Positive Behavioral Supports for Students with Autism: A Three Tiered Approach

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I have no financial relationships to disclose
Always

Unique

Totally

Interesting

Sometimes

Mysterious
Training Agenda

• Review Positive Behavioral Supports and Interventions (PBIS)
  o Three Tiers
  o Problem Solving Process

• Understanding Learning Styles of Students Diagnosed with Autism
  o Identify Core Deficits
  o PBIS Team Toolbox
  o Interventions: Modifications/Accommodations
Positive Behavioral Supports and Interventions (PBIS)
PBIS

- PBIS is defined as a framework for enhancing the adoption and implementation of a continuum of evidence-based interventions to achieve academically and behaviorally important outcomes for all students (Sugai et al., 2000).

- As a “framework,” the emphasis is on a process or approach, rather than a curriculum, intervention, or practice. The “continuum” notion emphasizes how evidence- or research-based behavioral practices are organized within a multi-tiered system of support, also called “response-to-intervention” (Sugai & Horner, 2009).

- Finally, the important supportive relationship between positive school- and classroom wide culture and individual student success is emphasized.
The Infamous Triangle

Adapted from Response to Intervention: Policy Considerations and Implementation (Batsche, et al 2005).
Note: Percentages are approximations and may vary by district.
Primary Components of PBIS

- **PREVENT** Challenging Behaviors (proactive)
  - Creating Supportive Environments
  - Supports/Interventions for Success

- **TEACH** new skills (educational)

- **TEAM** (Collaborative) Problem-Solving Approach
  - Use a variety of perspectives
  - Increase implementation / accountability

- **DATA-BASED** Decision Making
  - Use of Functional Behavioral Assessment
  - Using data to guide decision-making
PBIS Team(s)

- **Academic Problem Solving Team**
  - Sometimes referred to as child study teams
  - Review intervention data to determine Tier levels
  - Monitor Progress
  - Refer to special education if student is not responding to interventions

- **Behavioral Problem Solving Team**
  - Not always the same team as the academic team
  - Review intervention data to determine Tier levels
  - Monitor Progress
  - Refer to special education if PBIS interventions are not enough
  - May still be involved with IEP students
What does Autism look like in the school environment?

What will you have to support as a PBIS team?

Core Deficits

1. Behavioral Deficits
2. Communication Deficits
3. Social Deficits
PBIS Team Toolbox

• No two students with autism are alike
  • Understanding what tools you need to modify or accommodate

• We will review various interventions and supports to help you in the future
  • Understanding Core Deficits
    o Behavior
    o Communication
    o Social

• Remember to problem solve and utilize your resources
  • Speech and Language Pathologist
  • Behavioral Analyst
  • Social Worker
Core Deficits

Vital for the team to understand Core Deficits of Autism

1. Behavior
2. Communication
3. Social
By providing interventions, you are not “giving in”, but supporting for a disability.
Interventions and Supports

1. We will begin by reviewing behavior
2. Then transition into Communication
   • Visual Supports
3. End with Social Supports

ALL THREE MERGE TOGETHER
When looking at how to support ASD students through a PBIS Model

• Not Differentiated By Tier 1, Tier 2 or Tier 3, differentiated by Core Deficits. Your Individual team can decided what Tier the intervention will be identified in.
Autism vs. Behavior
Autism vs. Behavior

Understand Core Deficits

- If core deficits are understood, behavior can be understood
- Behavior is least important, CORE DEFICITS are most important
- Scientific Research: Deficits are physiological not behavioral
Core Deficits vs. Behavior
Iceberg Representation
Core Deficits vs. Behavior

Observable Behavior(s)

- Behavior
- Communication
- Social Interaction
- Measurable IQ
- Sensory Skills
- Motor Skills
Specific Behaviors

Deficits with Social Understanding
Communication Deficits
Limited Interests
Sensory Processing Issues
Learning Style Issues
Autism Iceberg
Aggression

Pushing
Hitting
Spitting
Throwing
Kicking

Observable Behavior

Core Deficits

Poor Social Judgment
Unawareness of Feelings of Self and Others
Sensory Misconceptions
Frustration over communication deficits
Does not know how to interact appropriately
Crisis

- Take a step back
- Use visual-not auditory
- Get student back into structure
- Reduce Social Pressure
- Do NOT TEACH DURING BEHAVIOR – teach strategies when student is calm
- Draw iceberg and brainstorm antecedents
Behavior Management Considerations

- Problem Solving Process (Team Approach)
  - What are the core deficits?
  - Look at the Environment
    - Is student over stimulated?
    - Can student flee from a situation?
  - Look at the Adults/Schedule
    - Are there certain adults who respond negatively?
    - Was the schedule interrupted?
  - Use visuals to implement new routines
    - Visuals will be addressed under communication deficits later in presentation
Problem Solving Tools
Team Planning Tool
45 Minute Behavior Support Plan Development
Meeting Mechanics Process

PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION: (5 minutes)
IDENTIFY the problem
Democratic (All Participate)
Open-Ended
Prioritize Concerns--use following list to assist in prioritization, if needed:
  ___Limits progress toward goals
  ___Limits socialization opportunities
  ___Interferes with the development of independent functioning

PROBLEM SPECIFICATION: (15 minutes)
Operational Definitions
Data / Variables Analysis
Antecedent Variables Focus (Antecedent/Behavior/Consequence)
Problem Solving Tools
Team Planning Tool
45 Minute Behavior Support Plan Development
Meeting Mechanics Process

BRAINSTORM: (6-8 minutes)
BRAINSTORM possible solutions/strategies to address the problem:
ALL IDEAS ARE GOOD IDEAS
DON’T EXPLAIN, DEFEND, CONVINCE
PROFESSIONAL ROLE ELIMINATION
FOCUS ON DEVELOPING THE BEST IDEA IN THE ROOM

CLUSTER / PRIORITIZE: (6 minutes)
CLARIFY Ideas
CLUSTER Similar Ideas (3 primary)
PRIORITYIZE Ideas through Sequencing
List strategies prioritized for implementation:

IMPLEMENTATION VARIABLES: (6 minutes)
Identify possible BARRIERS to implementation (brainstorm solutions if necessary)
Identify RESOURCES needed to implement plan
Determine DATA COLLECTION methods for evaluation
**Problem Solving Tools**

45 Minute Behavior Support Plan Development

Meeting Mechanics Process

**ASSIGN RESPONSIBILITIES:** (5 minutes)
- Team Process
- Roles and Functions
- DEVELOP ACTION PLAN

**ACTION PLAN**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Who</th>
<th>is doing WHAT</th>
<th>By WHEN</th>
<th>STATUS</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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</table>
Problem Solving Tools

Template to determine if student requires 1:1 Adult Support Determination Process and Planning Tool

Current research indicates that an overreliance on paraprofessional support is associated with unintended detrimental effects including the student feeling stigmatized, interference with peer interactions, interference with teacher engagement and competent instruction, loss of personal control, decrease in independence skills, and an increase in behavioral challenges (Downing & Clark, 2000; Giangreco, Broer, & Edelman, 2002; Giangreco & Broer, 2005). As such, assigning a paraprofessional must be approached cautiously and occur only the when the student needs direct academic, social or behavioral support that cannot be accomplished through other interventions such as visual supports, peer to peer support, positive behavioral support plan or the adult support in the current structure of the classroom.

This document provides a process for determining whether additional adult support is warranted and if so, designing an adult support intervention plan to reduce the likelihood of the detrimental effects occurring. IEP team members should first complete the following schedule matrix to determine where the student may need additional support.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Schedule</th>
<th>Expectations &amp; Instructional Demands</th>
<th>Current Level of Skills (Compared to Peers)</th>
<th>Current Supports, Strategies and EBPs</th>
<th>Potential Goals &amp; Strategies Needed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| In this column, list the student’s daily schedule including all primary activities, courses / classes and/or transitions. | In this column, identify the expectations & instructional demands during this part of the schedule. Expectations and instructional demands include:  
- Independence Skills  
- Social Interaction Skills  
- Communication Skills  
- Behavioral Skills  
- Academic Skills including task initiation, engagement, & output  
For example, during "arrival," the expectations may include independently taking off outerwear, getting materials ready, taking a seat, and completing morning work.  
Include in this section any specific IEP goals targeted during a particular time in the schedule. | In this column, identify the student’s performance, compared to peers, during each part of the schedule.  
Include the following:  
- Independent Skills  
- Social Interaction Skills  
- Communication Skills  
- Behavioral Skills  
- Academic skills including:  
  - Task Initiation  
  - Engagement  
  - Output  
Deficits in these areas may indicate the need for intervention including 1:1 adult support. | List in this column, all the supports, strategies, and/or supplementary aides and services currently in place to support the student. These include but are not limited to:  
- Visual / Organizational Supports / Strategies  
- Peer to Peer Supports  
- Functional Communication System  
- Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports  
- Evidence-Based Practices  
- Accommodations / Modifications  
- Behavioral Response Plan / Crisis Plan  
- Adult (Paraprofessional) Support  
Before considering 1:1 adult support, all other supports to address the challenge should be considered FIRST. One-to-one adult support should be considered the most restrictive support option (Giangreco, 2010). Adult supports should ONLY be used as long as is necessary to teach the student to independently use a system or strategy (e.g. self-management) to address the challenge.  
If adult support is added, the IEP team should complete the Adult Support Responsibilities form included in this document. | In this column, based on information in the previous columns, list potential goal areas (areas of need) and strategies needed for the student to independently make adequate progress in all areas. |
Current research indicates that an overreliance on paraprofessional support is associated with unintended detrimental effects including the student feeling stigmatized, interference with peer interactions, interference with teacher engagement and competent instruction, loss of personal control, decrease in independence skills, and an increase in behavioral challenges (Downing & Clark, 2000; Giangreco, Broer, & Edelman, 2002; Giangreco & Broer, 2005). As such, assigning a paraprofessional must be approached cautiously and occur only when the student needs direct academic, social or behavioral support that cannot be accomplished through other interventions such as visual supports, peer to peer support, positive behavioral support plan or the adult support in the current structure of the classroom. There should be three primary goals for using a 1:1 adult / paraprofessional:

1. Support the student in successfully following the expectations or following through on instructional demands:
   -- Assist in Material / Desk Organization
   -- Implement Academic Accommodations / Modifications
   -- Support / Facilitate Socialization / Communication Opportunities

2. Provide additional learning opportunities necessary for skill acquisition:
   -- Prompt appropriate behavior / work completion, etc.
   -- Run Behavioral Systems

3. Assist the student in learning systems or strategies that allow for optimal independent participation in the school environment:
   -- Visual Schedules and Prompts
   -- Self-Management Systems

IEP teams should complete the following form to outline the goals, roles and responsibilities and long-term planning for student skill acquisition reduction of the need for the paraprofessional.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Schedule</th>
<th>Student Skills Related to Expectations &amp; Instructional Demands</th>
<th>What are the Goals / Outcomes for the Student</th>
<th>Adult Role(s), Responsibility &amp; Strategies</th>
<th>Data Collection &amp; Plan to Reduce the Need for a Paraprofessional</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In this column, list the student’s daily schedule including all primary activities, courses / classes and/or transitions.</td>
<td>In this column, identify the student’s skills related to expectations &amp; instructional demands for all students during this part of the schedule. Expectations and instructional demands include: Independence Skills, Social Interaction Skills, Communication Skills, Behavioral Skills, Academic Skills including task initiation, engagement, &amp; output</td>
<td>In this column, identify the goals / outcomes during this part of the schedule including: Independent Skills, Social Interaction Skills, Communication Skills, Behavioral Skills, Task Initiation, Engagement, &amp; Output</td>
<td>In this column, describe the specific roles, responsibilities, strategies, etc. that the 1:1 adult / paraprofessional will use to assist the student in making progress on the goals / outcomes in the previous column.</td>
<td>In this column, identify the data collection system and schedule that will be used to measure progress on goals / outcomes. Also identify the plan and schedule for reducing the amount of 1:1 adult time the student requires to be successful.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Physical Structure

Is the Environment Increasing Behaviors?

• The arrangement of furniture and materials to add meaning and context to the environment

• Key Concepts:
  o Establish clear visual and/or physical boundaries; segment the environment meaningfully so that each activity is associated with a specific physical space.
  o Minimize visual and auditory distraction, help the child focus on the main concept no irrelevant details (avoid sensory overload)
Why do People with ASD Need Physical Structure?

- Rigid Behaviors
- Trouble Understanding Boundaries
- Difficulty with Generalization
- Difficulty Interacting with the Environment
Physical Structure

• Consideration
  o Runners/Safety
  o Distractions
  o Work/Play Distance
  o Number of Areas in the Classroom
  o Monitoring
  o Creating a Maze (provide more structure than less areas—but avoid clutter)
Real life examples of environmental interventions…
What Are Concerns?
What Are Concerns?

- Materials all over the place.
- Too distracting to be a teaching area.
- Communication book inaccessible.
- Reinforcers freely available.
- Difficult to collect data.
Well Organized Work Area

One work item on table

Easy to collect data immediately

Teacher controls reinforcers & work materials

A Better Idea
What Are Concerns?
Distracting Bulletin Boards within sight

Desk Facing Windows
A Better Idea
Distracting Bulletin Boards to Student’s Desk Clear of Unneeded Items

Unneeded Items Put in Back Pack

Desk Clear of Unneeded Items
Limited distractions surrounding student

Desk facing front/teacher
Interventions/Supports
Communication Deficits

Supporting students with Visual Supports

*If I can't picture it, I can't understand it.*

-Albert Einstein
Communication Supports

Augmentative and Alternative Communication

• Augmentative Communication is any item that is used to increase, maintain, or improve a person’s ability to communicate. Augmentative communication can increase vocalizations, verbalizations, articulation, comprehension, interpersonal interactions, creative use of language, attention span, and self-esteem. Augmentative communication can also decrease disruptive and aggressive behavior, self-stimulation, and frustration.
Communication Supports

**Picture Exchange System (PECS)** This approach uses pictures instead of words to help children communicate. Pictures of common symbols, objects and photographs are used to convey very simple messages, make choices or comments. Pictures can be used for classroom charts, communication boards, communication books and on individual cards. Some people refer to this type of communication as the Picture Exchange Communication System or PECS.

**Electronic Augmentative Communication Devices** Electronic augmentative communication are electronic devices that permit the storage and retrieval of messages, allowing the user to communicate with others using speech output.

**Sign Language** Manual signing systems are not just for the deaf community! Signing has the major advantage of not requiring support materials and provides an opportunity for a quick response.
Communication Supports
Communication/Transition
Behavioral Supports
Visual Schedules
Visual Schedules

• Visual Cues tell what activity will occur and in what sequence. A visual cue allows the student to predict what will happen next.
• Tell the “what, where and when” of the day
• It tells how to move through the physical space we have created—purposefully, independently, and calmly
• It is a positive routine to help the student deal and predict changes
Individualizing the Schedule

• **Symbol System**
  - Objects
  - Pictures
  - Written Words
  - Combination

• **Length**
  - Transitions
  - 1-item
  - First-Then
  - Part day
  - Full day

• **Location**
  - Teacher directed
  - IN transition areas
  - At work desk
  - Portable
Individualizing the Schedule

• Use
  o Carry and use/match objects
  o Carry and match symbols
  o Mark off When Finished

• Initiation
  o Teacher takes info to student
  o Student uses transition object
  o Verbal Cue
  o Spontaneous
# Visual Schedule Examples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Things to do</th>
<th>Finished</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Breakfast</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medication</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reader</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Get dressed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clean teeth</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shoes and socks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School bag</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ready set</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lets go!</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

![Visual Schedule Examples Image](image-url)
Visual Supports
Visual Supports

- Permissions as well as prohibitions
  
  **At a Party**
  
  I can
  
  - Eat Cake
  - Dance
  
  I can’t
  
  - Throw Trash
  - Kick Trash

- Show rules not Consequences
Visual Supports

How to wash your hands:

1. Wet your hands
2. Apply solution and scrub for at least 15 seconds
3. Scrub back of hands, wrists, between fingers and under fingernails
4. Rinse your hands
5. Turn off water lever using your elbows
6. Dry with paper towel
Visuals Interventions and Supports for Behavioral Deficits

Visual Supports to help with Identifying Feelings Self-Monitoring
## 5 Point Scale – Visual/Behavioral Support

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Escalation</th>
<th>What STUDENT says / does; How STUDENT feels</th>
<th>What STAFF says or does; What STUDENT can do (ex. Choices / Options)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level 5—Aggression</td>
<td>Physical aggression toward self / others.</td>
<td>• CRISIS / EMERGENCY INTERVENTION PLAN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 4—Anger</td>
<td>Verbal aggression including threats of physical harm</td>
<td>• Forced break / time away</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 3—Agitation</td>
<td>Noticeable increase or change in behavior</td>
<td>• BREAK to reduce stress; evaluate environment for potential stressors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 2—Anxiety</td>
<td>Slight change in behavior</td>
<td>• Strategies to alleviate anxiety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 1—GREEN</td>
<td>Appropriate behavior &amp; following expectations</td>
<td>• Provide positive feedback / reinforcement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## 5 Point Scale Template

<table>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>Level 3—Agitation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 2—Anxiety</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 1—GREEN</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Visual Supports

Feelings Meter

How am I feeling?
# Visual Supports

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I’m working fine!</th>
<th>I’m working fine!</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I need help, but I can keep working.</td>
<td>I need help, but I can keep working.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I need help, and I can’t keep working.</td>
<td>I need help, and I can’t keep working.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Visual Supports
Modifications/Accommodations
Social Deficits

Social Stories
Structured Play
Peer Buddies
Rule Following
Social Stories

Length and Use of Social Story Varies
• May need support daily, weekly, monthly
• Only during transitions
• Only during field trips or during unexpected events
• To prepare for field trips or unexpected events
Social Stories

- Social Stories
  - Pictures
  - Pictures with text
  - Videos
  - Pictures of Specific Place
Meeting and Greeting Circles

Strangers
Do not touch

Say hello

Wave

Handshake

Hug

Me

Playing

Sometimes I like to play with other kids.

I can ask them, "Do you want to play with me?"

If they say "yes", I can play with them. I will have fun.

If they say "no", it's ok.

I can ask someone else or play by myself.

'Tracey Boyd, 2009
Visual Supports
Modifications/Accommodations
Social Deficits

• **Structured Play**
  - Structured play is an approach to teach children how to play appropriately with toys, expand their use/variety and developmental level of play. Structured play emphasizes organizing and clarifying their play activities. By structuring play, more abstract concepts can become visually clear and make sense to the child increasing motivation and willingness to participate. Many children with autism do not know how to play with a toy. This is part of the reason why they sometimes focus on a single aspect of a toy. In order to help the children enjoy toys in a more creative way, we need to make the play activities and toys make sense to them.
Structured Play
Peer Buddies

Use Visuals to help assist peer buddy and/or student diagnoses with autism

- **Interaction during recess**
  - Peer Buddy to assist at recess
    - Decreases roaming or sitting at tables

- **Interaction during lunch**
  - Peers Buddy to assist at lunch
    - Decreases isolation
    - Find common interests (e.g. social outlets – music, celebrities, sports)

- **Peer Groups**
  - During RTI, study hall or recess
  - To increase social skills and independence
Promoting Rule Following

• Can be presented to a group or individual
  - Can use text or pictures
• Tells what is expected of student in any given situation
• Use consistently & before behavior is expected to occur
• Simple
Promoting On-task Behavior

• Use a timer
  o Provides information about when reward is available
  o Provides information about when activity is over
  o Can be used to increase work time (beat the timer)
  o Facilitates smoother transitions
Summary

• Remember the core deficits
  o Behavior
  o Communication
  o Social

• Iceberg
  o What is the underlying cause of the behavior

• Physical Structure
  o Is anything over stimulating the student - is the room cluttered.
  o Can the student flee from desk – centers – play area?
  o What is the purpose of piece of furniture, poster on the wall, etc.

• Visual Supports
  o Schedules, times, self-monitoring tools, PECS, Social Stories

• Social Supports
  o Peer buddies, structured play, etc.
References

- National Autism Resources
- The Autism Project
- Picture Exchange System
- Lovaas Institute
- SIU-C Autism Center
- 5 point scale = www.5pointscale.com
- START (Statewide Autism Resources and Training)
- PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports)
  - https://www.gvsu.edu/autismcenter/positive-behavioral-interventions-support-for-students-with-asd-90.htm