedent events.
- ▶ Describe target behavior.
- ▶ Identify and assess consequences that usually follow targeted behavior.
- ▶ Describe the role of DSP in both simple (primary) (A-B-C) and complex (supportive) (Scatter plot) functional analysis.
- ▶ Describe the role of the DSP in implementing a behavior support plan.

### KEY WORDS

**Choice:** Picking one activity, event, or thing over another.

**Antecedent:** What happens before the behavior.

**Behavior:** Actions that are used to communicate wants and needs.

**Consequence:** What happens after the behavior.

**Communication:** Sharing thoughts, views, and feelings.

**A-B-C Data:** Information about what happens before, during, and after a specific targeted behavior.

**Behavior Triggers:** Things in the environment that set off a targeted behavior.

**Behavior Function:** What the individual is getting or avoiding through the behavior.

**Support Plan:** Plan that determines a specific course of action to take when a targeted behavior occurs. Developed by a team of people who know the individual.

## Opening Scenario

*Remember Mary and Guy from the last Positive Behavior Support session last year? Mary is still working at Martha's Place and feels like she has learned a great deal in the last six months. Recently though, she has been having difficulty with a new individual who moved into the facility. Suzy is the first new resident to arrive since Mary has been working there. Suzy seems upset a great deal of the time and she yells and tries to hit the other individuals in the home. Mary wonders where to start with Suzy.*

## How to Support Individuals With Challenging Behaviors

In the Positive Behavior Support session in Year I you learned how to promote positive behaviors by creating and supporting environments that are conducive to a positive quality of life. You also began to try and figure out what the individual was telling us with the behavior. The strategies in the last session should assist you in establishing a positive environment that will help to prevent many challenging behaviors from occurring.

Even the most positive environment cannot prevent all challenging behaviors. When a challenging behavior continues even after the preventative measures have been taken; that is, the individual's communicative intent was determined, the life quality issues were addressed, and changes were made in the way you asked him to do things, it may be time to begin a team approach to examine the behavior more completely and develop a Behavior Support Plan.

The Person-Centered Planning Team is usually formed already and best able to develop a support plan for an individual's challenging behavior. This team includes people who know the individual well and interact regularly with him or her. The team might also include a Behavior Specialist who helps the team develop a support plan to help development replacement behaviors for the challenging behavior. The team may include:

- The individual
- DSPs or other support providers
- A representative from the individual's day program
- Family members
- Behavior specialist
- Regional Center case managers
- Others who know the individual and can assist with the development of the plan

### What is the Role of the DSP in Developing the Support Plan?

The DSPs who support an individual with challenging behavior should be included as part of the team that is analyzing the behavior and developing and implementing the plan. This is important because you are often the ones who have the most information and the most frequent contact with the individual. You are also an important part of the implementation of the plan after it is developed. You may be asked to assist the team in several ways:

- Collect information on the daily activities of the individual (individual's daily schedule, individual profile).
- Collect information on the specifics of the challenging behaviors such as how often it occurs, under what circumstances, etc. (Scatter Plot and A-B-C Data Sheet).

## How to Support Individuals With Challenging Behaviors (continued)

- Develop suggestions for replacement behaviors and activities [Motivation Assessment Scale (MAS), reinforcers].
- Implement the plan.
- Collect data on how the plan is working.
- Help inform the team on the success of the strategies in the plan.

As you can see, you are a critical team member and an important part of the plan's success. While you do not have to decide how to develop and implement the

plan by yourself, it is important that you understand its components.

Let's begin by talking about what each phase of the plan might look like. Remember, you are not expected to develop the plan by yourself. You will be asked to collect information and data on the specific behavior and intervention strategies, but the decisions will be made by the team. The more information the team has about the individual and the challenging behavior, the more likely the success of the intervention strategies.

## Developing a Positive Behavior Support Plan

In the last session on Positive Behavior Support, we talked about several ways to look at behavior in general terms for all individuals living in the home. In this session we will talk about the information you will need to develop a positive Behavior Support Plan.

Steps for developing a Behavior Support Plan include:

1. **Identify "Quality of Life"** areas that may be lacking and therefore contributing to behavior challenges. Figure out how to improve these areas in the individual's life; for example, add more opportunities for choice and variety, suggest meaningful activities based on preferences, or use a more person-centered planning process.
2. Identify and **define the challenging behavior(s)** by precisely defining exactly what the person does (kicks, throws objects, hits self with fist, etc.) and observing when the behavior occurs, how long the behavior lasts, how often it occurs, and how intense it is. You can use a scatter plot that looks at how long the behavior lasts and when it occurs.
3. **Identify the antecedents** (behavioral "triggers" and other factors) that are present immediately before the challenging behavior occurs), including medical variables, activity, environment, people present, time of day, etc. You can use the A-B-C observation data, the scatter plot, or the positive behavior support worksheet questions that we will talk about.
4. **Identify other events** including medical variables, activity, environment, people present, time of day, etc., that may be influencing behavior. Again, the A-B-C observation data, scatter plot (a method for keeping track of how often a behavior occurs), and worksheet may help.
5. **Identify the consequences** that happen after the behavior that may be reinforcing (maintaining) the challenging behavior. Remember, the reason that "challenging" behavior exists is because it is being reinforced by something. You want to find out what individuals are "getting" or "avoiding" through their challenging behaviors and give them a more appropriate strategy or skill to use that will still allow them to get their needs met.

## Developing a Positive Behavior Support Plan (continued)

6. **Identify “learning characteristics”** of the individual so we know how the individual learns best. When you teach new skills and replacement behaviors you need to match your teaching style to the individual’s learning style.
7. Use the individual learning characteristics to **teach to the individual’s strengths**. If an individual learns best by what he or she sees, then you should maximize your use of gestures, modeling, and visual cues like pictures and objects. If an individual learns best by actually “doing” an activity, you want to promote opportunities for participation in healthy routines to help the individual acquire new skills and behaviors to replace the challenging routines and behaviors.
8. **Identify possible reasons for the problem behavior**. What is the individual getting or avoiding through their behavior? Review your assessment information and the results from a Motivation Assessment Scale (which we will look at later) to help you develop a hypothesis or “best guess” as to why the behavior is happening and what the behavior is saying. Is it related to medical issues like pain, allergies, hunger, etc., or is the behavior a communication of wanting to get or avoid something?
9. **Identify replacement behaviors** or skills that
  - a. Allow the individual to get their needs met in a more socially appropriate way.
  - b. Will “work” just as well as the challenging behavior.

*Mary looks at the preceding list of steps in developing a plan and wonders how to apply these steps to help Suzy adjust to the new home and feel comfortable and happy. The DSPs at Martha’s Place have all worked on creating a positive environment at the home. They have also worked on supporting all of the individuals to have a good quality of life. Mary wonders how to positively support a new, unhappy resident. She knows she should develop a relationship with Suzy and try to understand why she is unhappy. Mary feels overwhelmed and doesn’t know what to do.*

How do you begin to support a person with challenging behavior? Let’s begin by looking at the previous list of steps in developing a support plan and break each of the items into some specific activities that can be used to develop an overall support system for individuals with challenging behavior.

All behavior has meaning and serves a need for the person. You need to do some detective work to find out the meaning (or purpose) of the behavior. We call this process functional assessment. Once you have a better understanding of why the behavior is occurring, you can identify and teach appropriate replacement skills as an alternative to the challenging behavior.

## Examining Quality of Life Areas

*To begin the process of functional assessment, let's look at some important questions to help us figure out the meaning of the behavior and why it is happening.*

*To begin this process we will break each item in the Behavior Support Plan into some specific activities.*

**Step 1. First, identify “Quality of Life”** areas that may be lacking and contributing to behavior challenges. Figure out how to improve these areas in the individual's life; that is, add more opportunities for choice and variety, suggest meaningful activities based on preferences, or use a more person-centered planning process.

One of the first steps in developing a behavior support plan is to look at an individual's quality of life areas. It is important to “get to know” the individual to figure out whether the quality of his or her life is enriching and encouraging to them. Think about how you get to know any new person who comes into your life. You usually begin by talking to them and finding out about their life; for example, who is in their family, what kind of work they do, what kinds of things they like to do for fun, etc. You also spend time with the person doing activities that you both enjoy and you watch and pay attention to the things they choose to do and say. You find out what they like and don't like, usually in a very informal way over time. But how do you do this with a person who is not able to use words to tell you these things? Where would you start?

Ways of getting to know a new individual in your home:

- Attend the IPP meeting that is held prior to or immediately after the individual arrives.
- Attend the person-centered planning meeting to plan for a smooth transition into the new home.
- Read the file.
- Talk to other staff and team members to see what they observed or learned about the individual.

It is helpful to create a profile of the individual so that all team members can give input and understand more about the individual. The profile could include information that you might or might not readily find in the file but would be helpful for people supporting the individual to know in order to create a supportive and welcoming environment. Information about what the individual likes and dislikes, strengths and challenges, and any other information about the individual is helpful. This information is collected by all the team members and is done by:

- Observing the individual.
- Talking with other DSPs about their observations.
- Having discussions at the person-centered planning meeting and IPP meeting.
- Talking with family members and others who know the individual.

The following profile can help to organize the information for easy use and reference.

**ACTIVITY**

**Creating a Profile of the Individual**

*Develop a profile of the individual's characteristics, strengths, and needs based on input from the team members.*

**Profile of the Individual's Strengths and Needs**

.....

Who is \_\_\_\_\_?

.....

What does \_\_\_\_\_ like?

.....

What are \_\_\_\_\_'s strengths (i.e., capabilities)?

.....

What does \_\_\_\_\_ dislike?

.....

What are \_\_\_\_\_'s challenges and needs?

Having the same information in one place is helpful to those providing support and helps everyone get to know a great deal about the individual in a short period of time.



**A C T I V I T Y**

**Think-Pair-Share**

*Look over the questions on the individual profile that you just created and think about an individual that you support, either now or in the past, who has challenging behavior.*

*Think about, then share your answers to the following:*

- *Which questions would you be able to answer the questions about that individual?*
  
- *Which questions would you have trouble answering?*
  
- *If you did not have all the information, where would you go to get it?*

**Quality of Life Questions to Consider**

As you recall from the last session on Positive Behavior Support, we discussed the quality of life of individuals and how important it is to consider these issues for all of the individuals you support. It is particularly important to consider the quality of life for individuals who exhibit challenging behavior. They may be trying

to tell us that something about their life quality is missing or not acceptable. It is helpful to consider these questions when developing a profile of an individual as it helps us think about things the individual likes and dislikes along with the ways that these likes and dislikes might be included in their daily life.

**Step 1: Examining Quality of Life Areas (continued)**

**ACTIVITY**

**Quality of Life Questions**

*Look over the questions that follow and think about how they might be helpful in developing a plan for an individual with challenging behavior.*

**Quality of Life Questions to Consider**

.....

1. *What would increase or strengthen the individual's friendships and social activities?*

.....

2. *How can you help the individual to be involved in more activities in the individual's home, school, work, or community?*

.....

3. *How could you help the individual have more opportunities for choice making and be able to control more aspects of his or her life?*

.....

4. *How can the individual's self-esteem and confidence be strengthened?*

.....

5. *What might interfere with the individual's ability to have greater independence and a higher quality of life?*

### **Individual Daily Schedule**

Another way to get to know an individual is to look at how they spend their time. This can be done informally by watching and noticing what the individual does. When an individual has challenging behaviors and is clearly upset on an ongoing basis, a more formal look at their schedule might be a way to find out what they like and don't like to do. Writing down the typical daily schedule is a good way to gather this information.

The Typical Daily Schedule that follows is one way to record information about how an individual usually spends their day. You would record what the individual does from the time he or she gets up until they go to bed. Support providers complete the schedule by listing the time of day, activity the individual is

involved in, and what kind of support and who provides the support, if necessary, for each activity. Several days worth of schedules might be kept and then the information compiled to form a "typical" day schedule. At the bottom of the schedule is a place to record any changes that might occur on a weekend or an infrequent basis.

This information can also be particularly helpful when looking at patterns of behavior to determine when, where, and under what circumstances a behavior occurs.

A completed example of a typical daily schedule follows. You will notice information about daily activities along with activities that occur less frequently.

**Step 1: Examining Quality of Life Areas (continued)**

**ACTIVITY**

**Think-Pair-Share**

Look over the completed schedule for Kevin and think about whether it is representative of the same type of schedule you might have at your facility. Then think about what you are able to learn about Kevin by looking at this schedule. Turn to your classmate and briefly share what you think you could say about an individual by looking at their daily schedule.

A blank individual daily schedule is available in Appendix 9-A for you to use in your facility.

**Kevin's Daily Schedule**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Support Person</b>
6:30 a.m.	Wake up housemates	Sally
7:00-8:00 a.m.	Breakfast and a.m. routine	Sally
8:00 a.m.	Take transit bus to work	
9:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.	Work at Home Depot	Job coach
2:30 p.m.	Arrive home on transit bus	Jon
3:00-3:30 p.m.	Other housemates arrive home	Jon and Dan
3:30-5:00 p.m.	Home Chores	Jon
5:00-6:00 p.m.	"Free Time"	Dan
6:00-7:00 p.m.	Dinner	Jon and Dan
7:00-9:00	(M,W,Th, F) Board games/social time	Jon and Dan with other housemates
7:00-9:30 p.m.	(Tuesdays) Community Outing	Jon
9:30-11:00 p.m.	Relax/video games, etc.	Dan

**Weekend Schedule Changes:**

Kevin and other housemates sleep in and go on community outings both days.

## Step 2: Defining the Challenging Behavior

Step 2. Identify and *define the challenging behavior(s)* by precisely defining what the person does (kicks, throws objects, hits self with fist, etc.) and observing when the behavior occurs, how long the behavior lasts, how often it occurs, and how intense it is. (You can use a scatter plot to look at how long the behavior lasts and when it occurs.)

Remember in the last positive behavior section we talked about figuring out what the individual is trying to tell us with behavior. Determining the communicative intent of the behavior is often helpful in trying to define the behavior that the individual is using to tell us what is wrong. Clearly defining the behavior is also important when you begin to develop a plan for changing the behavior. The following questions might be helpful in defining the target or challenging behaviors. Remember, you may not have all the information on each of these yet but this is a place to begin to list the specifics about the challenging behavior.

It is important that the target behavior be defined in clear terms that are observable and measurable. This means that you and others will know the behavior when you see it. When the behavior is clearly defined, it can be recorded as it happens and determine if it is improving or changing over time.

Defining the behavior. It is important to use words that are descriptive and that you can see.

Instead of saying the behavior is “acting out” you could say that the individual yells, hits, swings arms, stomps feet, etc. instead.

Instead of “gets upset” you could say that the individual cries, screams, clenches fists, slams fist down, etc.

**Step 2: Defining the Challenging Behavior (continued)**

**A C T I V I T Y**

**Defining Target Behaviors**

*Directions: Continue to think about the individual with challenging behavior that you have described in the previous activities. Answer the following questions about their challenging behavior to help you define the behavior that the individual exhibits. Write it on the worksheet. Turn to a classmate and describe.*

.....  
*Determine what the individual's problem behavior looks like:*

.....  
*Estimate how often the behavior occurs:*

.....  
*Describe how intense or severe the behavior is:*

.....  
*Determine what skills appear to be lacking:*

It is important that you be as clear as possible when defining the behavior as it will be used in all of the next steps for how you measure the behavior.

### Step 3: Identifying the Antecedents

**Step 3. Identify the antecedents** (behavioral “triggers” and other factors) that are present immediately before the challenging behavior occurs, including medical variables, activity, environment, people present, time of day, etc. You can use the A-B-C observation data, the scatter plot, or the positive behavior support worksheet questions, which we will talk about in a few minutes.

You also want to begin to figure out as much as you can about the challenging behavior such as how often it occurs, what happens before the behavior that might cause it, and what might be motivating the individual. Completing assessment tools (like A-B-C data sheets, a scatter plot, or a Motivation Assessment Scale) can help you find out why the behavior is happening.

### The A-B-Cs of Behavior

First, let spend a few minutes talking about the A-B-Cs of behavior. Here is a simple tool that helps you to be aware of patterns in behavior(s) over time. It’s called an A-B-C data sheet. You will notice the A-B-C chart contains three columns: the first or far left column is for listing the Antecedents (what happens before the behavior), the middle column is for listing the Behaviors, and the last or far right column is for listing the Consequences (what happen after the behavior) of the behavior. Let’s go into more detail about each section.

The “**A**” section stands for **Antecedents**, or what happens right before the behavior happens. This is where you would document time of day, the place where the behavior happened, what people were around, the activity, and anything else you noticed that may have “triggered” (caused the behavior to occur) the behavior.

The “**B**” section stands for the **Behavior**. In this section, write down what happened during the behavior; that is, what the individual actually did. This should be stated in measurable and observable terms.

The “**C**” section stands for **Consequences** or what happened after the behavior. Here is where you should record how individuals responded, what they did after the behavior, and any other consequences or outcomes that followed the behavior.

The A-B-C data sheet should be one of the first tools you use when confronted by challenging behavior. You can easily make your own A-B-C sheet on a piece of blank paper by simply dividing it into three sections, one for each sections.

Remember that the more A-B-C data you have, the easier it is to identify patterns in the antecedents and consequences.

## A-B-C Data Sheet

<b>ANTECEDENT</b> <i>What happened BEFORE the Behavior</i>	<b>BEHAVIOR</b> <i>What happened DURING the Situation</i>	<b>CONSEQUENCE</b> <i>What happened AFTER the Behavior</i>
<p><b>Things we can find out:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify <b>behavior triggers</b> or what sets off the behavior?</li> <li>• <b>When</b> is it more and less likely to occur?</li> <li>• <b>Where</b> is it more and less likely to occur?</li> <li>• <b>What activities</b> are most and least likely to promote the behavior?</li> <li>• Are medications or medical factors influencing the behavior?</li> <li>• What do people <b>do or say</b> that leads to a behavior?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Things we can find out:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What does the behavior look like?</li> <li>• What did the individual actually do?</li> <li>• How often does it happen?</li> <li>• How long does it last?</li> <li>• How severe was it?</li> <li>• Are we paying attention to decreases in or absence of typical behaviors also?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Things we can find out:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is the payoff for the challenging behavior? (All challenging behavior is getting reinforced by something!)</li> <li>• What is the behavior “saying” to us?</li> <li>• What is the individual “getting” or “avoiding” through the behavior?</li> </ul>

## The A-B-Cs of Behavior (continued)

Recording this information on an “A-B-C” data sheet will help you to find patterns in antecedents and consequences so you understand better why the behavior happens. When you look at antecedents, you can find out when behaviors are more and less likely to occur, where, with whom, and during which activities the behaviors are more and less likely to occur.

This A-B-C worksheet focuses on antecedents and consequences to the behavior over time. This tool should be one of the first ones used when you are faced with a challenging behavior. When you record A-B-C data over a period of time, you should be able to see patterns in the antecedent data. These patterns should help identify the circumstances around the behavior:

- When?
- Where?
- With whom?



### Antecedents

This data should help you to identify some behavior “triggers” that are likely to lead to the challenging behavior. Sometimes you find out that things you say or do may actually be triggers for an individual’s behaviors. Once you figure this out, you can often change what you are doing or saying and actually see an improvement in the individual’s behavior. Similarly, you should be able to find some patterns in the consequences by looking at the A-B-C data. It is important to find out what consequences usually follow a challenging behavior.

Examples of antecedents:

- **Personal expectations** are the expectations the individual has about the environment, what will be happening to him or her, and how predictable these events are; for example, when meals are usually served.
- **Expectations of others** about the individual; that is, what others assume they can or can’t do. For example, I know if we try to go to an action movie, Jack will throw a fit. Individuals often live up or down to the expectations that others have of them. If we expect a person to display behavior challenges, they probably will!
- **Nature of materials** that are available to the individual. What is his or her reinforcement value and is it meaningful; for example, someone likes rock and roll music, but only country western is available.
- **Nature of the activity** in which the individual is engaged. How difficult is the activity for the individual? Is it something that the person likes or prefers? Is the activity functional and age appropriate?
- **Nature of the instructions given to the individual** refers to how clear and simply instructions are given. Are they given verbally, visually (pictures, written cues, modeling, showing the student, etc.), through signed information, or other ways?
- **Number of people present** in the environment.
- **Behavior of other people present** can have a big influence on behavior, both good and bad.
- **Environmental pollutants** include noise, crowds, temperatures, lighting, etc.
- **Time of day when behaviors occur** or don’t occur. You can use a “scatter plot” to help find patterns in behaviors; for example, when are behaviors most and least likely to occur?
- **Individual’s physiological state** such as hunger, medication, seizures, pain, medical issues, lack of sleep, etc.
- **Length of activity** is the amount of time it takes to complete an activity. This can have a big influence on behavior. Sometimes, breaking down an activity into smaller parts can help.
- **Sudden change in routine** can act as a “trigger” for behaviors to occur.
- **Predictability** means that things happen in a certain, regular way.

It is important for you to pay attention to what happens before and after the behavior because it helps you to understand the relationship between a person’s behavior and its antecedents and consequences. By paying attention to this relationship, you can do a better job of finding out what a person is saying through behavior and figure out an appropriate replacement behavior.

**ACTIVITY**

**A-B-C Worksheet**

**Find the Behavior Triggers**

Directions: In small groups, read and discuss the following stories. Underline the possible antecedents (what happened before the behavior) that may be acting as a “trigger.”

.....  
**Scenario 1**

*Time: 9:30 p.m.*

*Location: Ramon’s room*

*Behavior: Scream/yell*

*Incident: Ramon’s roommate was watching “Jeopardy” on television in their room. Ramon told his roommate that he wanted to watch wrestling instead. His roommate said “No.” Ramon started to scream and yell profanities at his roommate. Staff came into the room and asked Ramon what was going on. Ramon said he wanted to watch wrestling. Staff told Ramon he could watch wrestling on the television in the living room. Ramon stopped screaming and watched wrestling in the living room.*

.....  
**Scenario 2**

*Time: 7 p.m.*

*Location: Loretta’s room*

*Behavior: Bite self/scream*

*Incident: Loretta was sitting in her room listening to the radio. Staff came in and said, “Loretta, you need to do the dishes now.” Loretta started to bite her arm and scream. Staff asked Loretta to take deep breaths until she calmed down.*

.....  
**Scenario 3**

*Time: 1:30 p.m.*

*Location: The Mall*

*Behavior: Throwing lunch pail*

*Incident: The DSP was supporting four individuals on a shopping trip to the mall. The DSP said, “It’s time to leave and go to the bus stop.” Jose threw his lunch pail across the store. Staff helped Jose to pick it up and then they left the store.*

## Scatter Plot

The scatter plot is another way to look at and define behavior based on how often and when it occurs. This simple tool takes very little time and effort to complete. It was developed by Dr. Paul Tochette from the University of California, Irvine. It has squares representing 30-minute intervals from 6:00 a.m. through 10:00 p.m. for an entire month.

The person recording the data is asked to place an “X” in the square that corresponds to the time and date a challenging behavior occurs. If a behavior occurs more than three times in 30 minutes, darken the whole square.

After the data has been recorded for three to four weeks, use the scatter plot to identify patterns in behavior over time. This can help you identify when the behavior is more likely to occur and then match those times and days to the activities, environments, task demands, people, and other events that may be “triggering”

the behavior. It is also important to look for times when the behavior is least likely to occur so you can find out what things are “working” in the individual’s life.

Some behaviors work well with a scatter plot. These include: aggressive behavior toward others, tantrums and toileting accidents, ripping off clothing, or breaking or hitting things. The scatter plot is not as useful with very high frequency behaviors; for example, any behavior that occurs an average of 10 or more times an hour.

Let’s look at a scatter plot about Dennis. The behavior is taking clothes off in public. This data was not collected on the weekends, which is why there are no “X’s” in the two-day spots representing Saturdays and Sundays. Look for patterns when the behavior is most likely and least likely to occur. What questions would you ask of the staff that supports Dennis?

## Scatter Plot

Name: Dennis Bockman

Month/year: 3/99

Behavior Definition: Taking clothes off in public

Behavior did NOT occur    
  Behavior DID occur    
  Behavior occurred 3x or more

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
6:00-6:30am																							
6:30-7:00																							
7:00-7:30																							
7:30-8:00																							
8:00-8:30		x	x	x				x		x	x			x		x	x	x					
8:30-9:0	x	x	x	x	x			x	x		x			x		x	x	x					
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## Scatter Plot (continued)

In your groups, spend about five minutes discussing the following questions based on the scatter plot:

Some patterns you should be able to identify:

- Behaviors happen most often between 8:00 a.m. and 9:30 a.m. What is happening during those times?
- Behaviors happen least often (not at all), between 9:30 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. What is working during these times?
- There also seems to be a pattern of higher likelihood for the behavior on every fifth day (Fridays).
- What questions would you ask staff members who support Dennis?

Again, you can see how so many different things influence behavior and how we might be able to support individuals in learning better ways of communicating by changing environmental “triggers.”

### ACTIVITY

#### Scatter Plot

*Look at the schedule for Kevin that follows. It contains two weeks worth of data on Kevin's target behaviors of screaming and cussing. Use this information to plot his behaviors on the blank scatter plot following it.*

*After plotting the behavior on the graph, refer back to Kevin's daily schedule to see what he is doing during the times he exhibited the target behavior. Look for patterns in Kevin's behavior when the behavior occurs the most and the least. Try to answer the following questions:*

- 1. What is different about weekday mornings (when there are problem behaviors recorded) and weekend mornings (no problem behaviors recorded)?*
- 2. Why are Tuesday evenings (no problem behaviors recorded) different from the rest of the weekday evenings (Mon/Wed/Thurs/Fri) when there are behaviors?*
- 3. What is different about weekend activities (no problem behaviors recorded) and weekday evenings when there are problem behaviors?*
- 4. Why do you think Kevin has no problem behaviors during the weekdays?*
- 5. What minor changes would you make in Kevin's schedule to help his day go more smoothly and hopefully reduce some of his challenging behaviors?*

## Kevin's Data

Directions: Review the two weeks of data below. Using the scatter plot that follows, mark an “ X “ under the appropriate time and date for every time Kevin

screamed or cussed. When you are finished, compare Kevin’s daily schedule to the patterns you see on the scatter plot.

**When is Kevin more and less likely to scream or cuss, and why?**

<b>Date:</b>	<b>Time:</b>	<b>Activity/Behavior:</b>
9/5	6:31 am	Screamed
	6:35 am	Screamed
	3:20 pm	Cussed for five minutes
	6:50 pm	Screamed and cussed
9/6	6:35 am	Screamed
9/7	6:40 am	Screamed
	3:25 pm	Cussed for five minutes
	7:10 pm	Cussed and screamed
9/8	6:35 am	Screamed
	3:29 pm	Cussed for 10 minutes
	7:45 pm	Screamed and cussed
9/9	6:33 am	Screamed
	3:25 pm	Cussed
	7:05 pm	Screamed and cussed
9/12	6:32 am	Screamed
	3:25 pm	Cussed for five minutes
	6:35 pm	Screamed
9/13	6:32 am	Screamed
9/14	6:32 am	Screamed
	3:31 pm	Cussed
	6:44 pm	Screamed and cussed
9/15	6:31 am	Screamed and Yelled
	3:32 pm	Cussed
	7:45 pm	Scream and cussed
9/16	6:34 am	Screamed
	3:25 pm	Cussed
	7:20 pm	Scream and cussed

## Scatter Plot

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Month/year: \_\_\_\_\_

Behavior Definition: \_\_\_\_\_

Behavior did NOT occur    
  Behavior DID occur    
  Behavior occurred 3x or more

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
6:00-6:30am																								
6:30-7:00																								
7:00-7:30																								
7:30-8:00																								
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## ACTIVITY

### Scatter Plot

#### Questions

*After completing the scatter plot, refer back to Kevin's daily schedule and identify patterns about when the target behavior is most and least likely to occur. Answer the following questions with your partner:*

- 1. What is different about weekday mornings (when there are problem behaviors recorded) and weekend mornings (no problem behaviors recorded)?*
  
- 2. Why are Tuesday evenings (no problem behaviors recorded) different from the rest of the weekday evenings (Mon/Wed/Thurs/Fri) when there are behaviors?*
  
- 3. What is different about weekend activities (no problem behaviors recorded) and weekday evenings when there are problem behaviors?*
  
- 4. Why do you think Kevin has no problem behaviors during the weekdays?*
  
- 5. What minor changes would you make in Kevin's schedule to help his day go more smoothly and hopefully reduce some of his challenging behaviors?*



It can also be very helpful to teach someone you support to monitor his or her own behavior. By using checks, an individual can see right away how they are doing. In other words, someone could use it as a self-reminder instead of needing a staff person to tell him or her

**Step 4. Identify other events** including medical variables, activity, environment, people present, time of day, etc., that may be influencing behavior. Again, the A-B-C observation data, scatter plot, and worksheet can help.

Behaviors are strategies that individuals use to get their needs met. *All* behaviors mean something. When you observe behavior that is very different than usual for the person, you should look at possible medical reasons for the behavior first! You should work closely with doctors to find out if there is any medical basis or reason for the behavior. Medication side effects can also influence behaviors. As we have discussed in previous sessions on medications and health, it is very important to notice any change in behavior as a possible medical issue. Pay attention to decreases in or absence of typical behaviors.

The support team should work closely with physicians to monitor medications, possible side effects, and medical issues. Working with doctors, neurologists, psychiatrists, and other medical professionals is essential in assessing medical issues that influence behavior.

If there is a medical problem, once it is diagnosed and treated, challenging behavior issues will likely disappear. There will no longer be a need to communicate the symptoms of the illness through behavior.

**Step 5. Identify the consequences** that happen after the behavior that may be reinforcing (maintaining) the challenging behavior(s). Remember, the reason that “challenging” behavior exists is

because it is being reinforced by something. You want to find out what individuals are “getting” or “avoiding” through their challenging behaviors and give them a more appropriate strategy or skill to use that will still allow them to get their needs met.

Finally on our A-B-C chart, let’s look at things you may find about consequences that may be maintaining the challenging behavior. What is the payoff for the problem behavior? Remember, every challenging behavior is being reinforced by something!

According to the rule of reinforcement, if a behavior continues to happen on a regular basis and/or increase over time, it is being reinforced, or paid off, by something, although you may not always know what it is. You can use our A-B-C data to help figure out what is reinforcing a behavior.

- ▶ What is the behavior “saying” to us?
- ▶ What is the person “getting” or “avoiding” through the behavior?

The “C” section stands for **C**onsequences, or what happened after the behavior. Here is where you should record what people (staff and peers) did after the behavior and any other consequences or outcomes that came after the behavior.

When you don’t find patterns in Antecedents or Consequences for a particular behavior, you probably need to observe more for additional A-B-C data. The A-B-C data sheet should be one of the first tools that you use when you observe challenging behavior. You can easily make your own A-B-C sheet on a piece of blank paper by simply dividing it into three sections: one for each of the columns. Remember, the more A-B-C data you have, the easier it is to identify patterns in the antecedents and consequences.

The following activity should help you practice identifying the consequences of a behavior. Individually, read each story and underline the consequence. When you

have finished, work with the others in your group to discuss and see if everyone underlined the same actions.

**A C T I V I T Y**

**Looking at What Happens After the Behavior**

*Directions: Read through the story and underline the possible consequences for (or what happens after) the behavior.*

**Story #1**

*Jessie, who cannot see very well, was walking to the mailbox and fell over a branch on the path. Staff ran to him and asked if everything was okay. Jessie said "yes" and returned to the house.*

*The next day Jessie was knocked over by a neighbor's dog and began to cry. Staff again ran out, but this time brought an ice cream bar. Jessie ate the ice cream and said, "Thank you" to the staff.*

*The next day, Jessie fell in the hallway and immediately began crying even though no visible sign of injury was noticed. Staff asked Jessie if everything was okay and Jessie asked for an ice cream bar and the staff brought one immediately. Jessie has been falling down and crying a lot more these past few days than in the past.*

**What do you think that Jessie is either "getting" or "avoiding" from her behavior?**

**Story #2**

*Each day staff spends a lot of time trying to get Chris to finish his assigned chores. His chores include making his bed each morning, setting the table for dinner, folding his laundry, and vacuuming his room. If the weather is nice, Chris is also responsible for watering the garden and filling the bird feeders.*

*The only chores Chris seems to do without a problem are the outdoor chores. He spends more than an hour each afternoon watering and filling the bird feeders. He does not do any of his other chores without throwing things.*

*Yesterday, a new morning staff told Chris that if his bed were made fast enough there would be time to water the garden in the morning before work. Chris made the bed in two minutes. In the afternoon, Chris folded the laundry without any argument after being told that the flowerbed needed special attention as soon as his regular chores are done.*

*Today, when Chris was asked to set the table, he threw the silverware across the kitchen.*

**What do you think that Chris is either "getting" or "avoiding" from his behavior?**

## ACTIVITY

**Identifying Possible Consequences for Challenging Behaviors**

*Directions: In small groups, read and discuss the following stories. Underline the possible consequences (what happened after) that may be maintaining or reinforcing the challenging behavior.*

**Time:** 2:00 p.m. Sunday

**Location:** Living Room

**Behavior:** Interrupting and refusing to discuss choices Crystal doesn't like

**Incident:** Three roommates were deciding on the weekly menu in order to plan the shopping and cooking schedules. Two of them suggested spaghetti for Tuesday. Crystal loudly said, "No way, we are having fish and chips!" One roommate quietly said, "But..." and Crystal interrupted loudly, "That is the way it is going to be!" The other two roommates both said okay softly.

**Time:** 4:00 p.m.

**Location:** Van driving to store

**Behavior:** Hitting window with fist

**Incident:** Pat is in the van with staff driving to the store. The staff was talking to another person in the van. Pat began waving and gesturing at the radio. The staff ignored her. Pat began to hit the van window with her fist. The staff said, "O.K., Pat, I'll turn the radio on." Pam calmed down.

**Time:** 5:30 p.m.

**Location:** Family Room

**Behavior:** Hitting others

**Incident:** Sally was playing with a hand held video game. Staff asked her to turn the game off and set the table. Sally continued to play. Staff went to Sally and asked her again to turn the game off. Sally hit the staff on the arm. Staff left Sally alone until she calmed down.

When you record A-B-C data on one or more specific behaviors over a period of several weeks to a month, you should be able to see that some antecedents are the same or similar. By looking for patterns in the antecedent data you should be able to find out when, where, and with whom the behavior is more and less likely to happen. This also helps you to identify some behavior "triggers" that are likely to lead to a challenging behavior. Sometimes you find out that things you say or do may actually be triggers for an individual's behaviors.

Once you figure this out, you can often change what you do or say and actually

see an improvement in the individual's behavior.

**Remember:** All behaviors are being reinforced (or rewarded) in some way. This includes challenging behavior. The Consequence section (C) of your A-B-C data may show that a individual's behavior is followed by avoiding a task or activity, getting a social interaction from someone, or getting food, drink, money, or other tangible item.

*When you don't find patterns in Antecedents or Consequences for a particular behavior, you probably need to do more observations to get more A-B-C data.*

The following two scenarios are for you to practice completing an A-B-C data sheet. Work in small groups and read and discuss the scenarios. Then work on

completing the A-B-C data sheets for each individual. Discuss the process after you are finished with both.

## ACTIVITY

### A-B-C Scenario #1

*Directions: After you have broken into groups, read the following observations of Annette. When you are finished, use the A-B-C data sheet that follows to describe what you read. In the Antecedent section, write down the antecedent events that happened before (that preceded) Annette's behavior. In the Behavior section, write down Annette's actual behavior (what did she say or do?). In the Consequence section, write down the consequences that happened after the behaviors occurred and what other people said or did.*

#### **Annette**

*Father is late for work and he is rushing Annette to her bus, which she takes to her day program. Annette says, "Nobody likes Annette." Her father stops and says, "Of course we like you; you're a good girl," and kisses Annette on the cheek as she gets on the bus.*

*Annette and some of her classmates go to the grocery store with a staff person. Annette has finished her shopping and approaches the staff person. She tells Annette, "Go look at some magazines until everyone else is finished shopping." Annette replies, "Everyone hates Annette. She's no good." The staff member says, "Stop it, Annette, or you'll have to go to the van." Annette continues to say negative statements about herself and the staff member ignores her.*

*Annette is sitting with some other students at school in the cafeteria. All the students, except for Annette, are talking with each other for several minutes. All of a sudden, Annette says, "Annette's bad." One of the students says, "It's okay, Annette, you're all right," while another student says, "Just ignore her. She's always saying stuff like that."*

*Questions to discuss:*

- 1. What are some **antecedents** you noticed? What are some **consequences** you noticed?*
- 2. What are some consequences that may be maintaining her behavior?*
- 3. What do you think Annette is getting or avoiding through her behavior?*
- 4. Using a positive approach, what strategies would you suggest to her support team?*

## A-B-C Data Sheet

**ANTECEDENT**  
*What happened  
 BEFORE  
 the Behavior*

**BEHAVIOR**  
*What happened  
 DURING  
 the situation*

**CONSEQUENCE**  
*What happened  
 AFTER  
 the behavior*

*Time of day, location or environment, who was around, what was happening, task or activity, etc.*

*Describe the behavior.*

*What was the response from people or the environment, what did others say or do, other consequences?*

**ACTIVITY****A-B-C Scenario #2**

*Directions: After you have broken into groups, read the following observations of Franco. When you are finished reading, use the A-B-C list on the following page to describe what you read.*

- In the Antecedent section, write down the antecedent events that happened before (that preceded) Franco's behavior.*
- In the Behavior section, write down Franco's actual behavior (what did he say or do?).*
- In the Consequence section, write down the consequences that happened after the behaviors occurred (what other people said or did).*

**Franco**

*Franco is at home helping with dinner. His DSP asks him to stir the stew in the kitchen. Franco picks up the ladle and stirs three times in a circular motion and then stops. The DSP comes back in the kitchen and says again, "Franco, stir the stew." Franco whines and stirs three more circular motions before stopping. The DSP looks up and says, "Franco, I told you to keep stirring!" Franco responds by hitting himself repeatedly in the face. The DSP tells Franco to go to his room. Franco stops hitting himself and goes to his room.*

*Questions for your team to discuss:*

- 1. What are some **antecedent** patterns you noticed? What are some **consequence** patterns you noticed?*
- 2. Why do you think Franco behaved in this way?*
- 3. What could Franco's behaviors of whining and then hitting himself be communicating?*
- 4. What are some suggestions you would make to the DSP and the support team assisting Franco? What could they do differently when attempting to encourage Franco to participate in similar tasks?*

## A-B-C Data Sheet

**ANTECEDENT**  
*What happened  
 BEFORE  
 the Behavior*

**BEHAVIOR**  
*What happened  
 DURING  
 the situation*

**CONSEQUENCE**  
*What happened  
 AFTER  
 the behavior*

*Time of day, location or environment, who was around, what was happening, task or activity, etc.*

*Describe the behavior.*

*What was the response from people or the environment, what did others say or do, other consequences?*

## Review

In this session you have learned about several different ways to define and analyze challenging behavior. You have learned how to define a behavior into terms that are observable and measurable. You have learned how to use two tools to help analyze the behavior and pinpoint where and when it occurs.

We have gone through the first five steps of developing a positive behavior support plan including:

1. **Identifying “Quality of Life”** areas.
2. Identifying and **defining the challenging behavior(s)**.
3. **Identifying the antecedents** (behavioral “triggers” and other factors) that occur before the behavior.
4. **Identifying other events** including medical variables, activity, environment, people present, time of day, etc., that may be influencing behavior.
5. **Identifying the consequences** that happen after the behavior that may be reinforcing (maintaining) the challenging behavior(s).

In the next session, we will complete the next four steps in the development of the Positive Behavior Support Plan and learn how to teach replacement behaviors and activities that are useful in decreasing the challenging behavior and increasing appropriate behaviors.

## PRACTICE AND SHARE

Before the next session, think about one of the individuals you support who has challenging behaviors. What type of information might you use from the tools we learned about today that will help you learn about their behavior more specifically.



### Positive Behavior Supports, Part 1

1	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> C	<input type="checkbox"/> D
2	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> C	<input type="checkbox"/> D
3	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> C	<input type="checkbox"/> D
4	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> C	<input type="checkbox"/> D
5	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> C	<input type="checkbox"/> D
6	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> C	<input type="checkbox"/> D
7	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> C	<input type="checkbox"/> D
8	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> C	<input type="checkbox"/> D
9	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> C	<input type="checkbox"/> D
10	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> C	<input type="checkbox"/> D

- 1. The more information the planning team has about the individual and the challenging behavior, the more:**

  - Reasons they will have to support the individual to make choices.
  - Reasons they will have to make decisions for the individual.
  - Likely the success of the intervention strategies.
  - Likely the team will conclude that the individual will continue with the challenging behavior no matter what.
- 2. Development of a positive behavior support plan includes:**

  - Identification of quality of life areas, defining the challenging behavior, and identification of the antecedents.
  - Identification of an individual's regional center service coordinator.
  - Identification of proper infection control methods.
  - Gathering information about each team member and how each person feels about the individual's challenging behaviors.
- 3. Once we understand the reason why a challenging behavior is occurring (the function of the behavior), we are better able to:**

  - Make sure that the individual never repeats the behavior.
  - Turn our attention to other matters, because now we understand what is going on.
  - Identify and teach appropriate replacement skills as an alternative to the challenging behavior.
  - Make decisions for the individual on all aspects of daily living.

4. **Analyzing the function that a behavior serves includes gathering information about the individual by:**
  - A) Observing the individual.
  - B) Talking with other DSPs about their observations.
  - C) Talking with family members and others who know the individual.
  - D) All of the above.
5. **A behavioral antecedent is something that happens before the challenging behavior occurs, and can be identified by using a:**
  - A) Life Quality Assessment
  - B) Medical History
  - C) A-B-C data sheet
  - D) Think-Pair-Share Exercise
6. **The scatter plot is a way to look at and describe target behavior based on:**
  - A) The individual’s quality of life and satisfaction with quality of life.
  - B) The individual’s likes and dislikes.
  - C) When and how often the individual does the behavior.
  - D) The amount of time and effort the DSP spent in filling it out.
7. **The A-B-C chart is used to identify:**
  - A) Patterns in the antecedents and consequences.
  - B) Recipes for making apple-baked-cobblers.
  - C) The individual’s abilities-behaviors-capabilities.
  - D) The correct order in a line.
8. **Is “Acting out” a good description of a target behavior?**
  - A) Yes
  - B) No
  - C) Maybe
  - D) I don’t know

9. **What is the “antecedent” in the following scenario?**

*Loretta was sitting in her room watching Jeopardy on TV. Staff came in and said, “Loretta, you need to do the dishes now.” Loretta started to bite her arm and scream. Staff asked Loretta to take deep breaths until she calmed down. The antecedent is:*

- A) Staff asked Loretta to take deep breaths.
- B) Staff told Loretta to do the dishes instead of continuing to watch TV.
- C) Loretta started to bite her arm and scream.
- D) Loretta was in her room watching a TV show.

10. **What is the “target behavior” in the following scenario?**

*Loretta was sitting in her room watching Jeopardy. Staff came in and said, “Loretta, you need to do the dishes now.” Loretta started to bite her arm and scream. Staff asked Loretta to take deep breaths until she calmed down. The target behavior is:*

- A) Staff interrupted Loretta’s TV program and told her to do the dishes.
- B) Loretta started to bite her arm and scream.
- C) Staff asked Loretta to take deep breaths until she calmed down.
- D) None of the above.



## Appendices



**A-B-C Data Sheet**

**ANTECEDENT**  
*What happened  
 BEFORE  
 the Behavior*

**BEHAVIOR**  
*What happened  
 DURING  
 the situation*

**CONSEQUENCE**  
*What happened  
 AFTER  
 the behavior*

*Time of day, location or environment, who was around, what was happening, task or activity, etc.*

*Describe the behavior.*

*What was the response from people or the environment, what did others say or do, other consequences?*

# Typical Daily Schedule

<i>Time</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Support Person</i>

*Weekend Schedule Changes:*

