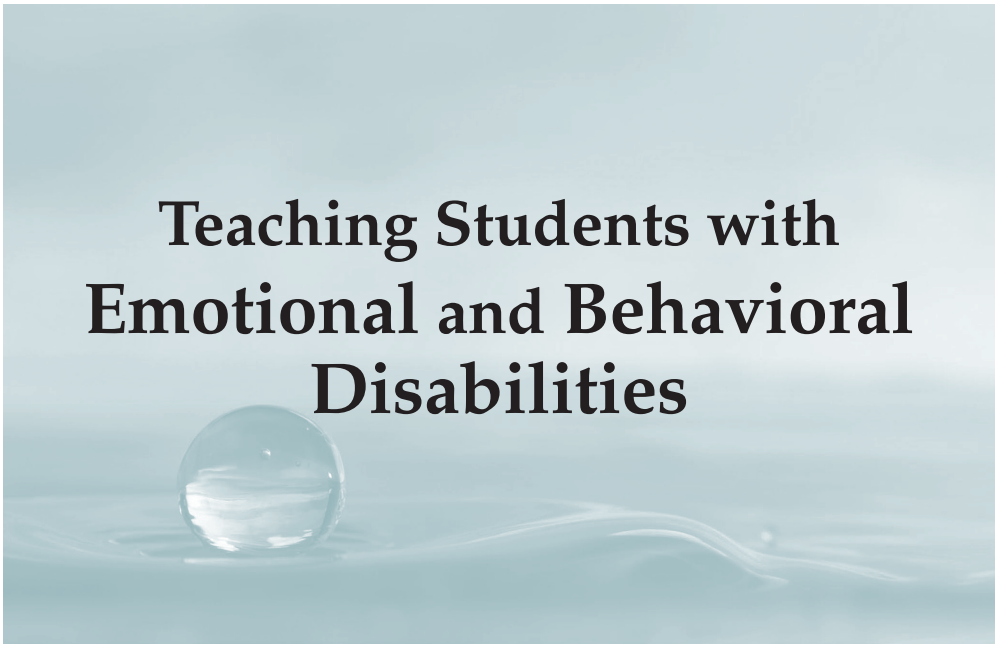

Teaching Students with Emotional and Behavioral Disabilities

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PREFACE

Students with emotional and behavioral disabilities (EBD) deserve a quality, evidence-based education. Capitalizing on the expertise of three authors who have served as general education teachers, special education teachers, interventionists, Board Certified Behavior Analysts, school-based and district administrators, and university faculty with over 60 years of combined experience, along with contributors who are currently practitioners working directly with students who have EBD and children with challenging behavior, our text provides an excellent resource for those dedicated to improving outcomes for children with behavioral challenges. We have supported students, teachers, administrators, paraprofessionals, and families of children from birth to age 21 and beyond. This text provides a comprehensive resource for advanced undergraduate to graduate preservice teachers, and in-service teachers supporting students with EBD and their families. The idea for this book grew out of our own experiences in special education—both the successes and the challenges—within the education system.

This book provides readers with an inclusive approach to teaching and supporting students with EBD. We present service delivery models and also highlight evidence-based reading, writing, math, and study skills strategies. These are important when educating any student, but are especially helpful when supporting students with EBD in academic settings. We provide behavioral interventions on multiple levels, including those that can be initiated and directed by teachers, students, and peers. We also include specific chapters to support the development of quality Individualized Education Programs, Functional Behavior Assessments, and Behavior Intervention Plans, along with a chapter on progress monitoring, which is critical to continued student success.

On the PluralPlus companion site, we are excited to offer instructors and students additional resources to accompany each chapter. Instructor resources include PowerPoint lecture slides, lecture outlines, chapter quizzes, and 2 to 3 in-class activities per chapter. Student resources include links to videos, online learning modules, printable forms, and case studies.

We are thrilled to provide educators with a resource that spans the teacher continuum (i.e., preservice to in-service)—a textbook that can be referred to beyond the college classroom and one that provides resources for meeting the needs of students. Thank you for supporting students with EBD—our students deserve amazing teachers, advocates, and cheerleaders.

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This book would not have been possible without an amazing team who supported us each step of the way. The insight and valuable feedback from faculty who reviewed our proposal and who provided suggestions for improvement as we developed our book was nothing short of amazing. We received stellar support from the project editors at Plural Publishing, Christina Gunning and Nicole Hodges, who gave generously of their time and went above and beyond to ensure that we met deadlines and had all of the resources needed. We also appreciate Hope Partin, University of Oklahoma Master of Special Education student, who served as the project assistant. Ms. Partin kept us organized, provided editorial assistance, and formatted chapters. Finally, we are most thankful for the educators who choose to teach students with emotional and behavioral disabilities. Your work makes a difference and we are hopeful that our text serves as a useful resource.

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8

Teacher-Directed Behavioral Interventions

With Contributions from Brianna Joseph

KEY VOCABULARY

Behavior Contracts
Behavior Specific Praise
Data Collection
Differential Reinforcement of Alternative Behaviors
Differential Reinforcement of Incompatible Behaviors
Differential Reinforcement of Low Rates of Behavior
Differential Reinforcement of Other Behaviors
Duration
Event Recording
Extinction
Force
Frequency
Functions of Behavior
Group Contingencies
Interval Recording
Latency
Noncontingent Reinforcement
Opportunities to Respond
Punishment
Rate
Response Cost
Replacement Behaviors
Scatterplot
Time-Out
Token Systems
Topography

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of this chapter, you should be able to . . .

- Understand the importance of effective data collection.
- Discriminate between data collection methods.

- Identify functions of behavior.
- Emphasize the importance of evidence-based interventions.
- Recognize evidence-based interventions to increase and decrease behaviors.
- Locate the difference between differential reinforcement procedures.
- Identify considerations when using time-out procedures.
- Apply classroom-wide behavior support interventions.

INTRODUCTION

Before implementing interventions in the classroom, teachers must be aware of the extent of the behavior. Behavior is observable, measurable, and learned (Skinner, 1953; Spence, 1956). For a behavior to truly be considered a problem behavior, the teacher needs to define and describe the behavior explicitly. Problem behavior impacts the teacher's ability to teach, impedes peer learning within the environment, creates an unsafe psychological or physical environment, and destroys property (Levin & Nolan, 2011). When behavior interferes with the teaching process and prevents students from learning effectively and systematically, this affects the teacher's capability to teach students.

Although the student's behavior can be distracting for their own learning environment, the behavior can also be distracting to the other students in the classroom. Meaning, if the behavior is manifesting in the same environment with other students, they may be influenced to display the same behavior, which impacts teaching. The behavior can also be psychological and physically unsafe for the classroom environment. The student or students may have some mental health deficits that needs to be addressed or display aggressive behaviors to students and staff in the classroom or themselves (e.g., self-injurious behaviors; Epstein et al., 1998). The student may destroy property in the classroom, which impacts safety and welfare of others within the environment. A problem behavior may continuously repeat in the same environment or environments. When a problem behavior arises, effective data collection measures, behavior change procedures, and interventions must be put in place. Problem behaviors are measured by multiple data collection procedures, where teachers and other school team members analyze data and implement evidence-based teacher-directed behavior interventions.

DATA COLLECTION

Interventions should be based on the results from data. Collection of data (i.e., **data collection**) that measures behavior can determine the extent of the target

behavior(s), which then can be used to apply interventions that may assist with increasing or decreasing the behavior (Alberto & Troutman, 2013). A target behavior is the problem behavior that is identified and needs to change. In order for the target behavior to be changed, assessments are needed to analyze and evaluate the data. There are two types of assessments that can be used to collect data: informal and formal assessments. Informal assessments collect data on the behavior that is not observable. Some examples are anecdotal behavior scales, questionnaires, interviewing the student (if possible) and/or guardian(s), and work samples (i.e., permanent product). Appendix 8-1 provides an example of a parent and teacher questionnaire.

Formal Assessments

Formal assessments require the teacher to observe the behavior directly. When observing the behavior, the teacher will need to have knowledge of the dimensional components of behavior, including:

- **Rate**—measures the frequency of the behavior based on a given period of time that the behavior is observed. Rate also allows the teacher to determine if the behavior should be increased or decreased the amount of time a student engages in the behavior or a task/activity in the classroom.
- **Frequency**—number of times the behavior occurs.
- **Duration**—the period of times that the behavior is illustrated from beginning to end.
- **Latency**—the length of time between a given direction/instruction/command and the occurrence of the behavior.
- **Topography**—description of the actual behavior. For example, if the teacher described the behavior as the student having a tantrum, the teacher will need to describe explicitly what the behavior looks like. Does the student scream, hits others, cry, etc.? This information must be stated to concretely define the behavior that is being displayed.
- **Force**—the intensity of the behavior. For example, data can be collected on the extent of the aggression, inappropriate verbal responses, noises, or body movements (Cooper et al., 2020).

Within formal assessment dimensions, the teacher will need to collect observable data using various data collection sheets. Examples of data collection documents include scatterplot, event recording, interval recording, latency, duration, and antecedent-behavior-consequence (ABC) functional assessment. **Scatterplot** data collection provides information about patterns of behavior. Scatterplot can indicate data patterns such as times of the day, settings, or activities in which the behavior is occurring.

Event Recording

Event recording is used to record discrete behaviors, those that have a clear beginning and end, during a given time. For example, a teacher can record the number of occurrences that a student yells during a specific period within the day in which the behavior usually occurs. However, event recording should not be used when behaviors occur at a high frequency, those that are difficult to decipher when they begin and end, or behaviors that are displayed for long periods of time (i.e., tantrums).

Interval Recording

Interval recording involves recording behavior during an interval of time (e.g., 30 seconds, 10 minutes). The teacher should be able to observe and collect data on whether the targeted behavior occurs or not. There are four types of interval recording: time sampling, partial-interval, whole interval, and momentary time sampling (Alberto & Troutman, 2013; Cooper et al., 2019).

Time Sampling

Time sampling data collection requires the observer to record if a behavior happened or not at the end of each specified interval.

Interval Recording

Partial-interval recording refers to recording if the behavior happened any time during the interval. Partial-interval recording is recommended as a form of data collection when the target behavior needs to be decreased. **Whole-interval recording** involves recording the occurrence of the behavior throughout the entire interval. When the objective is to increase a behavior, the use of whole-interval recording is recommended. **Momentary time sampling** can be used for high-frequency behaviors that the teacher can record at the end of preset intervals. Momentary time sampling is not recommended for low frequency and short duration of behaviors. Appendix 8–2 provides an example of a form for partial interval data collection.

Antecedent-Behavior-Consequence

An **ABC (antecedent-behavior-consequence) functional assessment** is a systematic method of generating information of events proceeding (antecedent/before) a behavior, the behavior itself, and those following the behavior (consequence/after). This is an attempt to determine what antecedents and consequences have a strong correlation with the occurring target

behavior. This process can be used to determine the function of behavior. This information is gathered on an ABC chart. ABC recording can be recorded in different sessions and intervals throughout the day (i.e., during science, math, reading, circle time, recess, etc.). Table 8–1 is an example of a tool for ABC data collection. Table 8–2 provides an example of a targeted time-period ABC data collection.

The ABC data collection process helps to form a hypothesis, leads to determining the individual's function of behavior, and helps to create the possible

Table 8–1. Example Antecedent-Behavior-Consequence (ABC) Recording Form

Setting: Classroom time from 8:05–10:00 a.m.

Target Behavior: Yelling at teacher and peers

Antecedent	*Behavior*	*Consequence*
Bethany is asked to go to the independent reading station.	Bethany tells the teacher "make me."	Teacher tells Bethany if she does not do her work then she will not have recess.
Teacher tells Bethany if she does not do her work then she will not have recess.	Bethany wanders around the class with a smile on her face.	Teacher tells Bethany that she has lost her recess time.
Bethany is asked to match CVC words to pictures.	Bethany completes her work.	Bethany is given a break.
Teacher comes over to Bethany in independent math station.	Teacher reprimands Bethany in front of peers that her work is wrong.	Bethany yells at teacher.
Bethany yells at teacher.	Teacher tells Bethany that she will eat her lunch with the teacher and not in the cafeteria.	Bethany yells even louder.
Bethany is asked to redo her work.	Bethany throws her assignment from the station on the floor and yells at teacher.	Teacher tells Bethany that she has afterschool detention.

Note. The ABC recording during the period of time in which Bethany was in the classroom was conducted in the morning. Based on the data, if Bethany is given a consequence in which reinforcers her escape from peer interaction, she will display the challenging behavior. Also based on the ABC recording, when Bethany is given work that she does not find challenging and is given a break, Bethany's challenging behavior is not displayed.

Table 8–2. Targeted Time ABC Recording Form

Setting: Lunch from 10:20–10:50 a.m. Target Behavior: Yelling at teacher and peers		
Bethany gets in the lunch line.	A classmate says "hi" to Bethany.	Bethany yells, "Leave me alone or I will punch you!"
Bethany yells, "Leave me alone or I will punch you."	The classmate turns around in line.	The classmate leaves Bethany alone.
Some of Bethany's classmates sit near Bethany to eat lunch.	Bethany yells, "Move away from me now!"	The classmates move away from Bethany.
The classmates move away from Bethany.	Bethany smiles.	Bethany sits by herself during lunch time.

Note. Based on the ABC recording, Bethany will display the challenging behavior in order to have her peers not interact with her. Bethany enjoys the isolation from her peers.

rationale as to why the behaviors occur, along with a way to change the environment variables that are causing the behavior to occur (Kearney, 2015). **Functions of behaviors** include sensory, escape, attention, and tangible (i.e., SEAT). Examples of behaviors and the connection to function are provided as follows:

- Sensory—a student is displaying behaviors because it is stimulating one or more senses (i.e., touch, smell, sound, taste, or is visually appeasing).
- Escape—a student is trying to escape or avoid a situation, which could be due to certain individuals (staff or peers in the classroom), a nonpreferred task, the environment, or noises.
- Attention—a student may display the behavior in order to get *attention* from the teacher and/or peers, such as calling out repeatedly during a lesson, or the student may stop calling out for a short period of time, where the function of their behavior is teacher attention.
- Tangible—a student wants to engage in a specified preferred item or activity, and the behavior is functioning to gain access to something obtainable within the environment.

To analyze and provide interventions that are based on the results of the data, teachers should collect data consistently for a given period of time (e.g., daily for 6 weeks). The teacher should also consider if the student is on