



## Functional Behavior Assessment

This document is based upon the field of positive behavior support (PBS) and applied behavior analysis (ABA). These are just recommendations or guidelines. Every case is individualized.

### **When to conduct a Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) (any of these apply):**

1. Behavior repeatedly impedes students learning or that of others OR
2. Prior assessments or interventions were ineffective. OR
3. Student is at risk for a change in placement due to behavior concerns OR
4. School refers a student to law enforcement OR
5. Manifest determination or repeated suspensions due to behavior

Referrals for possible FBA's come from:

1. Case managers/teacher
2. Parents via case manager
3. School Administrators
4. Pupil Services staff

Upon referral, previous interventions and behaviors are reviewed to determine whether a FBA is appropriate and what type.

- Build plan around hypothesis statement
- Identify desired and alternative behaviors
- Work to make behavior
  - Irrelevant (antecedent)
  - Inefficient (teaching new skills)
  - Ineffective (consequence)

The goal of ANY FBA is to define the behavior and generate a hypothesis based upon function (see Appendix A re: functions) that the team feels confident about.

### **Components of an informal (Level 1) FBA:**

1. Determine the behavior to change (increase or decrease) and operationally define the behavior. Operational definitions include what is being done (what it looks like), who, when, where, and when.
2. Previous records are reviewed and a problem solving meeting is held. Team should come up with a confident hypothesis of the behavior or summary statement. This includes what occurs before the behavior (setting events or antecedents) and what the function of the behavior (to gain or escape...)
3. Based upon results a behavior intervention plan may be developed.



Who should be involved (Level 1)	Suggested Materials
Individuals working directly with student (e.g. teacher, paraprofessional) Individuals present when problem behavior occurs Case manager* Parent* Behavior Specialist*	Functional Assessment Checklist for Teachers “FACTS” Motivation Assessment Scale (MAS)

\*not required but could be helpful depending upon circumstance

Components of an indirect (Level 2) FBA:

1. Determine the behavior to change (increase or decrease) and operationally define the behavior. Operational definitions include what is being done (what it looks like), who, when, where, and when.
2. Indirect observation through the use of an interview with staff or caregivers who interact with the individual on a regular basis. The main components of this include a description of the behaviors, identification of antecedent events that predict occurrence or non-occurrence of problem behavior, identification of potential functions or consequence that maintain the behavior, and a summary statement describing the relationship among situations, behaviors and their functions.
3. Brief direct observations by school specialist.
4. Based upon results a behavior intervention plan may be developed.

Who should be involved (Level 2)	Suggested Materials
Individuals working directly with student (e.g. teacher, paraprofessional) Individuals present when problem behavior occurs School specialist such as school psychologist or guidance Case manager* Parent* Behavior Specialist*	Functional Assessment Checklist for Teachers “FACTS” Motivation Assessment Scale (MAS)

\*not required but could be helpful depending upon circumstance

When to conduct a complex/full FBA (Level 3):

1. Student is a danger to self or others
2. Student is at risk for a change in placement due to behavior concerns.
3. Prior assessments or interventions were ineffective.
4. Team is not confident that the simple FBA would or did yield an testable hypothesis.



Components of a complex/full FBA:

1. Determine the behavior to change (increase or decrease) and operationally define the behavior. Operational definitions include what is being done (what it looks like), who, when, where, and when.
2. Indirect observation through the use of an interview with staff or caregivers who interact with the individual on a regular basis. The main components of this include a description of the behaviors, identification of antecedent events that predict occurrence or non-occurrence of problem behavior, identification of potential functions or consequence that maintain the behavior, and a summary statement describing the relationship among situations, behaviors and their functions.
3. Indirect information gathering and review which may include:
  - a. Record reviews (current/previous IEPs or evaluations, discipline reports)
  - b. Additional interviews with student with student, family, or other staff
4. Direct observation and measurement of problem behavior. A baseline rate per hour or per day should be calculated and the data should be analyzed to see what patterns may emerge. Observation sheet should be customized based upon the individual student, including antecedents and consequences that are relevant to the situations being observed

This should include information on:

- a. when & where a behavior occurs
- b. what happened before it (antecedent)
- c. what happened after it (consequence)
5. Based upon results, recommendations and strategies will be shared and a behavior intervention plan may be developed.

Who should be involved (Level 3)	Suggested Materials
Individuals working directly with student (e.g. teacher, paraprofessional) Individuals present when problem behavior occurs Case manager Parent Behaviorally Trained Specialist School specialist such as school psychologist or guidance* Administrator*	Teacher interview forms Parent interview forms Preference Assessment Skills assessment (most likely social skills)

\*not required but could be helpful depending upon circumstance



### Appendix A

These are the functions of behavior. Every behavior will fall into one of these areas. Another way to view it is socially-mediated reinforcement (requires presence of others) or automatic reinforcement (not mediated by the deliberate action of another person) (often referred to as sensory/stimulation). Once the function is identified, then interventions can be designed to address it in a more appropriate manner and to provide consequences that don't continue reinforcing the behavior.

