

Functions of Behavior

Attention

An individual may be engaging in a behavior in order to access attention from other students, teachers, or other people. The attention can be positive or negative.

How do I know if the behavior is an attention behavior?

Refer to your ABC data. If the consequence that follows the target behavior usually involves another person, it may be an attention function. The consequence may be a teacher lecture, other students laughing, or a paraprofessional providing extra help.

Escape

An individual may be engaging in a behavior in order to escape a situation, activity, or person. Escape behaviors may not always be to get out of a task, it may be to escape a specific part of the environment.

How do I know if the behavior is an escape behavior?

Refer to your ABC data. If the consequence that follows the target behavior usually a change in an environmental contingency, it may be an escape behavior. The consequence may be a break from a task, a time out, or access to an area of the class away from other students.

Sensory

An individual may be engaging in a behavior to give himself some type of internal sensation that is pleasing or remove an internal sensation that is aversive. These behaviors are sometimes known as self-stimulatory.

How do I know if the behavior is a sensory behavior?

Refer to your ABC data. If the behavior is occurring in a wide range of settings, with a wide variety of consequences, and sometimes occurs while the individual is alone, it may be a sensory behavior.

Access to Tangibles

An individual may be engaging in a behavior in order to access an item or activity. The consequence may involve a break or attention but consistently involves access to an item.

How do I know if the behavior is maintained by access to tangibles?

Refer to your ABC data. If the consequence that follows the target behavior consistently involves access to a preferred item or activity, it may be an access to tangible behavior.