

**E BOOK – Special Education Behavioral Basics;**

**6 Easy Steps to Improving Your Child's  
School Behavior!**

By JoAnn Collins  
Parent and Educational Advocate

Author of: *Disability Deception*

Subtitle: *Lies Disability Educators  
Tell and How Parents Can  
Beat Them at Their  
Own Game!*



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**Dedication:** I dedicate this book to my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! He is the author and finisher of my faith!

## About the Author

JoAnn Collins is the parent of three adults two who have developmental disabilities; Angelina age 29 and Shaun age 25. She has been a special education advocate for over 20 years, helping parents successfully navigate the special education system, which has included advocating at several due process hearings. She is a past employee of Options Center for Independent Living where part of her job, was educational advocacy. She has also been a disability advocate, fighting for community services for persons with disabilities. JoAnn also participated in several state wide advisory councils including the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP—Part of the Department of Education), Advisory Board in the State of Illinois.

JoAnn is the author of the book: Disability Deception; Lies Disability Educators Tell and How Parents Can Beat Them at Their Own Game (2007), an acclaimed book on special education advocacy that was the first book to address the fraudulent behavior of many school representatives, in the special education field. It specifically addresses the falsehoods, misrepresentations and fabrications of which every advocate is familiar. Parents from across the country have appreciated the insight JoAnn provides, regarding the behavior of some special educators. Her many resources are extremely helpful to parents and rarely found in other books.

More information can be found at her web site:

[www.disabilitydeception.com](http://www.disabilitydeception.com).

The book can be purchased at: [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com). Many parents agree that the book is a great resource for parents new to advocacy, who are trying to navigate the special education system for the first time—so check it out! JoAnn puts out a free monthly E newsletter entitled: The Special Education Spotlight. Shining the spotlight on truths and deceptions in special education! If you would like to receive this E newsletter send an E mail to: [JoAnn@disabilitydeception.com](mailto:JoAnn@disabilitydeception.com).

## Testimonials about Disability Deception

“I must admit your book is the **very best** advocacy tool I have ever used. Additionally I have advised many a client that this is the **First** book they must consider purchasing to get a handle on their own empowerment. I read it cover 2 cover in a few days, ear marked the pages, and then highlighted reference material until my ink went dry. Thank you so much.”

“I would recommend this book to anyone with a child in special education. It was very helpful and easy to read. There are many useful links and sample letters in this book! I say A+!”

“Some books on special education are too confusing, but this one was easy to understand and gave great advocacy tips.”

“This book should be read by every parent that has a child with special needs—Awesome!”

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## **1. QUICK GUIDE TO ACRONYMS USED IN THIS E BOOK** *(What Do All Those Letters Mean?)*

**ABC's of Behavior:** Antecedent, behavior, and consequence

**ADHD:** Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

**FAPE:** Free Appropriate Public Education

**FBA:** Functional Behavioral Assessment/Analysis

**IAES:** Interim Alternative Educational Setting/ Placement

**IDEA:** Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

**IDEA 2004:** The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act that was reauthorized in 2004. In this report, I will use IDEA, unless there are specific changes brought about by IDEA 2004.

**IEP:** Individual Educational Plan or Program

**LEA:** Local Education Agency (your local school district)

**MDR:** Manifestation Determination Review

**PBS:** Positive Behavioral Supports

**PWN:** Prior Written Notice

## 2. List of the 6 Steps to Improving Your Child's School Behavior:

1. Step 1: Determination of what the inappropriate behavior is, and identifying it in concrete terms.
2. Step 2: Determining what the ABC's of a specific behavior is (antecedent, behavior, and consequences).
3. Step 3: Conducting a properly developed functional behavioral assessment (FBA), to determine what function the behavior has for the child.
4. Step 4: Determine what supports to use including positive behavioral supports and a positive behavioral plan.
5. Step 5: Using the hypothesis from the FBA to develop a positive behavioral plan.
6. Step 6: Evaluating whether the positive behavioral plan is working to decrease the negative behavior, and/or if changes need to be made.

### 3. *Introduction to Behavioral Basics*

My journey with school behavioral issues began many years ago when my daughter Angelina was still considered a toddler. She would throw herself on the ground, scream and yell for no apparent reason that anyone could figure out, I began my journey learning about behavior, and also learning about the process of determining the function of the behavior, and how to improve my daughter's school behavior. Everything came to a head when she was 9-10 years old. I was spending so much time in the school office, that the school secretary joked to me "We should just get you a bed." Might have been funny to her, but was not to me.

After attending several trainings on behavior and speaking to a behavioral specialist I figured it out. Angelina's misbehavior was related to 2 different things: 1. She would have behavior when she was extremely tired, or when she was sick and/or 2. She would have behavior when academics were given to her. She was trying to avoid school and avoid the academics. We changed her curriculum to a functional curriculum, and I brought her home when she seemed sick or really tired, and her behavior improved. Because of her cognitive disability Angelina will always struggle with her behavior, but I am much better at figuring out what is triggering it.

This E book is for anyone who lives or works with children with disabilities that have behavioral difficulties, especially parents. You may be frustrated because your child has been getting a lot of suspensions; or the school district wants to remove your child from their current placement. Parents need to be proactive, when their child begins having negative behavior at school. Purchasing this E book is a good start to improving your child's school behavior. At the end of this E book is information on IDEA 2004's discipline regulations. It is critical that you learn about these, so that you can advocate for your child.

As parents, we often expect special education personnel to know how to deal with negative school behavior; and some do and are fantastic—but unfortunately most do not. In a recent article in Disability Scoop the article states that in New York City Public Schools the largest school district in the US, 1 in 3 suspensions were given to children with disabilities. I have seen suspensions used more and more with children with disabilities, even very

young children. I have also seen many special education personnel actually escalate the behavior and make it worse, rather than deescalating the behavior, and making it improve. As parents we must make sure that school personnel that work with our children are trained in the use of Positive Behavioral Supports and Plans.

It is extremely important for children with disabilities, to learn appropriate behaviors, so that they will be able to live and work in the community and have a fulfilled life!

While this E book focuses on behavioral difficulties a child with a disability has at school, this information can be successfully used in all of a child's environments. It is my hope that parents, educators, and advocates alike, will learn new skills, and proactively learn how to deal with unacceptable behaviors, in a positive manner! Children also often need to be taught appropriate behaviors to replace the inappropriate ones, which will be discussed later.

This E book will begin by discussing behavior in general, things that you must understand about behavior; before starting the process to improve a child's school behavior. Next to be covered will be the 6 easy steps to improving a child's school behavior. These 6 steps are research based using functional behavioral assessment/analysis (FBA) and positive behavioral supports/ plans, needed to increase positive behavior in a child, which will in turn decrease negative behaviors. This E book will finish with a brief overview of IDEA 2004 discipline regulations.

I would be remiss if I did not mention that a lot of people in the special education field, believe that FBA's and positive behavioral plans need to be developed by behavior specialists. While I do not disagree with this, the chance of the school district agreeing to hire an outside behavioral specialist, may not be good! I understand that some schools do have behavioral specialists, and in that scenario you could ask that this person conduct the FBA, and develop the positive behavioral plan. The information in this E book is to help parents that find themselves in a situation where they need help with the FBA process, and help in developing a positive behavioral plan. Forms that are used in these steps are available for free download.

#### 4. *Introduction to Behavior*

Below are seven things that you need to know about behavior in general:

- All behavior is a form of communication. The good news is, that a child's behavior is trying to tell the people around them something. The bad news is, that they must now figure out on their own, what the behavior is telling them. A functional behavioral analysis (FBA) needs to be performed to assist you in determining what function the behavior has for your child. FBA's will be discussed in detail later in this E book.
- A child's behavior could very well be related to their disability.
- Children often have behavioral difficulty if they are frustrated. A child can be frustrated if they are unable to communicate needs or wants! If your child has difficulty speaking or communicating, they may need a communication device to decrease their frustration. This would be covered under assistive technology. Any communication device agreed upon by school personnel, should be paid by the school, and should be placed in the child's IEP.
- **There is a huge connection between academic difficulty and behavioral difficulty. In other words, many children who have behavioral difficulty at school, also have difficulty with their academics. Also, children who are not receiving special education services that they need, will often express it in their behavior.**

**JoAnn—I have dealt with many children with disabilities that had behavior due to the fact that they were not only struggling with academics, but were receiving an inappropriate education. Teenage boys are especially prone to behavioral difficulties, due to academic frustration, in my opinion. I have seen this many times in my 20 years of advocacy, and often warn parents of young children to watch for this.**

- **If a child has struggled with academics for years, despite appropriate instruction, they may benefit from a functional curriculum rather than an academic curriculum.**

JoAnn—As I stated previously when my daughter Angelina was little, she used to throw herself on the floor at school, and start screaming. After some time of educating myself about behavior, I realized that she threw herself on the floor, every time that academics were being taught. I insisted that her curriculum be changed to focus on functional skills, and her behavior did improve. Angelina also had behavioral difficulty when she was extremely tired or sick. I would go and get her from school when this happened, and most times it prevented extreme behaviors. While Angelina still has some behavior difficulty the focus on functional skills, was just what she needed! It also helped her to graduate with some good functional skills under her belt!

- Dr. Greene author of “Lost at School” states that many children have behavioral issues due to expressive and receptive language difficulties. Inability to communicate can bring about negative behavior; keep this in mind!
- **The reaction to a child’s behavior will either improve the behavior or make the behavior worse. This includes at school and also at home! Untrained special education staff can escalate the behavior (make it worse), rather than deescalate the behavior (make it better)**

JoAnn—I have seen many special education personnel, escalate behavior to the point, that the child becomes violent. Years ago a friend of mine’s son who had Autism was finally doing well in school, after years of hard advocacy with little results. It was on his IEP that he be allowed to sit in a chair, at the back of the room, to calm himself down. He changed teachers, and all baloney broke lose! His new

teacher decided that she would not follow his IEP, and she took the chair away. When he became upset and went under a table, she chased him and states that he kicked her (no evidence that this happened). She then preceded to call the police, and try to get him arrested. The police did not buy it, and let the young man go home with his mother, as they should have.

All this teacher, would have had to do, is let the young man calm himself down, on the chair in the back of the room. Instead she blew the situation up, rather than being reasonable and allowing the accommodation. It took quite some time, but the child was placed in an appropriate private placement at the school districts expense. He is now a 20 year old young man taller than I am, with a job at a local grocery store, with supports.

- The earlier the behavior is addressed, the easier it will be to change the behavior, for the good.

## 5. *Six Steps to Improving a Child's School Behavior*

The information in this E book is to help parents and educators, proactively address a child's negative school behavior, as quickly as they can to bring about positive change. It has been my experience that some special education personnel wait until the child's behavior becomes serious, and then the child receives punishment. **Research has shown us that punishment only works in the short term to change a child's behavior.**

The 6 steps in this E book are proactive and research based, to help children with disabilities improve their behavior, over the long term. By improving a child's behavior, it will no longer interfere with their education, but allow them the opportunity for educational success! If you are a parent, whose child has one or more behaviors that interfere with their education, or the education of others, insist that special education personnel follow these six steps to benefit your child's education.

## **6. *Step 1: Determination of what the inappropriate behavior is, and identifying the behavior in concrete terms.***

Before a functional behavioral analysis (*FBA*) can be performed, to determine the function of a student's inappropriate behavior, it is necessary to pinpoint the behavior that is interfering with a child's education. **Define that behavior in concrete, specific, and easily understandable terms. These terms must be easy to communicate and simple to measure and record. Only 2-3 behaviors at a time should be worked on for maximum benefit.**

Below is a case study about a little boy named Michael, who has Autism. This example will be used throughout this E book, to help you learn to use the information that you are learning.

**\*\*Case study of Michael Jones: A 7 year-old child who has autism, and is in second grade. Michael's behavior has gotten worse since he has begun second grade. His academics are below grade level at: Reading 1.2; Math: Kindergarten level; and Written Expression: Kindergarten level. Michael's mother brought in some general information about behavior to his IEP meeting. The team decided to pinpoint the behavior, and to determine what Michael is getting from the behavior.**

### **Michael's Behavior (2 different behaviors)**

- 1. Pinpointing the behavior: Michael screams and throws his books when asked to read out loud in class, or do reading independently.**
- 2. Pinpointing the behavior: Michael continuously yells before school, at lunch or at recess, in the gym or cafeteria with a lot of other children.**

Ask special education personnel to identify the behavior and to put it in specific concrete terms, and in writing. Once you pinpoint the negative behavior that you would like to change, go on to step 7.

## ***Step 2: Determining what the ABC's of a Specific Behavior Are***

**It is important to help identify the ABC's of each behavior:**

A = the antecedent -- What happens before and at the time of the behavior? Where is the behavior occurring? Who is there? What is happening in the environment right before the behavior?

B = the behavior -- What the specific behavior is? Try and paint a clear picture of what happened.

C = the consequence of the behavior -- What happened after the behavior? What does the child receive as a consequence for the behavior? What was said to the child after the behavior.

The ABC's must be tracked for each behavior. By tracking the ABC's, you will know when the behavior is occurring, and when it is not. **In other words, you are looking for a pattern. You are also looking for triggers, that are causing the behavior.** The behavior needs to be tracked for at least one to two weeks, by using a different form for each day, and a different form for each behavior. **At least 3 data sources should be used to track the ABC's, to ensure accuracy.** The school psychologist, as well as possibly a social worker, and the teacher could be the three data sources.

**The ABC Form that is being used in this E book is downloadable free from the University of Arizona—College of Education at the following Web address:**

**<http://www.tucsonlinks.org/elearning/pdf/fba.pdf>**

**A blank ABC form is in Appendix A at the end of this E book**

**Case study of Michael Jones continues:**

**ABC Form  
for Michael Jones - 2<sup>nd</sup> grade (10-12-07)**

**Behavior #1:**

<u>Time</u>	<u>Antecedent</u>	<u>Behavior</u>	<u>Consequence</u>
8:30	Teacher asks Michael to read to class during story time	Michael screams at teacher and throws his books	Michael has to be in time out, does not have to read
10:35	Students each take passage, read it to their group and discuss the passage	Michael starts yelling at a girl in the group, when it is his turn	Michael is in time out and does not read
1:00	Michael was asked to sit and read to class, during special education reading instruction	Michael starts screaming, and refuses to read	Michael has to be in time out, and does not read to special education class
2:30 pm	Michael is asked to work on reading assignment, by himself	Michael starts screaming and throwing his books	Michael goes to the principal and does not do the work

The tracking of this behavior occurred for the entire week ending 10-12-07.

A pattern begins to emerge, that shows that Michael's screaming is related to his having to read out loud to his peers, or to do reading assignments alone.

**ABC Form  
For Michael Jones - 2<sup>nd</sup> grade (10-12-07)**

**Behavior #2:**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Antecedent</b>	<b>Behavior</b>	<b>Consequence</b>
8:15	Michael is in gym	Michael screams at	Michael gets to

am	before school starts with lots of other children	girl next to him until the teacher comes over	stay with teacher on bleacher until school starts
11:25 am	Michael is at lunch eating	He starts crying loud until teacher comes over to him	He gets to stay with teacher for rest of lunch
11:45 am	Michael is at recess with 3 classrooms of children	Michael screams extremely loud until teacher comes over to him	Michael gets to stay with teacher until end of recess on bleachers and away from other children.

The tracking of this behavior took place the entire week of 10-12-07.

Two things become apparent when Michael cries or screams: (1) he gets attention from his teacher; and (2) he also gets to sit on the bleachers with the teacher. This may be contributing to the behavior.

**Both of these behaviors were simple and easy to track. Some behaviors may be more complicated, and take longer to determine the ABC's.**

#### Additional forms for helping to determine ABC's of behavior:

- The document, "Addressing Student Problem Behavior," by the Center for Effective Collaboration and Practice" has an ABC observation form at:  
[http://www.fape.org/idea/what\\_idea\\_is/osher/functional.pdf](http://www.fape.org/idea/what_idea_is/osher/functional.pdf)
- Laura A. Riffel, PhD. has a wonderful ABC form that is downloadable on her Web site [www.behaviordocor.org](http://www.behaviordocor.org). Click forms at the top of the page and click on which form you want.
- The Document "Addressing Student Problem Behavior" contains a lot of information including a two page ABC form. This form can be downloaded free: [http://www.fape.org/idea/what\\_idea\\_is/osher/funcanali.pdf](http://www.fape.org/idea/what_idea_is/osher/funcanali.pdf)

**Advocacy Tip:** If your child is having negative behavior(s) at school, download an ABC form, and bring it with you to your child’s IEP meeting. Ask the special education staff to please track the behavior for one week, using the form that you will give them. Remember to ask them to use a different form, for each behavior. Do not focus on more than 2-3 behaviors at one time or your child may not be successful. Also, it is important to use at least three data sources in collecting this information.

Once the ABC form is completed you may move on to Step 3.

### **8. Step 3: Conduct a Properly Developed FBA (Functional Behavioral Assessment) to Determine what Function the Behavior is Providing to the Child.**

Below is the definition of what a functional behavioral assessment is.

#### Definition of FBA:

A document entitled, “Functional Behavioral Assessment and Positive Interventions: What Parents Need to Know.” is reprinted with permission from PACER Center. The document can be found on their website [www.pacer.org](http://www.pacer.org).

According to this document, “A FBA is a process for collection of information. The data the team collects is used to help determine why problem behaviors are occurring. The data will also help identify ways to address the behaviors. FBA data is used to develop a **positive behavioral plan.**”

IDEA 2004 specifically requires an FBA whenever a child with a disability has his or her current placement changed for disciplinary reasons. Parents can request one whenever a child’s behavior is interfering with their education, and/or the education of other students.

#### Important information about FBA’s:

- Most schools do not conduct, an FBA in an appropriate manner in my

opinion. They may use a checklist, which may not be effective in determining, what the child is receiving by continuing the behavior.

- Also it seems that special education personnel get stuck on the attention reason (that the child is seeking attention) and refuse to consider any other reason for the behavior.

In my opinion many refuse to consider that anything that they are doing with the child, could be causing the child's behavior (like giving the child academics that are too hard, or escalating the behavior rather than deescalating the behavior).

- At least three persons should be data sources for the ABC's and the FBA. When school districts do alternate assessments they must use 3 data sources; so why should the FBA be any different? **Three data sources need to be used to ensure accuracy!**

The school psychologist, as well as the social worker and teacher could make up the three data sources. They could do observations, fill out the ABC's and also be involved in filling out the function matrix to determine what your child is getting from the behavior.

### *Categories for Functions of Behavior*

In a document written by Laura A. Riffel, PhD. entitled, "Writing Behavioral Intervention Plans Based on Functional Behavior Assessments," the possible functions of behaviors can be put in two categories:

#### **Positive Reinforcement or Negative Reinforcement**

##### Positive Reinforcements:

Social Attention  
Access to Materials  
Sensory Stimulation  
Control

##### Negative Reinforcements:

Escape from activities or people  
Sensory (sensory overload)  
Pain

This information can be found by visiting: [www.behaviordocor.org](http://www.behaviordocor.org) and is used with permission from Laura A. Riffel PhD.

The University of Arizona—College of Education in a document entitled, “Functional Behavioral Assessment,” agrees with Dr. Riffel and states that there are only two primary functions of behavior: **access or avoidance**.

The positive reinforcement would be to “access” attention, materials or sensory stimulation; while the negative reinforcement would be to “avoid” activities, people, sensory overload or pain. **They also state that there are only three areas where children are trying to either access or avoid:**

Attention (from teachers, parents or peers)  
Tangibles or Activities; and/or  
Sensory (such as noise or physical contact).

This information can be found at the following Web Address:  
<http://www.tucsonlinks.org/elearning/pdf/fba.pdf>

**According to both resources above, negative behavior can occur only for 2 reasons:**

- **A child seeking positive reinforcement to access something, social attention, materials or activities or seeking sensory stimulation;**
- **Or a child seeking negative reinforcement to avoid activities or people, avoid sensory overload or to avoid pain.**

**In the document “Addressing Student Problem Behavior Part III” it states that the function of the behavior could be both to access something and to avoid something. For example: The child’s could be misbehaving for attention (access), and also to escape from work that is too hard (avoid). This document can be found at the Web address: <http://cecp.air.org>.**

## Appropriate steps to take in conducting an FBA:

The PACER document gives the appropriate steps that need to be taken to conduct an *FBA*:

- Identify and agree on the (problem) behaviors that require immediate attention for change. (What is the adverse behavior?) **(B)**.
- Determine where the behaviors occur and where they do not.

**JoAnn's comment: Don't forget to define what is occurring in the environment before and at the time of the behavior[s].) (A).**

- Identify what may contribute to the behaviors, such as possible health reasons, sensory reasons, avoidance of a situation, difficult academics inappropriate education, and inability to communicate wants and needs.

**JoAnn's comment: (Identify what the consequence is for the child?) (C)**

**(JoAnn's comment--These questions will be answered by filling out the ABC observation form listed previously.)**

- The team will also ask these kinds of questions:
  - a. What is unique about the environments where behaviors are not a concern?
  - b. What is different in the places where the problem behaviors do occur?
  - c. Could they be related to how the child and teacher get along?
  - d. Does the number of other students or the work a child is being asked to do cause the problem?

**JoAnn--Many children with disabilities have problem behavior because the academics that they are being asked to do, are too difficult, and they have not yet mastered them.**

**For example: If you child reads at a third grade level, make sure that the instructional materials used are at a third grade level and not above, or your child will not understand them, and they could develop negative behaviors as a result.**

e. Could the time of day or a child's mood affect the behaviors?

- **Is the problem behavior linked to a skill deficit?**

**JoAnn-- I believe that there is a huge difference between a child that can't do something, and a child that won't do something. Be sure that your child can do whatever is being asked of them, and is not refusing because they do not know how to do it. It has been my experience if a child can't do a task or specific academics, they will probably develop negative behavior rather than trying to do the task or the academics.**

- **Does the learning environment need to be modified? The FBA may reveal conditions within the learning environment itself that may precipitate problem behaviors. Simple curricular or environment modifications may be enough to eliminate the behavior.**
- Collect data on the child's performance from as many sources as possible. Use indirect assessment from interviews of teachers and students. Use direct assessment, which involves observing and recording situational factors surrounding a problem behavior. Use data analysis. Remember the importance of having three data sources in tracking the ABC's and in doing the FBA.
- **Identify other appropriate behaviors that can be taught and serve the same function for the child** (be sure that they are included in your child's IEP). Dr. Greene in his book "Lost at School" states the importance of teaching kids skills that they lack that will help them problem solve in the areas that they have difficulty with.

**Generate a hypothesis statement about why problem behaviors occur** (the function of the behaviors). A hypothesis is an educated guess based on data. It helps predict where and why problem behaviors are most likely to occur and where and why they are least likely to occur.

For example: Mark has been having meltdowns when a particular substitute is in his classroom. Describe in concrete terms what the behavior is and come up with the ABC's of the behavior. Is it to access or avoid something? In Marks case the hypothesis is that Mark is melting down so that he can leave the classroom (avoid) when a particular substitute is in his classroom. After further investigation by Marks mother it was found that the substitute was yelling at Mark in the class, and that is why he was having meltdowns. Removing the substitute and replacing her with another substitute should work to stop this negative behavior.

- Test the hypothesis statement regarding the function of the problem behavior. In my example above Marks meltdowns totally disappeared when another substitute was placed in the classroom. Now the difficulty may have been that the first substitute was not trained, and did not know how to handle Mark, but she should be given training in another classroom and away from Mark, in my opinion.

This is the FBA form that is filled out for Michael Jones's #1 behavior:

**Name of School District**  
**Department of Special Education Services**

**Functional Behavioral Assessment**

**Student Name:** Michael Jones **School:** Sims Elementary **Date** 10-15-07  
Data Sources (check below)      Dates Information Acquired

\* ABC Observation       Student Interview       \* Teacher Interview  
 Parent Interview       Reinforcer Checklist



<b>Function:</b>	<b>To Avoid:</b>	<b>To Obtain:</b>
Every behavior has a function driving it. What appears to be the primary behavior needs or goals that drives the behavior?	*Assignment *Class/School *Demand/request Afraid of being wrong	*Attention Power Revenge

**Michael is accessing attention from children and adults, and he is avoiding having to read out loud in class, or work independently by himself.**

Below is the FBA checklist form for Michael Jones' behavior #2

**Name of School District**  
**Department of Special Education Services**  
**Functional Behavioral Assessment**

**Student Name:** Michael Jones **School:** Sims Elementary **Date:** 10-15-07  
Data sources (check below)      Indicate Dates Information acquired

\*  ABC Observation       Student Interview       \*  Teacher Interview

Parent Interview       Reinforcer Checklist

Summary of Record Reviewed:

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**Target Behavior #2**  
Describe one inappropriate behavior that negatively impacts student or others.      Michael is at lunch with a lot of other students in the cafeteria. He screams continuously until teacher comes over to him, and lets him leave to go sit on a bench.

**Antecedent:**  
What happens immediately before the behavior occurs?      Michael is in a large room with lots of other children. There is a lot of noise!



to ask the teacher if he could sit on the bleachers in order to get away from the other children. In the previous discussion of the FBA checklist, the fact that Michael was trying to avoid the other children, was never mentioned by the teacher.

**The University of Arizona—College of Information in the document, “Functional Behavioral Assessments,” have a Function Matrix to help you in the process, and it is available at: <http://www.tucsonlinks.org/elearning/pdf/fba.pdf>.**

A blank Function Matrix Form is in Appendix A

**The Function Matrix for Michael Jones  
Behavior #1**

	<b><u>Access</u></b>	<b><u>Avoid</u></b>
<b><u>Attention:</u></b>	Maybe	
<b><u>Tangibles/Activities:</u></b>		Yes/reading
<b><u>Sensory</u></b>		

The correct hypothesis for Behavior #1 is as follows: Michael screams, cries and throws his books, when he is asked to read independently or to the class. Michael is doing this because the reading is too difficult for him, and he is trying to avoid the academics. Michael could also be doing the behavior to get attention from his teacher, so keep this in mind. The function of a behavior is not always easy to figure out. This is the reason that I gave you two possible functions of one behavior, in order to give you an idea of how to deal with possible different functions.

## The Function Matrix for Michael Jones Behavior #2

	<u>Access</u>	<u>Avoid</u>
<u>Attention:</u>	Maybe	being with lots of other children, and avoiding noise
<u>Tangibles/Activities:</u>		
<u>Sensory:</u>		maybe trying to avoid sensory overload

The Hypothesis for Behavior #2 is as follows: Michael yells constantly when he is with a lot of other children, to get away from the other children, and/or avoid sensory overload. If Michael were doing this behavior for attention, he would be doing it several times a day, which he is not.

### Few things about FBAs:

Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (“IDEA”) school districts must use “scientifically based instructional practices.” What this means is that school districts must use curriculum and other processes that are proven, by research, to work. In this case, this means that your school district should be using a **FBA that is “scientifically based” and proven to work.**

I would use this information to make sure that special education personnel are not using an ineffective checklist to determine the function of your child’s behavior.

Also, make sure that special education personnel are using at least three data sources to determine the ABC’s and function of your child’s behavior.

**Advocacy Tip: Ask special education personnel to follow the steps on page 17-19 and answer the questions. Also, take copies of the function matrix (that can be downloaded) to your school district and ask them to use this to determine the function of your child's behavior (Is the child trying to access something or avoid something). Remember that the checklist that most school districts use is not effective in determining what your child is getting out of the behavior.**

### How you can be involved in your child's FBA process

A policy letter put out by the Office of Special Education Programs on February 9, 2007 states: "If an FBA is used to evaluate an individual child in accordance with 34 CFR 300.304-300.311 to assist in determining whether the child is a child with a disability . . . it is considered an evaluation under Part B. . . and parental consent... is required for an *FBA* conducted as an individual evaluation or reevaluation. If the *FBA* is conducted for individual, evaluative purposes to develop or modify a behavioral intervention plan for a particular child under 34 CFR 300.502, a parent who disagrees with the *FBA* would have the right to request an IEE (Independent Educational Evaluation) at public expense."

Also in the policy letter: "If the IEP team has developed appropriate goals and objectives and specially designed instruction and wishes to complete an *FBA* to determine the effectiveness of the teaching methods and positive behavioral supports used for the student to make progress . . . Does this require parental consent? . . . We believe that parental consent would be required in this situation."

**Advocacy Tip: Use this policy letter as a way to be involved in the *FBA* process. Also to get an Independent Educational Evaluation at public expense, if educators do not conduct the *FBA* in a "scientifically based" way, and/or if they do not come up with a proper conclusion as to what your child is receiving as a result of the behavior. Remember parents have the right to an IEE at public expense, if they disagree with the schools evaluations (In some cases OSEP finds that FBA's are evaluations).**

## Functional Behavioral Assessment Forms

- Functional Behavioral Assessment Matrix form can be downloaded from [http://www.fape.org/idea/what\\_idea\\_is/osher/funcanal.pdf](http://www.fape.org/idea/what_idea_is/osher/funcanal.pdf). This document is put out by the Center for Effective Collaboration and Practice. The form can be found in the document, “Addressing Student Problem Behavior.”
- A document entitled, “Functional Behavioral Assessment,” is funded by Safe Schools Health Students. This document is developed by The University of Arizona—College of Education. Information and forms can be downloaded at the Website: <http://www.tucsonlinks.org/elearning/pdf/fba.pdf>
- **The form I used came from the University of Arizona—College of Education entitled, “Functional Behavioral Assessment.” It can be found at: <http://www.tucsonlinks.org/elearning/pdf/fba.pdf> It is called the Functional Matrix Form.**

### ***9. Step 4: Consider what Supports to Use, Including Positive Behavioral Supports and Plans***

School districts are required under IDEA to consider the use “research based” positive supports on children with behavioral difficulties. IDEA 2004 300.324 (a)(2)(i) requires that: “The IEP team in a case of a child whose behavior impedes his or her learning or that of others to consider. . .strategies including positive behavioral interventions, strategies and supports to address that behavior.”

According to the document, “Interventions for Chronic Behavior Problems” from NICHCY ([www.nichcy.org](http://www.nichcy.org)), **“Punishing, threatening, blaming and criticizing students as a way of influencing their behavior only works in the short term.** What research shows is that effective teachers tend to rely instead on proactive strategies for preventing behavior problems. They reinforce appropriate behavior and teach social problem solving.”

**According to the document, “Functional Behavioral Assessment and**

**Positive Interventions: What Parents Need to Know,” from Pacer an effective behavior intervention plan is used to teach or reinforce**

Behavioral Basics—JoAnn Collins

**positive behaviors. This is not a plan to punish, but to try and teach appropriate behaviors!**

The document, “Addressing Student Problem Behavior Part III” states that: “Intervention plans and strategies emphasizing skills students need in order to behave in a more appropriate manner, or plans providing motivation to conform to required standards, will be more effective than plans that simply serve to *control* behavior. Interventions based upon *control* often fail to generalize and many times they serve only to suppress behavior—resulting in a child seeking to meet un-addressable needs in alternative, usually equally inappropriate ways. On the other hand, proactive positive intervention plans that teach new ways of behaving will address both the source of the problem, by serving the same function, and the problem itself.”

Addressing Student Problem Behavior Parts I, II and III can be downloaded at <http://cecp.air.org>.

The document also states that: “Support can be given by special education personnel, such as counselors, school psychologist, etc. Other people who may also provide support are:

\*Peers who may provide academic or behavioral support through tutoring .

. .thereby fulfilling the child’s need for attention in appropriate ways;

\*Families, who may provide support by setting up a homework center in their home and developing homework schedule;

\*Teachers who may provide both academic supports and curricular modifications to address and decrease a child’s need to avoid academically challenging situations; and

\*Language therapists who are able to increase a child’s expressive and receptive language skills, thereby providing the child with alternative ways to respond to any situation.”

The above document also states that: “The behavioral intervention plan should include”:

- Strategies including positive behavioral interventions, strategies, and supports;
- Program modifications (or curriculum changes); and
- Supplementary aids and services that may be required to address the problem behavior.”

**For students with chronically disruptive behavior teachers will often use point or token systems, time out, contingent reinforcement and response cost (children with moderate to severe disabilities usually respond well to token systems.**

A document by Laura A. Riffel, PhD. entitled, “Positive Intervention and effective strategies (PIES 2) How to make Lemons into Lemon Meringue Pie,” has a lot of good information. **This information includes: discussion on social skills training, token systems, aggressive behavior, sensory integration, academic interventions and much more. She even discusses the different functions of behavior and how to deal with them! This can be viewed (it is extremely long, so you may not want to print it all) at [www.behaviordoctor.org](http://www.behaviordoctor.org). It contains a lot of useful and practical information!**

**A behavior intervention plan should be positive and include these things:**

- Behavior hypothesis statements—this should include a description of the behavior, triggers or antecedents to the behavior and the purpose of the problem behavior.
- Prevention strategies that will be used to decrease the chance that a child will have negative behavior.
- Strategies to teach children to deal with setting events such as the physical arrangement of the classroom, seating arrangements or sequence of academic instruction.

- Strategies to teach more acceptable replacement behaviors that serve the same function as the inappropriate behavior. This will address any skill deficits that your child has.
- Strategies to address any performance deficit that your child has. The student may have the skill necessary to perform the behavior but Behavioral Basics—JoAnn Collins does not consistently use them. In that case, the intervention plan should include techniques, strategies and supports designed to increase the student's use of the behavior.
- Changes to the classroom curriculum or instructional strategies, if needed. Some children with disabilities act out when they are unable to do academics.
- Any needed changes to the classroom or other environments. Can the child be placed up front for less distraction, etc?
- How the antecedent will be manipulated to get the desired behavior. In other words what can be changed in the environment before the behavior occurs. For behavior #1 with Michael, instead of being asked to read out loud or by himself, he could be allowed to work with a peer or classroom assistant.
- How the consequences will be manipulated to get the desired behavior.
- How will school personnel respond to negative behaviors that will not maintain the behavior?
- Interventions that offer reinforcement for appropriate behavior. This will encourage the child to use their new skills and appropriate behavior.
- Long term strategies that will help the child and family during the child's life.

**(JoAnn's Comment: You should ask that a daily behavior sheet**

**go home with your child every day. This sheet should include the date, goals worked on, tokens earned, positive behavioral rewards earned, and how well the child did that day. Keep copies of the sheets, in case a dispute develops later between yourself and school personnel. The sheet can be developed on one page and copies made by the teacher. Put a comment section, but limit the comments to positive only (otherwise the person filling out the sheet may fill it with negatives, which does not help**

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**increase positive behavior). This sheet will let you know how your child is doing on a daily basis. That way if the behavior escalates, you will know and be able to get involved as quick as possible. The sheet will also tell you if educators are following the positive behavioral plan. Be sure that the sheets are each dated.**

**Research has shown that the number one problem with behavior plans is the lack of consistency. Make sure that any positive behavior plan developed for your child is used on a consistent basis.**

**Strategies for dealing with attention seeking behavior** (This information taken from “Addressing Student Problem Behavior—Part III”):

“Most teachers can attest to the fact that students sometimes use inappropriate or problem behavior to get the attention of their teacher or peers. These behaviors usually stem from the notion that they are not likely to get attention any other way.

An effective intervention plan for attention seeking behavior combines strategies to:

- Keep the student from engaging in the inappropriate behavior;
- Teach replacement behavior;
- Ensure that the student gets enough opportunity to engage in the replacement behavior (request assistance if needed);
- Offer opportunities for the student to be reinforced for the new behavior. For the reinforcement to work it has to be easier to get and be a better pay off from the problem behavior.

### Strategies for dealing with escape motivated behavior.

Inappropriate behavior often stems from a child's need to either escape or avoid an unpleasant task or situation, or to escape to something such as a desired activity or location.

Behavior that is used to avoid or escape a difficult academic task might be addressed by teaching the student to use a socially acceptable escape behavior. (e.g., asking for help, which must be available once the student asks for it). **If the student is unable to complete the assignments because he or she cannot do it, the original assignment should be replaced with another assignment that is more appropriate. (JoAnn's Comment: The child should also receive increased instruction in the difficult academic task, or curriculum should be changed.)**

Other interventions include:

1. Placing some kind of demand on the student (e.g., using the correct behavior to ask for help) when facing a frustrating task or difficult situation.
2. Using signal responses (e.g., the teacher signals the student to use a predetermined alternative behavior); and
3. Making curricular accommodations or instructional modifications to boost the child's interest and/or ability to successfully complete the assignment.

The time outs that are often used for escape motivated behaviors might actually be reinforcing the negative behavior, because it allows the child to avoid the situation. Time out is, therefore, likely to increase rather than decrease the inappropriate behavior."

### Behavioral intervention strategies that can be used for children with behavioral difficulties:

From the document from the PACERS organization ([www.pacers.org](http://www.pacers.org)), "Functional Behavioral Assessment and Positive Interventions: What Parents Need to Know," are positive behavioral strategies:

\* Stop, relax and think teaches children how to think about the problem they are having and find a solution. Children learn these steps:

- a. Define the problem.
  - b. Decide who “owns” the problem.
  - c. Think of as many solutions as possible to solve the problem.
    - a. Select a solution to try.
    - b. Use the solution.
    - c. Evaluate its success.
- Planned ignoring is useful in stopping behaviors that are annoying.
  - Preventive cuing lets a child know when he or she is doing something that is not acceptable. Teachers can frown, shake their head or make eye contact to let the child know he or she needs to pay attention or to stop problem behaviors.
  - Proximity Control means that a teacher moves closer to the child in a gentle way.
  - Touch Control means touch that is not resisted and is a non verbal guided intervention. It is used to direct a student toward positive behavior.
  - Humor directed either at the teacher or the situation—never at the child—can defuse tensions as well as to redirect children.
  - Discipline privately.
  - Positive phrasing lets children know the positive results for using appropriate behaviors.
  - Behavior shaping rewards small gains and reinforces the gains as

they occur.

- Clear routines and expectations let children know what comes next in their school day, reducing anxiety or fear. **(JoAnn's Comment: The child could be given a visual daily schedule, extremely helpful for children with autism or other disabilities.)**
- For children who lack intrinsic motivators (motivators that come from inside themselves) they should be given extrinsic (external) motivators. If the child cannot see the value in behaving appropriately, it may be necessary to reinforce positive behaviors with some type of extrinsic reward, such as food, tokens, free time, etc.

I recently found a wonderful document from the Office of Special Education Programs (In the Department of Education in Washington) entitled “Teaching Children with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder: Instructional Strategies and Practices—2008. This document can be found at:

<http://www.ed.gov/rschstat/research/pubs/adhd/adhd-teaching-2008.pdf>.

While these behavioral strategies are specifically for children with ADHD, I believe that they would be helpful for children with other disabilities also.

This document recommends the following behavior intervention strategies (some were similar to above but were not repeated):

- **Define the appropriate behavior while giving praise.** Praise should be specific for the positive behavior displayed by the student. The comments should focus on what the student did right and should include exactly what parts of the students behavior was desirable.
- **Give praise immediately.** The sooner the approval is given regarding appropriate behavior, the more likely the student will repeat it.
- **Be consistent and sincere with praise.** Appropriate behavior should receive consistent praise. Consistency among teachers with respect to desired behavior is important in order to avoid confusion on the part of students with ADHD.

- Remove nuisance items. Teachers often find that certain objects (such as rubber bands and toys) distract the attention of students with ADHD in the classroom. The removal of nuisance items is most effective after the student has been given the choice of putting it away immediately and then fails to do so.
- Provide calming manipulative's. While some toys and other objects can be distracting, some children with ADHD can benefit from having access to objects that can be manipulated quietly.
- Allow for escape valve outlets. Permitting students with ADHD to leave class for a moment, perhaps on an errand, can be an effective means of settling them down and allowing them to return to the room ready to concentrate.
- Hand gestures. Use hand signals to communicate privately with a child.”
- Tangible rewards. Use tangible rewards to reinforce appropriate behavior. These rewards can include stickers, or privileges. Children should be involved in choosing the reward, to make it more likely to work.
- Token economy system. Use token economy systems to motivate a child to achieve a goal identified in a behavioral contract (or plan). A child could earn points for each homework assignment completed on time or they could also lose points for each homework assignment not completed on time. After earning a specified number of points, the student receives a tangible reward.
- Self Management systems. Train students to monitor and evaluate their own behavior without constant feedback from the teacher. In a typical self management system, the teacher identifies behaviors that will be managed by a student and provides a written rating scale that includes the performance criteria for each rating. The teacher and student separately rate student behavior during an activity and compare ratings.

- Behavioral contracts and management plans. Identify specific academic or behavioral goals for the child, along with behavior that needs to change and strategies for responding to inappropriate behavior.

Helpful guidelines for selecting specific intervention options:

1. Which intervention meets the function of the behavior?
2. Which intervention is appropriate keeping in mind the child's need and current level of performance.
3. Which intervention teaches the target or positive behavior?
4. Which intervention is most likely to positively change the child's behavior quickly and easily?
5. Which intervention is most likely to be acceptable to the child?

**9. Step 5: Using the Hypothesis from the FBA, to Develop Positive Behavioral Supports/Plan, for the Child.**

Below is a Positive Behavioral Intervention Plan Planning Form which will walk you through the developing of an effective positive behavioral plan! It is the most comprehensive free form that I have ever seen! This plan was downloaded for free at the Center for Effective Collaboration and Practice in the document, "Addressing Student Problem Behavior—Part III." The Web address is <http://cecp.org>.

**To Save space I have put the form close together. A blank form with spaces is in Appendix B. of this E book.**

**POSITIVE BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTION PLAN  
PLANNING FORM**

*IEP teams can use this form to guide them through the process of developing the Positive Behavioral Intervention Plan.*

Student \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

Sex \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Case Manager \_\_\_\_\_

Date(s) \_\_\_\_\_

**Reason for intervention plan:**

Participants (specify names):

- ( ) student \_\_\_\_\_
- ( ) special education administrator \_\_\_\_\_
- ( ) family member \_\_\_\_\_
- ( ) general education administrator \_\_\_\_\_
- ( ) special educator \_\_\_\_\_
- ( ) school psychologist \_\_\_\_\_
- ( ) general educator \_\_\_\_\_
- ( ) other agency personnel \_\_\_\_\_
- ( ) peer(s) \_\_\_\_\_
- ( ) other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**Fact Finding:**

- 1) **General learning environment:** Describe the student's school class schedule, including any special programs or services.
- 2) **Problem behavior:** Define the problem behavior(s) in observable, measurable, and countable terms (i.e., topography, event, duration, seriousness, and/or intensity). Include several examples of the behavior.
- 3) **Setting events:** Describe important things that are happening in the student's life that may be causing the behavior(s) of concern. B-2
- 4) **Review existing data:** Summarize previously collected information (records review, interviews, observations, and test results) relevant to the behavior(s). Attach additional sheets if necessary.

**Possible Explanations:**

- 5) Identify likely antecedents (precipitating events) to the behavior(s).
- 6) Identify likely consequences that may be maintaining the behavior(s).
- 7) Identify and describe any academic or environmental context(s) in which the problem behavior(s) does not occur.

**Validation:**

8) **Functional assessment:** Do you already have enough information to believe that the possible explanations are sufficient to plan an intervention?

a) If yes, go to Step 9, if no, then what additional data collection is necessary ( ) Review of IEP goals and objectives

- ( ) Review of medical records
- ( ) Review of previous intervention plans
- ( ) Review of incident reports
- ( ) ABC (across time and situations)
- ( ) Motivational analysis
- ( ) Ecological analysis
- ( ) Curricular analysis
- ( ) Scatter plot
- ( ) Parent questionnaire/interview
- ( ) Student questionnaire/interview
- ( ) Teacher questionnaire/interview (specify who)

( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Other(explain)

b) Summarize data. Attach additional sheets if necessary. B-3 **Category Access or Avoid**

**Planning:**

9) **Formulate hypothesis statement:** Using the table below, determine why the student engages in problem behavior(s), whether the behavior(s) serves single or multiple functions, and what to do about the behavior(s).

	<u>Internal</u>	<u>External</u>
--	-----------------	-----------------

Obtain Something

Avoid Something

10) **Current level of performance:** Describe problem behavior(s) in a way the team will recognize onset and conclusion of behavior.

11) Describe replacement behavior(s) that are likely to serve the same function as the behavior(s) identified in Step 9. **(New Acceptable**

**Behaviors to be taught)**

12) Determine changes that will be made to the learning environment, child's curriculum or instructional strategies, to help decrease the child's behavior (how you will deal with skill deficit).

**Measurement procedures for problem behavior(s) and replacement behavior(s):**

a) Describe how (e.g., permanent products, event recording, scatter plot), when, and where student behavior(s) will be measured.

b) Summarize data by specifying which problem behavior(s) and replacement behavior(s) will be targets for intervention.

**13) Behavioral intervention plan:**

a) Specify goals and objectives (conditions, criteria for acceptable performance) for teaching the replacement behavior(s). B-4

b) Specify instructional strategies that will be used to teach the replacement behavior(s).

c) Specify strategies that will be used to decrease problem behavior(s) and increase replacement behavior(s). (Positive behavior must be reinforced so that the child will continue the positive behavior)!

d) Identify any changes in the physical environment needed to prevent problem behavior(s) and to promote desired (replacement) behavior(s), if necessary.

e) Specify extent to which intervention plan will be implemented in various settings; specify settings and persons responsible for implementation of plan.

**14) Evaluation plan and schedule:** Describe the plan and timetable to evaluate effectiveness of the intervention plan

a. Describe how, when, where, and how often the problem behavior(s) will be measured.

b. Specify persons or settings involved in the behavior, be specific.

c) Specify a plan for crisis/emergency intervention, if necessary.

d) Determine schedule to review/modify the intervention plan, as needed. Include dates and criteria for changing/fading the plan.

15) Describe plan and timetable to monitor the degree to which the plan is being implemented

In our example about Michael, below is the hypothesis reached about his behavior.

**Hypothesis**

Behavior #1: a. When Michael is asked to read by himself or out loud to the class; b. He screams and throws his books on the floor; and c. To avoid having to read.

**Hypothesis**

Behavior #2: a. When Michael is in an unstructured setting in the gym lunch or recess with other children; b. He screams and yells; and c. To get the teacher to come over and to avoid being with other children. Michael gets to sit on the bleachers with the teacher.

Appendix B has a blank Positive Behavioral Intervention Form

Below is the example of Michael and the Positive Behavioral Intervention Form filled out with all of the information known, as well as a positive behavioral plan developed.

**Student:** Michael Jones                      **Age:** 7 years                      **Sex:** Male

**Teacher(s) Regular Education:** Mrs. Smith

**Special Education Miss Parker:** Grade 2<sup>nd</sup>

**Case Manager:** Miss Parker                      **Date(s):** February 28, 2008

**Reason for intervention plan:** Michael’s behaviors have seemed to worsen, to the point that he is throwing books in class, when asked to read, and continuously screaming in unstructured time. These behaviors are interfering with his education and with his socialization with his age appropriate peers.

**Participants (specify names):**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> student                                 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> special education administrator Mr. Brown |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> family member Mary Jones     | <input type="checkbox"/> general education administrator                      |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> special educator Miss Parker | <input type="checkbox"/> school psychologist                                  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> general educator Mrs. Smith  | <input type="checkbox"/> other agency personnel                               |

- ( ) peer(s)
- ( ) other (specify)

---

**Fact Finding:**

1) General learning environment: Describe the student's school class schedule, including any special programs or services.

**Michael is placed in a regular education 2<sup>nd</sup> grade classroom with Mrs. Smith for most of the school day. Michael receives 2 hours per day of pullout special education services as well as 1 hour per week of Speech and 1 hour per week of Occupational therapy.**

2) Problem behavior: Define the problem behavior(s) in observable, measurable, and countable terms (i.e., topography, event, duration, seriousness, and/or intensity). Include several examples of the behavior.

**Michael has 2 specific behaviors:**

**Behavior #1 is that Michael screams and throws his books when asked to read out loud to his class or to read by himself. The intensity can be a #4-5 with concern that another student may get injured due to the books being thrown.**

**Behavior #2 is that Michael will continuously yell at unstructured time, until the teacher comes over to him. This behavior is more annoying than dangerous.**

3) Setting events: Describe important things that are happening in the student's life that may be causing the behavior(s) of concern.

**B-2 In behavior #1 Michael is in his regular education or special education class doing reading which is difficult for him because he is at least 1 year behind in reading to his grade appropriate peers.**

**Behavior #2 Michael is in unstructured time (before school, lunch, recess) with an entire gym or cafeteria full of other children. These environments become loud and chaotic which upsets Michael.**

4) Review existing data: Summarize previously collected information

(records review, interviews, observations, and test results) relevant to the behavior(s). Attach additional sheets if necessary. **The ABC's of both behaviors and the Functional Matrix's of both behaviors are attached. Three data sources used: Teacher, School Psychologist, and Social Worker.**

### **Possible Explanations:**

5) Identify likely antecedents (precipitating events) to the behavior(s).  
**From the ABC of behavior #1 the antecedent is that Michael is asked by his regular or special education teacher to read to the class or to read by himself.**

**From the ABC of behavior #2 Michael is in the gym or cafeteria with a lot of other children when he begins screaming continuously. This is unstructured time in a loud and chaotic gym or cafeteria.**

6) Identify likely consequences that may be maintaining the behavior(s).  
**For behavior #1 Michael gets to avoid reading if he screams and throws his books. This may be encouraging the behavior to continue.**

**For behavior #2 Michael gets attention from the teacher and also gets to sit on the bleachers for the rest of the time, and avoid the other children. This may be encouraging the behavior to continue.**

7) Identify and describe any academic or environmental context(s) in which the problem behavior(s) does not occur.

**For behavior #1 the behavior does not occur if someone else is doing the reading, peers, the teacher or the paraprofessional in his special education class.**

**For behavior #2 the behavior does not occur when in smaller settings with fewer children, even if the setting is unstructured.**

### **Validation:**

8) Functional assessment: Do you already have enough information to believe that the possible explanations are sufficient to plan an intervention?

**Yes, function matrix for both behaviors attached to this plan.**

b) Summarize data. Attach additional sheets if necessary. B-3

**The function matrix for behavior #1 shows that Michael is doing this behavior because he is trying to avoid having to read out loud to his class or read to himself. It may also be about attention from his teacher. (Category-Avoid)**

**The function matrix for behavior #2 shows that Michael is doing this behavior for two reasons; one is to get attention from the teacher and two is to get away from the other children and sit on the bleachers. (Category-Access-Avoid)**

**Planning:**

9) Formulate hypothesis statement: Using the table below, determine why the student engages in problem behavior(s), whether the behavior(s) serves single or multiple functions, and what to do about the behavior(s).

**Behavior #1:**

<u>Internal</u>	<u>External</u>
Obtain (Access) something	Maybe--attention
Avoid Something	Yes—avoid reading

**Behavior #2:**

<u>Internal</u>	<u>External</u>
Obtain Something	Yes--attention
Avoid Something	Yes—get away from children

**Hypothesis for Behavior #1—Michael is doing this behavior because he wants to avoid having to read to his class or read to himself, because he is unable to do the work. This behavior could be attention seeking, but Michael does not do this behavior any other time of day.**

**Hypothesis for Behavior #2—Michael is doing this behavior so that he can access teacher attention and get away from the other children.**

10) Current level of performance: Describe problem behavior(s) in a way the team will recognize onset and conclusion of behavior.

**Behavior #1 onset Michael is asked to read out loud or by himself, then he throws books and screams. Usually has to sit in corner or in principal's office when he does this.**

**Behavior #2 onset Michael is in large group of children in an unstructured setting when he starts screaming continuously. Stops when teacher has him come and sit on the bleachers with her.**

11) Describe replacement behavior(s) that are likely to serve the same function as the behavior(s) identified in Step 9. (New acceptable behaviors to be taught).

**Behavior #1 replacement behavior to be taught will be how to get help from the teacher or paraprofessional without screaming, perhaps raising a certain color cardboard shape in the air. Michael should also be taught to seek help from a peer, teacher or paraprofessional when reading becomes difficult.**

**Behavior #2 replacement behavior to be taught will be how to access attention by peers and teacher, without misbehaving. Michael will also be taught how to ask to leave a situation that he cannot handle (self monitoring).**

12) **(JoAnn's Comment)** Determine changes that will be made to the learning environment, child's curriculum or instructional strategies, to help decrease the child's behavior (how you will deal with skill deficit).

**For behavior #1: Michael will be allowed to do all reading assignments with a peer, in his regular education class and with a paraprofessional in his special education class.**

**Michael will receive one extra hour per day in special education receiving instruction on reading (Dealing with skill deficit). The curriculum will be changed to a multi sensory reading program that is**

**Orton-Gillingham based. The teacher or professional used will be trained in the Reading program according to the developers instructions. The IEP team will determine which reading curriculum will be used, with parental input. The Reading Program instruction will be given with Fidelity based on the developer's instructions.**

**For behavior #2: Michael will be allowed to go to the special education classroom before school, lunchtime and recess. Michael will also start attending a social group in the special education classroom that meets twice a week for 1 hour at a time. This social group will be lead by an experienced social worker, who is available at other times if Michael needs to talk to someone or roll play a social situation. The social group is used to teach age appropriate behavior and includes roll playing a lot of different social situations. Michael will work on learning to ask for help reading without screaming, and learn how to deal with a situation that becomes overwhelming for him**

**13. Measurement procedures for problem behavior(s) and replacement behavior(s): a. Describe how (e.g., permanent products, event recording, scatte plot), when, and where students behavior(s) will be measured.**

**Behavior #1: For first and second week, after the intervention plan begins, chart incidents where replacement behavior is used instead of problem behavior every 2 weeks following until behavior is gone.**

**Behavior #2: For first and second week after intervention plan begins, chart incidents where replacement behavior is used instead of problem behavior every 2 weeks following until behavior is gone.**

b) Summarize data by specifying which problem behavior(s) and replacement behavior(s) will be targets for intervention.

**Both behaviors will have replacement behaviors taught and will have interventions developed for them.**

13) Behavioral intervention plan:

a) Specify goals and objectives (conditions, criteria for acceptable performance) for teaching the replacement behavior(s).

**B-4**

**Goals for Behavior #1: Michael will do reading assignments in his regular education class with a peer, without screaming or throwing books 100% of the time.**

**Michael will do reading assignments in his special education class with a paraprofessional, without screaming or throwing books 100% of the time.**

**Michael will ask for help by raising a certain color cardboard shape in the air, from the teacher or paraprofessional, if he is having difficulty with reading or other academic difficulties**

**Goals for Behavior #2: Michael will spend before school, lunch and recess in the special education classroom without screaming 100% of the time.**

**Michael will learn to ask to leave a situation that becomes too overwhelming for him, without screaming 100% of the time.**

- a) Specify instructional strategies that will be used to teach replacement behavior(s).

**Social groups to include social stories will be used to teach Michael the replacement behaviors. The social group is held in the special education classroom, which will require that Michael be pulled out of his regular education class 2 times a week for 1 hour each time.**

- c) Specify strategies that will be used to decrease problem behavior(s) and increase replacement behavior(s). (Positive behavior must be reinforced so that the child will continue the positive behavior)!

**Behavior #1: Use Strategy #1, which is stop, relax and think (this can be used in addition to the social group training). Strategy #3 Preventive Cuing, Strategy #4 Proximity Control, #7 Discipline privately, #8 Positive Phrasing \*9 is Behavior shaping rewards; which are usually very effective for young children, # 10 Clear routines and expectations, and possibly #11 token system.**

**A token system could be used to reinforce the use of the positive replacement behavior.**

**Behavior #2: Use strategy #1 which is stop, relax and think, strategy #3 Preventive Cuing, #4 Proximity Control, #5 Touch Control, #6 Humor may work in this situation as long as the humor is not directed at the child, #8 Positive Phrasing, #9 Behavior Shaping, #10 Clear routine and expectations, and #11 token system. A token system could be used to reinforce the use of the positive replacement behavior.**

d) Identify any changes in the physical environment needed to prevent problem behavior(s) and to promote desired (replacement) behavior(s), if necessary.

**For behavior #2 Michael will be allowed to go to the special education classroom before school, lunch time and recess time. The class is smaller than the gym and cafeteria and has a lot less children.**

e) Specify extent to which intervention plan will be implemented in various settings; specify settings and persons responsible for implementation of plan.

**Behavior #1 will be addressed in Michael's regular and special education classroom by Mrs. Smith and Miss Parker.**

**Behavior #2 will be addressed in Michael's special education classroom by Miss Parker.**

14) Evaluation plan and schedule: Describe the plan and timetable to evaluate effectiveness of the intervention plan.

a) Describe how, when, where, and how often the problem behavior(s) will be measured.

**Behavior #1 will be measured by using a chart for the general education class and the special education class two weeks after the intervention begins, to see if the behavior persists then every 2 weeks after that until the behavior is gone.**

**Behavior #2 will be measured by using a chart in the special education class, two weeks after the intervention begins, to see if the behavior continues. Then every 2 weeks after that until the behavior is gone.**

b) Specify persons and settings involved. **Both teacher's regular education and special education will measure the behavior.**

c) Specify a plan for crisis/emergency intervention, if necessary. **The IEP team does not believe that a crisis plan is needed at this time. Parent has given letter to school stating that she is not giving permission for Restraint or Seclusion to be used on her child. Any incidence that occurs that could possibly lead to the use of R and S will be brought to the mothers attention, so that appropriate strategies can be developed.**

d) Determine schedule to review/modify the intervention plan, as needed. Include dates and criteria for changing/fading the plan. **The IEP team will meet in 30 days to review Michael's progress and determine if the behavior plan needs to be modified.**

15) Describe plan and timetable to monitor the degree to which the plan is being implemented.

**A daily behavior sheet will be sent home with Michael that will include the goals written for both of the behaviors. This way the mother will be able to see if the plan is being carried out in a consistent manner, if the positive replacement behaviors are being appropriately reinforced, and if the negative behavior is decreasing.**

The IEP team met after 30 days and Michael's behavior was much improved. The screaming behavior that Michael had is totally gone, because he is not in the gym or cafeteria with a lot of other children. He is still a little frustrated with Reading, but he is now receiving appropriate instruction. He is receiving extra reading every day, using a Multi Sensory Reading Program, with instruction from a teacher that is certified in the instruction. Michael is making progress in his reading, and his mother is very pleased. The behavioral sheets have been very successful in helping to keep his mother up to date on his behavior. She has implemented some positive rewards at home for his positive school behavior; which is reinforcing the positive things that he is doing at school.

**Advocacy Tip: Use the above forms or forms listed below to work with special education personnel to develop a positive behavioral plan for your child. Bring copies of the forms to your child’s IEP meeting.**

Resources and forms:

There are many additional resources available to help parents and special education personnel develop behavior plans. Here are a few of them:

- Book—Behavioral Intervention for Young Children With Autism Edited by Catherine Maurice.
- Book—Making a difference; Behavioral Intervention for Autism Edited by Catherine Maurice.
- Positive Behavior Support—Critical Articles on Improving Practice for Individuals with Severe Disabilities Edited by Linda M. Bambara, Glen Dunlap, Ilene S. Schwartz.
- Practical Ideas That Really Work for Students with Disruptive, Defiant or Difficult Behaviors.
- BIP-3: Behavioral Intervention Planning-Third edition by Kathleen  
Behavioral Basics—JoAnn Collins
- McConnell can be purchased as a Kit. The kit contains a manual and copies of forms for Reasons and review, Functional Behavioral Assessment, Behavioral Intervention Plan, and Manifestation Determination Review.
- The above resource comes in a Computer version also. If you purchase this computer program, the forms can be downloaded and used for your child, and would not have to be ordered.

All of these resources can be purchased at [www.proedinc.com](http://www.proedinc.com) and their phone number is: 800-897-3202.

- More resources: Center on Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports can be found at the Web address: <http://www.pbis.org/main.htm>.

This organization is a National Technical Assistance center that is funded by the Office of Special Education Program.

- National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities (NICHCY) has information for parents on a lot of different subjects, including behavior/discipline. Their Web site is [www.nichcy.org](http://www.nichcy.org)
- Behavioral Intervention Plan Forms and other information can be found in the document “New Improved PIES 2 (Positive Interventions and Effective Strategies) on the Website: [www.behaviordocor.org](http://www.behaviordocor.org). Forms can be downloaded free of charge.
- Document-“Reducing Behavior Problems in the Elementary School Classroom” by the What Works Clearinghouse at: [http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc?pdf/practiceguides/behavior\\_pg\\_092308.pdf](http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc?pdf/practiceguides/behavior_pg_092308.pdf)
- Document-“Classroom Behavior Report Card Resource Book” by Jim Wright can be found at: <http://www.interventioncentral.org>
- The IEP team must discuss how they are going to monitor whether the behavioral intervention plan is consistently being followed. The team can specify the various components of the positive behavioral plan, and use a checklist to determine if the plan is being implemented. Also, you can ask that the components be placed on your child’s daily behavioral sheet that comes home with them, so you can monitor compliance.

### Few Comments

- **It is important that any positive behavioral plan that is developed be used with consistency, and across all school environments.**
- **Special education personnel must also understand that a child with disabilities, may not be able to verbalize why they are misbehaving. In my experience many special education personnel would like to talk to the child after the behavior; which in most cases may escalate the behavior, and make the behavior**

worse.

- **The behavioral plan is to be used to increase the child's positive school behavior, while decreasing the negative behavior. This is the reason why the function of the behavior is important to know.**

### **11. Step 6: Evaluate Whether the Positive Behavior Plan is Working, to Decrease Negative Behavior and see if Changes are Needed**

Behavior plans must be evaluated occasionally to determine if they continue to be effective. The behavior plan may need to be adjusted as the child's needs change. Laura Riffel PhD states that the behavior plan process is dynamic; it goes between the functional behavioral assessments to the positive behavioral interventions, and then back again, if the behavior plan requires adjustments. *This information was used with permission of Dr. Riffel.*

The IEP team must continue to measure the behavior once the behavioral intervention plan is in place to determine if it is working to decrease the child's negative behavior. This is done by occasional progress checks to monitor and see if the behavior has decreased, increased or not changed at all. Modify the plan if:

- The child has reached the behavioral goals and objectives with new goals and objectives need to be determined.
- The situation has changed and the interventions no longer address the current needs of the child.
- It becomes apparent that the positive behavioral plan is not producing positive changes in the child's behavior.

### How to maintain positive changes in child's behavior in the long term:

The best way to assure maintenance of behavior change in the long term is to be sure that interventions teach the child a set of skills. Many children with disabilities have below age level social skills, so it is important that they be taught appropriate behavior. To do this the IEP team must include

strategies in the positive behavioral plan to teach the student in such a way that promotes the maintenance of the skills as well as the generalization of the skills. The generalization means that the child will use the appropriate behavior in other settings over their life.

Another way to promote long lasting behavior change is to use strategies based on “cognitive mediation; “ which is thinking about a situation before acting, and self management.

Children should be taught:

- Self monitoring—count the frequency or duration of his/her own behavior;
- Self evaluating—compare the changes in behavior to a certain standard to see if he/she is making progress; and
- Self reinforcing—gives rewards when the behavior has reached certain criteria.

This information is taken from Addressing Student Problem Behavior Part III-which you can find at <http://cecp.air.org>.

## **12. Use of Restraints in School Districts**

I am including this section because it is a big problem for children and parents!!

According to many different sources the definitions of restraint and seclusion are:

A **restraint** is--

(A) Any manual method, physical or mechanical device, material, or equipment that immobilizes or reduces the ability of [an individual]<sup>2</sup>

(C) A restraint does not include devices, such as orthopedically prescribed devices, surgical dressings or bandages, protective helmets, or other methods that involve the physical holding of [an individual] for the purpose of conducting routine physical examinations or tests, or to protect the

[individual] from falling out of bed, or to permit the [individual] to participate in activities without the risk of physical harm (this does not include a physical escort) to move his or her arms, legs, body, or head freely; or (B) A drug or medication when it is used as a restriction to manage the [individual's] behavior or restrict the [individual's] freedom of movement and is not a standard treatment or dosage for the [individual's] condition.

**Seclusion is –**

The involuntary confinement of [an individual] alone in a room or area from which the [individual] is physically prevented from leaving. Seclusion may only be used for the management of violent or self-destructive behavior.

The involuntary confinement of [an individual] alone in a room or area from which the [individual] is physically prevented from leaving. Seclusion may only be used for the management of violent or self-destructive behavior.

“Seclusion” and “time-out” are not the same. Seclusion is placing a student alone in a room or area and preventing the student from leaving that area. However, educators have used the term “time-out” to describe a variety of interventions aimed at calming a student down, removing a student from the group, and engaging a student in problem solving or self reflection. Time-out can include placing a student in an area of the classroom where the student can observe classroom instruction, but cannot participate. It can also involve requiring the student to go to a separate designated area where the student cannot visually observe or hear what is happening in the classroom, but from which the student is not physically prevented from leaving, e.g. facing the wall, sitting with their head on their desk, standing in the hallway, or going to the principal's office.

Behavioral Basics—JoAnn Collins

According to all of the information, that I have read, physical restraints 1 and 3 should only be used on an emergency basis. and as a last resort. Physical restraints should only be used to prevent a child with a disability from hurting themselves or others.

The use of medication for children with disabilities to improve behavior is an individual choice that should be made with a qualified physician. IDEA 2004 added a section that states that special education personnel cannot

require you to give your child medication in order for them to attend school. This puts the decision on medication back where it should be, with parents and trained physicians.

A wonderful document entitled School is Not Supposed to Hurt put out by the National Disability Rights Network has a lot of wonderful information and resources for parents. You can download this document at: <http://www.napas.org/sr/SR-Report.pdf>

The problem with restraints are recognized by certain agencies:

The Center for Mental Health Services of the US Department of Health has released a report about restraint or seclusion. The use of these two practices have resulted in deaths and serious injury at about 150 per year.

The Government Accountability Office has also noted that restraint or seclusion can be dangerous to individuals in treatment settings.

**Any special education personnel using physical restraint needs to receive extensive comprehensive training. Call your state board of education special education department and check on three things:**

- Check and see if there are any laws in your state regulating restraints being used in school districts. Many states are passing laws about use of restraints in schools, because many children have been severely injured or killed because of misuse of restraints.
- Check with your state board of education and see if certification is required for special education personnel, who use restraints.
- Check on available training for special education personnel in the use of restraints (You could bring both of these issues up at your child's IEP meeting, certification and training).

Parents should ask that they be notified immediately, after their child has been restrained. While some accreditation requirement agencies like the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations or the National Association of Psychiatric Treatment centers for children have

requirements for use of restraints, this is not true of school districts. This makes school districts vulnerable to misunderstanding and abuse.

Check and see if your state has a policy preventing the use of corporal punishment. While the issues are different, several law suits have been filed due to this issue.

**According to the document, “Physical Restraint,” it states: “If using of these procedures can be anticipated for specific children, they should be done with parent permission, continued close monitoring and the circumstances for use are included in the students IEP, behavioral intervention plan . . .”.**

The Education Law Resource Center has a book entitled, Preventing Physical Restraints in Schools: A Guide for Parents, Educators & Professionals. This book can be purchased at the website: [www.edlawrc.com/physical\\_restraints.htm](http://www.edlawrc.com/physical_restraints.htm)

It contains a lot of useful information including: an explanation of physical restrains and “aversives”, a discussion of health and safety risks of using physical restraints, steps to take to help reduce risks, resources to help address student behavior and develop programs that eliminate or reduce the need to use physical restraints, discussion of legal requirements for using physical restraints in schools, an explanation of the training requirements for school staff that perform the restraints and much more.

I found a website called ([www.bridges4children.com](http://www.bridges4children.com)) that has a down loadable letter that you can use to send to your school district. This letter lets special education personnel know that they do not have your permission to use restraint on your child.

**Advocacy Tip: Download the letter, add your child’s information and send it to special education personnel in your school district. The letter can be downloaded at this Web address:**

<http://www.bridges4kids.org/IEP/NoRestraintLetter.html>.

The document entitled “School is Not Supposed to Hurt” which is mentioned above, includes a lot of information about the best practice of

using positive behavioral supports, to decrease the use of restraints and seclusion on children. One study found a 59% decrease of use of restraints and seclusion when positive behavioral supports were used with all children, not just those with disabilities.

In 2009 the US Government Accounting Office (GAO) held legislative hearings on the subject of Restraint and Seclusion, and developed a report on the subject. The GAO's report found several things:

1. Congressional personnel uncovered widespread abuse of restraints, to discipline children in special education in US schools.
2. Serious problems with the way that children with disabilities are being treated in public schools, including the use of prone restraints, which can be deadly.
3. Many school personnel that have injured or caused the death of a child in school, due to the use of restraints, are still working in school settings.
4. What frustrates experts the most is that efforts to force unruly children to comply by use of r and s, do not actually work!

An example of a school (Centennial School at Lehigh University) was given where the school personnel were able to decrease the use of R & S from 1000 documented cases to 0 documented cases by teaching children new skills, giving space to the children when upset, and providing positive behavioral supports as needed.

Many parent and advocacy groups are fighting this fight for children with disabilities. The Alliance for the Prevention of Restraint, Aversive Interventions and Seclusion (APRAIS) is trying to pass federal legislation to reduce and prevent restraint and seclusion in all schools—public and private.

From their Website: **Who We Are The Alliance to Prevent Restraint, Aversive Interventions and Seclusion (APRAIS) was established in 2004 by leading education, research and advocacy organizations to protect children with significant disabilities who exhibit challenging behaviors from abuse in schools, treatment programs and residential facilities. Fourteen national organizations are members.**

**APRAIS can be reached at: 1025 Vermont Ave NW., 7th Floor  
Washington, DC 20005 Telephone number: 202-263-5600. Their Web  
address is: <http://aprais.tash.org>.**

### **13. Overview of IDEA 2004 Disciplinary regulations**

Parents need to understand the discipline requirements under IDEA 2004, because of the fact that many school districts still prefer to punish a child, for inappropriate behavior, than to use the 6 steps above to improve the behavior. As your child's advocate, you must assertively and persistently advocate for them, so that their behavior does not interfere with their learning and their life.

Some of the difficulties between parents and special education personnel that are related to behavior and discipline are:

- The changes to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 2004, related to behavior and discipline are somewhat vague, and lead to some disagreements.
- Some children may have behavior because they do not understand what the class and school rules are, and what is being expected of them. Also, make sure that the expectations are not too high, for your child's age level. Make sure that your child's teacher explains the class rules and also posts the rules.
- Educators not trained in determining the function of a child's behavior, and how to develop and implement a positive behavioral plan, can negatively affect a child's education.
- Many school personnel continue to punish a child for the undesired behavior, rather than finding the "cause" behind the behavior, and implementing positive behavioral supports and plans, to correct the undesired behavior!

**JoAnn—I advocated for a young man who was 13 years old, and having a lot of behavioral difficulty. The school district was suspending him 2-3 times a month, and refusing to figure**

**out why the young man was having behavioral difficulties. Took me a very short time to figure out that this young man had Autism and that the behavior difficulties he was experiencing were part of the Autism. After some fierce advocacy the school acknowledged the Autism, but still struggled with the child's behavior.**

**I finally developed a behavioral sheet and gave it to the school district—who were stunned that I figured out on my own how to do this. It worked because it was focusing on the child's positive behavior, and trying to increase that.**

**The school ended up placing the young man in another district with a teacher that I happened to know. The young man did very well and was able to learn, as well as increase his good school behavior. What was the difference—a great teacher that understood how to increase a child's positive school behavior, and an extremely structured class that focused on helping students improve their academics and their behavior!**

- **Special education personnel often misinterpret what IDEA 2004 states about behavior/discipline. This is especially true of the ability of schools to remove children with disabilities to an Interim Alternative Educational Setting (IAES) for weapons, drugs, or causing serious bodily injury.**

**JoAnn—I have heard of many children with disabilities who are being removed for reasons that do not fall under the 3 categories; due to misinterpretation of IDEA 2004. The main misinterpretation that I see is the “severe bodily injury” definition. Schools felt like they could have their own definition of severe bodily injury which was a lot less than what is in IDEA 2004. OSEP stated in a document on behavior and discipline that school districts are not allowed to make up their own definitions of severe bodily injury.**

## **Where or how to get copies of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act 2004:**

Federal Laws: Peter and Pam Wright have available for sale on their Website: [www.wrightslaw.com](http://www.wrightslaw.com), the federal regulations “Special Education Law, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition.” This book is parent friendly and can be used as a reference on any special education issue. You can check on line for the IDEA 2004 regulations at: <http://idea.gov>. Click Part B of IDEA that deals with children with disabilities between the ages of 3-21. Click on statute and then click download.

State--Contact your State Board of Education for a copy of your states regulations on how they will comply with IDEA 2004. If you do not know how to contact them, do an Internet search for your state name and state board of education. (For Example: I would put, Illinois State Board of Education. Most of the states have their regulations available to download.)

## **IDEA requirements when child’s behavior interferes with his education:**

**IDEA 2004 (300.324)(a)(2)(i)requires that: “The IEP team, in a case of a child whose behavior impedes his or her learning or that of others, to consider . . . strategies, including positive behavioral interventions, strategies and supports to address that behavior.**

According to the document, “Prevention Research and the IDEA Discipline Provisions: A Guide for School Administrators,” it states: “Positive behavior support is an approach to discipline and intervention that is proving both effective and practical in schools.” The Guide also states: “Positive behavioral support is the application of positive behavioral intervention and systems to achieve positive change.”

**Even if a child has not been suspended because of his behavior, the IEP team must address the behavior if it interferes with your child’s ability to learn. The above document also states: “As a general matter, positive behavior support should be applied before any child is excluded from school due to problem behavior.”**

IDEA 2004 also requires that teachers are given high quality professional development including the use of “scientifically based instructional practices.” If your child’s teacher needs training in the area of positive behavioral supports, make sure that you request this in writing. Also be sure that the specific amount of training for your child’s teacher be put in your child’s IEP

IDEA 2004 at 300.530 (b) states “school personnel may remove a child with a disability who violates a code of student conduct from his or her current placement to an appropriate interim alternative placement or suspension for not more than 10 consecutive days (**to the extent those alternatives are applied to children without disabilities**); and for additional removals of not more than 10 consecutive school days in the same school year; **for separate incidents of behavior** (as long as these removals do not constitute a change of placement).”

If a school district wants to suspend a child for more than 10 days in a row, then they must have a *manifestation determination review meeting* to see if the behavior is part of the child’s disability. If the IEP team determines that the behavior is part of the child’s disability, the child cannot be suspended for more than 10 days. Services must also be provided on the 11<sup>th</sup> day of suspension if the manifestation determination shows that the behavior was not part of the child’s disability.

**If the behavior is not part of the child’s disability, then the child may be disciplined as other children without disabilities, which means that he could be suspended for more than 10 consecutive days (but receive educational services).**

**If a child is removed for 10 days several times for the same behavior this would be considered a “pattern of removals and thus a change of placement.”**

#### IDEA 2004 about Manifestation Determination Review meeting:

300.530 (e) (1) states: “Within 10 school days of any decision to change the placement of a child with a disability because of a violation of code of student conduct, the LEA, the parent and members of the IEP team must

review all important information in the students file. . .to determine:

- a. **If the conduct in question was caused by or had a direct and substantial relationship to the child’s disability; or**
- b. **If the conduct in question was the direct result of the LEA’s failure to implement the IEP.”**

(2) The conduct must be determined to be a manifestation of the child’s disability if the LEA and the parent determine that a condition in the above paragraph was met.

If the child’s behavior is caused by his disability:

IDEA 2004 requires under 300.530 (f):

- a. “The IEP team must: conduct a *functional behavioral analysis*, unless one had been done previously . . . and implement a behavioral intervention plan.
- b. If a plan has already been developed, review the behavioral intervention plan and modify it, if necessary, to address the behavior.
- c. Unless special circumstances apply (which will be discussed next), **the child must be returned to the placement for which he was removed;** unless the parent and school district agree to a change of placement.”

If parents disagree with the manifestation determination decision:

If you disagree with the manifestation determination decision, then you may file for a due process hearing to prove that your child’s behavior was part of his or her disability, and that he or she should not be disciplined the same as children without disabilities.

*Expulsions*

If a child is receiving special education services in a public school district, they are covered by the discipline regulations of IDEA. It is important to

understand these regulations as it applies to expulsions, because many school districts are using expulsions at a higher rate than in the past.

In a recent report from the National Longitudinal Transition Study-2 found that one-third (or 33%) of special education students were suspended or expelled at some point during their school years, compared with 21% of non disabled youth. Also African-American boys were suspended at a rate of 46%, while Caucasian children were suspended at a rate of 30%.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) does not allow school districts to expel a child with a disability, receiving special education service: if the behavior is found to be caused by the child's disability!

Earlier in this E Book, under manifestation determination reviews, you learned that if a school district wants to suspend or discipline a child for more than 10 consecutive days, they must have a manifestation determination review meeting (“MDR”). This MDR meeting is where you as the parent and your child’s IEP team sit and determine if your child’s behavior is related to their disability. **This is also true of expulsions, a manifestation determination review must be held to determine if the behavior is part of the child’s disability.**

Section 1415(k)(8) in IDEA states that the IEP team must find that behavior was a manifestation of the child’s disability if:

- A. The IEP was not appropriate (as far as the behavior), or was not being implemented correctly or at all.
- B. The disability impaired the child’s ability to control his or her behavior.
- C. The child could not understand the consequences of the behavior related to the disability.

### Special Circumstances:

IDEA 2004 states under 300.530 (g) that: “School personnel may remove a student to an interim alternative educational setting (IAES), **for not more**

**than 45 school days, without regard to whether the behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the child’s disability if the child:**

1. Carries a weapon to or possesses a weapon at school or on school premises.
2. Knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance, while at school, on school premises or at a school function.
3. Has inflicted serious bodily injury upon another person while at school, on school premises. . .”

The definition of serious bodily injury under IDEA 2004 is the inflicted injury as it involves either:

- A. **A substantial risk of death;**
- B. **Extreme physical pain;**
- C. **Protracted and obvious disfigurement; or**
- D. **Protracted loss or impairment of the function of a bodily member, organ, or mental faculty.**

**There is no stay-put provision for children with disabilities under special circumstances. What that means is that if special circumstances exist, school personnel can move your child to an IAES, even if you file for an expedited due process. This is where you, as a parent, must be involved in determining if special circumstances exist in your child’s behavior.**

For Example: If special education personnel state that your child caused serious bodily injury to someone in the school, ask for evidence. Was the teacher hospitalized? Did t\he or she require surgery? Are there any pictures or witnesses? Your child needs for you to stand up for them, and advocate for them.

If your child is placed in an IAES, the child must “continue to receive educational services, so as to enable the child to continue to participate in the general education curriculum . . . and to progress toward meeting the goals set out in the child’s IEP.”

A child can be placed in an IAES for up to 45 days if school personnel believe that one of the special circumstances apply. If you disagree that your child’s circumstances meet one of the three above, then you may file for an expedited due process hearing which will take place within 20 days of your filing. IDEA 2004 does allow school personnel to move the child to the IAES until the expedited due process hearing is finished, and the hearing officer gives a decision.

### A Few Things to Keep in Mind

- a. A weapon is defined as a “dangerous weapon”. A butter knife used to cut an apple would not be considered a dangerous weapon, unless the child was trying to stab someone.
- b. Illegal drugs are considered a controlled substance, not Tylenol or Pamprin, or prescribed medications.
- c. Many of the IAES facilities used by school districts are for children with behavioral disorders, and not designed for children with other disabilities, especially autism. Be careful that any IAES facility your child is placed in meets their unique educational needs.
- d. If you disagree that your child’s behavior fits under one of the three special circumstances, you may file for an expedited due process hearing. The hearing must be held within \_\_\_\_ days of filing. This means that your child would not have to be in the IAES as long as it would take to do a regular due process hearing. If you lose, your child would go to an IAES for 45 days. If you win, your child would be returned to his previous placement.

If school personnel believe that your child is a danger to himself or others:

If special education personnel feel that your child is “substantially

likely to result in injury to himself or others,” they have the option of filing for an expedited due process hearing to prove this to a hearing officer. If the school wins, they can put your child in an IAES for 45 days. If they want to keep the child in the IAES past 45 days, they must file for another due process hearing or the child returns to their previous placement.

- e. A lot of information about IDEA 2004 and discipline can be found at [www.wrightslaw.com](http://www.wrightslaw.com) or [www.nichcy.org](http://www.nichcy.org).

**It is absolutely critical that parents understand the Behavior and Discipline requirements of IDEA 2004. Many years ago I heard that most due process hearings were related to behavior and discipline.**

**By understanding the requirements of IDEA 2004 not only on behavior and discipline but the requirements for consideration of positive behavioral supports and plan, you can help your child with their education.**

### Conclusion

You now have the information that you need to be proactively involved with improving your child’s school behavior. It is important to teach your child appropriate behavior, because it will affect them for the rest of their life. Years ago I spoke with a social worker who worked for an adult disability agency. Angelina, who is now 27, was approximately 10 years old at the time. The women had worked with people that have disabilities for many years, in community settings. She asked me what I thought, the one issue was that kept adults with disabilities from being in the community, and having a full life. I thought for a few minutes and came up with a few items: the person did not have functional skills, the person had not received job training, etc. She told me, “No, the one issue that prevents adults with disabilities from living a fulfilled life in the community, is their behavior!!”

Many adult disability agencies, which have limited services that they can refer adults to anyway, usually cannot find any community services for people with severe behavioral problems. The person’s choices are more limited ,and may require placement in a state operated facility.

While your child is young, use best practices to not only improve their

school behavior, but to improve their community behavior as well.

**Good luck in your journey!! Your child is depending on you!!**  
**\*\*\*If you have used this E book to help get positive behavioral supports and plans in place for your child I would love to hear from you. Please contact me at: [JoAnn@disabilitydeception.com](mailto:JoAnn@disabilitydeception.com).**

## Appendix A: Blank Forms

### ABC Form

#### ABC Functional Behavioral Assessment Form and Case Studies

Time            Antecedent            Behavior            Consequence

Notes:

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## The Function Matrix

	<u>Access</u>	<u>Avoid</u>
<u>Attention:</u>		
<u>Tangibles/Activities:</u>		
<u>Sensory:</u>		

**APPENDIX B  
POSITIVE BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTION PLAN  
PLANNING FORM**

*IEP teams can use this form to guide them through the process of developing the Positive Behavioral Intervention Plan.*

Student \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Sex \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Case Manager \_\_\_\_\_

Date(s) \_\_\_\_\_

**Reason for intervention plan:**

Participants (specify names):

- ( ) student \_\_\_\_\_
- ( ) special education administrator \_\_\_\_\_
- ( ) family member \_\_\_\_\_
- ( ) general education administrator \_\_\_\_\_
- ( ) special educator \_\_\_\_\_
- ( ) school psychologist \_\_\_\_\_
- ( ) general educator \_\_\_\_\_
- ( ) other agency personnel \_\_\_\_\_
- ( ) peer(s) \_\_\_\_\_
- ( ) other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**Fact Finding:**

1) **General learning environment:** Describe the student's school class schedule, including any special programs or services.

2) **Problem behavior:** Define the problem behavior(s) in observable, measurable, and countable terms (i.e., topography, event, duration, seriousness, and/or intensity). Include several examples of the behavior.

3) **Setting events:** Describe important things that are happening in the student's life that may be causing the behavior(s) of concern. B-2

4) **Review existing data:** Summarize previously collected information (records review, interviews, observations, and test results) relevant to the behavior(s). Attach additional sheets if necessary.

**Possible Explanations:**

5) Identify likely antecedents (precipitating events) to the behavior(s).

6) Identify likely consequences that may be maintaining the behavior(s).

7) Identify and describe any academic or environmental context(s) in which the problem behavior(s) does not occur.

**Validation:**

8) **Functional assessment:** Do you already have enough information to believe that the possible explanations are sufficient to plan an intervention?

a. If yes, go to Step 9, if no, then what additional data collection is necessary? ( ) Review of IEP goals and objectives

- ( ) Review of medical records
- ( ) Review of previous intervention plans
- ( ) Review of incident reports
- ( ) ABC (across time and situations)
- ( ) Motivational analysis
- ( ) Ecological analysis
- ( ) Curricular analysis
- ( ) Scatter plot
- ( ) Parent questionnaire/interview
- ( ) Student questionnaire/interview
- (     )     Teacher     questionnaire/interview     (specify     who)

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- (     )     Other     (explain)

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b) Summarize data. Attach additional sheets if necessary. B-3 **Category Access or Avoid**

**Planning:**

9) **Formulate hypothesis statement:** Using the table below, determine why the student engages in problem behavior(s), whether the behavior(s) serves single or multiple functions, and what to do about the behavior(s).

	<u>Internal</u>	<u>External</u>
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Obtain Something

Avoid Something

10) **Current level of performance:** Describe problem behavior(s) in a way the team will recognize onset and conclusion of behavior.

11) Describe replacement behavior(s) that are likely to serve the same function as the behavior(s) identified in Step 9. **(New Acceptable Behaviors to be taught)**

12) Determine changes that will be made to the learning environment, child's curriculum or instructional strategies, to help decrease the child's behavior (how you will deal with skill deficit).

**Measurement procedures for problem behavior(s) and replacement behavior(s):**

a) Describe how (e.g., permanent products, event recording, scatter plot), when, and where student behavior(s) will be measured.

b) Summarize data by specifying which problem behavior(s) and replacement behavior(s) will be targets for intervention.

**13) Behavioral intervention plan:**

a) Specify goals and objectives (conditions, criteria for acceptable performance) for teaching the replacement behavior(s). B-4

b) Specify instructional strategies that will be used to teach the replacement behavior(s).

c) Specify strategies that will be used to decrease problem behavior(s) and increase replacement behavior(s). (Positive behavior must be reinforced so that the child will continue the positive behavior)!

d) Identify any changes in the physical environment needed to prevent problem behavior(s) and to promote desired (replacement) behavior(s), if necessary.

e) Specify extent to which intervention plan will be implemented in various settings; specify settings and persons responsible for implementation of plan.

**14) Evaluation plan and schedule:** Describe the plan and timetable to evaluate effectiveness of the intervention plan.

a) Describe how, when, where, and how often the problem behavior(s) will be measured.

b) Specify persons and settings involved.

c) Specify a plan for crisis/emergency intervention, if necessary.

d) Determine schedule to review/modify the intervention plan, as needed. Include dates and criteria for changing/fading the plan.

**15) Describe plan and timetable to monitor the degree to which the plan is being implemented**

## Thank You Page

I would like to thank you for purchasing this E book and hope that you will be able to use the information to benefit your child. By being proactive and getting involved with the process to improve your child's school behavior, you will be ensuring that they receive an appropriate education.

Take the information you have learned in this E book to your school district. Download the forms and copy them as needed. Stay involved in the FBA process and the developing of the positive behavioral plan. If you do not your child's teacher may become very negative toward them and emotionally damage your child. I have seen this happen to many children, and would like to prevent it happening to your child.

Please check out my Website at: [www.disabilitydeception.com](http://www.disabilitydeception.com). Feel free to send me an E mail if you have any questions. Send the E mail to: [JoAnn@disabilitydeception.com](mailto:JoAnn@disabilitydeception.com).

If you would like to sign up for my free E newsletter the Special Education Spotlight, send me an E mail at: [JoAnn@disabilitydeception.com](mailto:JoAnn@disabilitydeception.com).