A Systematic Approach to Including Key Individuals in the Function-Based Support Process

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Overview

- What is the relationship of function-based support for an individual student to schoolwide positive behavior support (PBS)?
- How are interviews with students used as a part of function-based support?
- How can parents be involved?
- How can contextual fit be established?
- What are the systems level variables for including key individuals in the function-based support process?
What is the relationship of function-based support for an individual student to schoolwide behavior support?

There is a commitment to educate all students -- even students with more extensive problem behavior.
School-wide positive behavior support (PBS) systems are in place for:

- teaching behavioral expectations
- acknowledging and reinforcing appropriate behavior
- correcting problem behavior
- using summarized office discipline referral information for decision-making to identify individual students who might benefit from function-based support
Office Discipline Referral (ODR) form includes information that will be useful for function-based support:

- time
- location
- behavior
- administrative decision,
- possible motivation, and
- others involved
A behavior support school team is ready to:

- Receive requests for help with behavior
- Work with a teacher to develop behavior support
- Monitor impact of support for the individual student at regular intervals
- Work with the schoolwide PBS team
The behavior support team

- Has a leader who takes responsibility
- Meets regularly
- Keeps a record of current and past requests for assistance
- Has opportunities for professional development in behavior support
A brief request for assistance form includes:

- Clear, objective description of the problem behavior
- When it usually occurs (situations, routines, antecedents, setting events)
- What usually happens right after it occurs or what seems to be maintaining it
- What has been tried to solve the problem?
- “Big picture” information (e.g. medical, academic, transition issues)?
The behavior support team has a standard process for getting a student started on positive, individualized, function-based support.

- Contacting parents, other teachers who may be involved
- Checklist to identify which steps to take (Interviews? Observations? Records review? Consultations?)
- Setting up a schedule – who, when, where
How are interviews with students used as a part of function-based support?

- Person Centered Planning type interviews:
  - Goals?
  - Dreams?
  - Strengths?
  - Resources?
  - Barriers? Problem-solving?
  - Next steps?
Functional Behavioral Assessment interviews:

- To find out the student’s perceptions of what happens first, next, later
- Like a reporter
- Not an interrogation!
- Not a diagnostic interview
- Not a counseling session
The Issue of Diversity

Who should interview the student?
Will you?

What should you be aware of?
- Know your own cultural influences
- Traditional “scolding” type questions
- Verbal language
- Body language – eye contact, level
- Best time, setting for the interview
What do we need to know?

- Enough to fill out a “Competing Behavior Pathway”
- What was supposed to happen?
- What happened that caused problems?
- What happened before that?
- What happened afterwards? Did you like that?
- What could be done instead?
Enough to fill out a “Competing Behavior Pathway”

The *Competing Behavior Pathways* (CBP) model (O’Neill et al., 1997) is a clear statement of the logic that drives an instructional approach to intervention rather than a punitive approach. CBP diagrams facilitate brainstorming of potential multi-component interventions (Condon & Tobin, 2001; Crone & Horner, 2003; Crone, Horner, & Hawken, 2004; O’Neill et al., 1997)
Competing Behavior Pathways

- Brainstorm potential interventions
- Capture the power of the natural contingencies that have been enabling the problem behavior
- Harness that energy to develop strategies that will lead to durable improvements.
How can parents be involved?


- Invite involvement in program development & evaluation & in problem-solving efforts!
- Recognize strengths, *don’t stereotype*
- Make it easier to meet *(help deal with obstacles)*
  - Child care
  - Transportation, help with car pools
  - Convenient time or *substitute family member okay*
Be knowledgeable about their child’s strengths in ways tests cannot detect

Have positive experiences to share

*Use informal communication opportunities*
  Preferred
  More likely to be used than formal occasions

Feel welcome:
  Listened to
  Concerns addressed: Ideas for community support!
  Treated in a friendly & respectful way
  Asked about their opinions
Immigrant parents role in home-school communication*

- Study in Chicago of 42 young children with English as a 2\textsuperscript{nd} language
- Total of 12 different languages involved
- Used interviews & observations

What support does the school provide?

- Materials, other children speaking other languages, teachers & assistants
- Helped if aides spoke Spanish for the Spanish speaking parents
For young children, see the Parent’s Guide to Functional Behavioral Assessment:

http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~ttobin
Getting something

- Getting something the child wants or enjoys, such as, food, a toy, a favorite activity, Dad’s attention
- Can be a function of appropriate – or inappropriate – behavior.
How can contextual fit of behavior intervention plans be established?

- Moes and Frea (2000) found that contextualized treatment-planning resulted in more positive outcomes than prescriptive treatment-planning.
- Contextual fit means the behavior support plan will fit well in the context where it will be implemented.
- The values, skills, and resources, etc., of the teachers and parents who will implement the plan have been considered.
- Processes for achieving contextual fit for interventions have been identified (Albin, Lucyshyn, Horner, & Flannery, 1996; Lucyshyn, Dunlap, & Albin,
What is needed for contextual fit?
(Horner, Salentine, & Albin, 2003)

- Knowledge about how the intervention should be implemented.
- Skills for implementing the intervention.
- Consistency with personal values of the implementers.
- Availability of needed resources (time, materials, funds).
In schools and community agencies, administrative support for the intervention will be available (e.g., review, follow up).

In homes, support for the intervention will be available from members of the family and/or friends (e.g., by co-operation, expressions of appreciation).
Believing that the intervention will be effective.

Knowing the intervention would be in the best interests of the focus individual.

Procedures that are efficient (smallest effort necessary for desired effect).
What are the systems level variables for including key individuals in the function-based support process?

- In the FBA process?
- In the implementation of an individualized, positive, function-based support plan?
- See “Functional Interventions in Versatile Environments Questionnaire” (FIVE-Q)
The school or district has allocated FTE for a person with behavioral expertise.
The teacher who needs help has ready access to the behavior specialist.
The behavior specialist will help with planning, implementing, and monitoring function-based support.
In some states, the state department provides technical assistance from behavior specialists.
Behavior Specialists Understand:

- Functional behavioral assessment
- Positive behavior support interventions
- Applied behavior analysis
A simple process for requesting assistance is in place.

- All teachers understand how to requesting assistance.
- School administration is supportive of these requests.
- Teachers understand what will be involved – not just a “hoop!”
- Teachers and students actually get help -- quickly.
Communication Systems Work

- State – District – School
- Students – School Staff
- School – Community
- School -- School Board
- Home - School
7 Ways Administrators Can Help with Home-School Communication:

1. Organizing “coffee & roll” informal socials
2. Setting up a daily, drop-in style “Parent Center”
3. Supporting a parent group run by parents
4. Supporting a “Partners” group for parents, teachers, and social workers
5. Supporting home visits, newsletters
6. Organizing “phone trees” to get the word out about events at school
7. Providing staff development in the area of cultural sensitivity if necessary

From:
Communication Systems, continued

- Within school
  - School staff know what’s going on with behavior support
  - PBS team reports to whole school
  - Behavior support team reports to whole school
  - How many students helped
  - How the process is working
For more information:

http://pbis.org
http://www.swis.org
http://five.uoregon.edu
http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~ttobin


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