Simple Solutions to common Behavior Problems

Interruption & Transition, Wait, Accepting No and Count & Mand Procedures
Presented by:
Tashenna Gillmore M.Ed., BCBA

Agenda
- What is ABA?
- Count & Mand procedure
- Interruption & Transition (or “Promise”) procedure
- Wait Procedure
- Accepting No procedure

What is ABA?

- Applied: application, serves purpose
- Behavior: observable response
- Analysis: study of behaviors
ABC: Three term contingency

- Antecedent: The event that occurs before a behavior
- Behavior: The observable response
- Consequence: The event that occurs after a behavior

Understanding Behavior

Looking at Behaviors

- Topography: What
- Function: Why
  (motivation is key)

Functions of Behavior

- Social Mediated Positive
- Social Medicated Negative
- Automatic Positive
- Automatic Negative

Neidert, (2010)
Socially Mediated Positive Reinforcement

- Something delivered by another person following a behavior that makes it more likely to occur.
  - Tangibles
  - Attention
  - Activities

Socially Mediated Negative Reinforcement

- Something (demand) removed by another person following a behavior that makes it more likely to occur.
  - Escape
  - Avoidance

Automatic Positive Reinforcement

- Movements or activities of the body that produce a feeling that makes it more likely to occur.
  - Self-stimulatory Sensations
Automatic Negative Reinforcement

- Movements or activities of the body that remove an unpleasant or uncomfortable feeling that makes that behavior more likely to occur.
  - Termination of pain
  - Pain Attenuation

Count & Mand Procedure

- Objective: To reduce problem behavior to obtain items and activities by teaching the appropriate mands.
- Candidates For This Program: An individual whose behavior has been determined to be a function of obtaining items and activities and attention through problem behavior even when the reinforcer has been delivered for appropriate asking.
- Examples: Grabbing instead of asking, bolting for an item instead of asking, asking with a whiny voice or while engaging in problem behavior like crying or falling to the floor.

Count & Mand Procedure

- The count & mand procedure teaches functional replacement for maladaptive behavior in the moment! Very helpful for a variety of individuals and situations.
- In order to conduct this procedure the following must be present:
  - Learner engaging in problem behavior because wants something
  - You as the listener know what the learner wants and can identify it
  - The item/activity is available and you are willing to grant access if problem behavior ceased
Count & Mand Procedure: Summary

• Tell student “no (problem behavior)“.
• Once the problem behavior stops, begin a silent count. For some students it may be appropriate to count aloud and/or show the passage of time by using your fingers. What number you count to (count interval) will be determined by the student’s repertoire. In any case, keep the count low at first, e.g. 3-5, to insure that the appropriate mand contacts reinforcement frequently.
• If student does not engage in problem behavior for the entire interval while you were counting, prompt the mand and when student echoes or signs, deliver the item.

Count & Mand Procedure: Summary continued...

• HOWEVER, if at all during the count interval, the learner again engages in problem behavior, start the count over
• Physically block self-injurious (SIB), aggressive, and property destructive behaviors.
• If you repeat the count for many trials without reaching the count (number of trials determined based on individual student needs) then discontinue by merely walking away without comment or redirecting to a neutral task and the opportunity to mand is no longer available to the learner.
• If the learner moves away from you, insure the learners safety and block access to reinforcement, but do not follow the learner. If and when the learner returns to you continuing to engage in problem behavior continue the procedure. If the learner does not return and the time dictates it is necessary to move to a new activity then proceed and the opportunity to mand is no longer available.
• Record the learner’s responses on the count & Mand data sheet.

Example and Practice
**Interruption & Transition Procedure**

- **Objective:** To replace problem behavior that has been acquired when problem behavior has resulted in the removal of demands to transition to another activity and thereby the student has maintained possession of a toy, activity, or item.
- **Candidates for the Program:** An individual whose behavior has been determined to be a function of a history of having demands removed and reinforcing items maintained following problem behavior.
- **Examples:** Aggression, SIB, screaming, crying, etc… when asked to stop a preferred activity and transition to a less preferred activity. Eg. Child is watching a movie and told it’s time for dinner; or child is out at recess and it is time to come inside for class.

**Interruption & Transition Procedure: Summary**

- Determine the demand to transition to a less reinforcing activity that you will place on the learner.
- Identify and have prepared in advance the “Promise” Reinforcers to be used in the interruption transition training.
- Present the “Promise” Reinforcer before you give the direction to transition.
- Present the direction to transition in clear and direct wording. (No questions. Eg “can you line up for me?”)
- If the learner successfully complies, give him the Promised Reinforcer and have him return to the preferred activity. (You can deliver additional reinforcement when he returns to the activity).

**Interruption & Transition Procedure: Summary continued…**

- If the learner engages in problem behavior as soon as you request the transition, Remove the Promised Reinforcer and continue to present the demand to transition to the learner until compliance with the demand is demonstrated while maintaining safety of student and others.
- Physically block self-injurious (SIB), aggressive, and property destructive behaviors.
- Do not allow access to the preferred item or activity the child is being asked to give up or transition away from.
**Interruption & Transition Procedure:**
**Summary continued...**

- Once at the transitioned area, continue to place easy demands until you gain instructional control, and then place the demand to go back to the original area. Do not give additional reinforcement upon return to the original location when problem behavior has occurred.
- Allow him there for a few seconds and interrupt again using the original procedure and do not place extra demands unless problem behaviors occur. Differentially reinforce the better transition if and when it occurs.
- As the learner accomplishes successful transitions, delay the interval that he must wait to go back to the original activity. (unless following a specific schedule)
- Record the learner's responses on the Interruption/transition data sheet.

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**Example and Practice**

**Wait Procedure**

- **Objective:** To eliminate problem behaviors by teaching the learner to wait
- **Candidates for this program:** An individual whose problem behavior was determined to function as a history of being allowed access to reinforcing items, activities and attention following problem behavior after being told to wait.
- **Examples:** When told to “wait”, “just a minute”, etc... the individual hits, screams, cries, whines, or engages in SIB and in the past people have given the reinforcing item or activity to them more quickly. Eg: Johnny starts crying when told he has to wait for his older sister to finish with the ipad and Mom hurries sister off the ipad quickly so Johnny stops crying.
Wait Procedure: Summary

- Tell the student “You’ll have to wait” or some similar phrase based upon the child’s skill level.
- Begin counting aloud and show the passage of time by using your fingers. Say, “Wait one, two three…” as you hold up your fingers (count will be predetermined based upon the student).
- If problem behaviors do not occur during the entire counting interval, deliver reinforcement.
- However, if at any point during the counting the student engages in problem behavior, restart the count.
  - Ex. “Wait one, two…wait one, two, three” etc

Wait Procedure: Summary continued...

- Continue this process until you are able to count the entire interval without the student engaging in problem behavior. At this point you can reinforce the student for waiting appropriately.
- If you repeat the count for many trials and the student is continues to engage in problem behavior, you may walk away and the student loses the opportunity to contact reinforcement.
- If the student moves away from you, make sure he/she remains safe, but do not follow. Simply end your count and if at any point the student re-approaches you start the procedure over again.
- If time dictates you must move on to another activity, do so, and the opportunity to access this particular reinforcer is lost.

Wait Procedure: Summary continued...

- Gradually increase the wait interval as the student achieves success.
- Once the student has had multiple opportunities to practice waiting and has shown success, fade the count and say “wait” while counting for the required time interval silently.
- Physically block self-injurious (SIB), aggressive, and property destructive behaviors.
- Record the learner’s responses on the Wait data sheet.
Example and Practice

Accepting No Procedure

- **Objective:** This is a program to teach an individual to accept being told no as a replacement for problem behavior. It is most often taught to students who exhibit problem behavior when they are told they can’t have something that they want.
- **Candidates for this Program:** This protocol is used with individuals whose problem behavior has been determined to have a function of a history of obtaining preferred items following problem behavior after being told no or having access to those reinforcers denied.
- **Example:** Johnny asks for McDonalds on his way home from school and Dad says “No, not tonight”. Johnny starts kicking and hitting dad while he is driving. Dad tells Johnny they can go to McDonalds, just calm down.

Accepting No Procedure: Summary

- **As you say NO, bring up a reinforcer or offer another activity by saying** “but you can have or do this reinforcer instead”.
- **If the student does not engage in problem behavior, deliver the reinforcer**.
- **If the student does engage in problem behavior, put the reinforcer away and withdraw the other offer and do not attend to the problem behavior**.
- **Instead re-direct the student to a neutral activity using prompts as needed**.
  - In the event that you had to redirect to a neutral activity, make sure student complies with at least 2-3 tasks without problem behavior before you deliver reinforcement. At this point **DO NOT deliver the reinforcer that was denied when the problem behavior occurred and make sure reinforcement is less that if the student would have accepted the alternative**.
Accepting No Procedure: Summary continued...

- Physically block self-injurious (SIB), aggressive, and property destructive behaviors.
- Avoid running too many trials in which you deny the reinforcer in a row. In other words, make sure you intersperse trials in which you do in fact deliver the reinforcer requested.
- For some students, it may be necessary to sequence steps carefully so that you "Set them up for success". Some of the considerations include the value of the reinforcer being denied, value of the reinforcer being offered as the alternative, number of trials in the day in which reinforcers are denied, and percent of trials in which an alternative is offered.

Accepting No Procedure: Summary continued...

- Example:
  - Step 1: Deny less reinforcing items while offering a more reinforcing item
  - Step 2: Deny a reinforcing item while offering a reinforcer that is somewhat equal in value.
  - Step 3: Deny a reinforcing item while offering a less reinforcing item
  - Step 4: Deny reinforcing items and offer an alternative for only 80% of the trials
  - Step 5: Deny reinforcing items and offer an alternative for only 50% of the trials
  - Step 6: Deny reinforcing items and offer an alternative for only 30% of the trials
- Record the learner’s responses on the Accepting No data sheet.

Example and Practice
Summary

- Before implementing any procedure be sure that there is a clear understanding of the function of the behavior. Ideally, a functional analysis has been conducted to verify function.
- Consistency across people and setting will always result in the best results. Work as a team with everyone involved in the best interest of that individual.
- Remember reinforcement! No one wants to transition to something less preferred or accept no, or wait for the things they want, so make it as painless as possible! Make sure you have alternative reinforcers in play to help with these difficult moments.
- Call in a professional when needed. These are procedures based specific circumstances and may not work for everyone. A Board Certified Behavior Analyst can help determine a more individualized intervention when needed.

References


Thank You!!!

Tashenna Gillmore, M.Ed., BCBA
The Heart of Behavior LLC.
Theheartofbehavior@gmail.com
(214)608-7120