

Behavior Intervention Plans

Often, if a child is having difficulty in the classroom or other learning setting, the Pupil Evaluation Team (PET) will decide to do a functional behavior assessment. The purpose of this assessment is to learn more about a child's challenging behavior. Once the questions about the behavior have been answered, the next step is to figure out how to help the child. A Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) is a set of strategies aimed at helping the child act in ways that work in the classroom, and that helps him or her be ready to learn. Here are some different ways that behavior intervention plans can be written after an assessment has been conducted:

If we learn that a child is behaving in a certain way to help them avoid or escape a situation that they don't like or where they might feel uncomfortable, a BIP for this child will focus on teaching new behaviors or skills. For example, if a student speaks out in class without being called on, a teacher would teach the student to raise his or her hand appropriately. To do this, the teacher might make eye contact with the student, and then move her hand in an upward motion to remind the student to raise his or her hand.

If we learn that a child knows the behavior that is expected, but chooses not to act that way, a plan would focus on reinforcing a new behavior. For example, if a child makes rude comments in order to make peers laugh, the plan would focus on ways to reward the child for making positive comments, or just stopping the rude comments altogether.

Sometimes, children might not see the value of what they are supposed to be doing at school. For example, a student who wants to be a mechanic might not understand why he or she needs to learn math. An intervention plan for that child would try to increase his or her motivation, first by explaining the importance of learning math and how it relates to the child's goals. If this doesn't work, the plan might also involve a concrete reward, such as stickers, activities, or free time.

These are some important things for the PET to consider when the intervention plan is created:

- The plan should be created with input from all people that the child works with, so that they can agree on expectations as well as rewards or consequences.
- A plan should specifically define behaviors and consequences, but should still be adaptable to different places: the classroom, the playground, music class, daycare, etc. Consistency will help the child learn what is expected of them.

The plan should focus on positive supports, such as rewards before resorting to consequences or punishments, and should focus on using positive skills that a child already has to help them shape alternative behaviors.

- It might be necessary to make changes in the child's academic program, or they may need some support that will help them learn a different behavior.
- A plan might need to include some kind of change in the physical setting, such as where the child sits and does work.
- A plan's effectiveness can be affected by student absences due to illness, suspension, or expulsion.
- A Behavior Intervention Plan should be evaluated to make sure that it is being followed, and to make sure that it is working effectively. A BIP should be reviewed at least annually, but can be reviewed whenever any member of the PET feels that a review is necessary. A BIP might be reviewed when:
 - A student has reached his or her goals and objectives and new goals and objectives need to be decided on
 - The child's situation has changed, and the BIP doesn't address the child's most current needs
 - There is a change in placement; or
 - It is clear that the original BIP is not producing positive changes in the child's behavior.

For more information on this or other topics related to the needs of children

with disabilities, call or write Maine Parent Federation at: P.O. Box 2067, Augusta, ME 04338; 1-800-7746 or 623-2144

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