



# BOATS



## Behaviour Observation Assessment Teaching Strategies

2016  
3rd Edition

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## Acknowledgement

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This resource is intended for all teachers, assistants, inclusive education consultants and behaviour support specialists working in public education systems.

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## Table of Contents

<b>BOATS</b>	<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>3</b>
	BOATS Defined .....	4
	BOATS Principles.....	4
	BOATS Process.....	5
	Understanding Behaviour - The Circle of Courage .....	6
	Belonging.....	6
	Mastery.....	8
	Independence .....	9
	Generosity.....	10
	Connecting to the Behaviour Support Plan.....	11
	Essential Understandings of Behaviour Support .....	12
	PBIS Components.....	12
	PBIS Illustrated .....	13
	Universal Strategies .....	14
	Effective Instruction .....	14
	CHAMP Strategy .....	17
	Targeted Strategies.....	17
	Individulized Strategies.....	18
	Summary .....	19
<b>B</b>	<b>Behaviour .....</b>	<b>20</b>
	Student Behaviours .....	20
	Attention/Obtain Something .....	21
	Escape/Avoidance.....	22
	Power/Control.....	23
	Self-Regulation.....	24
	The Function of Behaviour - Examples.....	25
	Common Adult Reactions to Behaviours .....	26
	Positive Aspects of Challenging Behaviour .....	27
	Other Variables Related to Challenging Behaviours .....	28
<b>O</b>	<b>Observation.....</b>	<b>29</b>
	Collecting Behaviour Data.....	29
	Data Collection Procedures .....	29
	Data Collection Systems.....	30
	ABC Recording .....	31
	Frequency Recording .....	35
	Interval Recording.....	36
	Momentary Time Sampling .....	37
	Duration Recording.....	38
	Latency Recording.....	38
	Summary of Data Collection Systems and Recommended Use .....	39

<b>A</b>	<b>Assessment .....</b>	<b>41</b>
	Assessment of Behaviour.....	41
	Functional Behaviour Assessment (FBA) .....	42
	FBA Process.....	42
	FBA a Team Activity.....	43
	FBA Forms.....	44
	Competing Pathways Chart.....	45
	Aligning Data Collection with BSPs.....	47
<b>T</b>	<b>Teaching .....</b>	<b>49</b>
	Teach Positive Replacement Behaviours .....	49
	Behaviour Support Plan (BSP) .....	50
	Select Desired Behaviours.....	52
	Behaviour Goals .....	52
	Skill or Performance Deficits .....	54
	Consequences .....	54
	Positive Reinforcement .....	56
	Negative Reinforcement .....	56
	Effective Reinforcement Systems.....	56
	Reinforcement Schedules .....	57
	Reinforcement Menu .....	58
	Token Economy Systems.....	59
	Behaviour Support Planning Summary .....	59
<b>S</b>	<b>Strategies .....</b>	<b>61</b>
	Strategies to Teach Positive Behaviour .....	61
	Specific Strategies to Match Function of Behaviour .....	62
	Attention/Power/Control Behaviours .....	62
	Increase Student Control and Choices.....	62
	Increase Opportunities for Positive Attention and Friendship .....	63
	Increase Status, Self-esteem and Image .....	63
	Escape/Avoidance Behaviours.....	63
	Decrease student need to escape or avoid .....	63
	Match Teaching Strategies to Student Learning .....	64
	Match Instructional Activities and Materials.....	64
	Match Assessment Strategies.....	64
	Self-regulation.....	65
	Increase or decrease need for self-regulation	
	Physical Arrangements and Classroom Management .....	65
	Supporting Positive Behaviour - Behaviour Techniques.....	66
	Student Strategies.....	69
	BOATS Summary.....	74
	BOATS: Evaluating Quality of Behaviour Support Plans .....	75
Appendix	Forms .....	77
	Definitions and Terms .....	101
	Supplemental Resources.....	103



# BOATS INTRODUCTION

BOATS is a resource for teachers developed by the Council for Inclusive Education of the Alberta Teachers' Association with support from the Learning and Teaching Resources Branch of Alberta Education. In the province of Alberta, each student enrolled in a school operated by a school board must be provided a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that fosters and maintains respectful, responsible behaviours. This learning environment is physically, emotionally and psychologically safe for all students and staff. It is an environment where everyone is accorded respect and dignity and where safety and well-being are paramount. A school environment of this nature optimizes opportunities for increased teaching and learning.

This resource is intended to provide a process for teachers to effectively address behaviours that seriously interfere with a student's learning and/or limit a student's ability to interact positively with others. BOATS is designed for classroom teachers, inclusive education teachers, educational assistants and others involved in establishing and maintaining effective instructional programs to modify challenging behaviours. This resource also supports the work of school-based learning teams. Parents, teaching staff, administrators, consultants and other members of a learning team, working collaboratively, can use this resource to assist in the process of determining the purpose or function of a student's behaviour and then use that information to develop a behaviour support plan.

BOATS was designed as a general resource with the following purposes:

- Build the knowledge and skills of educators in their efforts to support students with challenging behaviours
- Better understand the function(s) of behaviour
- Help develop behaviour support plan
- Provide strategies for a range of student behaviours—mild to severe
- Support school-based learning teams
- Provide ideas for teaching new, socially appropriate behaviours that can replace behaviours interfering with teaching and learning

Building teachers' knowledge and skills to support students with behaviour challenges begins by developing a shared understanding of what all students need in order to develop and maintain appropriate social behaviours. This shared understanding is important because it supports the subsequent process of observing and assessing behaviours, as well as selecting ways to teach new behaviours as replacements for those requiring reduction or change.

## BOATS Defined

BOATS is an acronym for one process designed to help teachers understand and effectively respond to student behaviour. Each component will be explained in subsequent sections of this resource.

- B – BEHAVIOUR
- O – OBSERVATION
- A – ASSESSMENT
- T – TEACHING
- S – STRATEGIES

## BOATS Principles

BOATS is based on the following conceptual principles from research and evidence-based best practices.

- Behaviour is learned and therefore can be unlearned.
- Each student is unique and will require an individualized approach depending on the purpose or function of the student's behaviour.
- Developing a relationship with students is critical to influence positive behaviours.
- Behaviour serves a need, purpose or function. The first step of intervention is to identify that need, purpose or function.
- Behaviour is influenced by the type of reinforcement or other consequence(s) occurring after the behaviour.
- Observational data is needed to determine the function of the behaviour and the effect(s) of antecedents and consequences surrounding that behaviour.
- Understanding the function of behaviour leads to selecting appropriate teaching strategies.
- Altering the setting or environment may be required to improve student behaviour.
- Data collection is important for initial decision making as well as continuous monitoring of programming.
- Working through the process of understanding and observing behaviours, implementing positive behaviour supports and matching appropriate teaching strategies to student needs enhances the competency and capacity of teachers and school-based learning teams.



## The BOATS Process

1. Behaviour is anything a student may say or do. A polite greeting, completion of addition problems, silent reading, emotional outburst, swearing and/or noncompliance are all examples of behaviour. Student behaviour becomes a challenge when it interferes with teaching and learning. If universal classroom management strategies are not effective in reducing the frequency, intensity or duration of behaviours, targeted or individualized strategies may be required. For assessment purposes, behaviour must be described in observable, measurable terms including what comes before the behaviour (ie, antecedents) and what follows the behaviour (ie, consequences).
2. Observations of behaviour must be objectively documented. Documentation provides information on student behaviour, including the context or setting in which the behaviour was observed as well as environmental variables that may influence the occurrence or nonoccurrence of behaviour. Documentation should indicate where the student was, with whom, when and what the academic or task demands were at the time, as well as consequences (events that followed the behaviour).
3. Assessment includes interpretation of data collected from observation. Assessment can help identify the function or purpose of the behaviour. The intent is to determine why the student has behaved in a certain way, what precipitated the behaviour and what consequences support, reinforce or maintain the challenging behaviour. For example, a student frustrated by tasks that are too difficult may seek attention or assistance by emotional outburst rather than by using more appropriate ways to communicate needs and seek assistance.
4. Teaching involves the process of replacing or modifying the challenging behaviour by replacing it with a more acceptable behaviour. The replacement behaviour must be effective and efficient as well as appropriate to the setting or context. For instance, in the foregoing example, emotional outburst may be replaced by the use of picture communication symbols to ask for assistance or by asking for help from a peer. Teaching replacement behaviours is individualized and must be based on the student's skill and/or performance level.
5. Strategies are selected to match the individual student's function of behaviour, learning style and needs. For example, visual prompts, reinforcement, guided practice and peer modelling may be used to teach replacement of emotional outburst behaviours. Selection of appropriate teaching and the use of effective instructional strategies become part of a behaviour support plan.

Each stage of BOATS—behaviour, observation, assessment, teaching and selection of strategies—needs to be continuously monitored and reviewed for effectiveness in shaping appropriate student behaviours. This includes evaluating improvement of student behaviour as well as evaluation of the BOATS process and general academic and social programming.

## Understanding Behaviour—The Circle of Courage

The process of understanding behaviour includes selecting teaching strategies useful for replacing challenging behaviour with socially appropriate behaviour. Readers are encouraged to consider the following prominent and researched model for understanding the behaviour of students exhibiting behaviour challenges. *Reclaiming Youth At Risk: Our Hope for the Future*<sup>1</sup> presents a model adhering to the belief that when children are cared for, encouraged to work hard and supported as students, academic achievement is increased. Development of positive cultures for learning and establishment of caring social relationships are vital.

*Reclaiming Youth At Risk: Our Hope for the Future* includes four components termed the Circle of Courage: belonging, mastery, independence and generosity. It is proposed these four components need to be positively developed in students. If not, the student's basic needs will not be met. The student may find inappropriate methods to meet their needs. Often, these inappropriate behaviours begin a negative cycle that, if not corrected, can negatively impact their future success. When these four basic needs are met, students are more likely to become successful learners, socially responsible citizens and contributing members of their school and family. Furthermore, when basic needs are not being met, students may be more inclined to exhibit challenging behaviours.

Therefore, it is important that a reclaiming environment be developed and maintained to support positive behaviours in students. A reclaiming environment, based on the four areas of the Circle of Courage, can create a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that fosters and maintains respectful, responsible behaviours.

### Belonging

Belonging provides the motivation to live, learn and get along well with others. Belonging includes being connected to the teacher, other students, the classroom and school. It is being part of and accepted into a group and being able to understand the responses of others or the group, having friends and developing positive relationships. A sense of belonging is developed when the student is accepted and he/she know that his/her well-being is a concern of others.

A sense of belonging is developed when students are positively reinforced over time for being part of a group. If consistently acknowledged, students will become accepted, attached, friendly, intimate, cooperative and trusting with others.

<sup>1</sup> Brendtro, L M Brokenleg and S Van Bockern. 1990. *Reclaiming Youth At Risk: Our Hope for the Future*. Bloomington, IN: National Educational Service.





If a sense of belonging is not provided or is negatively reinforced over time, students may learn to become loyal to an unhealthy peer group or attracted to unhealthy social relationships. Students could also begin to crave acceptance and become clingy or overly dependent on others for help or support.

If a sense of belonging is not consistently provided for or positively reinforced over time, students may become guarded, rejected, lonely, aloof, distrustful or isolated from others.

Connections to teachers, other students, activities and social opportunities within the school are of particular value for students who need an enhanced sense of belonging.

A sense of belonging is developed when the teacher

- provides a welcoming environment for every student,
- develops a relationship with each student,
- recognizes accomplishments and achievements,
- gives positive reinforcement and encouragement,
- creates positive opportunities for parent input,
- recognizes and appreciates individual differences and cultures,
- acknowledges individuality and unique talents,
- focuses on behaviour, not the student's characteristics,
- increases student ownership for behaviour,
- shows personal interest in each and every student.

A sense of belonging is developed when the student

- likes school and teachers,
- attends regularly,
- has friends,
- forms relationships with others,
- gets along with others,
- feels part of the school community,
- cares for other people.

## Mastery

Mastery is the development of cognitive, physical, social and spiritual competence. This holistic view of learning recognizes that all students can learn and each student must be given the opportunity to demonstrate competence in some way. When students are successful learners, their competence increases. When students feel competent, they can take more risks and learn to make better decisions. Without opportunities for success, students will tend to express their frustration and lack of self-worth or inadequacy through inappropriate behaviours, such as not caring about schoolwork or not completing assignments.

A sense of mastery is developed when students are positively reinforced over time for making good choices, reaching logical decisions and/or reaching their goals. Students may become creative, motivated, persistent, and feel competent when they experience success and take increasingly greater responsibility for their learning.

If a sense of mastery is not provided or is negatively consequenced over time, students may develop behaviours, such as cheating or avoiding work. Students may also become perfectionists, persevere on high marks or become overly focused on achievement or grades rather than learning. They could become oriented to failure, fearful of challenges and easily discouraged. The student may give up trying to achieve.

Mastery is developed when the teacher

- reinforces a growth mindset,
- treats others with respect and dignity,
- builds on student interests and strengths and beliefs,
- connects learning to real life,
- breaks learning into manageable instructional units,
- promotes self-esteem and motivation,
- ensures student success in something,
- helps students set and reach realistic goals,
- teaches and models problem-solving strategies,
- encourages students to take on challenging tasks,
- responds to different learning styles,
- provides clear instruction and expectations to increase students understanding,
- provides multiple means of representation to demonstrate student learning and
- provides frequent and constructive feedback.



A sense of mastery results when students feel like they are

- successful at schoolwork,
- competent,
- good problem solvers,
- flexible,
- internally motivated,
- able to reach potential and
- able to manage their learning and behaviour.

## Independence

Independence is increased autonomy in combination with responsibility. Independence is developed when students learn to be self-reliant and in control of their own actions, presently and in the future. Making good choices and being accountable for the consequences of choices empowers students to be in control of their learning and behaviour.

A sense of independence is developed when students are reinforced for taking responsibility and making positive choices. When positively reinforced, students may become confident, assertive and disciplined. Interdependence is also achieved when the student is able to positively interact with others.

If a sense of independence is not developed, students may develop socially manipulative or rebellious behaviours. Students could become defiant or easily exploited by others. If a sense of independence is not consistently reinforced over time, students may become helpless, submissive, irresponsible or easily led.

Independence is developed when the teacher

- provides choices for activities or task completion,
- teaches to multiple intelligences and/or different learning styles,
- involves students in decisions that affect them,
- teaches students how to study and take tests,
- rewards self-control and responsibility,
- enforces consistent consequences,
- confronts issues of personal responsibility,
- recognizes and promotes responsible decision making and
- uses mentors or role models to build relationships.

A sense of independence results when students

- make good choices,
- are confident,
- take risks,
- complete tasks and responsibilities on their own,
- are personally responsible,
- are held accountable for their actions and
- advocate for themselves.

## Generosity

Generosity is the ability to care for others, to have empathy and concern for the welfare of others. A sense of generosity is a feeling of pride that is experienced from helping others. Without opportunities to share or learn to care, students cannot learn to become caring, contributing or responsible learners.

A sense of generosity is developed when students are positively reinforced over time for showing caring and concern for others, being empathetic, accepting responsibility and helping or providing service to others. With positive teaching and practice, students may learn to be supportive, empathetic and altruistic.

A sense of generosity is not developed if students are not supported to behave in generous ways. Students may learn to become selfish, narcissistic or condescending. Antisocial, explosive or disloyal behaviours can result when students do not respect or care for others.

Generosity will more likely develop when the teacher

- encourages students to be good listeners,
- teaches communication skills,
- encourages students to express their opinions appropriately,
- provides opportunities for community service or volunteer projects,
- promotes cooperative learning and peer tutoring,
- lets students assume leadership roles within the school and classroom,
- practices random acts of kindness,
- models sharing and caring and
- focuses on the mission and vision of the school or district.



A sense of generosity results when students

- move from tangible to social rewards,
- are intrinsically motivated,
- contribute to group discussions,
- respect diversity,
- have empathy toward others,
- support or care for others,
- become responsible for the actions of others and
- volunteer to help others.

### Connecting to the Behaviour Support Plan (BSP)

All students require a sense of belonging as well as opportunities to feel competent, become responsible for self and learn how to care about others. These four basic needs are fundamental to the social and emotional well-being of children and youth. When these four needs are positively developed and acknowledged in students, they will have greater opportunities to experience academic and social success. Opportunities to feel competent and independent as well as develop emotionally fulfilling relationships for students can be generated as part of any behaviour support plan.

For more information and resources on The Circle of Courage, visit [www.reclaiming.com](http://www.reclaiming.com).

## Anchor

When children are cared for, encouraged to work hard and supported as students, academic achievement is increased.

The Circle of Courage philosophy includes positively developing a sense of belonging, mastery, independence and generosity in all students.

The four basic needs (i.e. belonging, mastery, independence and generosity) are fundamental to the well-being of children and youth.

## Essential Understandings of Behaviour Support

The BOATS methodology is based on Applied Behaviour Analysis, a set of empirical principles useful for explaining and addressing human behaviour. The Positive Behavioural Interventions and Supports (PBIS) system, used in many Alberta schools, is also based on Applied Behaviour Analysis techniques.

PBIS is a staff planning process for identifying and explaining what students should know and be able to do in terms of desired behaviour. PBIS involves the identification and positive recognition of appropriate behaviour and provides consistent consequences for inappropriate behaviour. Collecting data to monitor the effectiveness of teaching and selecting strategies to improve student behaviour are an ongoing part of the PBIS process. When consistently applied on a schoolwide basis by all staff, desired behaviours in students increase and challenging behaviours decrease.

### PBIS Components

1. A data collection system that measures the frequency, duration and nature of inappropriate behaviours, outlines and identifies areas where improvement is needed, and measures progress over time.
2. A list of behaviour expectations (eg, Be Responsible, Respect Others, Be Prepared for Learning) to be directly taught and consistently reinforced throughout the school by all adults.
3. The direct teaching of social skills and positive behaviours that specifically show what behaviour expectations look like in each setting or context.
4. Assessment of challenging behaviours to help select or target more specialized interventions for students having difficulty demonstrating desired behaviours.

Research on PBIS concludes that the above components, consistently and simultaneously implemented, lead to behaviour improvement. Effective PBIS includes

- knowing what students need to know and be able to do,
- teaching new and/or desired behaviours,
- selecting effective teaching strategies,
- recognizing and rewarding desired behaviours,
- consistently applying consequences for inappropriate behaviours and
- making programming decisions based on an assessment of the data collected.

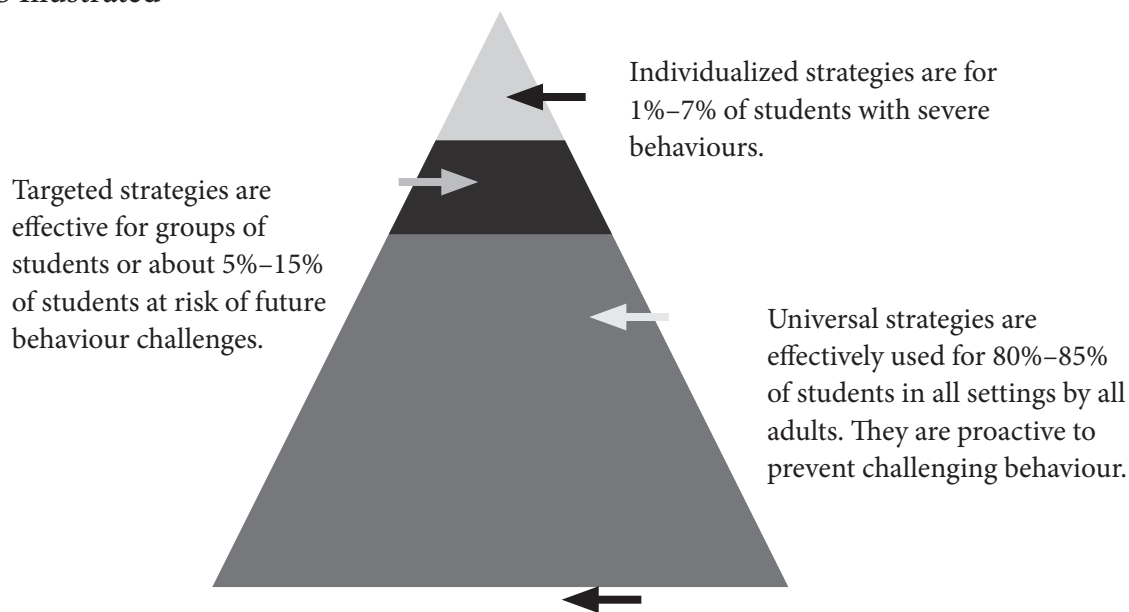


Not all students have the necessary skills or sufficient motivation to comply with social and academic requests or to understand complex interpersonal expectations. Behaviour skills need to be taught by using effective instruction and by matching teaching strategies with the same rigor academic competencies are taught.

One of the central issues to understanding challenging behaviours is evaluating the context in which behaviours occur—not solely the student's characteristics, diagnostic information or individual behaviour challenges. Focus must be placed on a student's behaviour within each environment (ie, the setting or context) where the behaviour occurs most often, with whom (ie, staff or peers) and when (ie, time or subject area). Furthermore, observations of settings, demands and times the student does not display the behaviour are also of interest.

PBIS is a well-researched, evidence-based practice that teachers can implement with an individual student, in a classroom and/or on a schoolwide level. PBIS is tailored to individual students or groups of students based on data collected as well as the purpose or function the behaviour may be serving an identified student.

### PBIS Illustrated



For more information on PBIS, visit [www.pbis.org](http://www.pbis.org).

## Universal Strategies

All students in a school or classroom need the following universal strategies to be successful learners.

### Universal behaviour supports

- Clear behavioural expectations are specified.
- Each expectation is directly taught, practiced, reinforced and reviewed.
- All routines and activities are predictable.
- Staff use “proximity control” (ie, standing closer to a student who is not paying attention).
- Staff employ the “premack principle” (ie, student completes assigned, less preferred tasks prior to being able to perform a more personally preferred activity).
- Positive consequences are delivered after appropriate behaviours or group expectations are met.

### Universal academic supports

- Strong focus is on teaching and learning.
- Learning goals are clear and purpose is known.
- Class time on learning is maximized and time off task is minimized.
- Learner outcomes are matched to student learning styles.
- Feedback on learning and achievement is frequent.
- Instructional supports are provided for academic deficits.
- Essential concepts are pre-taught and reviewed.
- Transitions are structured.
- Visual supports are used.
- Formative assessment are developed.
- Differentiated instruction meets individual student needs.

### Effective Instruction

To effectively prevent students from developing behaviour challenges, it is important that teachers know, understand and model effective instructional practices. Instructional organization that contributes to successful teaching and learning must include planning, managing, delivering and evaluating instruction. Effective teachers demonstrate the following practices:

1. Goals and expectations for performance and success are stated clearly and understood when
  - clear goals for learning are set and communicated,





- student understanding is checked often and
  - feedback to students is frequent and direct.
2. Classroom management is effective and efficient when
    - a few essential classroom rules and procedures are selected and stated positively,
    - expectations for classroom behaviours are communicated and reinforced,
    - behaviour disruptions are handled respectfully and promptly and
    - student accountability and responsibility are developed.
  3. Classroom routines are effective when
    - instructional routines are well established (eg, students know schedules in advance, how to get materials, procedures for leaving the classroom);
    - transitions are brief, procedures for changing activities are planned; and
    - interruptions are minimized.
  4. Classroom environments have a positive climate when
    - learning is the focus,
    - cooperative learning is used,
    - leadership is shared with students and
    - individual differences are respected and valued.
  5. Instruction is matched to student learning styles when
    - demands of classroom tasks and assignments are analyzed,
    - students are grouped for instructional purposes,
    - activities are matched to “real life” or student interests,
    - activities and assignments are matched to instructional goals,
    - student success rates are high and
    - student understanding is checked.
  6. Lessons presented and instructional procedures are efficient when
    - sequences of teaching include demonstration, prompting and practice;
    - concepts are clear and students know what the learning involves; and
    - learning is consistently reinforced through practice, attention, praise and personal acknowledgement.

<sup>2</sup> Adapted from Algozzine, B and J Ysseldyke. 1993. *Strategies and Tactics for Effective Instruction*. Longmont, CO: Sopris West.

7. Instructional support is provided when
  - instruction is monitored and adjusted,
  - thinking strategies are modelled and practiced,
  - learning strategies are directly taught,
  - sufficient time is provided for learning and application of learning and
  - practice is guided and reinforced.
8. Sufficient time is allocated to academics and instructional time is used effectively when
  - students are actively engaged in learning,
  - teacher interactions with students are frequent and positive,
  - learning is fun and meaningful and
  - tasks and activities are selected to match learner needs and levels of understanding.
9. Student opportunities to participate in learning are high when
  - opportunities to respond are provided frequently,
  - effective questioning techniques are used,
  - errors are corrected immediately,
  - errorless learning is used at times and
  - differentiated instruction is used.
10. Student progress and understanding increase when feedback is
  - frequent,
  - constructive,
  - diagnostic,
  - task specific and
  - performance based.
11. Student performance is best evaluated through formative assessment that is
  - appropriate,
  - frequent,
  - student specific and
  - directly related to the program of studies or essential learner outcomes.



## CHAMP Strategy

For each class or activity, consider CHAMP as an example of an universal strategy:

- C Conversation—Can students talk with each other during the activity? If yes, how? What about? With whom? How long?
- H Help—How do students get their questions answered? What is the best way to get your attention? What is the best way to handle students who have to wait for your help?
- A Activity—What is the purpose of the activity? What is the most important learner outcome? How does the activity relate to students' life?
- M Movement—How do students move about the room (eg, get a pencil, drink, go to the bathroom, hand in or pick up materials)?
- P Participation—What behaviours are important for showing respect and responsibility as a learner in the classroom?

See Appendix: Classroom Support System: Routines and Procedures (p 79)

## Targeted Strategies

Targeted strategies are needed for about 5–15 per cent of students who do not respond consistently to universal strategies. These strategies are used in addition to universal strategies and work well for groups of students who are experiencing behaviour challenges.

### Targeted behaviour supports

- Reinforcement and acknowledgment of students are used when behaviours are appropriate (ie, four encouraging and positive comments are provided to every one correcting comment).
- Reward systems are in place to consistently reinforce students' appropriate behaviours when demonstrated (ie, catch students being good).
- Precorrection and various levels of prompting are used for behaviours expected in different settings or activities.
- Supports and assistance for changes or interruptions in routines or activities are available.
- Students are taught to self-monitor their own behaviour.
- Anger management and conflict resolution skills are taught.

<sup>3</sup> Sprick, R, M Garrison, and L Howard. 1998. *CHAMPS: A Proactive Approach to Classroom Management*. Longmont, CO: Sopris West.

### Targeted academic supports

- providing additional time to learn key concepts or complete tasks;
- providing instructional strategies or mnemonic devices to retain key concepts or enhance learner outcomes;
- using meta-cognitive strategies and problem solving;
- adapting or modifying curriculum and providing differentiated instruction;
- giving assistance with transition planning and changes in routine or activity;
- developing individualized program plans (IPP).

## Individualized Strategies

Individualized strategies are needed for about 1–7 per cent of students who do not respond consistently or positively to either targeted and/or universal strategies. While most students will respond positively to the above supports, a few students will require even more intensive management techniques. Students having severe communication and social challenges, such as autism, severe developmental disabilities and/or multiple medical conditions in addition to behaviour challenges, may require behaviour support plans developed by a school-based learning team. The team, consisting of professionals and parents, can design teaching strategies specific to the individual student's educational needs.

### Individualized behaviour supports

- functional behaviour assessment and behaviour support plan,
- token economy or a formal tangible reward system,
- behaviour contracts,
- communication programming,
- assistive technology,
- a school-based learning team,
- case conferences to coordinate additional services (ie, mental health support or family school support) and
- crisis management planning (ie, use of “room clear” or time-out room).



### Individualized academic supports

- individualized program plan (IPP),
- increased adult support and supervision for learning,
- modified instructional program,
- remedial or intensive instruction in literacy and math and
- appropriate alternative assessment procedures.

## Summary

Establishing positive behaviour and academic supports appropriate to the level or needs of students is the first step to preventing behaviour challenges as well as dealing with low-level behaviour difficulties. Effective instructional practices are essential to establishing a positive classroom climate. Modifying or adapting curriculum and learning expectations for individual students may also be needed in addition to effective classroom management. Together, effective behaviour management and instructional practices ensure student success and ultimately increase student achievement as well as reduce challenging behaviour.

## Anchors

If you expect students to behave in a certain way, you have to teach students how to behave in that way.

Effective behaviour supports include universal, targeted and individualized strategies to meet the needs of students.

Behaviour and academic supports are needed both to ensure student success and increase student achievement.

Begin instructional programming by clearly identifying what you want students to know and be able to do.

# BOATS—BEHAVIOUR

Behaviour is defined as anything a student may say and do. Student behaviour becomes a challenge when it interferes with teaching and learning. Behaviour must be described in observable, measurable terms, including what comes before the behaviour (ie, antecedents) and what follows that behaviour (ie, consequences).

Data regarding the nature, extent and frequency of student challenging behaviours must be collected and assessed prior to determining what action to take and selecting the most appropriate teaching strategies. This section provides information on gathering observational data as well as evaluating the function of student behaviour.

During the process of observing student behaviours, remember that behaviour

- has a purpose, reason or function;
- is learned and can be unlearned;
- is a form of communication;
- may be different in different settings; and
- is highly influenced by the environmental conditions surrounding it—what comes before and the reinforcement or consequence(s) that follow.

Observation of behaviour in multiple contexts is important to develop a greater understanding of the function or purpose the specified behaviour serves the student. Rather than focusing on what is “wrong” with a student, diagnostic information or student characteristics, observations should result in identifying what the student is currently doing under particular circumstances, and what he or she is gaining as a result. Direct teaching of desired replacement behaviours, appropriate use of positive reinforcement and continuous monitoring of the student’s behaviour should result in matching current difficulties with positive programming strategies.

## Student Behaviours

Students display challenging behaviour for a number of reasons.

1. Attention/obtain—to draw peer and/or adult attention away from others or away from a task and onto oneself or to obtain something that is of value to the student;



2. Escape/avoid—to end an event or activity the student does not like to do, or cannot do comfortably or independently. It may also include getting away from a person or setting the student does not like or feel comfortable in;
3. Power/control—a behaviour may potentially serve a need to be in control of oneself, of others or events in the environment;
4. Self-regulation or sensory stimulation—the behaviour serves the student’s need to regulate energy or stimulation, or make the environment or him/herself more physiologically comfortable.

### Attention/Obtain Something

Attention-seeking behaviours serve to draw attention away from others onto oneself or to obtain something of value.

Why do students engage in attention-seeking behaviours?

- Adults often pay more attention to inappropriate behaviours.
- Student does not know how to ask for attention appropriately.
- Student does not get sufficient personal attention or has few friends to provide positive social support.
- There is an inability or lack of experience in delaying gratification.
- Student has not learned independence.
- Student does not understand social expectations such as turn taking and listening.

Indicators of attention-seeking behaviours may include one or more of the following:

- The student disrupts teachers and classmates.
- The student misbehaves when no one is paying attention to him or her or when someone stops paying attention.
- Seeks attention when adults are busy with other students.
- Asks for help constantly, even when it is not needed.
- Rarely displays the behaviour when one-to-one assistance is provided.

## Escape or Avoidance

Escape or avoidance behaviours serve to end an activity or event the student does not want, like or think he/she can do easily. The student may also be seeking to escape from something perceived of as aversive in the environment, eg, a peer who teases or a noisy ceiling fan. Escape behaviours may also involve obtaining a different activity, such as a walk in the hall.

Why do students develop escape or avoidance behaviours?

- Unreasonable expectations by others
- Belief that only perfection is acceptable
- Overemphasis on competition
- The work is too difficult
- Peers are too demanding
- Learned helplessness or perceived incompetence are characteristic of the student
- Expectations and directions are ambiguous
- Boredom, student has already indicated he or she can perform the task
- Physiological or sensory discomfort

Indicators of escape or avoidance behaviours may include one or more of the following:

- Misbehaves when pressured to succeed
- Procrastinates, fails to complete assignments
- Develops temporary incapacity or assumes behaviours that resemble a learning disability or has physical complaints of some type of illness
- Misbehaves when asked to perform certain tasks
- Stops the behaviour when teacher stops making demands or task is taken away
- Does not follow task demands or instructions
- Refuses to follow teacher requests or appears to have selective hearing
- Often occurs during a transition to a nonpreferred activity
- Occurs during increased assistance or attention to perform in a particular manner
- Does not occur when the student is alone or engaged in self-selected activities





## Power/Control

Power or control behaviours serve the need to be in control of events, activities and/or other people.

Why do students develop controlling behaviours?

- Student lacks empathy.
- Adults stress dominant-submissive roles.
- Success is defined as achieving personal power.
- Student lacks control in many aspects of life.
- Student has a past history of abuse or victimization.
- Student has experienced inappropriate role modeling of adults.
- Student has experienced unequal treatment or anger over past wrongs.
- An overemphasis on competition exists.
- Student's perception is that circumstances are not fair.

Indicators of power/control may include one or more of the following:

- Becomes disruptive and confrontational even with reasonable requests.
- Quiet noncompliance—the student is pleasant and agreeable but still refuses to comply.
- Challenging behaviour occurs when an activity or event is taken away.
- Behaviour stops when student gets his or her way.
- Student displays the behaviour when told he or she cannot have something requested.
- Used as a means to get something wanted when told this is not possible.
- Behaviour stops as soon as the item or activity is acquired.
- Behaviour is usually displayed only when something is wanted but is unavailable to the student.
- The student needs to punish others for something that was done to the student or to right a past wrong.
- Behaviour is directed toward someone who is more “valued” by others.

## Self-Regulation

Self-regulating behaviours serve the need to regulate feelings, sensory input or energy levels.

Why do some students use inappropriate behaviours to meet sensory needs?

- Understimulated or overstimulated by the environment
- May be gifted or experiencing learning disability, attention difficulties or trauma and has not learned alternate ways of coping
- Uncomfortable physically
- Has not developed self-regulatory skills
- Insufficient movement, individualized breaks have been not built into the school program
- May have medical difficulties such as seizures or influences such as medications and allergies.

Indicators of self-regulation or sensory stimulation may include one or more of the following:

- Behaviour happens repeatedly with limited external control.
- Stimulation is increased through misbehaving when the environment is stressful.
- Behaviour occurs in stressful, anxiety-producing or highly demanding situations or tasks.
- Behaviour occurs when there is little going on or the student is bored.
- Follows a long period of inactivity or focused seat work.
- Becomes increasingly resistant before or after seatwork that requires printing, reading or other personally frustrating activities.
- Reacts to loud noises, overly warm room or other environmental circumstances.
- Refuses to participate in activities requiring fast responses, such as team sports or competitive games.



## The Function of Behaviour

Frequent reasons students act out are to get/obtain/access something or get out of/avoid/escape something

Observation data collected regarding student behaviour helps to determine the function of behaviour. Observations on what, where, when and with whom the behaviour occurs determine what a student is acquiring or avoiding (ie, what a student is getting or getting out of). If it is initially determined that the student is demonstrating all of the above behaviour functions, more observation data is needed to narrow down the exact function of the behaviour.

## Examples

The following table illustrates the common functions of student behaviour in a typical classroom setting.

Behaviour	Get/obtain/ access	Get out/avoid/ escape	Power/control	Self-regulation
Calls out	✓			
Argues with peers	✓	✓		
Loner		✓		
bullies			✓	
Temper tantrum		✓		
Works only with adults	✓			
Talkative	✓			✓
Refuses to cooperate		✓	✓	
Perfectionist	✓			
Can't sit still				✓

To assist staff in determining the function of behaviour, consider the use of FAST: Functional Analysis Screening Tool or the Behaviour Questionnaire included in the appendix.

See appendix: FAST (p 81)  
The Behaviour Questionnaire (p 83)

## Common Adult Reactions to Challenging Behaviour

### Attention-seeking behaviours

- Feels irritated or annoyed
- Impulse is to say something like “can’t you just pay attention?”

### Avoidance/escape behaviours

- Believes the student doesn’t care
- Believes the student does not have the ability
- Feels frustrated—student could do better if she or he “just tried”.

### Power/control behaviours:

- Feels angry or frustrated, fear toward student
- Feels as if losing control of the situation—power struggle ensues
- Impulse is to do something physical like physically grab the student
- Feelings include “I dislike having that kid in my class” or “that student does not belong in this school”

### Self-regulating behaviours:

- Frustrated, exasperated or irritated
- Annoyance with the student’s apparent lack of self-control

While these adult reactions are common, they are not effective in changing behaviour. Challenging behaviours are best viewed as a teaching opportunity, just as academic skills are viewed. Focusing on positive behaviour change tends to lead to proactive planning and an increase in knowledge and skills to best support students having behaviour difficulties.

Educators working with students must teach replacement behaviours.



## Positive Aspects of Challenging Behaviour

In order to promote positive behaviour support and planning, change the focus from what the student is doing wrong and focus on what the student can do. Consider positive aspects of student behaviour that can be used to develop a positive behaviour support plan. Positive aspects of challenging student behaviour include

### Attention seeking behaviours

- Student is interested in relationships with adults and/or peers.
- Student is asking for attention and engagement so this motivation could be used to motivate positive behaviours.

### Avoidance/escape behaviours

- Student wants to succeed if he or she can be sure of not making mistakes.
- Student will be motivated if he or she can achieve status through effort achievement.

### Power/control behaviours

- Student seeks fairness.
- Student exhibits leadership potential, assertiveness and independent thinking.
- Student is a good self-advocate.
- Student protects him or herself from what is feared or painful.

### Self-regulation behaviours

- Behaviours function to reduce anxiety or moderate energy levels.
- Student seeks to physically integrate all the sensory stimulation in the environment.
- Student needs shorter tasks, sensory breaks or higher rates of reinforcement.

## Other Variables Related to Challenging Behaviour

Evaluating the setting or context in which behaviour occurs is essential to developing a greater understanding of student behaviour. When observing challenging behaviours, information regarding the events in the environment that precede the behaviour(s) as well as those that follow the behaviour(s) is needed. In addition, information on other variables that may be related to the behaviour may include the following:

1. Curricular/instructional variables. These may include unpredictable changes in routines, difficult tasks, slow instruction and lack of choices.
2. Environmental variables. These may include aversive noise, too many people, lack of space, uncomfortable seating arrangements, poorly planned traffic patterns and/or confusion with activities or assignments.
3. Health/medical/personal variables. These may include possible onset of a medical or academic diagnosis, illness, allergies, fatigue, changes in medication and/or the student's temperament or mood.
4. Social variables. These may include staff or other students' attention or lack of attention, preferred or non-preferred peers or activities, changes in staff, proximity of others and/or social demands.

Observe and/or examine environmental aspects to see if any are potentially influencing an individual student's challenging behaviours. Teachers are in control of many of these variables and if a behaviour change is required, preventing or reducing potential challenges through environmental changes is as important as determining the function of challenging behaviour. A focus on what staff do to promote or prevent certain behaviour is an important aspect of any positive behaviour support plan.

## Anchor

Student behaviour becomes a problem when it interferes with teaching and learning.

Reasons for student behaviour may include

- to get/obtain/access something and
- to get out of/escape/avoid something.

Observation data on what, where, when and with whom the behaviours occur are needed to clearly determine the function of student behaviour.

Positive behaviour support and planning should focus on the function of behaviour and then the replacement behaviour.



# BOATS—OBSERVATION

Observation of behaviour must be objectively documented. Documentation should indicate where the student was, with whom, when and what the academic or task demands were at the time, as well as what consequences followed the behaviour.

## Collecting Behaviour Data

Sufficient data related to a student's behaviour must be collected in order to make decisions about what to do to change or replace that behaviour and develop a behaviour support plan, as well as how to provide program evaluation. Ideally, information related to specified behaviour needs to be collected across a number of settings, at various times and with different teachers for up to five days. Behaviour must be specified in observable and measurable terms to be easily recorded. Behaviour may be discrete, with a clear beginning and end, in which case it can be counted. It is important to clearly identify what the student is doing when the behaviour most frequently occurs, who else is involved, when the behaviour most often occurs and where the behaviour occurs most often to fully understand why the student uses that behaviour.

Behaviour may be continuous, requiring a measure of time during which the behaviour occurs. The times, locations and surrounding conditions of the behaviour generally need to be observed and recorded as well. The method of data collection will depend on the nature and severity of the challenging behaviour. It is particularly important to also collect data before and after behaviour support programming to show progress and monitor behaviour change.

## Data Collection Procedures

Data is the basis of effective functional behaviour assessment and behaviour support plans. Baseline data is the current frequency, amount of time the behaviour is observed and/or the level and intensity of behaviour before interventions are selected. Baseline measures are a collection of information before any new skills are taught or reinforcement programs and behaviour support plans are developed. This data makes it possible to compare the student's current behaviour to future behaviour. Baseline data should be collected for at least five days under typical conditions. For less frequent behaviours, longer baselines may be required.

Data collection procedures can be as easy as long as reliable information is collected.

Procedures include the following:

1. Select a challenging behaviour to be changed or replaced according to student need. If more than one challenging behaviour is identified, select the most critical or necessary behaviour to focus on first.
2. Choose a data collection system that is effective and efficient and matches the nature, extent and/or frequency of a student's behaviour.
3. Implement the data collection system.
4. Summarize and assess the data to clearly identify the main function of behaviour.
5. Use a summary of data to determine the function of behaviour, prioritize desired behaviour(s), select teaching strategies and develop a behaviour support plan.

Challenging behaviour should be observed often enough for staff to clearly describe and document behaviour in a variety of settings or contexts. This means identifying behaviours agreed upon so all staff reliably observe them. A precise definition ensures that everyone involved knows when the behaviour occurs and when it does not occur as well as ways to describe influential environmental conditions.

Measurable behaviours are COR:

- Countable
- Observable
- Repeatable

## Data Collection Systems

There are a number of ways to collect data. Frequent use of any system increases the knowledge and skills required in collecting behaviour data. Systems for data collection include the following:

- ABC Recording
- Frequency Recording
- Interval Recording
- Momentary Time Sampling
- Duration Recording
- Latency Recording

Each system is explained in the following section. Forms are included in the appendix for use if appropriate to particular students.





## ABC Recording

ABC recording is the most common form of collecting information to develop behaviour support plans. ABC stands for Antecedent, Behaviour and Consequence. The process includes documenting the setting or events that precede the behaviour itself and the consequences following.

### A = Antecedent

The events that occur immediately prior to a challenging behaviour under observation are the antecedents to that behaviour. Antecedents are the environmental conditions preceding the behaviour. Instructions, requests, physical discomfort, people or noise may all result in challenging behaviour. Sometimes these conditions are called “triggers” as they can be responsible for promoting challenging behaviour. Knowledge of what triggers a behaviour can be used to change or alter the environment or setting to reduce the likelihood of the behaviour occurring. Conditions or contexts in which the targeted behaviours occur, including the time, class, subject/topic, person, activity, demand or task request, are antecedents.

Record the task demand, expectation, verbal requests or situation that caused the behaviour of concern. “Go to your desk and sit down” or “line up for gym,” for example, are verbal instructions requiring language processing and motor responses—a high expectation for some students. Part of the subsequent intervention may be visual cues for these requests or warnings for transitions, so it is important to capture the typical requests that are currently responded to in an inappropriate manner.

### Examples of antecedents

1. Tuesday, April 21: Math class

Jason was asked by the teacher to provide his answer out loud to the class.

2. Monday, May 6: Language arts class

The teacher handed back the written assignments on *The Outsiders*. Jason had a low mark.

3. Friday, June 21: Final exam

The same language arts final exam is given to all students. Jason is working two years below grade level.

## B = Behaviour

Behaviour is any response to requests, observable actions or reactions. Hitting, screaming, running away and ripping up paper are examples of challenging behaviours. When recording behaviours through anecdotal comments, avoid comments like, “He angrily attacked me.” Instead, say, “At 9:20, while (the student) was picking up the balls in the gym (antecedent conditions), he hit my right hand twice with an open hand.”

Examples of behaviour related to the above three antecedents

### 1. Tuesday, April 21: Math class

Jason was asked by the teacher to provide his answer out loud to the class.

Behaviour: Jason yelled, “No, pick someone else!”

### 2. Monday, May 6: Language arts class

The teacher handed back the written assignments on *The Outsiders*. Jason had a low mark.

Behaviour: Jason looked at his mark and wiped everything off his desk, hitting another student.

### 3. Friday, June 21: Final exam

The same language arts final exam is given to all students. Jason is working two years below grade level.

Behaviour: He began to make noises and move around in his desk; then he ran out of the room, slamming the classroom door.

## C = Consequence:

An immediate consequence occurs directly after the behaviour. Consequences may include teacher attention, peer laughter or successful escape from disliked tasks. Recording consequences should include a description of what was obtained, what was avoided, staff or peer attention, verbal feedback and/or a change in setting, for example, “Joe received a reward,” or “He was ignored,” or “I turned to him and said sternly, I don’t like it when you hit people.” Verbal praise, time away including the number of minutes, or verbal feedback provided should all be recorded. This information is essential to ascertain a possible function the challenging behaviour is serving the student. Often consequences considered negative by staff may reinforce the student’s behaviour. By identifying the consequences, modifications that reduce challenging behaviours can be selected.

Consequences may also be delayed, such as suspension from school several hours after an aggression. Long term consequences should also be recorded.



1. Tuesday, April 21: Math class

Jason was asked by the teacher to provide his answer out loud to the class.

Behaviour: Jason yelled, “No, pick someone else!”

Consequence: The teacher chooses another student and asked to speak to Jason after class privately.

2. Monday, May 6: Language arts class

The teacher handed back the written assignments on *The Outsiders*. Jason had a low mark.

Behaviour: Jason looked at his mark and wiped everything off his desk, hitting another student.

Consequence: Jason refused to apologize so he was given a noon-hour detention.

3. Friday, June 21: Final exam

The same language arts final exam is given to all students. Jason is working two years below grade level.

Behaviour: He began to make noises and move around in his desk; then he ran out of the room, slamming the classroom door.

Consequence: A teacher assistant followed and spent seven minutes trying to persuade him to go back to the room, but he would not return. Jason was required to write the exam after school with his teacher.

When using ABC Recording, record data on behaviour observed, including low-level behaviour management techniques used to manage student behaviour. Please note a single chain has been recorded rather than numerous behaviors. Make your observations specific enough that they will be useful for planning. This data can then be assessed when determining the function of behaviour and planning the positive behaviour support plan.

## ABC Recording Summary

### Antecedent

- Description of the setting or context in which the targeted behaviour occurs
- Time, location, demands, cues, requests, expectations

### Behaviour

- Words or actions demonstrated by the student
- Describe in objective, measurable terms how the student behaved
- Specify exactly what the student said or did

### Consequence

- Events and behaviours that follow the occurrence of the targeted behaviour (eg, what staff or peers said or did in response)
- Explain the outcomes and resulting actions taken in response to the behaviour

## Example of an ABC Recording Chart

Setting/ Events	Antecedent	Behaviour	Consequences	Outcomes
<b>Date:</b>  <b>Time:</b>  <b>Staff:</b>	What happened right before the behaviour?  Consider variables  1. Environmental: noise, space, others, seating  2. Curriculum/ instruction: difficult tasks, slow instruction, seat work, rate of errors, ability  3. Health/medical: illness, fatigue, medication, mood  4. Social: peer group, preferred activity, changes in staff, closeness of others  Record anything that may have caused or triggered the challenging behaviour.	What exactly did the behaviour look like? Be very specific and make sure the behaviour is well defined.  Examples Hitting, kicking or throwing rather than “aggressive.”  Document facts in point form.	What happened after the behaviour?  Examples Work was finished or not, went home, left room, reinforcement, ignored. What resulted?	What was obtained, escaped from, avoided or received as a result of the behaviour? What did the individual “get” or “get out of”?  Examples Tangibles, attention, avoiding an activity or assignment, provision of a sensory or social reinforcer.  Hypothesize the possible “function(s)” this behaviour is serving the student in each observation.

See appendix: Observation and Analysis Form (p 85)

ABC Chart (p 86)

Interview Staff Report Form (p 89)



## Frequency Recording

Frequency recording involves counting the number of times a discrete behaviour happens during an identified time period (eg, class, day or event). This is a measure of frequency of a specific behaviour. For example, in a given class or time period, count the number of times the challenging behaviour occurs using tally marks on the board, moving items from one pocket to another, or using a golf counter. Event recording should not be used with behaviours that are occurring at very high rates, thus making counting difficult.

### Examples of frequency recording

Each time a student shouts out during a 30-minute mathematics class, a mark is made. At the end of each 30-minute block, the marks are tallied to determine the total number of call outs. If a behavioural goal is to decrease call outs and increase hand-raising, event recording may be suitable.

Mathematics III II	Science III	Social 0	PE 0
Language Arts II	Home Room 0	Lunch Room 0	Library II

### Another example of frequency recording

Challenging behaviour: Swearing at another student

Monday—Check mark each occurrence of behaviour observed.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					

Tuesday—Check mark each occurrence of behaviour observed.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓										

(Note: this is simply frequency counting. No conditions, times or situations are indicated, so it provides limited information for programming.)

## Interval Recording

Interval recording involves setting intervals of time and recording behaviours as they occur within that time. For example, in a given assignment or learner task of 10 minutes, divide the ten minutes into 30-second intervals and note whether the behaviour occurred during that interval or not. Interval recording is used to measure the presence or absence of behaviour within specific time intervals.

Whole interval recording is the process of recording behaviour that lasts throughout the whole interval. For example, dividing a 30-minute period into 20-second intervals to record self-stimulatory behaviour, and recording if self-stimulatory behaviour was observed during the full 20-second interval. Partial interval recording is recording a behaviour in the interval even if it is briefly observed during that 20-second interval.

Interval recording involves

- defining a specific time period for observation;
- dividing the observation period into equal lengths that are adequate to observe and record behaviour reliably;
- selecting a method of recording, symbols and materials required; and
- ensuring the description of the behaviour to be observed is extremely clear so recording is consistent across observers.

A matrix including time intervals and the student's daily timetable could be used to determine patterns in the student's behaviours across settings or subjects.

Example of interval recording

Challenging behaviour: "daydreaming" (sitting, gazing at the ceiling fan) during a mathematics assignment. Simply note whether the behaviour occurred during the 5-minute time interval. Was the student daydreaming? If yes, make a check mark. If no, cross it off.

5 minutes ✓	10 minutes ✓	15 minutes ✓	20 minutes ✓
25 minutes ✗	30 minutes ✗	35 minutes ✗	40 minutes ✓

Please note: to use interval recording effectively, a timer or electronic signaling device such as an egg timer or counting clock may be needed to record each interval of time. Interval recording is best done by an objective observer who is not responsible for teaching at the same time, as it requires a high level of vigilance to be valid and reliable.



## Momentary Time Sampling

Momentary time sampling involves setting up an interval of time and if the behaviour occurs at the specific time the interval stops, it is counted. At the end of each time interval, note whether the student is engaged in the behaviour or not. This data collection method can be used for groups of students as well as individuals. Record only the behaviour occurring at the moment of observation. More than one behaviour can be recorded at the same time using this system, for example

A buzzer rings at regular intervals (every 5 minutes—fixed intervals) or at varying intervals (4 minutes, 7 minutes, 3 minutes—random intervals). The teacher or observer scans the classroom and records behaviours at that precise time. The teacher may also verbally praise students writing quietly during individual seat work, record a mark by each student's name who is observed to “be on task,” or use the buzzer ring as a personal prompt to attend to individual students. Students “on task” during three selected times during a twenty-minute creative writing task

Student Name	Writing interval 1	Writing interval 2	Writing interval 3
Karen	✓	✓	✓
Hayley	✗	✗	✓
Myka	✓	✓	✓
Darci	✗	✓	✓
Lorraine	✗	✗	✗

Please note: momentary time sampling can be an effective data collection system if the behaviour performance of a group of students requires improvement. It is a measure of the estimated frequency and duration of specified behaviours. There must be sufficient intervals to provide reliable and valid information.

## Duration Recording

Duration recording is useful when the primary concern is the length of time a specific behaviour occurs. Recording is started at the time the individual begins the behaviour and stopped when it ends. It could be particularly useful for numbers of minutes sitting at the computer and actively working, engaged attention during group discussions, participating cooperatively in a gym game or other social activities. Duration recording can be combined with event recording for some behaviours. For example, it is possible to record how many times a student is out of his or her seat (frequency) as well as how long each time out is (duration).

To effectively record the duration or length of behaviour, use a clock, wrist watch, stop watch or other timing device. Each time the student begins the behaviour, start timing, and stop timing when the behaviour ends. Duration recording is most effective when the behaviour has a clear beginning and end. It is difficult to use duration recording if the behaviour is frequent without an extra recorder, for example

A student starts a tantrum when given work she does not enjoy. During baseline, start the time recording and respond to the behaviour in the typical way. Record the end of the tantrum. This is a measure of the baseline length of time the tantrum lasted without additional programming.

## Latency Recording

Latency recording is a measurement of elapsed time between the presentation of a stimulus such as a visual reminder, task direction, cue or presentation and the student's response to that request. Latency is the measure of time between a request and the desired behaviour. Latency recording may be useful to record how long a student takes to begin a task or activity once requested. To record, note when a student is given an instruction and when the student responds. For example, when a teacher says "Line up for gym," record the time between the request and when the student gets into the line-up.

Another example of latency recording

Desired behaviour: prepare to work within one minute.

Request/Direction	Request Given	Request Completed
"Take out your math book"	10:00	10:02
"Put away math"	10:40	10:41
"Take out spelling"	10:45	10:55
"Dress for gym"	1:00	1:03
"Get ready for the bus"	2:15	2:27





## Summary of Data Collection Systems and Recommended Use

The following table summarizes the data collection systems recommended for challenging behaviour typically demonstrated by students:

Behaviour	Data Collection Systems					
	ABC Chart	Frequency Recording	Interval Recording	Duration Recording	Momentary Time	Latency Recording
Off task	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Hitting others	✓	✓				
Swearing	✓	✓				
Yelling out	✓	✓	✓			
Spitting	✓	✓				✓
Self-stimulation	✓		✓	✓	✓	
Bothering others	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Function of behaviour unknown	✓				✓	

## Summary

A system for collecting data should provide a baseline of information and focus attention on clearly identifying the nature, extent, intensity and frequency of challenging behaviours. Data collection systems are initially used to make summary statements about the student's observed challenging behaviour(s) and set priorities for more comprehensive observations. Results are the basis of developing hypotheses that describe and/or summarize behaviours, situations and reinforcement thought to be encouraging or maintaining the challenging behaviour.

Whatever system for collecting data is used, it should clearly identify the 5 Ws (what, where, when, with whom) to identify why the student uses that behaviour.

Behavioural data should be collected on an ongoing basis. Collecting data before and after the implementation of a behaviour support plan assists in monitoring the effectiveness of the behaviour support plan in conjunction with behaviour change.

## Anchor

Behaviour serves a function or purpose  
and occurs in relation to the environmental context.

Data collection systems are needed to assess the function of  
behaviour as well as develop a behaviour support plan.

There are a number of simple data collection systems that can  
be used to gather data. Frequent use of any system increases  
the knowledge and skills required in collecting behaviour data.

Assess the function of behaviour in order to replace that  
behaviour with one having the same function, but  
with more social appropriateness.

Data collected from observations should identify

1. What is the most frequent behaviour?
2. When does the behaviour most often occur or not occur?
3. Where does the behaviour most often occur or not occur?
4. With whom does the behaviour most often occur?
5. Why does the behaviour occur?



# BOATS—ASSESSMENT

## Assessment of Behaviour

Assessment is the interpretation of data collected from observations. The first purpose of behavioural assessment is to collect information necessary for hypothesizing the purpose or function of behaviour. The intent is to determine why the student behaves, what precipitates the behaviour and what consequences reinforce the behaviour. This information becomes the basis on which behaviour support plans and teaching strategies are developed. Functional Behaviour Assessment (FBA) is a process used to examine behaviour within natural settings and conditions to determine what predicts or maintains challenging behaviours. The link between gathering information and developing an appropriate program is the most critical step of effective behavioural assessments.

The function of behaviour is not “inappropriate.” Rather, it is the effects of the behaviour(s) observed by others that are judged acceptable or unacceptable. Even when behaviour is socially unacceptable, the student may be obtaining what he/she wants or avoiding what is unwanted. Therefore, the task for educators is to teach and support new behaviours that meet those same needs, but in more acceptable ways. This may involve increasing motivation and making environmental changes to promote behaviours already known and not used, and/or teaching new replacement skills.

Students will change their behaviour only when it is clear that a different response will more effectively and efficiently result in the same outcome. It is often much easier and more reinforcing, for example, to call out a disrespectful, but “funny” answer than to raise a hand and provide an academically relevant answer. A student who has limited communication skills often finds it much easier to scream or grab at something wanted rather than search through picture symbols to find one appropriate for indicating what is required.

FBA involves several steps including observing challenging behaviours, collecting data, assessing the purpose or function of the behaviour(s), selecting replacement behaviours to teach, and then determining what strategies, accommodations and adaptations to make to increase the success of that teaching. These components can then be incorporated into a behaviour support plan and/or the student’s Individual Program Plan.

## Functional Behaviour Assessment (FBA)

A functional behaviour assessment is best completed by a team of individuals who work together to address student behaviour in a variety of settings or contexts. Parents and others who are knowledgeable about the student should collaboratively generate hypotheses regarding the functions of the behaviour as well as select practical, manageable and effective strategies to teach replacement behaviours. The more serious the behaviour difficulties and complexity of the student's characteristics, the more important it is to use the expertise and experience of the school-based learning team.

What does the student get or obtain?

- Social attention, wanted items, change of environment or activities, adult or peer interactions, sensory regulation?

What does the student avoid or escape from?

- Avoid assigned work, get away from people, escape from unwanted or uncomfortable environments, avoid unwanted items, activities or conditions, prevent unpleasant sensory stimulation?

### FBA Process

In summary, the process inherent in understanding the function of behaviour includes the following steps:

1. Define the challenging behaviours and the settings in which they occur. Interviews, observations and information on other variables or from various individuals who are familiar with the student are required. Consider sequences or chains of behaviour that often occur together. A description of the student's strengths, challenges, historical and personal information should be included for background knowledge.
2. Hypothesize the function of behaviour based on identification of environmental events that predict challenging behaviour as well as times challenging behaviour does not occur. Make summary statements that include the behaviour, when and how the behaviour occurs, and what consequences appear to be reinforcing or maintaining the behaviour.
3. Prioritize challenging behaviours and select what should be addressed immediately. Often targeting one at a time may be most practical. In general, serious behaviours that are a danger to self or others should be the greatest priority. Aggression toward other students, for example, not only hurts the other child and limits participation in the learning environment, but also may reduce opportunities to make friends or learn more socially acceptable ways to communicate with others.
4. Collect direct, systematic observations and record relevant data. Do not interfere with typical activities or normal circumstances when obtaining initial data. Refer back to the appendix for data collection methods.



5. Define what the student is to know, understand and/or do in positive terms. Ensure that the replacement behaviours are efficient and can be directly taught. For students having severe social and communication difficulties, make sure communication strategies are included. Identify specifically what will be taught.
6. Develop a behaviour support plan, including the environmental changes to be made as well as reinforcement planning. This document should reflect what staff will do and have a clear description of expected outcomes for the student.
7. Evaluate and monitor behaviour on an ongoing basis. Set timelines for review and program modifications as needed.

### FBA as a Team Activity

When working collaboratively to help reduce challenging behaviour, a team approach is recommended. The more complex and long term the challenging behaviours, the more important it is for the learning team to develop a behaviour support plan that will be initiated and maintained across settings in a consistent manner. Therefore, it is important to include team members from school, home or community agencies as needed, depending on the seriousness of the behaviours. If a school-based learning team is organized to collaboratively assess the function of a student's behaviour, the following activities are recommended:

#### Define the challenging behaviour

1. Convene a meeting with staff with appropriate expertise and knowledge of the student.
2. Discuss observational data and information from the settings or contexts specific to the school and/or classroom(s).
3. Record specific descriptions and concerns with a focus on measurable, observable language.
4. Discuss the best ways of collecting data and objective observations. Share forms and the importance of making data-based decisions.

#### Determine the function of behaviour:

1. Reach agreement on the function the behaviour may be serving, with a focus on events, antecedents and consequences that appear to predict or maintain that behaviour.
2. Value the perspective of different individuals who know the student well, as many views provide better overall information.
3. Seek consensus on replacement behaviours and define the positive statements to be used, for example, "Use quiet feet in the hall" rather than "Don't run;" "Hands to oneself" rather than "No touching." Clear communication regarding the desired behaviours expected between all team members is vital.
4. Identify contextually relevant, practical interventions and supports necessary for reducing challenging behaviours and increasing the replacement behaviours.

5. Develop a behaviour support plan that includes appropriate teaching strategies to teach replacement behaviours efficient for serving the same function as the challenging behaviour.
6. Prepare for implementation of a behaviour support plan by ensuring any reinforcers, visual schedules, verbal prompts, sensory breaks, required work and any other relevant aspects of the program are organized in advance.
7. Communicate in writing with other staff members, bus drivers, day care supervisors and any other individuals who have the potential to influence the program designed in other settings.

See Appendix: Establishing A Behaviour Management System (p 91) for use with school-based learning teams.

### FBA Forms

There are many forms and templates useful for teachers to conduct a functional behaviour assessment. The process used should result in developing a behaviour support plan that is realistic and appropriate for use in the classroom or school. Functional assessment forms can be extremely useful for ensuring data-based decision making. Recommended forms can be found in the appendix and include one or more of the following:

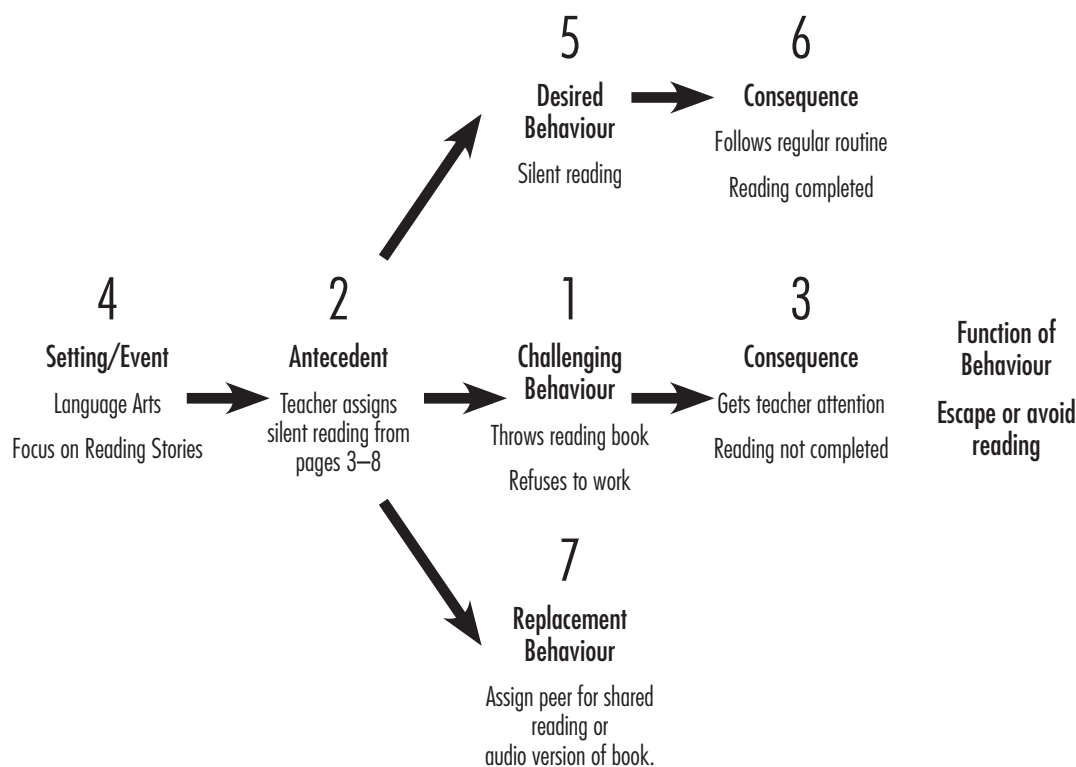
- ABC Chart (p 86)
- Observation and Analysis Form (p 85)
- Interview Staff Report Form (p 89)
- Functional Behaviour Assessment (p 88)
- Establishing a Behaviour Management System (p 91)

To help determine the precise function of student behaviour, see Appendix:

- FAST: Functional Analysis Screening Tool (p 81)
- The Behaviour Questionnaire (p 83)



## Competing Pathways Chart



## Competing Pathways Chart (Example Appendix p.87)

Competing pathways is one strategy that visually links the results of functional behaviour assessment with a behaviour support plan. A competing pathways model is frequently used to increase awareness of the link between results of assessment and what will be done to support the student as well as increase the continuity of programming.

### The 7-Step Competing Pathways Process

1. Identify the challenging behaviour
2. Record the antecedent
3. Analyse the consequences of the behaviour
4. Record the setting and event
5. Discuss the desired behaviour
6. Outline the desired consequences of the desired behaviour
7. Teach the replacement behaviour

The purpose of conducting a competing pathway flow chart is to

- build a behaviour support plan based on the function of behaviour,
- identify desired behaviours to replace the challenging behaviour,
- select strategies to reduce the use of challenging behaviour and
- increase the probability desired behaviours are demonstrated.

When determining what behaviours are more acceptable, select a replacement behaviour that would be more effective, efficient and relevant to gain the same purpose as the function of the challenging behaviour. Strategies, for example, may include visual information, reminders, token economies, changing the environment or modifying adult responses to student behaviour.

For further examples and a description of competing pathways, see O'Neill, R E, R H Horner, R W Albin, J R Sprague, K Storey and J S Newton. 1997. *Functional Assessment and Program Development for Problem Behavior: A Practical Handbook*. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole Publishing Company.





## Aligning Data Collection with BSPs

Whatever form is used to assess the function of behaviour, it is important to align the process to the development of the behaviour support plan.

For example, use the ABC recording form to create a behaviour support plan:

Setting/Event	Antecedent Strategies	Teaching Behaviour Strategies	Consequences
April 22, 2017 10:30 AM Ms Fulton			Avoid overreacting to attention-seeking behaviours
Language arts	Precorrection and visual models if frustrated during class	Teach to ask for help when uncertain of a word	Praise when asks for assistance
Assess reading level			Reward with time with peer following reading
Use cooperative reading groups	Divide story into shorter sections	Teach word attack skills and reinforce when using on own	
Provide extra help	Read with a peer		Provide encouragement during reading

See Appendix: ABC Chart (p 86)

Strategies selected for use should match the function of behaviour and be appropriate to the student's level of understanding. They must be effective, efficient and relevant for the student to use them consistently in the classroom environment. The next section builds on the strategies presented in this section and focuses on how to teach replacement behaviours.

For more information on assessing function of behaviour and selecting teaching strategies, refer to Sprick, R. 2012. *Encyclopedia of Behavior Management: 100 Problems/500 Plans*. Eugene, OR: Pacific Northwest Publishing.

## Anchor

Functional Behaviour Assessment (FBA) is a process used to examine behaviour within natural settings and conditions to determine what predicts or maintains challenging behaviours.

A functional behaviour assessment is best completed by a learning team to address student behaviour in a variety of settings or contexts.

There are many forms and templates useful for teachers to conduct a functional behaviour assessment.

Strategies selected should match the function of behaviour and be selected to replace challenging behaviour with more appropriate behaviours.



# BOATS—TEACHING

## Teach Positive Replacement Behaviours

Teaching a replacement behaviour involves providing knowledge and skill development as well as practice opportunities to enable students to develop appropriate skills. Teaching a replacement behaviour involves the process of extinguishing the challenging behaviour by replacing it with a more acceptable behaviour that serves the same function or purpose for the student.

The process of teaching replacement behaviour involves identifying behaviour, observing the nature, extent and frequency of challenging behaviour, then assessing the function of that behaviour, followed by selecting both what and how to teach the student.

Teaching strategies should be

- designed based on whether there is a lack of skill or a performance deficit,
- based on the function that the behaviour currently serves,
- designed to replace or reduce challenging behaviour,
- purposeful for instructing a student to acquire new skills,
- supportive for a student who may know what he or she should be doing,
- designed for the context or environment in which the behaviour occurs,
- designed to prevent or remove the reinforcing consequences of the challenging behaviour and
- monitored so they can be modified if found to be ineffective.

When selecting teaching strategies to increase desired behaviours, be clear about

what the student is expected to Know, Understand and Do ( KUDo)!

This information will become part of the Behaviour Support Plan (BSP).

Once the KUDo is agreed on by adults, answer these questions:

1. What information or data will be used to make programming decisions?
2. How will the desired behaviour be encouraged?
3. How will the inappropriate behaviour be discouraged?

## Behaviour Support Plan (BSP)–The Four-Square Matrix

A Behaviour Support Plan is a written plan of action to teach and reinforce desired behaviours and to reduce and consistently consequence challenging behaviours. Behaviour support plans define what is to be done to change behaviour and the specific actions to be taken by adults while addressing the KUDo.

Usually, a behaviour support plan involves changing the behaviour of school staff, peers or family members as well as modifying the environment. Changes in schedules, instructions and transportation to and from school, for example, may become part of a behaviour support plan. The plan is designed to define how to teach desired, replacement or positive behaviours through a comprehensive organization of events and conditions. Therefore, the plan must include an instructional component and be designed to fit the environment or contexts within which the challenging behaviour occurs. The key to an effective plan is to remove or reduce the reinforcing consequences of the challenging behaviour and to teach the student a set of behaviours more appropriate to participation in the social and academic school environment.

Skill  What do you want the student to know, understand and be able to do?	Teach  How will the student be taught appropriate behaviours?
Stop  What don't you want the student to do?	Reinforce  How will all adults consistently use consequences?



Example of the components of the Four-Square Matrix:

<p><b>What do you want the student to know, understand and do?</b></p> <p>“I want Darci to respond to one-step verbal directions within 15 seconds.”</p> <p>“Ask an adult for necessary help only, no more than five times during math.”</p>	<p><b>How will the student be taught appropriate behaviours?</b></p> <p>The teacher will provide a class lesson.</p> <p>The teacher will stand close and physically prompt responses.</p> <p>The teacher will provide visual clues.</p> <p>The teacher will use clear directions.</p>
<p><b>What don't you want the student to do?</b></p> <p>“I don't want Darci to ignore me or walk away when I am speaking to her.”</p> <p>“I don't want Karen to be dependent on adult help to complete assignments.”</p>	<p><b>How will all adults consistently use consequences?</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ignore noncompliance for following instructions at the moment.</li> <li>2. Positively reinforce another student close by who is following instructions independently.</li> <li>3. Remember to reinforce when the student does respond to directions within 15 seconds independently.</li> </ol>

## Select Desired Behaviours

Following an assessment of the function of the challenging behaviour based on data, it is important to think of replacement behaviour that serves the same function for the student, but in a more appropriate manner. When selecting replacement behaviours, develop one or two behaviour goals. Ensure that the behaviour or goal you want is achievable in the settings or contexts where the desired behaviours will be expected and is PAM:

- Practical
- Achievable
- Manageable

Examples of behaviour goals:

1. Following a clear written and verbal instruction, Hayley will ask for help within two minutes during class time when uncertain of what to do.
2. Lorraine will recognize the personal space of self and others when playing on the playground during recess by keeping her hands to herself and not touching other students more than two times during the 15-minute period.
3. Darci will comply with single-step teacher requests and directions within one minute.

Remember when selecting replacement behaviours or goals, they must:

- be achievable within a given time frame
- be relevant to the students' needs, serving identified functions of current challenging behaviour
- be positive and enabling
- be clearly defined and understood by students and staff

## Behaviour Goals

Behaviour goals and objectives should:

- be achievable within a school year
- be relevant to the student's needs or function of behaviour
- be positive and focus on what the student should learn, know and be able to do
- contain essential components—what the student should do, when, where and under what circumstances as well as how well the student should be expected to perform the behaviour



Specifically, when selecting replacement behaviours and objectives, components include

- behaviour—what the student should know and do;
- conditions—when, where, under what circumstances the behaviour is to be performed; and
- criteria—the standards or expectations for performing.

Note: the Individualized Program Planning Binder (2006), published by Alberta Education, is useful for selecting and writing goals and objectives. In addition information and sample strategies that teachers can use to develop and implement an effective and student-focused Individualized Program Plan (IPP) as well as Behaviour Support Plan (BSP). The Standards for Special Education, amended June 2004, can be accessed at <http://education.alberta.ca/media/1626539/standardsforspecialeducation.pdf> and found at the Inclusive Education Library, [www.learnalberta.ca/content/ieptlibrary/](http://www.learnalberta.ca/content/ieptlibrary/).

Examples of behaviour goals

	BEHAVIOUR	CONDITION	CRITERION
	The student will do what?	Where and when?	How?
By January 25th	Express anger appropriately	Within the school setting	By using words instead of physical aggression whenever angry and practicing counting to ten each time
By February 20th	Recognize personal space of self and peers	When playing on the playground during 15 minute recess or lunch periods	By keeping hands and feet to self at least 85% of the time during a 15-minute recess
By March 15th	Ask for help	Following assignment, during class time when uncertain of task requirements	By putting his hand up within two minutes of realizing he does not know how to begin
By June 20th	Comply with teacher requests and directions	During class time or when a request is made	Within 15 seconds of each request being made during class instruction

## Skill or Performance Deficits

When selecting teaching strategies or developing a behaviour support plan, it is important to identify if the student has the skills to perform the desired behaviours. If the student lacks the skills, a skill deficit can be identified. If the student performs the desired behaviours in some settings or activities but not others, a performance deficit may exist. The student may not know when or where to perform the behaviour, or may be inadequately motivated. It is therefore important to determine if the challenging behaviour is a result of a lack of skill or a lack of motivation.

If the student lacks the skills needed to behave, then the student needs to be taught new replacement behaviours. Strategies for increasing skills may include direct teaching of the skill, participation in social skills group programs, reinforcing and coaching with constructive feedback provided and/or peer modelling.

If the student has the skill to behave but does not always use it, then the student needs to increase consistent use of the behaviour. Strategies for increasing performance include increasing cues, prompts, positive reinforcement programs and/or matching correct performance under specified environmental conditions with positive feedback.

## Consequences

Consequences are the conditions that follow behaviour. They serve to strengthen or weaken that behaviour. The effects of consequences are a critical aspect of behavioural programming and must be carefully arranged as part of a behaviour support plan. Students differ in their response to various consequences and an individualized approach is essential for effective behaviour change.

Examples of the effect of consequences on student behaviour are listed below.

- When Karen yells out for teacher help during class, the teacher tells her to be quiet. Karen continues to yell out.
- When Lorraine disrupts the classroom, the teacher or peers around her tell her to be quiet. She becomes quiet.

In the second example is the consequence of “verbal correction” successfully applied?

Consequences should be

- arranged depending on the function of behaviour;
- meaningful, age appropriate and enforceable;
- clearly communicated to students in advance;
- based on a history of the student and past attempts to modify behaviour;





- as positive as possible;
- consistent for a designated period of time to ensure the student knows exactly what the consequences will be and with sufficient adjustment time;
- understood by all adults responsible for changing the behaviour of a student or students; and
- administered with brief, clear verbal or visual language—enthusiastically if positive consequences and neutral if negative.

Many students are concerned about fairness and consistency of consequences. To help students understand the importance of behaviour, involve the students to participate in making choices and monitoring their own consequences if possible. Intensity and intrusiveness of the consequences must match the level of intervention required to replace challenging behaviours. Many negative side effects result from inappropriate negative and punitive consequences.

#### Universal consequences familiar to teachers

- Premack principle
- Proximity control
- Precorrection/preteach
- Signal cues and reminders
- Detentions
- Behaviour improvement reports

#### Targeted consequences in addition to universal consequences

- Behaviour contracts
- Token economy or point system
- Self-monitor/self-management programs

#### Individualized consequences in addition to selected and universal consequences

- Behaviour support plan
- Time-out area
- In-school suspension
- Individualized behaviour programming
- Individual reinforcement program

See Appendix: Definitions and Terms (p 101) for an explanation of the above terms.

## Positive Reinforcement

Positive reinforcement is a consequence following a behaviour that increases or maintains that behaviour. It involves contingent presentation of items, activities, attention or other conditions resulting in strengthening or increasing selected behaviours. Differential reinforcement procedures are used when a behaviour (the replacement or appropriate behaviour) is reinforced, while another behaviour (targeted for reduction or elimination) is no longer reinforced. Positive reinforcement involves presenting the student with something the student views as positive when appropriate behaviour is performed.

Examples of positive reinforcement include

- Lorraine gets out of her seat to help another student wipe up spilled water. The teacher praises Lorraine for helping others. The next time a student spills water, Lorraine goes over to help. Lorraine is reinforced by teacher.
- Brenda studied every night last week for her math test. She got 90% on her test. Brenda studies every night for her science test. High grades are reinforcing.
- Karen calls out in class. When she calls out more than four times, she is asked to go to the hallway and “think about how disruptive she is.” Karen increases calling out. She is reinforced by time in the hallway.
- David hits students on the playground. When he hits, he is taken into the classroom. Hitting increases and he goes in almost everyday. David is reinforced for hitting.

## Negative Reinforcement

Negative reinforcement is the contingent removal of aversive or unwanted events (negative stimuli). A negative reinforcer strengthens the behaviour it follows.

- Missing recess (ie, an aversive or unwanted event) can be avoided by completing assigned work.
- Having to work in the office (ie, an aversive or unwanted event) can be avoided by working quietly in the classroom.
- Taking the key out of the car stops the buzzer.

## Effective Reinforcement Systems

Positive reinforcement procedures are used to

- strengthen new or positive behaviours,
- encourage infrequent or non-fluent behaviours,
- serve as a model to other students regarding positive ways to support students with diverse learning needs,
- establish positive relationships with students,
- strengthen appropriate behaviours and reduce challenging behaviours and
- build increased self-control.



Positive reinforcement systems should promote student self-management over time. Ideally, any extrinsic reinforcement system should transition from

- staff delivered to student delivered,
- frequent to infrequent,
- predictable to unpredictable,
- tangible to social,
- individual to group and
- extrinsic to intrinsic.

## Reinforcement Schedules

To maximize the impact of positive reinforcement, it must be administered correctly with a focus on shaping desired behaviours. Depending on the skill or performance level required for a new or replacement behaviour, a reinforcement schedule may be needed. Each reinforcer should be paired with brief verbal statements that clearly and objectively describe the desired behaviour. Specific activities, stickers and/or other intensive methods of reinforcement may be required for some students. Each time reinforcement is presented, it should be paired with a verbal statement. Over time, the verbal praise may be sufficient (ie, a conditioned reinforcer).

Schedules of reinforcement include the following

- **CONTINUOUS REINFORCEMENT**—Each time the behaviour is displayed, it is reinforced. This may be required for new and particularly difficult behaviour to gain mastery and fluency.
- **INTERMITTENT REINFORCEMENT**—Behaviour is reinforced some of the time.
- **FIXED RATIO REINFORCEMENT**—Reinforcement is provided after a predetermined number of responses, such as a set number of mathematics problems correctly computed.
- **FIXED DURATION**—Reinforcement is provided after a specified time, such as attending or being on task for three minutes.
- **FIXED INTERVAL**—Reinforcement is provided after a scheduled amount of time and the student demonstrated the desired behaviour during that time (ie, was on task during 15 minutes of time).
- **VARIABLE REINFORCEMENT**—Reinforcement is provided after a specified, but variable amount of time, such as after three minutes, then one minute, then four minutes.
- **DIFFERENTIAL REINFORCEMENT**—Reinforcement for specific behaviour(s) not others (ie, reinforce for raising hand, not reinforcing call-outs). Students may be reinforced for behaviours other than the challenging behaviour, for replacement behaviours and/or for behaviours that are prerequisite to future expectations.

## Reinforcement Menu

A reinforcement “menu” is a list of potential reinforcers individualized to reflect personal interests. Everyone is interested in something, but for some students, finding out what reinforces them can be challenging. It is recommended that when collecting observation data, attention should be given to what the student likes and dislikes. Some students like praise or public acknowledgement and others do not. Some students like to collect points to exchange for something later and others do not.

When determining appropriate reinforcements, remember, it is not what the adult thinks should be reinforcing—it is the effect a re-inforcer has on strengthening desired behaviours. For students with more complex, challenging behaviours, interviewing parents or others knowledgeable about the student may be required, as well as observing what choices students make, to establish a sufficiently powerful reinforcement program.

Reinforcements that require little effort to implement may include

- smiles,
- free time,
- time with a peer,
- classroom jobs,
- library or computer time,
- preferred activity within the classroom and
- time with the teacher.

Reinforcements that require more effort to implement may include

- lunch with the principal,
- token or point system,
- behaviour contract,
- special privileges outside the classroom or school following work completion and
- self-monitoring and self-reinforcement programs.

Reinforcement should be given immediately to avoid inappropriate or interfering behaviours. The student is therefore clearly aware of behaviours that lead to reinforcement and those that do not. For example, with reinforcing during a task, students are likely to continue working for longer periods of time. Students can trade tokens or points for desired items or privileges that have been prearranged by the teacher. It is important to increase expectations for obtaining reinforcing items and to fade the use of such systems over time and replace them with more natural and positive consequences, such as verbal and social praise. For some students, ongoing positive reinforcement systems may be needed due to the intensity required to maintain appropriate social behaviour.



## Token Economy Systems

Token economy systems are often used to increase the frequency of responses or behaviours, and to support the teaching of new behaviours or skills. Token economies involve provision of initially neutral “tokens,” such as check marks, points, a bingo dabber mark in a box of squares, tickets and play money. These are provided immediately following desired behaviours, then exchanged at a later time for “back up reinforcers,” such as free time, special activities, tangible items, computer time, prizes, classroom parties and time with specific people. Token reinforcement systems can be followed up at school and/or at home.

Token economies or point systems require careful planning and some initial time and resources to develop. Points, check marks or tokens are awarded when the student is observed demonstrating desired behaviours. They should be given immediately so any inappropriate or interfering behaviours do not occur prior to opportunities to reinforce.

Receiving the token reinforcement often maintains positive behaviour longer and, when used appropriately, helps the student to understand exactly what to do to get reinforcement. The student can trade tokens or points for desired objects or privileges that have been pre-arranged. Increase expectations for obtaining points and fade the use of such systems over time. When possible, replace them with more natural positive consequences such as social or verbal reinforcements. Some students may need ongoing positive reinforcement systems due to their ability level, lack of internal reinforcement or inability to be reinforced using more natural or positive consequences.

For more examples, refer to

Riethaug, D. 2003. *Orchestrating Positive and Practical Behaviour Plans*. Vancouver, BC: Sterling Head Enterprises. To order, contact Stirling Head Enterprises at [dreithaug@shaw.ca](mailto:dreithaug@shaw.ca).

## Behaviour Support Planning Summary

A behaviour support plan is effective when

- there is agreement on what to do to develop positive behaviours;
- it serves as an action plan for everyone who works with the student;
- it is consistently applied in all settings by all adults;
- it is discussed with staff before use to ensure support and understanding;
- it provides enough details for staff to know what to do on a consistent basis;
- it supports existing classroom management procedures;
- it is evaluated using data collection systems;
- it is adjusted as the student’s needs and circumstances change;
- collaboration and communication occur regularly.

## Anchor

Identifying challenging behaviour, observing the nature, extent and frequency of the behaviour, then assessing the function that behaviour serves is followed by selection of teaching strategies.

When selecting teaching strategies to increase desired behaviours, be clear about what the student is expected to know, understand and do—KUDo.

Behaviour plans define what is to be done to change behaviour and the specific modifications to be made by adults.

Consequences, the conditions that follow behaviour, strengthen or weaken that behaviour.

Positive reinforcement is a consequence following a behaviour that increases or maintains that behaviour.

Negative reinforcement is the removal of something undesired to obtain what is desired. It strengthens a behaviour.

Depending on the skill or performance level required for a new or replacement behaviour, a reinforcement schedule may be needed.



# BOATS—STRATEGIES

Strategies must match the student's needs and interests as well as the identified function of behaviour. Selecting appropriate strategies is critical to shaping positive and more appropriate behaviours. This section provides strategies found to be effective when teaching positive behaviours.

## Strategies to Teach Positive Behaviour

Once the function of behaviour is determined and a replacement behaviour identified, strategies and supports should be selected.

If the behaviour serves to get attention or obtain power/control, strategies may include one or more of the following:

- Increase student's personal control and choices
- Increase opportunities for the student to provide service to others
- Increase opportunities for positive attention and friendships
- Increase student's status, self-esteem and/or image

The replacement behaviour should ideally include opportunities to develop a greater sense of *belonging and/or independence*.

If the behaviour serves to escape or avoid an activity, task or person, strategies may include one or more of the following:

- Increase student's personal control and choices
- Increase student's status, self-esteem and/or image
- Match teaching strategies to student's strengths and interests
- Match instructional activities and materials to student strengths and interests
- Ensure work is at an appropriate academic level
- Teach communication skills or augmentative communication
- Match expected responses/testing methods to student's strengths and interests

The replacement behaviours should include opportunities to develop a greater sense of *mastery and/or generosity*.

If the behaviour serves as a form of self-regulation or stimulation, strategies may include one or more of the following:

- Increase student's personal control and choices
- Use of a sensory environment that will increase or reduce sensory stimulation as appropriate
- Develop sensory activities helpful to reducing agitation
- Teach self-management skills
- Match teaching strategies, instructional activities and assessment to student interest
- Provide opportunities for movement in and around the classroom or school

For some students, the specific strategies that support teaching positive behaviours reflect the philosophy of the Circle of Courage as the foundation of positive behaviour. For other students, assistive technology or augmentative communication skill training may be required. Strategies should match the positive behaviour and be described clearly in a behaviour support plan.

## Specific Strategies to Match Function of Behaviour

The following specific strategies match the function of behaviour or serve the student's need to get attention, control others, escape a situation or to self regulate their needs in positive ways. Each strategy below should be individualized and selected for use in a manner that is meaningful and manageable for students and staff.

For more examples refer to

Topper, K, W Williams, K Leo, R Hamilton and T Fox. 1994. *A Positive Approach to Understanding and Addressing Challenging Behaviours*. Burlington, VT: University of Vermont, Centre for Developmental Disabilities.

## Attention/Power/Control Behaviours

### Increase Student Control and Choices

- Include student and/or student's family in planning and problem solving..
- Provide visual schedule for the student.
- Allow flexibility in student's daily schedule.
- Shorten time student is involved in each activity.
- Allow alternative seating and choice of seating for student.
- Provide student a choice board for completion of assignments.
- Teach the student to check and evaluate effort and work (self monitor).
- Provide opportunities for movement breaks.





## Increase Opportunities for Positive Attention and Friendships

- Identify an adult as a main contact person.
- Teach interdependence with student and peers.
- Provide opportunities for the student to become involved in the community.
- Develop a peer buddy system.
- Increase students' knowledge and understanding of one another.
- Profile student strengths, interests and preferences.
- Teach model and enforce respect and responsibility.
- Use cooperative learning groups and study teams.
- Provide opportunities for leadership.

## Increase Status, Self-esteem and Image

- Encourage student to mentor/tutor/help another student.
- Involve student in community service or work experience.
- Provide assignments within the students' zone of proximal development.
- Teach social skills and reinforce when student uses them in the classroom.
- Give classroom responsibilities to student.
- Showcase student talents, interests or abilities.
- Direct and teach hygiene and self-care.

## Escape/Avoidance Behaviours

### Decrease student need to escape or avoid

- Increase student's personal control and choices.
- Increase student's status, self-esteem and/or image.
- Match teaching strategies to student strengths and interests.
- Match instructional activities and materials to student's strengths and interests.
- Directly teach skill replacements, provide practice opportunities and reinforcement.
- Match expected responses/testing methods to student's strengths and interests.
- Provide assignments within the student's zone of proximal development.
- Ensure directions and instructions are clear by asking student to rephrase back what they need to do.
- Provide visual cues, prompts and schedules.

### Match Teaching Strategies to Student Learning

- Use small-group, teacher-directed activities.
- Use small-group, student-directed activities.
- Teach cooperative group work, roles and responsibilities.
- Give reinforcements for effective group and cooperative work.
- Keep cooperative group work short and focused.
- Provide students with written and verbal directions.
- Use visuals.
- Ensure a clear assessment and marking system.
- Use differentiated questions (Bloom's taxonomy) and greater wait time for responses.
- Let students review work and practice with other students.
- Let students pick a study partner.
- Set up a mentor program.

### Match Instructional Activities and Materials

- Use materials that match student interests.
- Use real-life examples appropriate to student age and interests.
- Use materials student can relate to at home or in the community.
- Balance cooperation and competition targeting student's personal best.
- Teach lessons and activities that build on the students background knowledge.
- Provide a balance of cooperation and competition that targets student's personal best.
- Teach note-taking, organizational skills and study skills.
- Use functional activities and community-based opportunities for students requiring life skills instruction.
- Provide natural opportunities to practice and receive reinforcement for new skills and competencies.

### Match Assessment Strategies

- Allow students to demonstrate learning in different ways.
- Teach test-taking skills.
- Teach relaxation skills.
- Use accommodations for assignments before actual use on tests.
- Develop alternative assessments to allow students modified curriculum to demonstrate learning.
- Use a test-teach-test format.
- Develop clear criteria and rubrics to clarify standards and expectations.



## Self-regulation

### Increase or decrease need for self-regulation

- Increase student's personal control and choices.
- Match teaching strategies to student's strengths and interests.
- Teach self-monitoring strategies.
- Match expected responses/testing methods to student's strengths and interests.
- Increase student's status, self-esteem and/or image.
- Teach self-regulation skills.
- Provide student access to fidget times and tools.
- Provide student access to use of a sensory room.
- Provide opportunities for movement in and around the classroom or school.
- Increase staff understanding of the impact sensory difficulties may have on learning and participation.

### Physical Arrangements and Classroom Management

- Allow students to sit in the front or back of the classroom to best meet their learning needs.
- Experiment with different lighting options.
- Arrange the classroom to facilitate individual, small-group and whole-group work.
- Provide options for alternative seating, standing desks, wobble cushions, etc.
- Allow students to leave the classroom when needed.
- Allow students input into the design of the classroom to decrease distractions and increase time on task.
- Use a peer-mentoring program.
- Be aware of sensory difficulties (visual, auditory, kinesthetic) that may impact learning.
- Increase comfort and security.
- Decrease noises or disruptions.
- Ensure the expectations are exceedingly clear.
- Limit unengaged time.

## Supporting Positive Behaviour—Behaviour Techniques

There are many effective behavioural techniques available to be used as part of a behaviour support plan. Several are described below. For further strategies visit the Inclusive Education Library at Alberta Education, [www.learnalberta.ca/content.ieptlibrary/](http://www.learnalberta.ca/content.ieptlibrary/).

### Chaining

Chaining involves teaching individual discrete skills or competencies one at a time to eventually form a chain or sequence. For example, “Get ready for lunch” often includes skills related to lining up, getting a lunch bag, walking to the lunch area, sitting at a table, eating lunch and cleaning up. Forward chaining involves teaching skills one at a time in a forward sequence, while backward chaining involves teaching the last step of a sequence of behaviours first and progressively teaching the one that comes before until the whole chain is complete.

### Extinction

Extinction involves careful management of reinforcing consequences. An extinction procedure requires withholding reinforcement following challenging behaviour that previously had been reinforced. It is more complex than simply “ignoring” behaviour, as the focus must be on long-term behaviour change, by reducing the possibility that challenging behaviour is being maintained by any environmental conditions. Ignoring may be effective if used with low-level behaviours that do not compromise student safety and if the teacher is assured no other form of reinforcement is being provided (eg, attention by peers). If behaviours serve the function of only getting teacher attention, ignoring would involve not paying any attention to the challenging behaviour, walking away or starting a different activity when it occurs. When the student stops that behaviour, the teacher would immediately praise something appropriate about his or her behaviour, say something positive or use other students by giving “proximity praise” to demonstrate his or her attention is more probable following appropriate behaviours.

### Generalization

Generalization refers to the application of new skills in a setting other than where the skills were initially learned. It is important to teach for generalization to insure the student performs the desired behaviours under different conditions, with different people and for different, but appropriate, reasons.

### Maintenance

Maintenance is the ongoing demonstration of desired or appropriate behaviours over time without extra reinforcement. It is also the performance of learned appropriate behaviour without direct supervision and reinforcement. Independence and decreasing the need for extra adult supervision are positive outcomes of an effective behaviour support plan.



## Modelling

Many behaviours are learned through modelling. The learner observes a model and then imitates that behaviour. A student must be able to attend and to imitate before dependence on learning through modelling is assured. For behaviour change, clear appropriate models must be arranged. For example, the teacher may model how to open the door for others by demonstrating to the student coming and going from recess times. Natural reinforcement should be arranged by encouraging peer attention to the door holding. Guided practice and reinforcement are typically required as part of a modelling strategy.

## Prompting

Prompting involves presenting a cue, word or signal that would increase the chances of the desired behaviour occurring in a given setting or context. For example, “inside voices” is a cue for students to use quiet voices in class. Various “levels” of prompting should be carefully planned. They may include physical, verbal, gestural and visual cues to promote success.

## Redirection

Redirection is subtly shifting the student’s attention away from an undesired activity to a desired activity or to a different task. Redirection should be neutral rather than positively reinforcing as escape and avoidance of the original task may consistently result in a more positive option. For example, when a student is staring off into space, the teacher assistant says “5 plus 2” and directs the student into the task without discussing “off task” behaviour. Reinforcement should follow task re-engagement.

## Response Cost

Response cost involves taking away a reward or privilege following observation of challenging behaviour. It is used to decrease the occurrence of that behaviour. Fines or loss of privileges are common response cost techniques. They must be immediate and consistent, not spontaneously decided. If not properly implemented, response cost can escalate challenging behaviour if the student feels he or she has nothing to lose or is strongly motivated by the reward or privilege. Furthermore, students having severe disabilities can become confused when reinforcers are removed, and this can lead to aggressive behaviour.

## Shaping

Shaping is the process of reinforcing successive approximations of a desired behaviour. For example, increased time on a writing task would include working on assigned writing for 10 minutes the first week, 12 minutes the second week and 15 minutes the third week until the amount of time spent on writing is increased and maintained—or shaped over time.

## BEHAVE Strategy

There are many strategies and various programs to teach social skills. The intent of most is to select necessary behaviours, teach and practice them directly, then arrange opportunities for generalization. BEHAVE is an example of one strategy to teach individual social skills:

B = Identify the target behaviour.

- State the goal or objective in positive terms.
- Clarify what you wish the student to do in observable, measurable terms.
- Use simple vocabulary.

E = Explain the expectations.

- Task-analyze or list the skill sequence or routine required.
- Consider communication, social and functional skill level of students.
- Clarify for all staff and students as well as family members.

H = Have clear models.

- Demonstrations must model the specific social skill and attach language clearly.
- Use adults and peers where possible.

A = Act it out consistently and frequently.

- Provide reinforcements for desired behaviours.
- Include guided practice, verbal and visual prompting.
- Strive to work in more than one setting, under more than one set of conditions.

V = View and value the social skill being used.

- It must be more reinforcing and easier to perform than the inappropriate behaviour targeted for change.
- Identify observation and data-collecting techniques.

E = Expand and extend the behaviours.

- Make specific plans for generalization and maintenance.
- Communicate learning to others and expect the learning will be demonstrated elsewhere.



## Student Strategies

The following strategies are provided from examples that could be used to explicitly teach desired behaviours. Each strategy should be matched to the needs, functioning level and age of the student. <sup>4</sup>

### Problem-solving Strategy (for a student)

1. Stop, take a deep breath, count to five.
2. Decide what the problem is and how you feel.
3. Think about your choices and their potential consequences.
4. Decide on your best choice.
5. Do it!

### Body Basics—FEVER

1. Face the other person.
2. Use **E**ye contact.
3. Use appropriate **V**oice.
4. Match your **E**xpression to what you say and your tone of voice.
5. Use good body posture—**R**elax.

### Joining In

1. Body basics—stand close to the activity, ask what is going on.
2. Greet the other person.
3. Wait for the appropriate time.
4. Ask to join in.

### Starting a Conversation

1. Body basics—face the person, make eye contact, use name.
2. Greet the other person.
3. Decide what to say.
4. Listen to the other person's response.
5. Think about what is said.
6. Wait for the appropriate time to talk.
7. Start speaking.

<sup>4</sup> Adapted from S M Sheridan. 1998. *Why Don't They Like Me? Helping Your Child Make and Keep Friends*. Longmont, CO: Sopris West.

### Conversation Skills

1. Body basics—face the person you want to talk to.
2. Wait your turn.
3. Say what you want to say—use “I” statements.
4. Listen to the other person.
5. Say at least two more things to the other person.
6. Make a polite closing statement.

### Playing Cooperatively

1. Body basics—where and how to sit with others.
2. Decide who starts.
3. Wait your turn.
4. Talk and listen to the other person’s words.
5. Say something nice at the end.

### Dealing With Being Left Out

1. Stop, take a deep breath and count to five.
2. Decide what the problem is and how you feel.
3. Think about your choices and their consequences:
  - a. Ask to join in.
  - b. Say how you feel—use “I” statements.
  - c. Play with someone else.
  - d. Do something else that is fun.
4. Decide on your best choice.
5. Do it!





### Accepting “No” as the Answer

1. Stop, take a deep breath and count to five.
2. Decide what the problem is and how you feel.
3. Think about your choices and their consequences:
  - a. Say okay.
  - b. Say how you feel in a friendly way—use “I” statements.
  - c. Find something else to do.
4. Decide on your best choice.
5. Do it!

### Recognizing and Expressing Feelings

1. Body basics.
2. Decide how you feel/how the other person feels.
3. Wait for a good time.
4. Think about your choices and their consequences:
  - a. Say how you feel—start with “I feel...”.
  - b. Ask the other person if he/she feels that way too.
  - c. Ask if you can help.
5. Act out your best choice.

### Solving Arguments

1. Stop, take a deep breath and count to five.
2. Decide what the problem is and how you feel.
3. Think about your choices and their consequences:
  - a. Compromise.
  - b. Take turns.
  - c. Ask someone else.
  - d. Speak calmly.
  - e. Tell yourself “It’s okay”.
  - f. Say how you feel in a friendly way.
4. Decide on your best choice.
5. Do it!

### Teach Self-control

1. Stop, take a deep breath and count to five.
2. Decide what the problem is and how you feel.
3. Think about your choices and their consequences:
  - a. Ignore the situation.
  - b. Tell yourself “It’s okay”.
  - c. Tell yourself to relax.
  - d. Speak calmly.
  - e. Compromise.
  - f. Say how you feel—use “I” statements.
4. Decide on your best choice.
5. Do it!

### Dealing with Teasing

1. Stop, take a deep breath and count to five.
2. Decide what the problem is and how you feel.
3. Think about your choices and their consequences:
  - a. Ignore teasing.
  - b. Walk away.
  - c. Say something good to yourself or to the other person.
  - d. Say how you feel in a friendly way.
4. Decide on your best choice.
5. Do it!

See Appendix:    Student Contract (p 99)  
                       Student Behaviour Self-report (p 98)  
                       Behaviour Incident Report (p 97)  
                       Student Support and Behaviour Plan (p 95)



## Anchor

Once the function of behaviour is determined and replacement behaviour identified, strategies and supports are then selected.

Strategies should promote the replacement behaviour and be described clearly in a behaviour support plan.

Each strategy should be individualized and selected for use in a manner that is practical and realistic for staff and the student.

Each strategy should be matched to the needs, functioning level and age of the student.

## BOATS Summary

The process, activities and suggestions provided in BOATS are presented to educators in an effort to increase the following competencies when working with students displaying challenging behaviors:

1. Seeking understanding of challenging behaviours and clearly describing them
2. Identifying when and where challenging behaviours occur and/or do not occur
3. Considering priorities to address challenging behaviours
4. Determining function of behaviours and replacing challenging behaviours with replacement behaviours
5. Identifying positive and negative consequences that maintain challenging behaviour and replacement behaviours
6. Selecting appropriate data-collecting techniques
7. Selecting strategies to match the function of behaviour and lead to more effective teaching
8. Monitoring and evaluating behaviour change regularly

Each stage of **BOATS**, **B**ehaviour, **O**bservations, **A**ssessment, **T**eaching and selection of **S**trategies needs to be continuously monitored and reviewed for effectiveness in shaping desired student behaviours. This includes evaluating improvement of student behaviour as well as evaluation of the **BOATS** process and general academic and social programming.

See Appendix: Functional Behaviour Support Plan (p 93)  
Student Support and Behaviour Plan (p 95)



## BOATS: Evaluating Quality Behaviour Support Plans

This checklist is to assist in evaluating or judging the quality of behaviour support plans.

### COMPONENTS

BEHAVIOUR	Yes	No	??
Staff have a consistent philosophy of beliefs about the needs of students.			
Staff support the best educational interests of all students.			
A reclaiming environment is provided that fosters a sense of belonging, mastery, independence and generosity in all students.			
A schoolwide behaviour support system is in place.			
School and classroom routines are predictable.			
Student behaviour and expectations are defined and stated positively.			
Expectations for student behaviour are directly taught.			
Desired student behaviours are regularly acknowledged and positively reinforced (ie, verbally).			
Challenging behaviours are dealt with immediately.			
Consequences for challenging behaviours are known in advance.			
Procedures are in place to address emergency or dangerous behaviours.			
Staff use a problem-solving approach to student behaviours.			
Staff are more proactive than reactive to prevent challenging behaviours.			
Staff are consistent with each other in handling student behaviour.			
Staff review behaviour data/patterns on an ongoing basis.			
The school's physical features are modified to deal with unsupervised areas, large numbers of students, entrances and exits.			
Instruction and curriculum materials are matched to student abilities.			
Students are expected to achieve high rates of academic success.			
Teachers have regular opportunities to meet and support each other.			
OBSERVATION			
Data collection system is in place.			
Data is collected across settings or classes/subjects.			
Data is collected for at least five days prior to decision making.			
Staff is committed to documenting each behaviour incident.			
Data collected clearly identifies the 5 Ws (what, where, when, with whom) to determine why the student uses a behaviour.			
Nature, extent and frequency of behaviour is summarized.			
Data collection clearly identifies challenging behaviour(s).			
Student health needs have been considered and documented.			
Curriculum is differentiated for student ability level or assessed needs.			
Classroom environment has been modified to promote positive behaviours.			

ASSESSMENT	Yes	No	??
A team approach is used to assess student behaviour.			
Parent information is used to assess the function of student behaviour.			
Student strengths and needs are clearly identified.			
Occurrence of behaviour can be predicted.			
Nonoccurrence of behaviour can be predicted.			
Function of behaviour is clearly identified based on data collected.			
Desired behaviour selected for improvement is based on the function or purpose of challenging behaviour.			
Behaviour goal(s) include the condition, criteria and specific behaviour to improve.			
Behaviour goal(s) are stated positively.			
What the student is to know, understand and do is clear to student.			
TEACHING			
One desired behaviour is selected based on function of challenging behaviour.			
Behaviour goals are clearly defined and communicated.			
Staff agree on what to do to develop positive behaviours.			
Positive reinforcement procedures are used by all staff.			
If required, negative consequences are used by all staff consistently.			
Students are motivated to perform the positive behaviour.			
Student receives specific training in how to perform the positive behaviour (ie, use a social skill, anger management technique).			
Teaching strategies fit the classroom or environment.			
A simple process exists for students to request assistance from staff.			
Parents are included in the behaviour support plan and process.			
Student behaviour is monitored and feedback is provided to staff.			
Students are involved in decisions that affect them.			
STRATEGIES			
Strategies are selected that clearly match function of behaviour.			
Strategies are selected to teach desired behaviours.			
Student is taught to self-monitor behaviour progress.			
Review dates are included in the behaviour support plans.			
An evaluation system is in place to monitor effectiveness of plan.			
Student behaviours are evaluated by staff based on data.			
The behaviour support plan results in more teaching time and less time dealing with student behaviours.			
The behaviour support plan is making a positive impact on the student's behaviour(s).			
The behaviour support plan is making a positive impact on all students.			
AN EVALUATION SYSTEM IS IN PLACE BASED ON DATA			



# Appendix

<b>B</b>	Classroom Support Systems: Routines and Procedures .....	79
<b>O</b>	FAST: Functional Analysis Screening Tool .....	81
	Behaviour Questionnaire.....	83
	Observation and Analysis Form .....	85
	ABC Chart.....	86
<b>A</b>	Competing Pathways Chart .....	87
	Functional Behaviour Assessment .....	88
	Interview Staff Report Form .....	89
<b>T</b>	Establishing a Behaviour Management System .....	91
	Functional Behaviour Support Plan.....	93
	Student Support and Behaviour Plan.....	95
<b>S</b>	Behaviour Incident Report.....	97
	Student Behaviour Self-Report .....	98
	Student Contract.....	99

Copies of blackline masters available from <https://cieducation.ca>.







## Classroom Support Systems: Routines and Procedures

Routine(s) for	Procedure taught to students should include
What is expected	Classroom expectations reflect program expectations
	1.
	2.
	3.
	How will they be taught to students?
Encouraging appropriate behaviours	Students will be positively reinforced with
	1.
	2.
	3.
	Other:
Seating arrangements	Entering the classroom (bell or during class time?)
	Leaving the classroom (bell or teacher?)
Daily schedule	Posted where?
	Posted when?
Completing assigned work	Individual seatwork?
	Group work?
	Computer work?
Personal belongings	Where do students keep coats, bags, etc.?
Classroom materials	Where are they located?
	What is needed for each subject?
	What if student does not have materials?
Homework	Assigned:
	Completed:
	Not completed?
Completed assignments	During class time
	Done as homework
Getting a drink	



## Classroom Support Systems: Routines and Procedures (continued)

Routine(s) for	Procedure taught to students should include
Going to the bathroom	
Going to another room	
Requesting assistance	
Care of textbooks	
Marking system	
Exam procedures	
Garbage	
Snacks/drinks in class	
Transition to next class	Cues used:
	Use of stairs or hallways:
Discouraging challenging behaviours	When students violate a program expectation
	1.
	2.
	3.
	Other:
Monitoring behaviours	System for monitoring student behaviours includes
	1.
	2.
	3.
	Other:

Source: B Sautner. 1999). *Masks of Misbehaviours*.

The Council for Inclusive Education, ATA (2016)







## Behaviour Questionnaire

Student: \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewer: \_\_\_\_\_

### Specific Behaviour Description:

Directions: Keeping in mind a typical episode of the challenging behaviour, circle the frequency at which each of the following statements is true.

	Never	10%	25%	50%	75%	90%	Always
1. Does the behaviour occur and persist when you make a request to perform a task?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. When the behaviour occurs, do you redirect the student to get back to task or follow rules?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. During a conflict with peers, if the student engages in the behaviour, do peers leave the student alone?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. When the behaviour occurs, do peers verbally respond or laugh at the student?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
5. Is the behaviour more likely to occur following a conflict outside the classroom (eg, bus write up)?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
6. Does the behaviour occur to get your attention when you are working with other students?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
7. Does the behaviour occur in the presence of specific peers?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6



8. Is the behaviour more likely to continue to occur throughout the day following an earlier episode?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
9. Does the behaviour occur during specific academic activities?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
10. Does the behaviour stop when peers stop interacting with the student?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
11. Does the behaviour occur when peers are attending to other students?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
12. If the student engages in the challenging behaviour, do you provide one-to-one instruction to get the student back on task?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
13. Will the student stop doing the challenging behaviour if you stop making requests or end an activity?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
14. If the student engages in the challenging behaviour, do peers stop interacting with the student?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
15. Is the challenging behaviour more likely to occur following unscheduled events or disruptions in classroom routines?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6

**Behaviour Questionnaire Profile** Circle the score given for each question from the scale below the corresponding question number (in bold).

Payoff	PEERS			ADULTS			Setting Events		
	Escape	Attention		Escape	Attention				
	3 10 14	4 7 11		1 9 13	2 6 12		5 8 15		
Always	6 6 6	6 6 6		6 6 6	6 6 6		6 6 6		
90%	5 5 5	5 5 5		5 5 5	5 5 5		5 5 5		
75%	4 4 4	4 4 4		4 4 4	4 4 4		4 4 4		
50%	3 3 3	3 3 3		3 3 3	3 3 3		3 3 3		
25%	2 2 2	2 2 2		2 2 2	2 2 2		2 2 2		
10%	1 1 1	1 1 1		1 1 1	1 1 1		1 1 1		
Never	0 0 0	0 0 0		0 0 0	0 0 0		0 0 0		
	Total ____ of 18	Total ____ of 18		Total ____ of 18	Total ____ of 18		Total ____ of 18		

Adapted from: Source: Lewis, T J, T M Scott and G Sugai. 1994. *The problem behavior questionnaire: A teacher-based instrument to develop functional "Hypotheses of problem behavior in general education classrooms"* *Diagnostic*, 19 (2-3) 103-115.



# Observation and Analysis Form

Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Staff Member: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

Challenging behaviour(s) observed: \_\_\_\_\_

## I. Direct Observations

Start:	Setting:	Activity:
End:		
Antecedent:	Behaviour:	Consequence:
Comments:		

Start:	Setting:	Activity:
End:		
Antecedent:	Behaviour:	Consequence:
Comments:		

Start:	Setting:	Activity:
End:		
Antecedent:	Behaviour:	Consequence:
Comments:		

## II. Summary

1. Identify the settings, activities and consequences that appear to be related to the occurrence and nonoccurrence of the challenging behaviour(s).

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Identify the events that occur prior to and after the challenging behaviour(s).

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Are they consistent with other information collected? ☐ Consistent ☐ Inconsistent

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

# ABC Chart

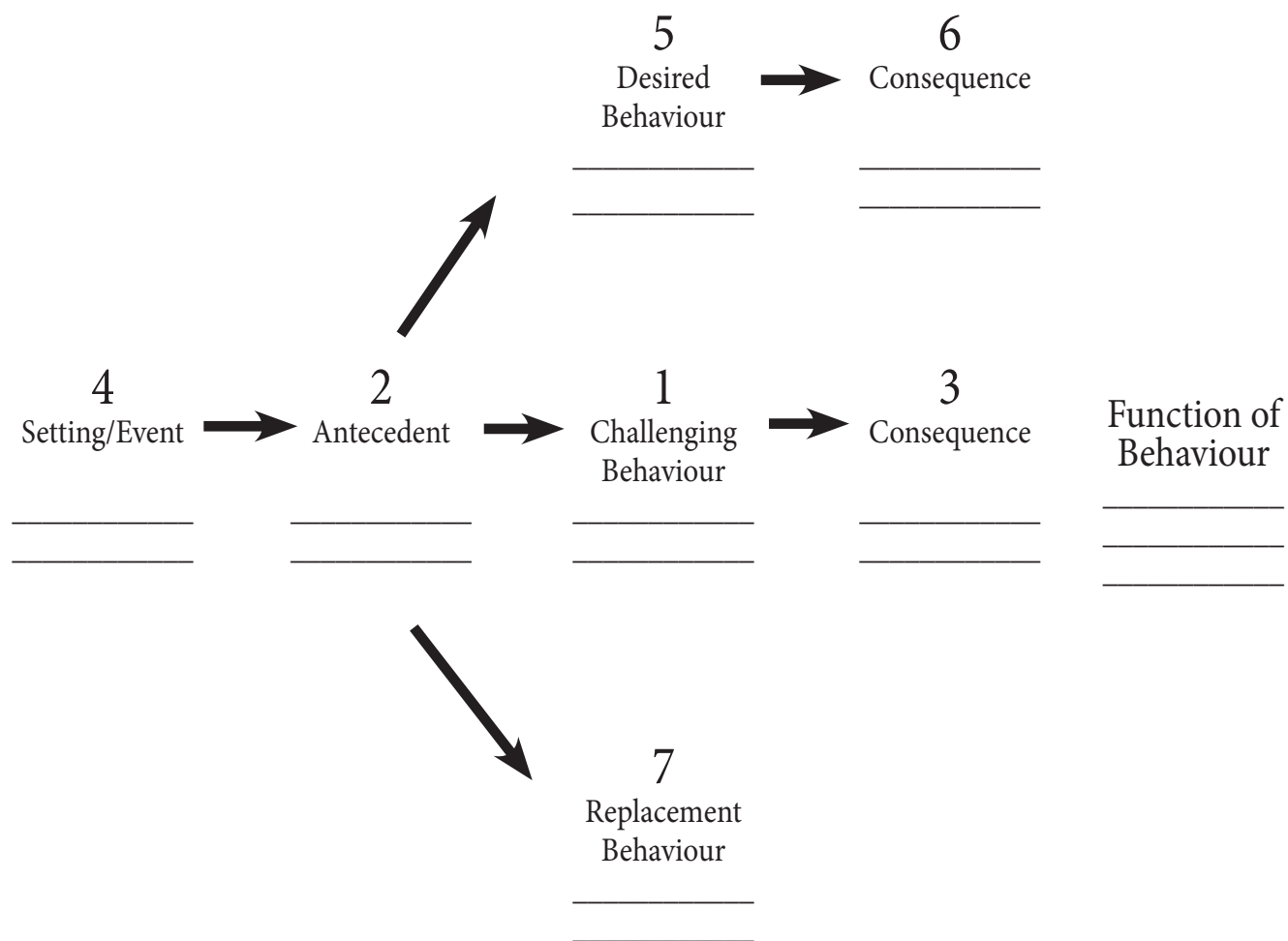
Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Room/Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Setting/Events	Antecedent Conditions or context in which the challenging behaviours occur	Behaviour Responses or actions of concerns exhibited by the student	Consequence Events and behaviours that follow the occurrence of the challenging behaviour
	Class, subject, person, activity, demand, task	Describe in objective terms how the student behaved	What did staff do in response?
Date			
Time			
Staff			
Date			
Time			
Staff			
Date			
Time			
Staff			
Date			
Time			
Staff			





## Competing Pathways Chart



# Functional Behaviour Assessment

Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

Class/Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Step	Questions	Outcomes/Actions
1	Describe the challenging behaviour. What does it look like (description)? -observable and measurable terms -frequency and/or duration	
2	Under what general conditions do challenging behaviours tend to occur?	
3	Under what general conditions do challenging behaviours tend not to occur?	

Perform a formal functional assessment (analysis of data from reports/forms)

4	Antecedants of behaviour What types of events or stimuli immediately precede challenging behaviour?	
5	What types of consequences typically follow instances of challenging behaviour?	
6	What types of consequences typically follow instances of positive behaviour?	
7	What is a testable explanation (hypothesis) of the behaviour? What is the main function of behaviour? Why does the challenging behaviour occur?	
8	What do you want the student to do instead? Will it serve the same function?	
9	Does your data support the hypothesized function of behaviour?	
10	What is the primary function of behaviour?	

Source: Adapted from Scott, T M and C M Nelson. 1999. "Using Functional Behavioral Assessment to Develop Effective Intervention Plans: Practical Classroom Applications." *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions* 1,4: 242-251.



# Interview Staff Report Form

Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Staff Member: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

## I. Problem Definition

1. Describe the student's target behaviour(s)—primary challenging behaviour(s)—in objective terms.

---



---

## II. Events and Situations Related to the Occurrence and Nonoccurrence of the Target Behaviour(s)

2. In what situations does/do the target behaviour(s) occur?

Location	Time	Person(s)	Instructional Context
<input type="checkbox"/> In class	<input type="checkbox"/> Arrival at school	<input type="checkbox"/> Teacher(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Entire group
<input type="checkbox"/> Hallways	<input type="checkbox"/> Morning	<input type="checkbox"/> Specialist(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Small group
<input type="checkbox"/> Cafeteria	<input type="checkbox"/> Lunch	<input type="checkbox"/> Support staff	<input type="checkbox"/> Individual
<input type="checkbox"/> Special classes	<input type="checkbox"/> Afternoon	<input type="checkbox"/> Bus driver	<input type="checkbox"/> Transition
<input type="checkbox"/> Bus	<input type="checkbox"/> Recess/break	<input type="checkbox"/> Peer(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

3. In what situations are the student's behaviours most appropriate?

Location	Time	Person(s)	Instructional Context
<input type="checkbox"/> In class	<input type="checkbox"/> Arrival at school	<input type="checkbox"/> Teacher(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Entire group
<input type="checkbox"/> Hallways	<input type="checkbox"/> Morning	<input type="checkbox"/> Specialist(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Small group
<input type="checkbox"/> Cafeteria	<input type="checkbox"/> Lunch	<input type="checkbox"/> Support staff	<input type="checkbox"/> Individual
<input type="checkbox"/> Special classes	<input type="checkbox"/> Afternoon	<input type="checkbox"/> Bus driver	<input type="checkbox"/> Transition
<input type="checkbox"/> Bus	<input type="checkbox"/> Recess/break	<input type="checkbox"/> Peer(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Are there any other internal and external events that influence the target behaviour(s)?

Internal Events	External Events
<input type="checkbox"/> Medication _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Conflict at home _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Physical health _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Illegal drug use _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Academic skills _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Negative peer influence (gangs, etc.) _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

## III. Events that Occur Prior to (Antecedents) and After (Consequences) the Target Behaviour(s)

5. What typically happens prior to the student exhibiting the target behaviour(s)?

<input type="checkbox"/> Low levels of adult attention	<input type="checkbox"/> Presentation of activity or task	<input type="checkbox"/> Under varied conditions
<input type="checkbox"/> Low levels of peer attention	<input type="checkbox"/> Social interaction with adult	<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Unavailability of object/activity	<input type="checkbox"/> Social interaction with peers	

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

6. What typically happens after the student exhibits the target behaviour(s)?

<input type="checkbox"/> Start-up request	<input type="checkbox"/> Reprimand	<input type="checkbox"/> Ultimatum	<input type="checkbox"/> Time out
<input type="checkbox"/> Ignore	<input type="checkbox"/> Response cost	<input type="checkbox"/> Office referral	<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_





# Establishing a Behaviour Management System

## STEP 1

### Frame Your Plan

- ☐ Convene a student support or learning team
- ☐ Review the process as outlined from Step 1 to Step 5
- ☐ Begin documenting background information, including

#### Description of present problem

- What—(describe the behaviours demonstrated)
- When—(time(s) of day and/or day(s) of week)
- Where—(location(s))
- How long—(duration of each episode)
- How often—(frequency per class, day, week)
- Why—(What need is being communicated through the student's misbehaviour?)

#### Check all that may apply:

- ☐ Attention
- ☐ Power/Control
- ☐ Escape/Avoidance
- ☐ Play
- ☐ Coping/Self-regulation
- ☐ Other

Identify at least three of the student's strengths and/or subject areas.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

Identify strategies that have been tried and highlight their effectiveness.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

## STEP 2

### Focus Your Plan

- ☐ Clearly define the most frequent challenging behaviour.
- ☐ Discuss parent involvement and roles in developing a behaviour management system.
- ☐ Gather other information:
  - Review of student records
  - Input from other staff who know the student
  - Input from parents/guardians

## STEP 3

## Set Your Goals

- ☐ Identify one or two appropriate behaviour(s) for the student.
- ☐ Develop concrete examples of the appropriate behaviour, using the student's strengths and/or subject areas and positive consequences for use of appropriate behaviours.
- ☐ Develop examples of inappropriate behaviours and negative consequences.
- ☐ Describe possible reasons for misbehaviours and how data will be collected to determine actual reasons for student's use of such behaviours to achieve needs (see Appendix).
- ☐ Identify additional support systems that may be required (ie, check-in system, determine a location for student to go when angry).



## STEP 4

## Develop Your Plan of Action

- ☐ Develop a written plan of action with the following:
  - Goals for student behaviour and how to teach them.
  - Specify who is responsible for what and how.
  - Establish time lines and communication systems for implementation.
  - Establish at least two measures of evaluation for the effectiveness of the system.



## STEP 5

## Implement and Evaluate Your Plan

- ☐ Collect data.
- ☐ Monitor student.
  - How will student efforts be encouraged?
  - Establish follow-up meeting #1 to discuss initial implementation and student progress.
  - Establish a communication system with other staff and parents.
- ☐ Identify problems as they arise.
  - Establish follow-up meeting #2 to discuss possible problems and potential resolution.
  - Discuss whether more structured interventions are necessary.
- ☐ Make adjustments.
- ☐ Revise plan as needed and document your successes.

Source: B Sautner. 1999). *Masks of Misbehaviours*.



# Functional Behaviour Support Plan

Student \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_ This plan will be implemented by: \_\_\_\_\_

Class/Subject: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Step	Questions	Actions
1	What is the function of behaviour? -get/obtain/access something? -get out of/avoid/escape something? -other function?	
2	What is a replacement behaviour that serves the same function?	
3	What does the replacement behaviour look like? - Can it be taught? - Will the student have immediate success?	
4	How can the student be taught to use the desired behaviour? -teacher modelling -practice, feedback, role plays	
5	What conditions will make student success unlikely? What can be done to prevent this?	
6	What conditions will make student success more likely? What can be done to encourage this? -prompts, cues, practice, etc.	
7	How will positive behaviour be reinforced? -reinforcement menu -reinforcement schedule	
8	How will instances of challenging behaviour be handled? -immediately -extreme/severe behaviour	
9	How will data be collected? -data collection forms -evaluation criterion	
10	What is the behavioural goal? -criterion/conditions -short term objectives -maintenance and generalization	

Source: Adapted from Scott, T M and C M Nelson. 1999. "Using Functional Behavioral Assessment to Develop Effective Intervention Plans: Practical Classroom Applications." *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions* 1,4: 242–251.







# Student Support and Behaviour Plan

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Student's Strengths

1. _____	
2. _____	
3. _____	

## Student's Needs

## Challenging Behaviour(s)

What?	Where?	When?	How often/long?	With whom?

Function of challenging behaviour(s)	Antecedents of challenging behaviours	Where behaviour occurs most often
<input type="checkbox"/> Attention		
<input type="checkbox"/> Escape/Avoidance		
<input type="checkbox"/> Power/Control		
<input type="checkbox"/> Self-Regulation/Sensory		
<input type="checkbox"/> Other		

Positive Behaviour(s) of Student	Examples of positive behaviours	Conditions	Criterion
1. _____			
2. _____			
3. _____			

Behaviour Goal(s) Focus on developing student sense of ☐ belonging ☐ mastery ☐ independence ☐ generosity.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

## Strategies to Teach Positive Behaviours

## Monitor and evaluate positive behaviours with


## Individual Student Support and Behaviour Plan (continued)

Positive Consequences for Student	Monitor and evaluate positive consequences by
1. _____	_____
2. _____	_____
3. _____	_____

Negative Consequences for Student	Monitor and evaluate negative consequences by
1. _____	_____
2. _____	_____
3. _____	_____

Additional Support System:

- ☐ Adult mentor  
☐ Check in  
☐ Movement/activity  
☐ Personal control/choices  
☐ Positive attention/friendships  
☐ Self-monitor/track  
☐ Status/self-esteem/image  
☐ Time-out area  
☐ Token economy  
☐ Other

Strategies	Staff most responsible

Other Important Issues to Note	Parent feedback and support
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Evaluation	Review dates?	By whom?	How?	Desired results?

Signed and agreed to by

96

Teacher

Parent/Guardian

Student (if appropriate)

Teaching Assistant

Administrator

Other:



# Behaviour Incident Report

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Location: \_\_\_\_\_ Staff: \_\_\_\_\_

1. What was your behaviour?

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2. What did you want? (Check at least one.)

- ☐ I wanted attention from others.
- ☐ I wanted to be in control of the situation.
- ☐ I wanted to challenge the teacher's authority.
- ☐ I wanted to avoid doing my work.
- ☐ I wanted to be sent home.
- ☐ I wanted to cause problems because I am miserable inside.
- ☐ I wanted to cause others problems because they don't like me.
- ☐ I wanted revenge.
- ☐ I wanted \_\_\_\_\_.

3. Did you get what you wanted? Yes ☐ No ☐

Why? \_\_\_\_\_

4. What will you do next time?

---

5. What do you need to do it appropriately?

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6. What do you need to do to fix your current problem?

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Staff Member:	Time Started:
Consequences 1:	Time Ended:
Consequences 2:	Number of Minutes:
Parent Contact:	Total Time Owed:
Other:	Other:

Source: Adapted from Colvin, G and G Sugai. 1989. *Managing escalating behavior*. Eugene, OR: Behavior Associates, and Interventions: Collaborative Planning for Students at Risk. Copyright © 1993 by Sprick, Sprick & Garrison. Intervention B: Managing Severely Disruptive Behavior.

# Student Behaviour Self-Report

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Describe what happened.

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2. What effect did your behaviour have on others (other student(s) and teacher)?

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3. What will you do to fix your problem?

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4. What can you learn from this? What will you do next time?

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5. What will you tell your parents (if appropriate)?

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Teacher Comments

Previous behaviours related to incident? \_\_\_\_\_

Consequences previously used? \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Contact? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

Source: B Sautner. 1999). *Masks of Misbehaviours*.



# STUDENT CONTRACT

## Example

### Challenging Behaviour

Penny is enrolled in a high school special education program and provided a modified program of study in the core subject areas. She is integrated into optional classes of her choice.

Penny is not attending school. By June, she had missed 335 classes totaling 83 full days (or 42 per cent attendance rate). The teacher has asked for assistance as per the school's student truancy policy. Penny cannot explain why she misses so much school.

### Behaviour Support Plan

Try a written behaviour contract.

### Behaviour Contract Suggestions

1. Select one behaviour to improve: ie, Penny will attend school 85 per cent of the time. With the amount of absences, this is a huge goal; 100 per cent may not be attainable given her current attendance rate.
2. Discuss some strategies with Penny as to how this can be accomplished. Ask her what support she needs to achieve this goal, what supports her parent needs to provide, and what help staff could give. Be realistic about what can be provided and by whom. Think day-by-day and week-by-week. If parents are unable to motivate her to attend, an incentive system may be needed based on days attended. Penny needs to know that not attending school will affect her job skills, etc. For example, each day that Penny attends school, she goes to a staff member who is "very happy" to see her. Penny initials a calendar, which keeps track of her attendance and provides immediate feedback on her progress.
3. Talk about what will happen if Penny meets the goal—how will this be celebrated? Day-by-day and week-by-week? Use rewards that motivate Penny.
4. Talk about what will happen if the goal is not met and checkpoints in the process. Try to get as much information as you can as to why the absenteeism.
5. Show the contract, ask for feedback and, after consideration of student and parent feedback, sign. Stress the importance of the contract being like a promise.
6. Build in review dates and a check-in system.
7. Thank student and parent for participating!



# OUR LOCAL HIGH SCHOOL NAME

## STUDENT CONTRACT

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Goal to Achieve

1. Penny will attend school 85 per cent of the school days.
2. Any time that Penny needs to be away, the parent will notify the school.

### What the Student Will Do

1. Penny will be responsible to get herself up and get to school.
2. Penny will check in each day with Mr K (or an assistant) and initial the calendar.
3. Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### What the Parent Will Do

1. Provide help to Penny to get her to school each day and on time.
2. Provide encouragement and incentives to Penny for increasing the attendance.
3. Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### What Staff Will Do

1. Coach Penny on increasing attendance and tracking progress.
2. Buy Penny lunch in the cafeteria for meeting her attendance goal each month!
3. Focus on helping Penny to pass her courses so she can participate in the graduation ceremonies with her friends.

Review Dates:    ☐ September 30    Attendance Record = \_\_\_\_\_  
                          ☐ October 31    Attendance Record = \_\_\_\_\_  
                          ☐ November 30    Attendance Record = \_\_\_\_\_

### Signed and Agreed to by

Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent: \_\_\_\_\_

Staff: \_\_\_\_\_



## Definitions and Terms

The terms and definitions included in this document are aligned with the definitions provided in the Standards for Special Education, amended June 2004.

<b>Adapted programming</b>	Adapted programming retains the learning outcomes of the program of studies. Adjustments to the instructional process are provided to address the education needs of the student.
<b>Antecedent</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The events that occur immediately prior to the challenging behaviour.</li> <li>2. What occurred in the environment just before targeted behaviour was exhibited; a.k.a. “the stimuli” that prompted the behaviour.</li> </ol>
<b>Assessment</b>	Assessment is the ongoing process of collecting information about students using a number of formal and informal methods across a variety of domains relevant to performance (behavioural, communicational, intellectual, learning and/or physical characteristics) to develop and implement appropriate programming in support of student learning.
<b>Behaviour</b>	Behaviour is any action of the student.
<b>Behaviour contract</b>	Behaviour contracts are verbal or written agreements between student and staff describing what each party will do to support student behaviours.
<b>Behaviour Support Plan (BSP)</b>	A behaviour support plan is developed to record summary statements gathered from the functional assessment process. Essential components of the behaviour support plan include knowing what the student is to know, understand and do, reinforcement strategies, what the student is not to do and how the staff and environment will change to support the student and teach replacement behaviours.
<b>Consequence</b>	Consequence is what occurs after the behaviour was exhibited. Consequences can include both positive and negative conditions. Reinforcing consequences strengthen behaviour; punitive consequences weaken behaviour.

<b>Context</b>	Context refers to the student's environmental surroundings (people, places, events).
<b>Modified programming</b>	Modified programming involves changing learning outcomes in ways that create an individualized program different from the provincial curriculum. A modified program is specifically designed to meet a student's unique special education needs.
<b>Precorrection</b>	Pre-correction is discussing expected behaviour prior to a typical problem, time or setting. It allows for clarity of expectations, appropriate prompting and can prevent challenging behaviour. Check for student understanding. Use pictures or a written activity log with visual cues for students who are more successful with visual information.
<b>Premack principle</b>	The premack principle is the same as "grandma's rule". The intent is to make preferred activities and choices contingent on completing nonpreferred activities first; eg, "First you complete your math questions, and then you can go to the computer."
<b>Proximity control</b>	Proximity control involves moving closer to the student, perhaps lightly touching the student or arranging materials to promote focus on appropriate tasks or indicate the need to correct behaviour.
<b>Signal cue</b>	Signal cue is a subtle signal to provide feedback, reinforcement or reminders to individual students.
<b>Self-reinforcement</b>	During self-reinforcement a student rewards his or her own behaviour according to acceptable predetermined criteria, at a specific time or under predetermined conditions.
<b>Token economy or point systems</b>	Presentation of points or tokens when the student is observed demonstrating desired behaviours. The student can trade tokens or points for desired objects or privileges that have been pre-arranged. Token economy systems involve provision of some kind of initially neutral "token" such as checkmarks, points, a bingo dabber mark in a box of squares, tickets and so forth that can be provided immediately, but exchanged at a later time for "back up reinforcers," such as free time, special activities, tangible items, computer time, edibles, classroom parties and so forth.





## SUPPLEMENTARY RESOURCES

For more information on reclaiming youth at risk, visit [www.starr.org/training/youth.com](http://www.starr.org/training/youth.com).

For more information on PBIS, visit [www.pbis.org](http://www.pbis.org).

For information on establishing effective classroom management, refer to CHAMPs. This is a resource to support classroom organization and behaviour management techniques that reduce inappropriate and off-task behaviors by helping teachers organize classrooms in ways that foster responsible behaviour.

For more information on assessing function of behaviour and selecting teaching strategies, refer to

1. Sprick, R and L Howard. 1995. *The Teacher's Encyclopedia of Behaviour Management: 100 Problems/500 Plans*. Longmont, CO: Sopris West.
2. Riethaug, D. 2003. *Orchestrating Positive and Practical Behaviour Plans*. Vancouver, BC: Sterling Head Enterprises. To order, contact Stirling Head Enterprises at [dreithaug@shaw.ca](mailto:dreithaug@shaw.ca).

## This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.





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