

# What is Included in a Behavior Plan?

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# BEHAVIOR



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It's an age-old question. How specific should a behavior plan be? The answer to this question is easy - very specific. Let's reflect on what a behavior plan is. A behavior plan defines the behavior/s being targeted and how it will be addressed and changed. Who uses the behavior plan? Teachers, paraprofessionals, other school staff, and sometimes family members or caregivers.

Behaviors should be selected carefully. The behaviors chosen should be the most significant. To ensure more reliable implementation and data, try not to have more than five behaviors. Next define the behaviors. A behavior definition should include the

frequency, topography, duration, intensity, and latency of the behavior (Horner et. al. 2012). An example of this would be as follows: Tommy often hits adults with an open hand once when prompted to complete an assignment.

Next, identify the function of the behavior. Best practice is to complete a functional behavior assessment (FBA) before writing a behavior plan. If an FBA is completed correctly it will define the problem behavior, identify the triggers for problem behaviors, and identify the consequences that maintain the behavior. This will help you figure out the function (attention, escape, escape to tangible, or sensory) and help you determine which interventions and replacement behaviors to use based on the function.

Once the function is determined interventions are written that match the function of the behavior. These can be antecedents and consequences. First, consider antecedents. What can the adult change in the environment to help the students' behavior? Examples might be extra time, transition warnings, reinforcement procedures, visual schedules, timers, and seating arrangement to name a few. Next, write out the intervention and the consequence. For each behavior, there should be a step by step procedure for staff to follow in the event of that behavior.

Next, identify replacement behaviors that are more appropriate. For each behavior, there should be a replacement behavior. For example, Tommy hits his staff every time he needs help. A replacement behavior for this would be to have a help card sitting on Tommy's desk. Staff would then teach Tommy to give the card to someone in place of him hitting someone when he needs help.

After replacement behaviors, identify when the intervention and reinforcement will be decreased and removed. A fading procedure needs to be included in the behavior plan. For example, if Tommy goes 15 days with 5 aggressions or less his reinforcement will go from every 30 minutes to every hour. Data should be collected daily and graphed and analyzed weekly to monitor progress and help make data based decisions on whether the intervention is working or not. Finally, if the data indicates the intervention plan is not working, the team should make decisions on appropriate next steps.

## Resources

<http://www.pbisworld.com/tier-2/behavior-intervention-plan-bip/>

<http://www.greenbush.org/stayresources/>

## References

Gable, R. A., Quinn, M. M., Rutherford Jr., R. B., & Howell, K. (1998). Addressing problem behaviors in schools: Use of functional assessments and behavior intervention plans. *Preventing School Failure, 42*, 106-113.

Horner, R. H., Sugai, G., Todd, A. W., & Lewis-Palmer, T. (2000). Elements of behavior support plans: A technical brief. *Exceptionality: A Special Education Journal, 8*, 205-215.



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