

Kern County Consortium SELPA

# Behavior Support Plan Handbook



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*Advocates for Children*

Adapted from materials provided by Diana Browning Wright at the 2004 PENT Summits

# 1. Behavior Impeding Learning is . . .

Describe *non-judgmentally in observable terms* what the behavior looks like.

Describe it as if you were describing it to a person who is blind.

## Examples:

- Poor Attendance – e.g., high absenteeism, tardiness to class
- Does not complete assignments
- Does not begin assignments without adult assistance
- Off task behavior as shown by e.g., crawls on floor, plays with objects on desk, attempts play with others
- Talks out during seatwork and/or during group lessons
- Poor organization and planning as shown by...e.g. rushes to complete assignment without planning each phase, inappropriate sequencing of tasks to complete assignments; waits until the final work period to begin long-term assignment
- Disrupts other students' learning as shown by...e.g., tapping neighbors on shoulders; grabbing their materials; argumentative verbal interactions during collaborative work groups
- Escalating aggression pattern as shown by... inability to follow group consensus during playground disputes over game rules; getting in physical fights, swearing and verbally challenging peers and adults when personal desires are not met
- Outbursts/Rage/Explosive reactions as shown by...e.g., student throws materials; student crawls under the desk and screams with high volume.
- Verbal threats to harm peers as shown by...e.g., using statements such as, "I'll get you after school for this!"
- Swearing at teachers
- Upset with changes to the routine as shown by...e.g., moans, throws things; goes to previous anticipated activity and refuses to leave
- Screams to communicate a lack of interest in completing an assigned task.
- Leaves the classroom/school without permission
- Does not interact with peers
- Self-stimulatory behaviors as shown by...e.g., twirling string; repeatedly rubs genitals or buttocks
- Inappropriate sexual behaviors as shown by...e.g., hands in pants, touching genitals; using words related to sexual activity



## 2. Behavior impedes learning because. . .

Are there fewer skills being learned by the student or other students?

Are there safety/welfare concerns?

### Examples of How Behavior May Interfere with Learning:

- Student or teacher is unavailable for instruction
- Reduced amount of skills are being learned
- Lack of work production negatively impacts progress or grades
- Disrupts other students' opportunity to learn
- Requires class activities or instruction to stop
- Instructional time is lost for disciplinary proceedings
- Requires full adult attention
- Negative interaction with peers (creates fear and an environment where peers are hypervigilant about this student, which interferes with peers learning)



### 3. The need for a Behavior Support Plan. . .

#### ❑ **Early Stage Intervention**

General Principle: Behavior is not yet significantly impacting learning of student or classroom functioning but could escalate if not addressed.

Examples of Behaviors fulfilling the criteria “early stage”:

- Behavior has not generalized to more than one specific situation
- Behavior has only occurred recently, less than 3 times
- Behavior, although mildly problematic and unlikely to escalate nevertheless impacts classroom functioning and/or students (e.g. student’s time on task, task completion or quality of work completed or number of standards mastered)

#### ❑ **Moderate**

General Principle: Behavior is beginning to significantly impact classroom functioning or student learning.

Examples of behaviors fulfilling the criteria “moderate”:

- Behavior has generalized to multiple settings
- Behavior has been occurring for a period of 1 – 2 months
- Behavior disrupts the classroom functioning and students are unable to complete anticipated work due to frequency of the teacher’s need to address this behavior
- Student is not mastering core curriculum at anticipated rate nor progressing in IEP goals and objectives

#### ❑ **Serious \***

General Principle of SERIOUS designation: If student has an IEP/504 plan and is “assaultive, self-injurious or is another pervasive maladaptive behavior that significantly impacts the student’s mastery of IEP goals and objectives” and/or classroom function.

Examples of behaviors with SERIOUS designation:

- Assaultive: Physical attacks that are serious and occur more than twice in a school year
- Self Injurious: Physically harming self (e.g., repeatedly hits self on head; continuous skin picking resulting in health issues, hitting self repeatedly on nose, causing nose bleeds and bruising.)
- Other Pervasive Maladaptive: Serious behaviors that interfere with quality of life, and or IEP mastery occurring in multiple environments

#### ❑ **Extreme \***

General Principle of EXTREME designation: Student poses a safety issue to others or to self.

Examples of behaviors with EXTREME designation:

- Student has physically attacked peers or adults more than once and requires very close monitoring to prevent reoccurrence
- Student physically harms self, leaving pervasive evidence of the attack
- Student has made substantive threat to harm self or others

\* NOTE: The difference between “serious” and “extreme” is often a matter of degree: frequency, intensity, or duration of the behavior

## 4. Frequency / Intensity / Duration of Behavior. . .

Specify frequency, intensity, duration to convey to the reader the extent to which this behavior is happening.

Examples of Current Frequency or Intensity or Duration of Behavior:

**Frequency: How often the behavior happens.**

Examples:

- During specific activities, every ten seconds
- Three times per week
- Averages two times per month, see behavior logs
- One time in 1999, six times in 2000, ten times in 2002

**Intensity: How exaggerated or bigger than expected behavior.**

Examples:

- Screams loud enough to be heard in adjacent classrooms
- Hits with retracted fist hard enough to leave bruises on person hit
- Bites hard enough to leave marks, but has not yet broken skin

**Duration: How long behavior lasts.**

Examples:

- Entire class period with no stopping
- Entire lesson
- Continuous for 20 minutes
- 30 – 45 Second



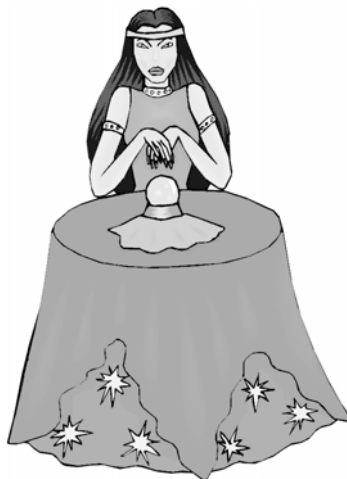
## 5. What are the Predictors for the Behavior? . . .

Situations in which the behavior is likely to occur: people, time, place, object, etc.

Commonly seen predictors: difficult task, transition time, when not working in group, with specific people, when alone, after a request, etc.

### **Examples of situations, which may result in problem behavior:**

- Disruptions in routines: unexpected changes in routine
- Work level higher than student's ability
- Verbal directives; adult verbal corrections
- Lack of predictability in schedule or when lack of understanding of schedule
- Time of day – medication wearing off, fatigue
- During lengthy seat work
- Internal physical or emotional state – anxiety, hunger, need for medication
- Peer conflicts or peer teasing
- Over/Under stimulation
- Substitute teacher/aide, gender of teacher
- Unstructured time
- Room conditions – noise level, crowded room
- Events from previous environments (on bus, at home)



## 6. What supports the student using the problem behavior? . . .

What is missing in the environment/curriculum or what is present in the environment/curriculum that needs changing?

### Always two parts:

- 1) Changing environmental features so that there's no need to engage in behavior.
- 2) Teaching a new way to meet function identified in Section # 8.

### Key:

What has NOT YET been done AT SCHOOL that could change his or her need for this behavior? What has the student not yet received?

### Examples of factors present or missing which sustain problem Behavior:

#### **Present in the environment:**

- Problems with seating arrangement, noise level of the classroom, size of the desk, interactions going on around student, etc.
- Peer status is gained for misbehaving

#### **Missing in the environment:**

- Student has **not yet** been taught to transition quietly
- Schedule/rules/expectations/alternatives/consequences are **not yet** clear to the student. Reteaching is necessary
- Counseling **not yet** provided to address anxiety issues
- Student is non-verbal and has **not yet** been taught a communication system i.e. sign language, Picture Exchange System (PECS)
- Effective communication with parents **not yet** established
- Conflict negotiation/resolution skills **not yet** been taught to the student



## 7. What Environmental Changes, Structure and Supports are Needed to Remove the Student's Need to Use this Behavior. . .

*Changes in time/space/materials/interactions to remove likelihood of behavior.*

Interventions specified in this section must be logically related to the predictors of behavior (5) and what supports the student using the problem behavior (6).

### **Key Writing Guide:**

You need to add details to each idea below so that implementers can be accountable for using these supports. Write enough detail so that everyone remembers the specifics and materials selected to do these changes.

### **Time Changes:** Add specifics in these areas:

- Give more/less time on tasks
- Provide a break after 15 minutes of work
- Allow completion of tasks in parts; develop pacing technique
- Give student time to finish assignments at home

### **Space Changes:** Add specifics in these areas

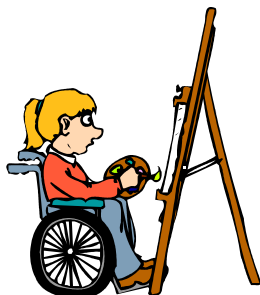
- Student will sit near the front
- Student needs to sit near assigned support buddy
- Different work areas will be clearly identified, different work spaces for different tasks
- Study carrels will be provided to avoid distractions

### **Material(s) Changes:** Add specifics in these areas

- Provide work that has been accommodated to this student's learning style
- Hands-on learning or manipulative will be increased
- Tasks organized in sequencing trays
- Notebook organizer

### **Interaction:** Add specifics in these areas

- Use supportive voice volume and tone
- Cue the student to use coping strategies for changes that may create anxiety that have been taught.
- Praise successes frequently-
- Give "walking away" praise and points
- Verbally praise student's use of "time away"



NOTE: Be specific when identifying individuals responsible for implementation and frequency of monitoring. The less specificity, the less chance there is of this plan succeeding.

## **8. Team believes the behavior occurs because. . .**

What the student is trying to get or avoid through his/her behavior? (Function)

### **Getting Examples:**

- To gain adult or peer attention
- To gain a desired item or activity
- To get help from aide
- To get sensory stimulation
- To receive physical contact

### **Avoiding Examples:**

- To escape or avoid a task student believes is too hard, or believes he or she will be punished for not performing well
- Inappropriate dress (leading to disciplinary action) is a means of escaping the learning environment where work is too difficult
- The student is searching for belonging by exhibiting gang affiliations
- Protests are to achieve a sense of empowerment/choice
- Hiding in restroom is a way to avoid classes where peers have teased student

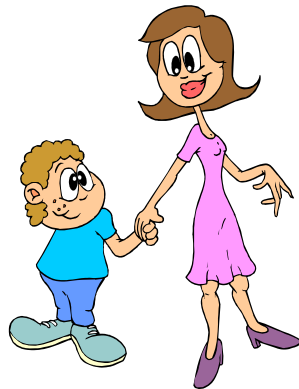


## 9. What the Team Believes the Student Should Do Instead of Problem Behavior?

***Replacement Behavior must accomplish same function as Problem Behavior!!!***

How should the student avoid or get his/her way in an acceptable manner?

| <b>Function of Behavior:</b>                  | <b>Problem Behavior</b>     | <b>Examples of Replacement Behavior</b>                                      |
|---|-----------------------------|--|
| Attention from teacher                        | Swears at teacher           | Ask teacher for time together.   |
| Protests not getting his way                  | Fights                      | Use protest language taught in verbal conflict resolution training.          |
| Protests unexpected activity (relieve stress) | Screams                     | Use daily schedule with teacher to protest. Lack of unexpected activity.     |
| Avoid difficult work                          | Runs from room              | Go to time away/break center.  |
| Get social belonging                          | Affiliates with gangs.      | Join alternative, reinforcing group.   |
| Get sensory stimulation                       | Bangs head against the wall | Provide student with sensory diet including deep pressure massage or pillow. |



## 10. What Teaching Strategies/Necessary Curriculum/Materials are Needed to Teach Replacement Behavior. . .

### Examples:

- Better communication skills, anger management, Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) for nonverbal students with cognitive disabilities, self-management systems, following schedules and routines, learning new social skills, learning how to negotiate, learning structured choice, learning new scripts, learning notebook organization
- *Basically any general or specific skill deficit you hope to correct to change the behavior*

### Additional Examples:

- The special education teacher/counselor will teach organizational skills – how to write down assignments, organize papers, make to-do lists, etc. using teacher made materials-three times a week with daily general education monitoring.
- Teach (shape/model/cue/prompt) the steps of how to solve a conflict; Role-play techniques for avoiding a fight or conflict – four times with daily monitoring.
- Teach the student coping strategies by role-playing how to handle “unexpected events” like: being teased by a peer, missing the bus, forgetting lunch money, having a substitute teacher.
- Teach relaxation strategies with the teacher or counselor – two times per week for 15 minutes.
- Explicitly explain then role-play/practice how to appropriately follow the basic classroom rules – e.g., asking for assistance when work is too difficult; answering the door for guest, being seated when the bell rings, passing out papers, asking for permission to use the restroom.
- Teach, “Stop and Think” to remind the student to choose appropriate behavior – three times with follow-up.
- Teach social skills by having the student attend group with the school counselor one time per week for 30 minutes.
- Give student classroom responsibilities to foster a sense of belonging and responsibility, e.g. passing out papers, running errands to the office-daily, sharpening pencils.
- Teach student to describe his or her emotions – two times per week for six weeks, then monitor.



Identify individuals responsible for  
implementation and frequency of monitoring.

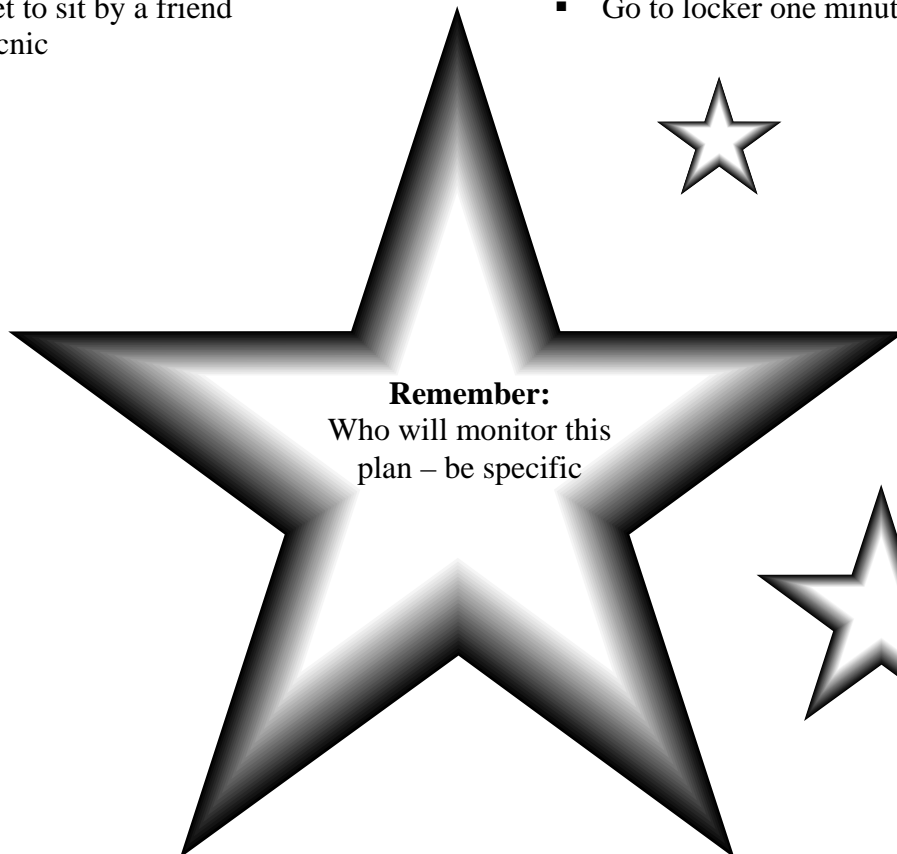
## 11. Reinforcement used for establishing, maintaining and generalizing new behavior. . .

Hints regarding the use of reinforcers:

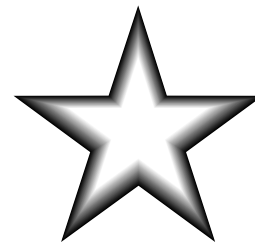
- When establishing new behavior the reinforcer must immediately follow each response
- When maintaining and generalizing new behavior use intermittent or variable schedule reinforcement
- Make sure it really is a reinforcer
- Vary reinforcement and get child's input when devising reinforcers

### Examples of Reinforcers Available in Almost Any Classroom:

- Praise
- Smile from teacher
- Chance to help other students
- Happy faces on paper
- Clean the chalk board
- Choose a game
- Library Pass
- Party after school
- Stars on paper
- Being class messenger
- Cafeteria helper
- Get to sit by a friend
- Picnic
- Pat on back by teacher
- Music pass
- Extra privileges
- Stamps on hand
- Listen to music
- Flag raiser
- Sit in front of classroom
- Sit in back of classroom
- Sit by door
- Daily, weekly, and monthly good reports home
- Go to locker one minute early



**Remember:**  
Who will monitor this  
plan – be specific



## 12. What strategies will be employed if problem behavior occurs again?

*Ask yourself: What works to calm the student? How can you best prevent escalation? Will structured choice help? Offering “Time Away” to cool non-emotionally? What series of behaviors should adults employ to return the student to rule-following behavior?*

- Prompt student to switch to the replacement behavior
- Have positive discussion with student after the behavior ends and add any necessary classroom or school consequences

### **Examples in a Hierarchy of Responses, Early to Late Stages:**

#### **Reactive Strategies for Behavior Just Beginning to Escalate:**

- Staff will pay attention to signs of escalating anxiety (i.e., clenched fists, increased voice volume, increased ritualistic behavior, etc) and respond in supportive manner
- Encourage student to utilize “time away” to cool off
- Remind the student to “Stop and Think” (a cue that has already been taught and learned)
- Provide immediate praise for the student if behavior does not escalate

#### **Reactive Strategies for When the Behavior Problem is in Progress:**

- Be directive – Use gentle/firm “Stop/No command”
- Use a structured choice
- Consider the safety of peers and student
- Remove the audience, if appropriate
- Utilize district approved procedures if student is a physical danger to self or others (To be done only by those trained in Non-Violent Physical Crisis Intervention - such as PART-R or CPI)
- Administration contacts Police if behavior is a serious danger to self/other

#### **Reactive Strategies for After the Problem Behavior has Occurred (Tension Reduction Phase):**

- Allow time for student to calm down and regain composure/rationality
- Re-establish the student/adult relationship (therapeutic rapport)
- Once rationality has returned, debrief with student and explore his or her perspective as to why the behavior problem occurred
- Brainstorm ways to keep the behavior from occurring in the future

Who will talk to the student?  
Be specific in plan.



### 13. Behavioral Goals. . .

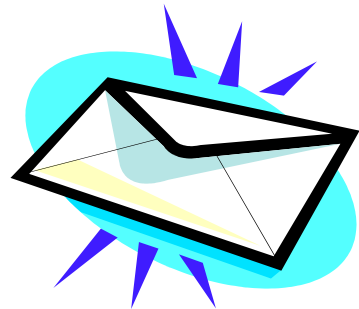
The behavioral goals are brief statements referencing the IEP, or 504 Plan or school team's discussion: What new skills will the student achieve through this plan?  
What new skills will the student need in order to perform the replacement behavior?

Behavioral goals are designed to achieve one or more of the following:

- Reduce the frequency of the problem behavior
- Increase the use of the replacement behavior.
- Develop new general skills that remove the student's need to use the problem behavior.

**Examples of Behavior Goals:** Specify behavior and criterion level.

- Student name will complete 80% of seatwork within a two week period
- Student name will attend school with no unexcused absences in a one month period
- Student name will demonstrate acceptance of changes in routine by proceeding to next activity with no resistance (no screaming, hiding, falling on floor) on 90% of trials recorded over a three week period
- Student name will attend anger management/conflict resolution counseling eleven to twelve times in two weeks and demonstrate strategies learned during any playground altercations, which occur subsequently for three weeks
- Student name will privately ask for assistance when work is too hard on 95% of the assignments that he or she requires adult intervention to complete in three weeks
- Student name will identify situations that are stressful by signaling "stop", then asking for "time away" by placing stop sign in the designated envelop rather than running from the room on 9/10 occasions in six months
- Student name will remain in class unless given permission to leave 95% of the classes in September and October
- Student name will reduce self-stimulating behaviors to less than 10% of leisure time periods as observed in a three month period
- Student name will learn a system of communication, Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) and utilize it to request desired objects or activities on 90% of request situations in a two month period

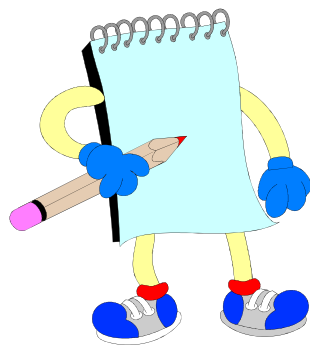


## 14. Manner & Content of Communication. . .

*What system of communication will participants use? Phone calls to whom by whom? Informal notes? Daily report cards? Weekly logs? Consider family, administrators, IEP team, SST, counselors, probation officer or other agencies.*

### **Examples of Communication – Add frequency and all participants:**

- Phone calls (Daily? Weekly? From whom to whom?)
- Written notes
- Daily/weekly progress reports
- Daily charting reported to parent/counselor/principal
- As student's behavior improves the daily report will be reduced to two times per week. Behavioral logs to be sent home for parent review/signature.



## **\*BSP Checklist\***

### **All Behavior Support Plans Should Address:**

- How the current environment supports the problem behavior and does not yet support alternative behaviors
- Purpose and function of problem behavior for the student
- Reason problem behavior continues
- Environmental instructional, and/or curriculum changes necessary? Will this alone alleviate the problem?
- Will an accommodation plan alleviate some problems?
- Is there an alternative behavior to replace the problem behavior, meeting the same function; Can the student do this yet?
- Are there skill deficits? Methods of teaching what is missing?
- Strategies and curricular components for teaching any new behaviors?
- Strategies for maintaining new behavior?

**For Additional Assistance** in writing effective behavior support plans, contact the SELPA Program Specialists at: 661-636-4814.

