Building Your ASD Toolbox – Behavior Strategies

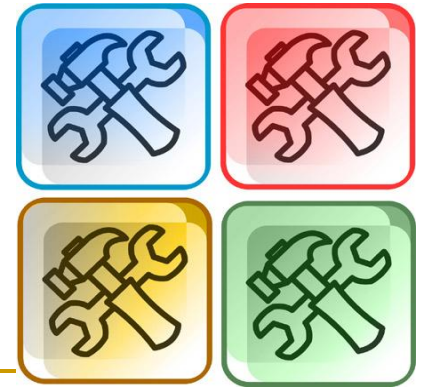## Georgia Department of Education

Autism Academy

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Amy C. Zaring

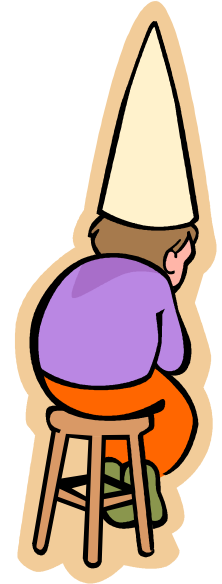Autism Intervention Specialist

Fayette County School System

Building Your ASD Toolbox

Proactive and Reactive Positive Behavior Strategies

■ There is a quote

that goes something like this –

When children can't do math, we teach; when children can't read, we teach;

when children can't behave . . .

Causes of Behavior Problems

- Confusion
- Expectation
- Stimulation
- Lack of Order
- Communication
- Driven Behaviors

Positive Behavioral Supports

- Positive Behavioral Support "involves the application of positive behavioral interventions and systems to achieve socially important behavior change."

- "An approach that improves lifestyle results….by making problem behavior less effective, efficient, and relevant and the desired behavior more functional."

(Sugai *et al., 1999, . 6-7*)

Proactive Strategies

- Positive behavior intervention strategies that are in place before behaviors occur; their purposes are to manipulate antecedents to behaviors and to shape appropriate replacement behaviors

- (Reactive strategies are used after the behavior occurs.)

Why a Preventative Approach?

- Cause and effect learning is poorer with autism.

- Therefore, we try to prevent problems from outset.

- Consequences and reactive approaches maintain safety, but don't necessarily change behavior.

- Requires ongoing processes of teaching, not a quick fix.

Proactive strategies for managing behaviors:

- Understanding the deficits of autism
- Setting up structure
- Developing pro-active routines
- Developing effective communication systems
- Building on strengths and interests to develop curriculum
- Expanding social/leisure instruction, interests, and opportunities

Behavior Strategies

- Proactive vs Reactive – Some strategies function as both! Behavior interventions should be proactive, but some reactive strategies are necessary, especially to manage an incident.

- Daily intervention and/or in the formal Behavior Intervention Plan

- Areas to Consider:
  - Academics
  - Antecedent/Setting Manipulation
  - Alternative Skills/Replacement Behaviors

Positive Proactive Strategies

- Academics
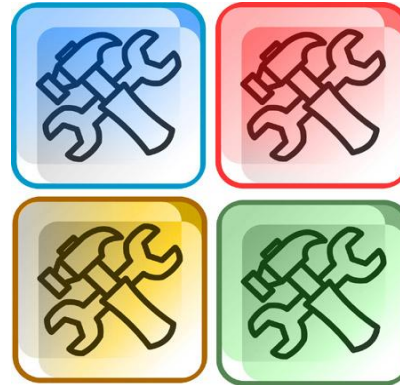
- Can physical environment be changed or made clearer?

- Does schedule need revising?

- Has student developed positive work routines?

- Is visual structure incorporated effectively?

- Can we increase motivation through use of the students' interests?

"Communication of Expectations"

- Have we provided student with an effective way of communicating to us?
    - Self-determination (choices/preferences)
    - Need to escape or be alone
    - Communicating "I need help."
- Have we answered the 4 Questions??
    - How much do I do?
    - What do I do?
    - When is it finished?
   - What do I do next?

"Communication of Instructions"

- Clarity of instructions
- Specificity of instructions
- Consistency of instructions
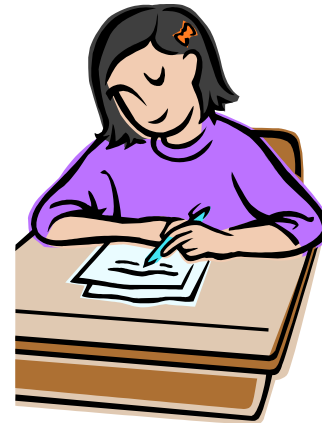
- Simplify Visual Presentation

- Offer Choice of Order of Assignment Completion Whenever Possible

- Check for Understanding of Directions

- Provide Initial Help on Assignments

- Modify Length of Assignments

- Use Checklists for materials, routines, class assignments, etc.

Positive Pro-Active Strategies

Antecedent/Setting Manipulation
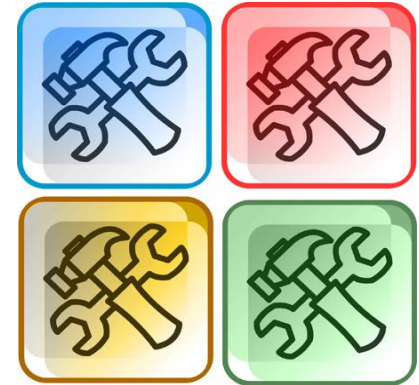
Setting Events

An event that occurs at a different point in time that may influence the likelihood of a behavior occurring.

"Sets the occasion" for behaviors good and bad

Student with Autism may have:

- Been refused some request or activity
- Been hurried or rushed more than usual
- Had a negative interaction with staff or peers
- Been under the instruction or care of an unfamiliar person
- Had unexpected visitors
- Experienced a change in schedule
- Had medications changed, missed , or introduced

Student with Autism may have:

- Experienced a physically or emotionally upsetting event

- Worried or become anxious about an upcoming event

- Appeared to be or complained of being ill or in pain

- Been overly stimulated by the environment

- Been confused by aspects of the environment

Steven R. Love, Ph.D.

Asheville TEACCH Center

Contracts

The "Sure I Will" Program

Rhode, G., Jenson, W. R., Reavis, H. K. (1992). *The Tough Kid Book – Practical Classroom Management Strategies*. Longmont, CO: Sopris West.

- Contingency Contracts

  Finish _____, then _____

  First _____, then _____

  Do _____during class, then do _____the last five minutes

Signs of Frustration?

- Behavioral Momentum

  Gain or continue the following of directions by giving a series of simple (high-probability) requests followed by non-preferred (low probability) requests

Break System

- Unscheduled
- Scheduled
- Teacher Directed
- Student Initiated
- Plan must include who and where.
- Must have plan for return to setting.

- Teacher-Directed Choices

- Prime for Changes

- Visual Schedules and Checklists

- Would a schedule change help?
- Change schedule to include built-in breaks, morning priming, and work time in an alternate setting
- Adult Monitor During Transition Times
- Monitor Agenda Use and Organization of Materials

- Reinforcement Survey Updates
- Checklists (Less Verbal Interaction)
- Set Up Positive Peer Experiences
- Reminder Charts
- Positive Thoughts Journal
- Use of Timer

- ***Use of Thermometers – Check-ins!***

- "Stop and Think" Strategy

- Teach the student his/her triggers

- Big Deal, Medium Deal, Little Deal
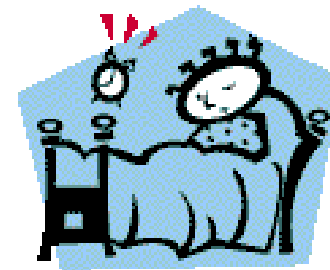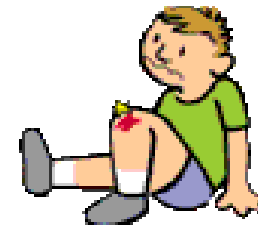
"Do-Overs"

Allow student to back-up and try again!

Positive Pro-Active Strategies

Teaching

Alternative Skills/Replacement Behaviors
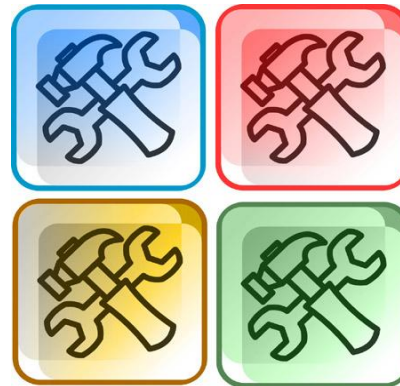
What we have already learned to help us teach -

- When to teach –

   NOT when the child is engaging in the inappropriate behavior, especially if stressed or escalated

- Where to teach –

   in a safe environment; then practice generalization

- How to teach -

   the Lesson Plan example – with praise and role modeling – and practice!

PROACTIVE PROGRAMMING GUIDELINES

- Identify the function (i.e., purpose, need) of the behavior (ex. Attention)
- Identify what skill the child's must learn in order to meet that need.
- Break skill down into teachable parts: Task analysis / Hand washing? Getting attention?
- Teach one step at a time until the child has mastered the skill.
- Use effective teaching strategies.

WHAT TO TEACH

Function   **Programmatic Alternative**

Attention	Peer Relationships/Appropriate Initiation Techniques/Talent-Skills
Avoidance/ Reduction of Demands	Negotiation/Provide Means of Requesting Breaks/ Following Instructions (compliance)
Power/ Control	Increased Choice Making Skills/Compliance Training/Teach Appropriate Levels of Control\Flexibility Training

WHAT TO TEACH

Function   Programmatic Alternative

Communication	Increase Verbalization Skills/Augmentative Communication/PECS
Frustration Release/Stress Reduction	Stress Management Frustration Tolerance Increased Coping Strategies
Self-Stimulation	Leisure/Play Skills

Point/Check Sheets

- Positive Behavior Motivation System
- Important components:
    - Targeted Replacement Behaviors – number is based on student's age/ability level
    - Definitions of Behaviors
    - Identification of Reinforcers
    - Explanation of How Points Will be Awarded/Reinforcement will be earned! – Based on age of student.
    - Debrief Time – includes self-monitoring for older students
    ******This is the teaching component!*****
    - Reinforcement Assessment/Cash-In
    - Reinforcement Time

Examples of "Point/Check Sheets"

Stress Management Instruction

- Teach the student his/her triggers

- **Teach Self-Calming Strategies – play games and role model specific triggers and use of strategy**

- Use of Thermometers and "Managing My Stress" chart to monitor emotions/behavior

Break Plan/System

- Teach Socially Appropriate Escape Behavior – Break Card System
  - Teacher Initiated
  - Student Initiated – the long term goal
- May need to schedule breaks throughout the day:
  - Calming and "energy out"
  - Walks, Snack Time

- Reminder Chart – reference guide of stress management techniques learned – keep in several places

- Increased Social Skills/Stress Management Instruction and Review
  - Social Autopsies
  - Teach Perspective Taking
 - Peer Interaction – Role Models

- Positive Thoughts Journal

Social Skills

- Teach Appropriate Social Skills – wait, taking turns, sharing, losing, continue building list based on daily incidents

- Provide Social Skills Teacher with Examples of Skill Deficits for Instruction

- Establish Positive Rapport – Play Games, Chat on Preferred Topics – Make a Personal Connection
- Offer Teacher-Directed Choices – Limit to Two
- Conduct Reinforcement Assessment
- Prime for Changes
- Written Visual Schedule
- Communication with Parent
- Visual Reminder of Rules and Expectations

Reactive Strategies
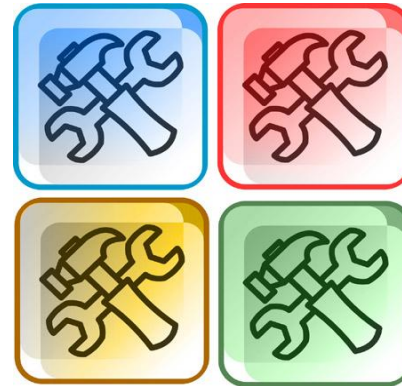
Reactive Strategies

- Do not teach but create a temporary "window of opportunity" to build in more functional behaviors to replace maladaptive ones

- Reward nonoccurrence of / interfere with misbehavior

- Temporarily stop / suppress inappropriate behavior

Reactive Strategies

Planned Ignoring

Time-Out (note guidelines – not to be "seclusion)

Over-correction ("Do-Overs")

Earned Reinforcement (Both)

Response-Cost

Antecedent Manipulation (both)

Behavioral Momentum (both)

Classroom Behavior Systems

- Often more reactive than proactive

- Often have a proactive reinforcement component, individual component, and group component

- Can EASILY add in individualized behavior goals as a proactive reinforcement component

Behavior Momentum

To note student's level of calm:

> Gain the following of directions by giving a series of simple (high-probability) requests followed by non-preferred (low probability) requests.
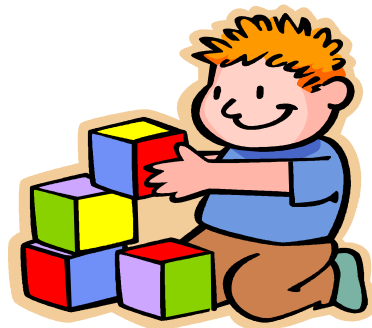
- Removal Protocol – Follow Outlined Procedures
- Use of Quiet Room/Break Plan
- Follow Procedures for Escalation Cycle
- Social/Behavior Autopsies – Written (Discussion Later)
- Cue and Reinforce Calm and Use of Relaxation Strategies
- Loss of Reinforcement Time and Contracted Privileges
- Turn over point sheet and state "I'm waiting"

Behavior During Academics

- Offer help to get started
- Monitor progress during assignment
- Ensure understanding throughout assignment
- Remind of next break or reinforcement
- Reinforce following directions and starting work (or approximations of the desired behavior)
- Does not receive full allocation of points for reinforcement based on criteria (Amy.. This is confusing.. Can you restate for clarity?

- Verbally ignore

- Redirect to activity

- Practice appropriate verbalizations at an appropriate time – comments to fit the situation

- Do not verbally engage - Assess level of agitation

- HUGE reinforcement for use of break card

Know the student's

ESCALATION CYCLE

Diagram/Draw it out with notes:

What student does at each stage -

What staff should do at each stage

Escalation Cycle

Early stage(s): Provide visual and verbal cues to use strategies. Limited verbal interaction. Redirect. Introduce calming and preferred activities.

Escalation: Verbally ignore; make sure environment is safe.

Last stage(s): Maintain limited verbal interaction. Reinforce approximations of calm. Use Behavior Momentum.

For aggression towards property, and especially individuals, you need to have the steps to the plan spelled out in the Behavior Intervention Plan.

Reactive Plan for Disruption of Physical Environment

- 1) Ensure safety of children and staff
- 2) Verbally ignore behavior – do not use comments such as "don't throw that"
- 3) Encourage use of break card and movement to de-escalation area in the classroom
- 4) Allow time for de-escalation
- 5) Encourage movement to de-escalation area in another room when interrupting learning environment

- 6) Allow time for de-escalation – if behavior increases, move to recovery/break/calming room (not to be seclusion – note rule).
- 7) Catch opportunities to reinforce calm or approximation of calm and other desired behaviors – bonus points

Where do these fit?

- Contact with parent as pre-determined

- Debrief incident at a later time

- Will be given the opportunity to make up missed work at school/at home within a limited number of days -

- Clean Up/Repair Damages

- Written and/or Verbal Apologies – When Behavior Directed at an Individual

- Office/Administrative Involvement for Aggression Towards Peers/staff is situational

Reactive Plan for Aggression

- 1 – Ensure safety of children and staff
- 2 – Verbally ignore – avoid comments such as "no hitting"
- 3 – Move outside hitting/kicking range
- 4 – Passively block – if talk, tell him what to do such as "hands down"
- 5 – Encourage movement to de-escalation area/calming room/break room – avoid touching when agitated
- 6 – Tag team with available staff
- 7 – Redirect to preferred topics

- 8 - Catch opportunities to reinforce calm or approximation of calm and other desired behaviors – bonus points
- 9 – Allow walking/pacing
- 10 – Build behavior momentum - make simple requests to check for calm and cooperation
- 11 – Continue catching opportunities to reinforce calm or approximation of calm and other desired behaviors – award bonus points
- 12 – Notify school administration

RESOURCES
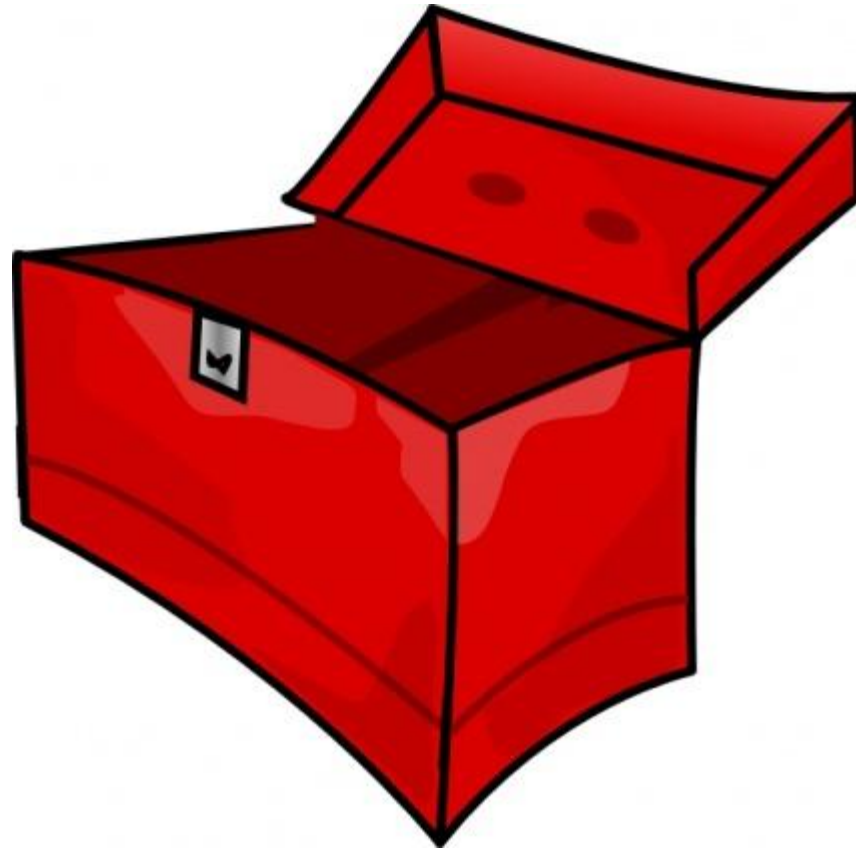
- Baker, Jed (2008). *No More Meltdowns – Positive Strategies for Managing and Preventing Out-of-Control Behavior*. Arlington, TX: Future Horizons, Inc.

    Dr. Baker offers an easy-to-follow, 4-step model that will improve your everyday relationships with the children in your life: 1) Managing your own emotions by adjusting your expectations, 2) Learning strategies to calm a meltdown in the moment, 3) Understanding why a meltdown occurs, and 4) Creating plans to prevent future meltdowns. There is a companion website (www.symtrend.com) and mobile app for iPhone, iPad, iPod Touch, or touch-based smart phone for this book.

■ Baker, Jed (2005). *Preparing for Life - The Complete Guide for Transitioning to Adulthood for those with Autism/Asperger's Syndrome*. Arlington, TX: Future Horizons, Inc.

This easy-to-follow resource provides a complete toolbox of skills that can open doors to opportunities. Includes sections on perspective taking, non-verbal communication, conversational skills, goal setting, and stress management. Explains options and types of assistance available educationally and legally.

- Buron, Kari Dunn, & Curtis, Mitzi (2003). *The Incredible 5-Point Scale*. Shawnee Mission, KS: Autism Asperger Publishing Company.

- Maag, John W. (2001). *Powerful Struggles: Managing Resistance, Building Rapport*. Longmont, CO: Sopris West Educational Services.

- Moyes, Rebecca A. (2002). *Addressing the Challenging Behavior of Children with High-Functioning Autism/Asperger Syndrome in the Classroom*. Philadelphis, PA: Jessica Kingsley   Publishers.

- Myles, Brenda Smith, & Southwick, Jack (2005). *Asperger Syndrome and Difficult Moments: Practical Solutions for Tantrums, Rage, and Meltdowns*. Shawnee Mission, KS: Autism Asperger Publishing Co.

- Rhode, G., Jenson, W. R., & Reavis, H. K. (1993). *The Tough Kid Book – Practical Classroom Management Strategies*. Longmont, CO: Sopris West.

- Rhode, G., Jenson, W. R., & Reavis, H. K. (1994). *The Tough Kid Tool Box*. Longmont, CO: Sopris West.

  Companion book for *The Tough Kid Book* that includes all the forms for reproduction.

- Wagner, Sheila (1998). *Inclusive Programming For Elementary Students With Autism.* Arlington, TX: Future Horizons, Inc.

- Wagner, Sheila (2002). *Inclusive Programming For Middle School Students With Autism/Asperger's Syndrome.* Arlington, TX: Future Horizons, Inc.

- Wagner, Sheila (2009). *Inclusive Programming for High School Students With Autism or Asperger's Syndrome.* Arlington, TX: Future Horizons, Inc.

Web Sites

- Blueprints for Success: Instructional Strategies to   Promote Appropriate Student Behaviors.

    www.dpi.wi.gov/sped/ebdbluepri.html

- http://pbis.org