

Challenging behaviours and effective interventions



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STEPS TO TAKE WHEN FACING A CHALLENGING BEHAVIOUR

- 1) Definition
- 2) Measurement
- 3) Preference assessment
- 4) Functional assessment
- 5) Appropriate intervention
- 6) Monitoring
- 7) Change/Maintenance
- 8) Fading





Definition

- ❑ Challenging behaviour: behaviour that interferes with everyday routines, learning, social interactions, inclusion.
 - ❑ *Examples:* Aggression, self-injurious behaviour, property distraction, tantrums, stereotypies.
 - ❑ *Examples of purposes* they serve: gain access to food, gain break from tasks, gain adult attention, avoid aversive situations, attenuate pain, self-stimulate, etc.
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Measurement

- ❑ Measurement is important to give us a picture of the behaviour's current level.
 - ❑ Measurement is necessary in order to judge if the intervention that will be put in place is effective.
 - ❑ Common behaviour dimensions to measure: frequency, duration.
 - ❑ *Practical Examples*
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Preference assessments

- ❑ **Single-stimulus presentation** (Green, Reid, White, Halford, Brittain, & Gardner, 1988; DeLeon & Iwata, 1996; Windsor, Piché, & Locke, 1994)
 - ❑ **Paired-stimulus presentation** (Dattilo, 1986; Fisher, Piazza, Bowman, Hagopian, Owens, & Slevin, 1992)
 - ❑ **Multiple-stimulus presentation** (DeLeon & Iwata, 1996; Roane, Vollmet, Ringdahl, & Marcus, 1998; Windsor, Piché, & Locke, 1994)
 - ❑ **Example:** <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=opD476Uetwg>
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Functional assessment

- ☑ Importance of function vs topography
- ☑ Function=cause-effect relation
- ☑ Topography=how the behaviour looks like/
its form.

↪ Questionnaires (e.g., FAST)

↪ ABC

↪ Functional analysis



Example: FAST

☐ Functional Analysis Screening Tool (FAST© 2005 The Florida Center on Self-Injury)

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|--|-----|----|-----|
| 1. Does the problem behavior occur when the person is not receiving attention or when caregivers are paying attention to someone else? | Yes | No | N/A |
| 2. Does the problem behavior occur when the person's requests for preferred items or activities are denied or when these are taken away? | Yes | No | N/A |
| 3. When the problem behavior occurs, do caregivers usually try to calm the person down or involve the person in preferred activities? | Yes | No | N/A |
| 4. Is the person usually well behaved when (s)he is getting lots of attention or when preferred activities are freely available? | Yes | No | N/A |

Scoring Summary

Circle the number of each question that was answered "Yes" and enter the number of items that were circled in the "Total" column.

<u>Items Circled "Yes"</u>				<u>Total</u>	<u>Potential Source of Reinforcement</u>
1	2	3	4	___	Social (attention/preferred items)
5	6	7	8	___	Social (escape from tasks/activities)
9	10	11	12	___	Automatic (sensory stimulation)
13	14	15	16	___	Automatic (pain attenuation)



Example: ABC assessment datasheet

Antecedent	Behaviour	Consequence
Bill is doing Math tasks with his teacher.	He throws the materials off the table.	His teacher gives him a break until he is calm.
Tom, 4 years old goes to bed without his pacifier for the 1 st time (=time to take it off).	He has an intensive and long tantrum and seems unable to fall asleep after 1 hour.	His parents decide he is not mature enough yet to sleep without the pacifier and give it back to him.
Jim sits is alone in the living room and TV is on.	Jim flaps his hands and sings.	Mum and dad are still not in the living room.
The food is just served and includes lentils.	Kate cries and throws the plate off the table.	Dad substitutes lentils for pizza.
Mary and Ann are playing in their room. Their mum is cooking in the kitchen.	Mary and Ann start fighting and calling their mother.	Mum stops cooking and joins them to make sure they do not fight again.



Functional Analysis

- ❑ More precise, flexible and efficient method to identify the function of behaviour

(Iwata, Dorsey, Slifer, Bauman, & Richman, 1994a; Iwata, Pace, Dorsey, Zarcone, Vollmer, Smith, et al., 1994b)

- ❑ Systematic exposure of participant to certain conditions.
 - ❑ Conditions: attention, alone, play, demand
 - ❑ Must be conducted under the supervision of a BCBA.
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Intervention

□ Antecedents:

- Manipulate demands: reduce session length, reduce difficulty, provide prompts, give choices, teach appropriate ways of asking for a break. (Attention! The alternative appropriate behaviours should be naturally maintained in the environment, so make sure it is easy to emit and everybody reinforces it).
 - Give attention for desirable behaviours: give praise for appropriate attention seeking behaviours (e.g., “Mummy, look!”, *tap shoulder*)
 - Enrich environment: teach appropriate play skills, provide toys and activities that stimulate all senses
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Intervention

□ Consequences:

- Escape extinction: do not provide breaks when the problem behaviour arises, always continue with the task, give prompts if needed.
 - Planned ignoring: do not pay attention to inappropriate behaviour (Attention! Even eye contact can be reinforcing)
 - Behaviour contract: establishes what exactly the student has to do in order to gain a specified reinforcer (*e.g., arrive on time in class 4 out of 5 school days in order to gain a ticket for the cinema*).
 - Differential Reinforcement procedures: Control the emission of repetitive and out of context behaviours that offer auto-stimulation with the use of DRO, DRA, and DRI.
 - Response Interruption and Redirection (RIRD) procedure.
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Intervention

□ Consequences:

- DRO: reinforcement is delivered after a specified period of time if the student has not engaged in the target behaviour.

Example: The teacher delivers social praise every 10 minutes for students who have not engaged in speaking with peers in class).

- DRA: reinforcement is delivered when the student shows an alternative behaviour.

Example: The teacher gives a break from tasks to the student, when he verbally asks for it instead of throwing the materials away.

Tip! Choose alternative behaviours that can easily compete with problem behaviours for being easy to perform, provide prompts for their emission and reinforce them.



Intervention

□ Consequences:

- DRI: reinforcement is delivered when the student shows an incompatible behaviour, same as DRA but the student could not perform both the problem and incompatible behaviours simultaneously

Example: The incompatible behaviour is placing the hands on the table and the problem behaviour is hitting.

Response Interruption and Redirection (RIRD) procedure: The teacher interrupts the emission of the stereotypical behaviour and redircets the student to an appropriate activity.

Example: The student emits out of context vocalizations and the teacher contingently presents motor imitation tasks.



Intervention

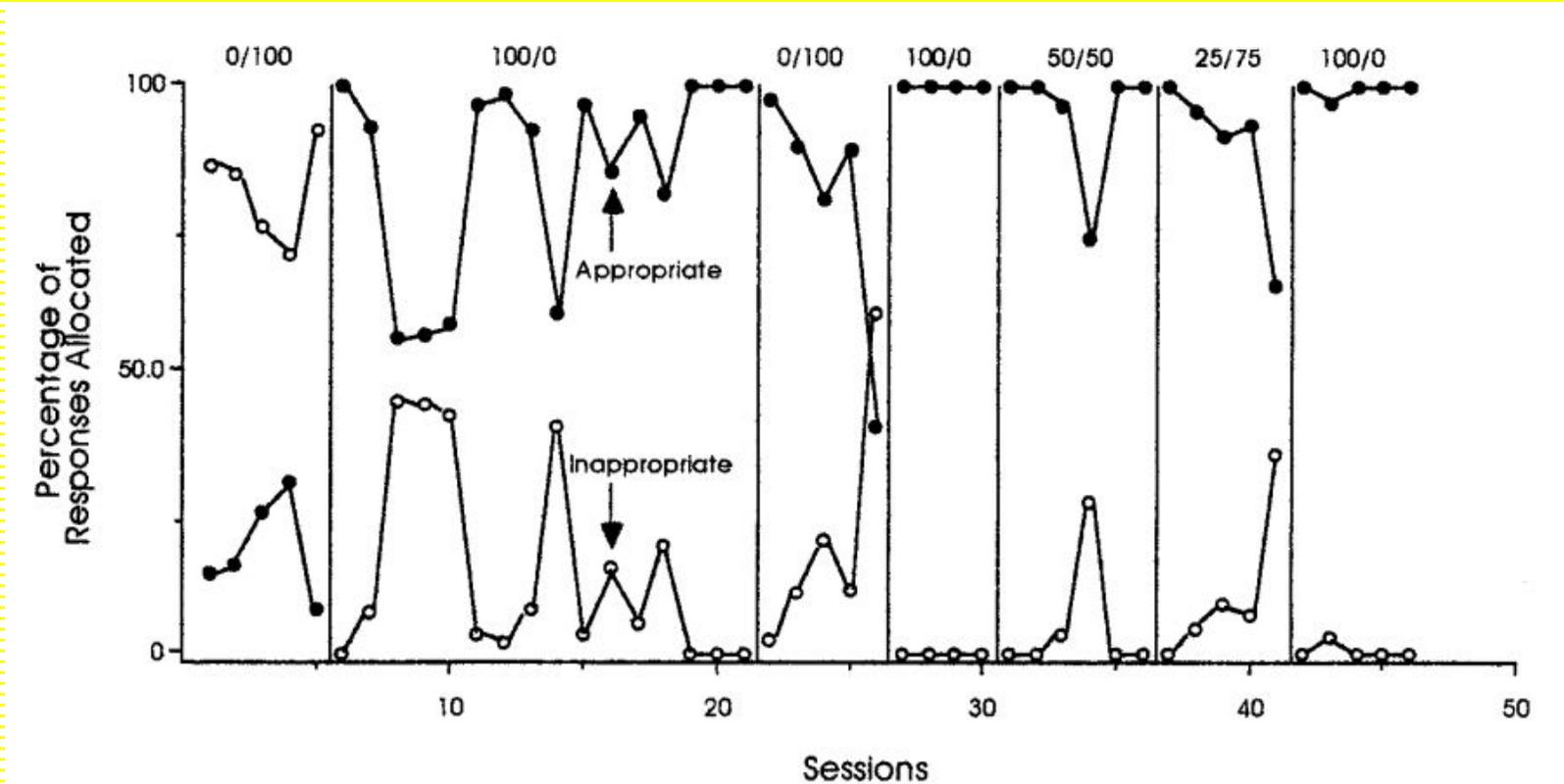
- Combination of As and Cs and data:
 - ↪ Manipulate **antecedents**
 - ↪ Also manipulate **consequences**
 - ↪ Monitor progress by **data** taking and graphing
 - ↪ Make **changes** or **maintain** the procedure and gradually **adapt** it to the individual's progress (e.g., thin the reinforcement schedule)
 - ↪ Conduct **generalization** probes
 - ↪ **Terminate** once criterion met
 - ↪ Take **follow-up** data to make sure change is maintained
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Monitoring

Change
Maintenance



□ Example of graph and decision



Example from Vollmer, Roane, Ringdahl, & Marcus, 1999, page 18.



Fading

- ❑ Remember to fade out **prompts** (e.g., fade out the echoic prompt provided for the emission of a mand for a break).
 - ❑ Remember to fade out your **presence**, it can also be a prompt (e.g., for appropriate play with a specific toy).
 - ❑ Remember to gradually increase the length and difficulty of **demands** back to the desired levels.
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