The Fill-able FuBA:

A comprehensive digital model for teachers and parents to efficiently identify, evaluate, and change challenging behavior.

Superheroes social skills training, Rethink Autism internet interventions, parent training, EBP classroom training, functional behavior assessment: An autism spectrum disorder, evidence based (EBP) training track for school psychologists.

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Introduction

The aim of the Fill-able FuBA is to provide parents and teachers with an all-in-one product that breaks down the same steps used by Board Certified Behavior Analysts and Special Education teams to identify, evaluate and change challenging behaviors. Fill-able FuBA includes a concise manual that provides an overview of applied behavior analysis, behavioral monitoring, and how to increase the potential for behavior change written specifically for parents and teachers. This manual is based upon both seminal and cutting edge research in the field of behaviorism so that consumers will be up-to-date on the most recent evidence-based practices.

Fillable FuBA was created with a liner sequence in mind, beginning with identification of the target behavior, accurate and reliable measurements and data collection, investigation into antecedents and consequences of behavior, and development of replacement behaviors. This will allow the user to gain a basic understanding of the underlying causes of the behavior in the aim of determining appropriate methods to enact behavioral change. Additionally, there is a section designed to help formulate meaningful and measurable goals that are very similar to those found on student individualized education programs (IEPs). By including this section there is an increased potential to improve continuity between school-based and home-based behavior change programs.

Each of the steps outlined has a digital Fillable Form that can be accessed through Microsoft Office. Users that have a windows-based tablet (e.g. HP, Surface) will be able to input data directly onto the form with the touch of a button. The completion of the fillable forms will be explained in detail under the 'Easy Steps' sections. These forms have been designed to be user-friendly and easy to use while still including the same important data fields utilized by behavioral analysts. Because each form is completely fillable, it is easy to save and create a digital portfolio that monitors all stages of behavioral change in an accessible location. These can then be e-mailed, printed, and even shared on a cloud-based server to provide the maximal amount of utility and convenience to each form. This can be especially useful for communication between the home, school, and additional service providers.

FILLABLE FORMS

1. Behavior Identification Form
2. Data Tracking and Graph Forms
3. Antecedent Behavior Consequence Form
4. Functional Behavior Assessment Form
5. Replacement Behavior Identification Form
6. IEP Goal Forms

Brief Introduction to Fillable Forms

The Fillable FuBA can be an amazing tool, especially when you can use it as intended. Each form is completely fillable, meaning that the fields have been created to incorporate the most commonly used information. There are multiple types of fields, and this introduction will provide a brief overview.

Developer Tab:

All forms have been created in Microsoft Word using the Developer tab. All forms will work without you needing to use Developer, but if you want to make adjustments or modifications you will need to have this tab open. The default for most computers is to hide this tab, so in order to access it you will need to enter your Word settings, customize the ribbon (toolbar), and include the Developer tab.

Open Text: Click here to enter text.

These fields are simply created so that you can enter as much or as little text as you like. Simply click on the field and begin typing. The field will automatically adjust to the amount of text you input, and there are no restrictions.

Date: Click here to enter a date.

These fields include a drop-down calendar for you to simply select a date. You can also choose the 'today' button if the form is being completed that day. For dates that occurred many years ago (date of birth), it might take a long time to scroll through the calendar. Alternatively, you can delete the field and write in the correct date.

Drop Downs: Choose an item.

This is another drop down field, but instead of a calendar it will have multiple options for you to choose from. I have tried to include the most common options that would be appropriate, but there may be answers that I have forgotten. If this is the case, you can delete the field and write in the correct response. Alternatively, you can modify the options by selecting the field, and then opening the properties menu in the Developer tab.

Boxes: ☐ and ☒

The forms use boxes for fields that are easily expressed in yes/no format. For these, simply press or click the box to change it from blank to marked.

Graph Wizard: Microsoft Excel

The Fillable FuBA Graph Wizard has been protected to maintain its functioning. All the user needs to do is open the file, copy and paste the data, and the Graphing Wizard will create a graph automatically. If the user is familiar with Excel and would like to make modifications, the password to unprotect the sheet is "FuBA"

1. Behavioral Identification Forms

Many times in life we get so excited about a new project or idea that we end up putting the cart before the horse; the realm of behavior is no different. Often we get so caught up in moving forward with a new behavioral plan that we gloss or skim over the most important part: identifying the target behavior. Skimming over the groundwork happens all of the time, but it is imperative to understand that we must lay the correct groundwork by clearly and precisely defining what it is we are hoping to accomplish.

There is a reason that we tend to bypass some of the nitty gritty details of a target behavior: we tend to believe we already know exactly what the problem is and that our definition adequately captures it! For example, a common problem for parents and teachers is student responsibility, or when a child refuses to accept consequences. This makes sense, doesn't it? If I could just get my child to take responsibility with their behavior, we wouldn't have any problems! Why wouldn't this be a good target behavior? Let's come back to that.

Target behaviors were given the name 'target' because they are the focus of an intervention. This means that those are the behaviors we want to change the most. But how do you know if the behavior is actually changing? In order to know the answer to this, the target behavior must be **OBSERVABLE**. If the target behavior is an underlying cognitive process (i.e. a memory deficit) or some other unobservable state, we cannot know with confidence that the target behavior is actually changing. Moreover, we would not be able to rule out alternative explanations. Here is a scenario to illustrate:

Sally is a 3rd grade student who just moved into a new school district. During the first week, her teacher notices that she has a big problem with listening to directions when she is supposed to be working, which is causing her to fall behind the class. She decides to implement a behavioral intervention for Sally's listening to instruction. She finds is that Sally does a great job listening during the lesson when she stands right by her desk, and even does a great job with independent seat work. The problem occurs when Sally is not expecting instruction. As it turns out, Sally has a substantial hearing impairment and is not able to hear unless she is looking at the teacher and there is minimal background noise. Knowing this, it would not make sense to spend hours and hours designing an intervention where none is needed!

The next critical component of a target behavior is that it must be **MEASUREABLE.** Without some form of data, there really is no way to know how much (or if) the behavior is improving. This goes far beyond a guessing game or simple anecdotal report. There is a place for these types of measurement, but it is not in the realm of behavior change. There are a number of ways to measure a behavior, and this is another important consideration. Specifically, a behavior can be measured in frequency (how often it occurs), duration (for how long it occurs), intensity (to what extent does it occur), and ratio (for what percentage of time it occurs). Although each behavior has all of these components, it is best to determine a single measurement for each single target.

Determining the most appropriate measurement warrants careful deliberation. Consider what it is about the behavior that is most problematic, and focus on that single area. For example, behaviors related to impulsivity such as interrupting may be most appropriate for frequency measurements, whereas a tantrum may be more readily measured by duration. Behaviors that occur for a portion of

time (e.g. out of seat during class) can be measured using a ration and converted into a percent. Finally, although more subjective, intensity can be an appropriate measurement for a behavior that has variable levels, such as screaming. If you choose to use an intensity based system of measurement, it is often recommended that you combine specific descriptions of the behaviors with a consecutive level system to increase the objectivity of the measurement. In some classrooms, teachers even use a sound-meter to convert noise into measureable decibels!

This increase of specificity brings us to the final quality of a good target behavior. The target behavior must be **WELL-DEFINED.** The enemy of any behaviorist is a vaguely defined goal. Goals that are well-defined are more easily observed and more easily measured. Moreover, many children may not be developmentally advanced to the point of understanding general behavioral expectations. "Be good" and "That's not okay" are used far too often, and are much less understood. To make any behavioral program successful, the child must know precisely what is expected, and that means the behavior must be precisely defined.

One commonly used term among behaviorists is "operational definition." This implies that the behavior is explicitly defined so that it can be consistently measured, is clearly understood across multiple observers, and is easily identified in multiple settings. A behavior that is well-defined will appear the same to both teachers and parents and occurs in a similar fashion at school as well as home. It is important to remember that at this step, we are not trying to determine why the behavior occurs: this is just a very clear description of the single behavior we would like to see change.

Let's return to the behavior of 'taking responsibility." This goal presents a problem for all three fronts. First, it is not easily **OBSERVABLE** because responsibility can happen in multiple settings and it can be hard to notice when a student is doing what is already expected. Second, this behavior is not easily **MEASURABLE** because there is no easily identified metric to track generalized responsibility. Third, this behavior is not **WELL-DEFINED** because what is responsible to one observer may be very different than another, and responsibility at school can be very different than responsibility at home or in other settings.

To make this an appropriate target behavior, we need to create an operational definition. For the student who consistently avoids taking responsibility, we could imagine that one component of his or her behavior might be denial of misbehavior. An operational definition might look like: *When caught breaking one of the classroom rules at school, the student avoids responsibility by verbally stating "I didn't do it" and blaming someone else.*   This behavior is OBSERVABLE because anyone could hear and see when the behavior occurs. This behavior is MEASURABLE in that it lends itself to a frequency count of how often this specific behavior occurs. Finally, this behavior is WELL-DEFINED based on the clarity of the situation and the contextual cues that are incorporated. As it is written, this target is focused upon at the classroom level, but this could be generalized to other settings that have clear rules and expectations. You would not want to say '*When caught misbehaving…'* because that introduces another level of vagueness and subjectivity across people and settings.

Easy Steps: Form #1- Behavioral Identification

1. Demographic Information
    a. Complete as much demographic information as appropriate. In general, the more information you can enter, the more meaningful the data will be, but YOU MUST BE CAREFUL!! If you are planning on sharing this information with others, you may not want to include a student's personal information. You can either leave it out, or simply delete sensitive fields prior to sharing the document (either electronically or physically).
    b. The student's educational placement can be helpful to note here for professionals who may be interested in a basic understanding of the level of support the child is currently receiving. Typically, educational placements range from a general education classroom to a functional skills or cluster classroom, with a variety of levels in between. Further, including this field provides an awareness of future possibilities of educational placement.
    c. Educational classifications and diagnoses are similar, but not exactly the same. The purpose of this field is again to communicate information to other service providers who may be reviewing the case. It is possible that this is the first evaluation for this student, or perhaps the student is receiving Section 504 services and there is a consideration of a special education diagnosis. In any case, the more information given to service providers, the greater the transparency and consistency of potential wrap-around services.
2. Data Sources
    a. For this section, simply check all data sources that apply. The more informants and sources of data, the more reliable the data will be. If you are only able to check one or two boxes, consider this a threat to the reliability of the data since there are very few informants. Consider utilizing school records as well as information from the family.
3. Description of the Behavior
    a. This section details the specifics of the behavior in question. In general, you want to be as thorough as possible while still using precise wording. Why is this behavior a concern? How will it impact the student's development? What is the single target behavior you are interested in examining? Consider writing to the extent that a stranger, who has never met the student, would be able to enter a room and identify the student based on their behavior.
4. Settings in which the Behavior Occurs
    a. Check all settings that you feel are appropriate, but also consider any patterns you see. Perhaps the behavior occurs in a very specific setting in response to that environment; or, perhaps the behavior occurs in many general domains and is not apparently linked to any one setting. All of these elements of data are clues that can help piece together the puzzle of complex behavior.
5. Measurement Paradigm
    a. This will be largely dependent upon the Target Behavior. Review each of the measurement systems carefully, and select a single method with deliberation. This system will be critical in the objective assessment of the behavior, as well as in determining the effectiveness of any behavioral intervention.

2. Data Tracking and Graphing

The primary reason that we make our target behaviors measureable is so that we can do just that: Measure them! It is critical to measure the behaviors so that we can make informed decisions about a number of domains: How big of a problem is this behavior? Is everyone aware of how often this behavior is occurring? Does the student recognize when and how much they are doing this? Is the intervention making a difference?

Data tracking is arguably the most time-consuming and burdensome component of a behavioral assessment system. Appropriate tracking requires either extensive one-on-one time with the student or thorough consultation with someone who does. Moreover, taking mountains of data will only inform the next steps of a functional assessment, and may not tell you directly why a student is engaging in that behavior firsthand. And a final point of frustration with data tracking is that all the while you are taking scrupulous notes, the student isn't making any progress. Wouldn't it be better to focus on helping the student right away, rather than to watch them fail while you take data on them?

The answer to this question is as complex as the behaviors you are attempting to change. First, no one would ever want a child to fail. If there is a straightforward intervention that you think will help your student, don't hesitate to put it in place. However, most behaviors that reach this stage of consideration are likely to be very resistant to change and varied in their presentation. For these tough behaviors, it is important to put the supports in place that you feel are beneficial, and then continue to take data to record a clear and objective assessment of the behavior. In addition, many times we believe we can put interventions in place to help a behavior, but we forget to consider the long-term sustainability of those services. Tracking the data, even with the interventions, can reveal more precisely how pervasive a student's challenging behavior is, and the challenges it can create for parents and teachers.

The importance of good data tracking can be seen in nearly every field and profession. Consider the stock market: people would not be satisfied if their broker simply informed them that the stocks did 'fairly well' or 'pretty good' that quarter. We desire data and numbers to track as precisely as possible what our investments are doing, often with the more detail the better. Or, consider the medical field. A patient would not want to hear that their white blood cell count is 'probably stable,' or that their blood pressure 'could be going up.' These vague responses become even more upsetting in the presence of instruments that *can* track objective data, and the decisions based thereupon become infinitely more informative.

Consider, for example, a student whose behavior warrants immediate intervention. With services and supports in place, the behavior is no longer a problem. So, why continue to track data? Perhaps without the supports in place, the behavior regresses to its previous levels. If you have clear data that show this trend, there could not be a better argument for those services. On the other hand, perhaps the behavior gets worse, even with the services in place. Having a sound collection of data can help elucidate the response of the behavior to the intervention, and is very strong evidence when considering the level of behavioral difficulty observable at present and desirable in the future.

Easy Steps: Form #2.1-2.4- Tracking Data using Frequency, Ratio, Intensity, or Duration

1. General Steps
   a. The number of times the behavior occurs will help you to determine the interval you should use. If the behavior occurs less than 10 times per day, it will be appropriate to use the date. If the behavior occurs at least 10 or more times per day, it may be better to break each row into either a part of the day (e.g. morning, noon, evening) or use a specific time.
   b. Be sure to include the operationally defined target behavior at the top of each page. This will serve as a reminder of what behavior you are specifically tracking and will decrease false positives (behavior that is similar, but not exactly the same).
   c. If the behavior occurs fairly infrequently (<10 times/day), simply add the date to each row of the first group of columns and then the number of times the behavior occurred in the next column.
   d. For more frequent behaviors, split the day up as mentioned above. To change this in the column, simply delete the fields marked '*Click here to enter a date.'* and write in the time of day the behavior occurred, followed by the number of target behaviors observed.
   e. Once you have filled in the date and number of target behaviors, move DOWN the page. DO NOT MOVE ACROSS. When you have completed the first group of columns on the left, go on to the next group of columns (on the right side of the page). This will make graphing much easier in Step 6 of this Easy Steps section.
2. Frequency (Form 2.1)
   a. The variable '# of Target Behaviors' observed has been defined in number from 1-15. If you are observing more than 15 target behaviors per day, you will need to break the day up into smaller periods or modify the drop-down properties in the Developer tab.
   b. For those behaviors that occur very often, it may be easier to record a tally on a slip of paper or notecard and then input the data into the form at a convenient time.
3. Duration (Form 2.2)
   a. The variable 'Min. of Target Behavior' has been defined in minute-based intervals, ranging from .25 (15 seconds) to 30. If you feel that there is not an appropriate interval, please delete the field *'Choose and item.'* and replace with an interval of your choosing, or modify the drop-down menu properties in the Developer tab.
   b. Whatever interval you decide upon, you must keep that interval for the entire data sheet. This is so that when we graph the data it will not be skewed by variable intervals and the graph will reflect more accurately what was observed.
   c. It may be helpful to use a stopwatch to record the duration, especially over a long interval (such as all day). When doing this, do not reset the stopwatch during the interval; simply continue to add time as the behavior occurs.
4. Intensity (Form 2.3)
   a. This form will require more operational definitions than the others. This is necessary so that the target behavior can be accurately measured across different times, settings, and with different people.

    b. To operationally define levels of intensity, determine what constitutes both the most mild and most severe forms of the target behavior. The most severe form would be a 5, and the mildest would be a 1. From there, determine how you can objectively state the behaviors that would make up a rating of 2, 3, and 4. Record these operational definitions on page 1 of Form 2.3.

    c. When the target behavior occurs, determine the most fitting level of intensity. Record this and the date on page 2 of form 2.3. This type of measurement paradigm is more open to subjectivity than duration and frequency, but may capture some behaviors in a more appropriate way.   This would also include behaviors that are very unlikely to ever be eliminated and where a goal of a "1" would be appropriate.

5. Ratio (Form 2.4)

    a. Using a ratio is another method of analyzing behavior duration. The difference here is that the data tracker would want to complete all intervals instead of only completing intervals in which the behavior occurred. For example, when using a ratio tracking system, you should have an entry for every interval, ranging from 0-100%. With other systems, you can only record data when the behavior occurs. With a ratio tracking system, each interval must be recorded.

    b. This system requires a high degree of consistency and a rater who is able to monitor the student objectively. Because this is often completed in relative hindsight (at the conclusion of each interval) and with a fair amount of subjectivity, the rater must exercise extreme caution in assigning percentages of the target behavior.

6. Graphing (any sheet)

    a. Now comes the fun part! Once you have completed a form (the left, right, or both groups of data points), it is ready to be graphed.

    b. Open the Fillable FuBA Graph Wizard in Microsoft Excel.

    c. For electronic data:

        i. Select (highlight) both columns of one group (the date/time column and the target behavior column).

            1. Do not include the cells that say DATE/TIME and TARGET BEHVIORS

        ii. Copy the data by using the right-click on the mouse and selecting 'copy' or by pressing "CTRL+C"

        iii. Open the graph wizard and paste the data into the specified columns by using right-click and selecting 'paste' or by pressing "CTRL+V"

    d. For hand-written data:

        i. Input the data (date/time and target behaviors) into the specified columns

    e. The graph will open in a new sheet entitled: Graph 1 (1st group) and Graph 2 (2nd group). This can be found on the bottom left corner of the excel workbook.

    f. Save this excel workbook under a new name (we recommend the students initials and the date). With this workbook, you can print the students' progress, review with parents and educators, and even share this via email! Transforming raw data into a graph has been shown to help both parents and teachers understand the progress that their student is making, or can also emphasize the lack of responsiveness to a specific intervention.

3. Antecedent-Behavior-Consequence (ABC'S)

One of the easiest ways to think of the multiple variables associated with any target behavior is to use the ABC model. In this model, the A stands for *antecedents*, the B for the target *behavior,* and the C for the *consequences.* As random as many behaviors seem, you can usually find a reliable pattern of antecedents and consequences for each behavior. If you are able to examine and understand the ABC's of a behavior, then you open the door to both understanding why a behavior occurs AND predicting when a it is likely to occur.

Antecedents are situations, settings, events, and even people that precede the target behavior. Antecedents are like signs you see while you drive on a highway: they signal what exits and turns are coming up. With enough practice, you can quickly recognize the antecedent and take action to alter the behavioral pathway. Antecedents can also be thought of as triggers for the behavior, or indications that a behavior is about to occur. A straightforward example is that kids typically get more excitable and agitated near the end of the school day. They may see that the bell is close to ringing, and their behavior deteriorates. Knowing these types of patterns can prepare you to take actions to avoid problem behaviors before they even occur!

Because every child is different and has different motivations, nearly anything can be an antecedent or a trigger. Because there are so many potential antecedents, it is best to describe as much as possible that was present prior to the behavior. In this way, more patterns may be revealed over time and with more data. It is also important to consider antecedents that are not directly obvious. These are called setting events, as they can serve to set the stage and increase the likelihood that a student will engage in the target behavior. For example, feeling tired or hungry can have a dramatic impact on some behaviors. Additionally, sensory factors such as smell, noise, and temperature should be thought of during analysis of the antecedents.

Consequences are events that immediately follow the behavior, and these can be highly variable based on the behavior and the people involved. Just as with the antecedents, it is advisable to be highly diligent in noting any possible consequences that could influence the maintenance of the behavior. Namely, a consequence can have a reinforcing or punishing effect. Consequences that serve as reinforcing increase the likelihood that the behavior will occur again in the future. Consequences that serve as punishing, on the other hand, serve to decrease the likelihood that the behavior will occur again in the future.

It is important to note that any stimulus can serve as a punishing or reinforcing consequence. If a student is given a time out following a tantrum, but then tantrums even more, the time out would be considered reinforcing. This type of consequence is called *negative reinforcement* because the removal or subtraction of the activity (during time out) caused the likelihood of the behavior to increase. Alternatively, *positive reinforcement* is a type of consequence that increases the likelihood of the behavior following the addition of a stimulus. This could be attention from peers and adults or access to a favorite toy or activity. For example, if a student's target behavior results in an adult yelling at them, and the target behavior increases, yelling is a positive reinforcer. Even stimuli that we consider punitive or punishing can be reinforcing to some students.

Easy Steps: Form #3- Antecedent-Behavior-Consequence

1. General
   a. This form can (and should) be completed by anyone that interacts with the student on a reliable basis. The more informants that can assist in data collection, the more robust the ABC model will be.
   b. Although it is much more informative to complete these at the time the behavior occurs, they can also be completed via interview or with regards to behaviors that have already taken place. A warning, though, is to never stretch the data just to increase the completeness of the form.
      i. It is better to have fewer pieces of highly accurate data than many pieces of data that is in any way estimated, unreliable, or exaggerated.
   c. You can think of each ABC sheet as a piece in a jigsaw puzzle. The more pieces you are able to get, the easier it will be to complete the puzzle.
2. Demographic Information
   a. Simply complete demographic information regarding the student.
   b. It is important to note your position with relation to the student, as different informants will view behaviors through their own perspective.
   c. The importance of a well-defined target behavior cannot be understated. The more objective the target behavior, the more consistently you (as well as other informants) will record the data.
3. Date, Time and Setting
   a. Including the date will help you keep track of the data. The time, however, serves the valuable function of showing possible patterns of when the behavior typically occurs. If the behavior is consistently occurring at similar times throughout the day, you can better understand what might be causing the behavior and how you can intervene.
   b. The same is true with the setting. If you observe that the behavior is typically happening in one or two settings, you may consider what it is about the setting that is particularly triggering. If a common theme is revealed, you can focus on that theme to reduce the behavior.
4. People Present
   a. Since any stimulus has the potential to be an antecedent or consequence, it is important to record all persons present. It is possible that a specific person acts as a trigger, be they adult, peer, or even pet, and for that reason it is best practice to complete this section thoroughly.
5. Antecedents
   a. This is not the area to be concise! Describe as many potential antecedents that you can observe. Having a large number of antecedents can make drawing conclusions more time-consuming, but it will provide a much richer data set and will likely result in more informed decisions. Record any actions that people were taking, questions and demands being placed on the student, activities that were occurring, and anything else that you think may be informative.

6. Behavior
   a. In this section, clearly and objectively describe the behavior. If it matches precisely the target behavior described in the top section, you can simply write "Target;" otherwise, write out the behavior exactly as it appeared as if you were relating the story to a lawyer or judge.
7. Consequences
   a. This area requires no small amount of detective work on your part! Carefully consider the events that occurred after the behavior, bearing in mind the types of consequences that influence behavior. List them as closely as you had observed them, and focus on consequences that occurred as a direct result of the behavior.
   b. This can be tricky as you will have to monitor the student for some time after the behavior (at least 15 minutes). You will have to tease out the consequences that occurred as a direct result of the behavior as opposed to co-occurring events that are not related to the behavior. This task becomes exponentially more difficult as the time since the behavior elapses.

4. Functional Behavior Assessment

Collecting data about the antecedents and consequences of the target data can elucidate the most important question of any behavior: 'Why is the student doing this?' As far-fetched as some behaviors can be, every behavior serves some function or accomplishes some goal that the student has. In essence, there is a reason for every behavior.

Traditionally, there are four classes of functions for any behavior: attention (can be positive or negative); escape or avoidance; access to rewards, treats, or toys; and finally, to experience control, autonomy, or stimulation.

Attention is a relatively common function, and one that can be very difficult to extinguish. This is especially true if the behavior is a function of negative attention (i.e. misbehavior to get a reaction from peers or adults). Telltale signs that a behavior is under the function of attention are if the student is highly social while engaging in the target behavior, or if they appear to enjoy being the focus of anyone's attention, even if it is coming from a disciplinary figure.

Escape and avoidance are similar functions, but the behavior may look different depending on the specific function within this class. Avoidance will typically occur when a student is cognizant of an upcoming situation which they find aversive. Depending on the severity of the aversive situation, they may go to extremes to avoid, delay, or dismiss the environment. Escape, on the other hand, occurs when the student is already in an environment they find aversive. A student may engage in a great variety of behaviors to try to get out of their present situation, and once they find a behavior that serves that function, it is difficult to break their association between behavior and escape.

Access to items, activities and tangibles is generally easier to notice. If this is the primary function of the behavior, a clear pattern is usually observable within a few instances of the target behavior. It is important to consider all types of items, activities and tangibles in this category. Just as every child has different triggers and antecedents, each child has widely varied tastes in the items and activities they prefer. What we consider to be highly reinforcing for ourselves may be looked over by our students, and what we would never think of as a toy or preferred item can be extraordinarily reinforcing to others. Consider the child who gets a brand new toy for his birthday and pushes it aside to play with the box!

The final function of behavior is considered to be internal; that is, a student will engage in a behavior so that they can feel in control or because it feels good to do it. Because the consequences reinforcing this behavior are internal, it can be very difficult to identify this function. Moreover, it will be extremely difficult to decrease this behavior. Many behaviors that seem to reveal no association or pattern with the other functions may fall into this category. Some indications to examine include if the student engages in the behavior when alone, if the student is smiling or content after the behavior, and if the student continues to engage in the behavior in spite of a wide variety of punishments and alternative reinforcement schedules.

Easy Steps: Form #4- Functional Behavior Assessment

1. General
   a. If you have completed the ABC forms (and lots of them!), this form should be relatively easy to complete. That is because you do not have to complete this form the instant the behavior occurs, but rather you can gradually add to it as you are tracking data and monitoring behavior for the ABC form.
   b. This is not to say that the ABC and FBA forms are redundant. There is ample information in each that can differentially inform and enhance intervention. For example, the ABC form includes the antecedents. While behavioral intervention has traditionally focused on *altering the outcomes* of behavior to elicit change, a growing movement of *preventing* the behavior from ever occurring has been steadily increasing in popularity for several years. Instead of relying on punishment or a system of differential reinforcement, service providers can eliminate the need for either! This could only be gleaned from a thorough description of the antecedents on the ABC form.
   c. Conversely, the FBA form has great value in the ability to quickly summarize the primary function of a behavior. Since not all antecedents can be altered (e.g. school work demands), we occasionally have to focus on reducing the target behavior by way of consequences. This task becomes infinitely easier when we have reliable data revealing the function of the behavior. This would not be easy to glean from the ABC form.
2. Date, Time of Day and Activity
   a. For this form, it is important to record each instance of the behavior on a new row. This means you may have many rows with the same date, but it will help elucidate patterns across time and activity. For example, say the target behavior occurs five times during morning recess and once during reading in the afternoon of the same day. By recording each instance, you can see that the behavior is more likely to occur in the morning and during unstructured times (5:1 instead of 1:1).
3. Function
   a. Best practice dictates to determine a single function for each instance of the behavior. This can be very difficult to do, and introduces some subjectivity on behalf of the rater. The hope is that over time a reliable pattern will emerge, with a single function indicated as the cause of the behavior; however, there are many occasions where the function is ambiguous. Although a single function is more ideal from an intervention perspective, it is possible for a behavior to serve multiple functions. With that in mind, you can select multiple functions for a single behavior, bearing in mind that a loss of specificity weakens the overall assessment.
4. Totals
   a. The bottom row of totals is provided so that the instances of each domain (time of day, activity, and function) can be scored and reported in a single space. The goal of this component is that a single column from each domain will emerge as a primary target, and these will be the focus of intervention.

5. Identifying Replacement Behaviors

Up to this point, we have defined a target behavior, taken data and graphed the trend of this behavior, and determined the antecedents, consequences, and function of the behavior. This leaves us with an incredible amount of information, but there is still a very important component that remains. As we have seen, behaviors serve very reinforcing functions. In a sense, they fulfill a need that the student has.

Simply knowing this function and trying to control the behavior will lead to a *reinforcement struggle*, or a battle between the consequences you are prepared to deliver and the motivation of the student to engage in the target behavior. Even if the student is motivated by a behavioral change program, the absence of the original target behavior will leave a void for the student, and this can dramatically increase the resistance of that behavior. One option is to increase the incentives or positive reinforcement for the absence of the behavior, and in many cases this is the first course of action. However, this can become unsustainable when the level of reinforcement is dramatically elevated. In order to reduce this burden, finding a benign replacement behavior that serves a similar function can greatly reduce the reinforcement struggle.

A replacement behavior is designed to serve a similar function as the target behavior. It will never be the exact same function as every behavior has unique reinforcement pattern, but it can come close to fulfilling the need created by the absence of the original target behavior. By utilizing an appropriate replacement behavior, the student can still experience a portion of what was reinforcing the original behavior and subsequently be less reliant on large-scale incentives.

For example, consider the student who is easily overwhelmed and has an outburst nearly every math class, ending with him hitting a neighbor. The target behavior is his striking of the other student. In his classroom, whenever someone hits another, they are taken to timeout. For this student, the timeout removes him from the math class and thus the hitting behavior is negatively reinforced through the function of escape.

If you relied solely on methods of reinforcement, you might offer the student a treat or reward for every minute he stayed in math class. This strategy would work well with powerful enough reinforcers, but eventually the student may become satiated on the treats, and still have the desire to escape the situation. This is when a replacement behavior, serving approximately the same function of escape, can be very beneficial. For this example, the student could be given a few "Take a Break" cards per day, and when he feels overwhelmed he can use them to escape the environment for a brief time. These cards serve to provide the student with the ability to escape, and the control of when to go. Combined with a lower intensity system of incentives and rewards, this is a much more powerful intervention.

Very few replacement behaviors will be singularly sufficient to change target behaviors, just as various reinforcement schedules are not likely to produce lasting gains over the long term. It is the combination of appropriate and sustainable reinforcement schedules with carefully constructed replacement behaviors that will result in the most reliable and durable behavior change.

Easy Steps: Form #5- Replacement Behaviors

1. General
    a. The sentence at the top of the page can be completed using the FBA form (Form #4). Simply input the time of day, the type of setting, and the function of the behavior. This will provide a clear and concise *Behavioral Intervention Sentence*.
2. Intervention Area Matrix
    a. Using your Behavioral Intervention Sentence, review the applicable areas of intervention targets. This matrix is by no means comprehensive, and is simply a guide to start thinking about potential areas to focus on for developing replacement behaviors.
    b. Because every behavior is so unique to the individual, the situation, and the persons involved, there are very few universal interventions and replacement behaviors. For this reason, a team comprised of the student, parents, and relevant educators and service providers should collaborate and determine the most appropriate replacement behaviors.
3. Selection of Replacement Behavior(s)
    a. Once the team agrees on a replacement behavior, waste no time in beginning implementation. Be prepared, the course of a behavioral intervention is unpredictable: some target behaviors show an immediate and stable decrease, some will show an initial decrease followed by a resurgence, some will show no decrease initially but then gradually fall, and some will show no decrease at any point.
    b. Once you begin implementing the intervention, it is imperative to return to data collection. Using the same measurement paradigm as before, track the target behavior. Be patient, and use the data and graphing worksheets to determine if the intervention and replacement behaviors are showing any progress. If, after a reasonable amount of time (5-9 data points) there is no improvement, it is time to consider altering the reinforcement program or the replacement behavior.
    c. Do not expect to see incredible decreases in the target behavior right off the bat; most interventions take time. In fact, be weary of highly dramatic gains. Often, these gains are only observed in the short-term, and the target behavior regresses to initial levels after the initial impact of intervention weans.

6. Creating Behavioral Goals

Placing a behavioral intervention in place, tracking and graphing the data, and seeing progress takes us to the last step of this manual: determining goals. Without this step, the intervention would never end! We use goals to articulate when the student has made adequate progress on the target behavior and the intervention can be faded out. Knowing when this is appropriate is not something to be taken lightly, and the team must reconvene to determine what level of target behavior is most appropriate for each individual student.

Writing effective goals can be a very complex undertaking. In order to be effective, the goal must be objective, measurable, and feasible. The goal should be based on data, including both baseline data and desired outcome data. The data should show what the student is able to do presently, what they are struggling with, and what the student needs to do in order to be successful in the environment of the target behavior. This component of importance, or why the student needs to be able to achieve this goal, is perhaps the most essential component of a goal. If the end-goal is not highly valued or beneficial to the student, the goal is less likely to be achieved. A clear statement of need can be critical in goal attainment.

With behavioral goals, there is often the need to break a long-term goal into short term objectives. Having clear objectives will help provide a clear focus for intervention, a basis for monitoring student gains, and an objective framework for communicating expectations. In determining these goals, it is important to consider how who will collect data and how frequently. Clearly, there must be ample data to determine the student's level of progress, but requiring too much data can create a burden on the team. A balance must be struck between the feasibility of data collection and the utility of such data.

It is not a coincidence that this form will translate into goals used for student's Individualized Education Plans (IEP). Many children demonstrate behavioral challenges in the school setting. These behaviors can limit their ability to access and benefit from the common curriculum. For these students, it can be critical to develop appropriate goals that will enable to students to maintain the least restrictive educational placement and progress in the general curriculum. Goals that are formulated objectively, including both short and long term benchmarks with data to support decision making, are more likely to yield positive results. By using the included statements, the target behavior can be translated into a typical IEP goal, fulfilling the requirements of documenting that students are making quantifiable and adequate yearly progress.

Easy Steps: Form #6- Behavioral Goals

1. Target Behavior
    a. Like always, the behavior must be defined in objective, operational terms so as to eliminate confusion and any subjective interpretation of the goal.
2. Measurement
    a. Clearly define how the behavior has been and will be measured. The more consistent the measurement system, the easier it will be to interpret the data.
    b. Also to be considered is who will be measuring the behavior, and how often. This is a decision to be made by the team, with consideration to the frequency of the behavior and the need for sufficient data to make informed decisions.
3. Able to Perform
    a. This section addresses what the student is able to do currently. This is important to include so that there is a basis of comparison throughout the intervention.
    b. The use of baseline data here cannot be understated. Without a reliable and objective metric, the margin of error for future comparisons is greatly jeopardized.
4. Unable to Perform
    a. In a similar vein to what a student is able to perform, it is important to include what a student is currently unable to do. This statement helps clarify what the student is having difficulty with as compared to the expectations of the team.
5. Short Term Objectives and Annual Goals
    a. The next items on the form are focused on objectives ranging from one month away to the following year. These should be completed with a realistic mindset, and it is often advisable to err on the side of conservatism. If you set lofty objectives, and they are not reached, the team and the student may experience dismay, even if some progress is being made.
    b. Using the baseline data as a starting point, consider what would be realistic for each benchmark. If you are finding it difficult to determine the short term objectives, consider what you would like the target behavior to be in one year, and work backward from that. Since the goal **MUST** be measurable, state each objective in terms of the measurement paradigm used for the baseline data.
    c. For example, if the target behavior is talking out during class, and the current baseline data reveals 10 talk-outs per hour, an annual goal might be 1 talk-out for the same interval. From this, we can create short-term objectives of 8 talk-outs (1 month), 6 talk-outs (3 months); and 4 talk-outs (6 months).
    d. By using these objectives and benchmarks, it can be determined if the intervention is leading to the desired level of progress, or if the team should reconsider the goals in place.
6. Importance
    a. Lastly, yet most importantly, is the statement of why this is an important area to focus on. This statement is the crux of the behavioral intervention, and without an appropriate need, the goals, objectives, and data become meaningless.