

## What is a Behavior Intervention Plan?

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A Behavioral Intervention Plan (BIP) is designed for an individual child to address a behavior that is interfering with the child's learning or the learning of other students.

There is a specific, detailed process that is required to develop a BIP. First, the school team conducts a Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA). During an FBA, the team reviews the student's records, completes checklists/questionnaires, and conducts direct observations of the interfering behaviors to determine the function of the behavior. Some potential functions include: getting something (i.e., attention, reward, sensory input) or avoiding something (i.e., difficult work, anxiety, and boredom). Once the function has been determined, the Individual Education Program (IEP) Team develops a BIP.

A BIP incorporates the hypothesis about the function, the definition of the behavior, where the behavior does and does not occur, what happens before and after the behavior, and relevant information about the student (i.e., strengths, health, and medication).

The BIP includes a plan to:

- modify the environment
- teach the child to avoid the behavior "triggers" (i.e., coping skills, noise canceling headphones)
- reinforce the child for using socially acceptable behavior (i.e., toy play, appropriate communication)
- teach the child replacement behaviors
- modify the responses of the adults (i.e., extinction, redirection, blocking)

It may be possible to modify the environment by implementing preventative strategies such as: teachers stating clear expectations, modifying seating arrangements, adapting instructional pace, avoiding long delays, providing choice, and allowing the student to take breaks.

Replacement behaviors must serve the same function as the interfering behavior and be equally as effective as the behavior. The amount of physical effort needed, the likelihood that the replacement behavior will produce the desired result, and the delay between the replacement behavior and the desired result must be equivalent or less than that of the interfering behavior. If the replacement behavior is harder to do, does not get reinforced or there is a long delay, the interfering behavior will continue because it is more effective.

Often, a replacement behavior is teaching the student to communicate. As the student begins using the replacement behaviors, school staff should create situations to practice the new



skills. Staff persons need to be aware that change occurs slowly.

Because it takes time to see behavior change, it's important that the team decide what will happen when the interfering behavior still occurs. Planned consequences reinforce the replacement skills while decreasing the effectiveness of the interfering behavior. Having planned consequences teaches the student that using the replacement skills is a better way to get the desired result. In some cases, the behavior may be extreme. The team should develop a crisis plan which includes defining what constitutes a crisis, describing the intervention procedures, detailing who will be involved, identifying what resources are required, and describing procedures for documenting the use of the plan. The team also sets up a system to evaluate and modify the plan including a timeline for review as a team and with the family based on the data collected.

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