



Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired

Outreach Programs

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Strategies to Help Young People with Deafblindness and Behavior Issues

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Presented by

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Challenging Behavior

- often direct result of sensory impairments
- intervention should be based on strategies that take into account ability of child to gather information, understand environment, communicate, feel secure
- best addressed through prevention
- can be reduced by using effective communication and support strategies

Effects of Sensory Impairments

- Situations may be confusing or threatening due to incomplete or distorted information from other people and the environment.
- Different perceptions of what is interesting, important, motivating, or punishing.
- Frustration about communication attempts about needs and feelings being unrecognized or misunderstood by others.
- Difficulty in recognizing, trusting, and bonding with others.
- Need to stimulate or regulate sensory input.
- Behavioral challenges may be in response to unreported pain or problems associated with medical conditions.

Addressing Behavioral Concerns

From IEP Quality Indicators for Students with Deafblindness, Texas Deafblind Project, 2003

- Assessment includes functional analysis of communicative intent of, or sensory needs met by behaviors.
- Team has evaluated whether discomfort related to medical conditions or student's etiology are impacting behaviors.
- IEP includes goals for improving student's ability to communicate ideas and concerns in more socially acceptable ways.
- IEP includes strategies for providing student with more understandable information.

Which is better?

Reaction

"What should I do when and if the student engages in challenging behavior during this activity?"

Prevention

"What can I do before this activity to make it less likely that the student will engage in challenging behavior?"

Prevent behavior in the short-term...

by controlling antecedents or "triggers", or by "blocking" the behavior.

Before developing a long-term plan...

teaching new behavior.

Determine the Function of the Behavior by Collecting Data

- Where is the behavior most likely to occur?
- When is the behavior most likely to occur?
- What items are present when the behavior occurs?
- What is usually happening before, during, and after the behavior?
- Who is with the student when the behavior occurs?

Behavior Functions

- Lack of knowledge about what to do or what not to do
- Cultural/family norms
- Doing the desired behavior is too difficult
- Confusion, stress, or anxiety (survival skills / self-regulation)
- To gain attention or social interaction
- To get an object or activity
- To reject or escape an object or activity
- Physical or medical problem
- Personality conflict
- Pleasurable sensation

Effects of deafblindness related to these functions

Incomplete or distorted information from other people and the environment affects:

- ✓ Lack of knowledge about what to do or what not to do
- ✓ Cultural/family norms
- ✓ Doing the desired behavior is too difficult
- ✓ Confusion, stress, or anxiety (survival skills / self-regulation)
- ✓ To gain attention or social interaction
- ✓ To get an object or activity
- To reject or escape an object or activity
- Physical or medical problem
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Different perceptions of what is interesting, important, motivating, or punishing affects:

- Lack of knowledge about what to do or what not to do
- Cultural/family norms
- Doing the desired behavior is too difficult
- ✓ Confusion, stress, or anxiety (survival skills / self-regulation)
- To gain attention or social interaction
- ✓ To get an object or activity
- ✓ To reject or escape an object or activity
- Physical or medical problem
- Personality conflict
- ✓ Pleasurable sensation

Communication about needs and feelings being unrecognized or misunderstood affects:

- Lack of knowledge about what to do or what not to do
- Cultural/family norms
- Doing the desired behavior is too difficult
- ✓ Confusion, stress, or anxiety (survival skills / self-regulation)
- ✓ To gain attention or social interaction
- ✓ To get an object or activity
- ✓ To reject or escape an object or activity
- ✓ Physical or medical problem
- ✓ Personality conflict
- Pleasurable sensation

Difficulty in recognizing, trusting, and bonding with others affects:

- Lack of knowledge about what to do or what not to do
- Cultural/family norms
- Doing the desired behavior is too difficult
- ✓ Confusion, stress, or anxiety (survival skills / self-regulation)
- ✓ To gain attention or social interaction
- To get an object or activity
- To reject or escape an object or activity
- Physical or medical problem
- ✓ Personality conflict
- Pleasurable sensation

Need to stimulate or regulate sensory input affects:

- Lack of knowledge about what to do or what not to do
- Cultural/family norms
- Doing the desired behavior is too difficult
- ✓ Confusion, stress, or anxiety (survival skills / self-regulation)
- To gain attention or social interaction
- To get an object or activity
- To reject or escape an object or activity
- Physical or medical problem
- Personality conflict
- ✓ Pleasurable sensation

Unreported pain or problems associated with medical conditions affects:

- Lack of knowledge about what to do or what not to do
- Cultural/family norms
- ✓ Doing the desired behavior is too difficult
- ✓ Confusion, stress, or anxiety (survival skills / self-regulation)
- To gain attention or social interaction
- ✓ To get an object or activity
- To reject or escape an object or activity
- ✓ Physical or medical problem
- Personality conflict
- ✓ Pleasurable sensation

By focusing on the behavior ...

we sometimes miss the message.

Concerns sometimes communicated by a student's behavior

- "I'm bored"
- "I don't feel good."
- "I'm confused."
- "I'm not ready."
- "I'm scared."
- "I'm embarrassed."
- "This is too hard."
- "I'm lonely."
- "I need help."
- "I want to have some input into this decision."

Resources

- NCDB; Library; Selected Topics; Behavior – <https://nationaldb.org/library>
- Perkins Scout; Education for Students with Multiple Disabilities; Behavior Issues – www.perkins.org/resources/scout/students-with-multiple-disabilities/behavior-issues.html
- OSEP Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports – www.pbis.org/
- Texas Behavior Support Initiative – www.txbsi.org
- David Pitonyak, Imagine – www.dimagine.com/

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Figure 1 TSBVI logo.



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Figure 2 IDEAs that Work logo and OSEP disclaimer.