



IES Grant #
R324A160086

Using ABC Data to Choose Strategies

Antecedent, Behavior, and Consequence (ABCs) data supports the identification of the function of a child's challenging behavior. Once a function has been identified, consistently using corresponding Prevention, Teaching, and New Response strategies will greatly reduce challenging behavior.



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Antecedent → Prevent

Antecedents of a child's challenging behavior inform which **PREVENT** strategies are likely to decrease the child's challenging behavior. **PREVENT** strategies change the environment so that the identified antecedents no longer turn **ON** challenging behavior.

Consequence → New Response

Consequences that have turned **OFF** your child's challenging behavior in the past reinforced their use of challenging behavior to meet their wants and needs. **NEW RESPONSE** strategies provide ways to respond to challenging behavior that do not reinforce it and help a child understand it is no longer effective to get their wants and needs met.

Challenging Behavior → Teach

A child engages in challenging behavior to communicate their wants and needs. **TEACH** strategies give step-by-step instructions for teaching your child a **REPLACEMENT SKILL**. This skill is a more appropriate and reliable way for your child to communicate what they want. Reinforcing a child's use of **REPLACEMENT SKILLS** helps them learn that there is another way to communicate their wants and needs.

CHOOSING THE APPROPRIATE STRATEGY

- 1 Collect ABC data and look for patterns in the antecedents and consequences that typically occur with the behavior
- 2 Find the table on pages 2-5 with antecedents and consequences that best match the data you collected
- 3 Click on each strategy to learn more about how to use it
- 4 Choose 2-3 strategies from each category you feel most confident implementing

For more information about supporting a child with challenging behavior, click [here](#).





Gain Attention

On this page you will find typical antecedents and consequences that indicate a child engages in challenging behavior to get **ATTENTION** from people. Attention can take many forms (ex: playing, asking for help, hugs, even reprimands!), so there are many strategies you can use to prevent challenging behavior that serves this function.



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ANTECEDENTS

- Child is playing alone
- Child has been waiting for a while
- Others are occupied and not attending to the child
- Attention is shifted attention away from child



CONSEQUENCES

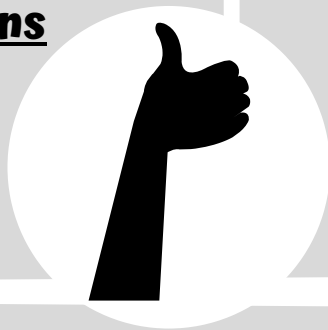
- Child is comforted
- Someone plays with the child
- Child is reprimanded
- Child is punished
- Child is redirected
- Someone talks with the child



Attention can be positive (play) or negative (reprimands).

PREVENT

- Frequent positive attention
- Positive descriptive feedback
- Set clear behavior expectations



TEACH

- Ask for attention
- Ask for help
- Play alone

NEW RESPONSE

- Avoid attending to the behavior
- Help once calm
- Use verbal reminders

Verbal reminders help the child remember the replacement skill during challenging times.



Gain an Item/Activity

On this page you will find typical antecedents and consequences that indicate a child engages in challenging behavior to get an ITEM or ACTIVITY. The strategies below will help reduce challenging behavior when the child wants an item from someone else or when the child wants to keep an item.



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ANTECEDENTS

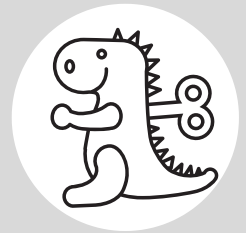
- Another child is playing with a toy
- An object is taken away
- An activity is unstructured with lots of choices
- An activity begins or ends
- Child is playing alone
- Child has been waiting for a while
- Child is playing with other children



CONSEQUENCES

- Child is given an object or a toy
- A person plays with the child
- Child is allowed to keep doing the activity
- Child is reprimanded
- Child is redirected
- Child talks with adult

The child could want an activity or item because some attention comes with it.



PREVENT

- Provide choices within and between activities
- First-then visuals
- Provide transition warnings
- Frequent positive attention
- Positive descriptive feedback
- Set clear behavior expectations



TEACH

- Ask for an item
- Ask for more
- Take turns
- Make choices

NEW RESPONSE

- Avoid attending to the behavior
- Delay access to an item
- Delay transitioning to an activity
- Use verbal reminders

Make sure to give your child what they ask for as soon as they ask for it so they know their replacement skill is as reliable as challenging behavior.



Escape a Non-Preferred Activity



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On this page you will find typical antecedents and consequences that indicate a child engages in challenging behavior to ESCAPE a task or activity they do not want to do. The strategies below will help reduce challenging behavior when the child has to complete these less preferred tasks or activities.

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ANTECEDENTS

- An activity ends or begins
- Child is told "no" or "stop"
- Child is told to do something
- An unexpected activity begins
- An activity is unstructured
- An activity is directed by an adult



Sometimes children engage in challenging behavior when they are unsure what to do. Use visuals to make activities more concrete.

CONSEQUENCES

- The demand or request is removed
- Someone helps the child complete the request
- A different demand or request is provided
- The activity is changed or removed
- An activity is delayed
- Child is put in time out



PREVENT

- Provide transition warnings
- Daily schedules
- First-then visuals
- Frequent positive attention
- Positive descriptive feedback
- Set clear behavior expectations
- Provide choices within and between activities

TEACH

- Request to be done
- Ask for help
- Make choices

Choices can make a less preferred activity more engaging.



NEW RESPONSE

- Avoid attending to the behavior
- Prompt follow through

Prompt follow through helps children complete the task so they understand that they cannot escape the activity by engaging in challenging behavior.



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Escape Attention

On this page you will find typical antecedents and consequences that indicate a child engages in challenging behavior to ESCAPE ATTENTION. The strategies below will help reduce challenging behavior when the child is trying to communicate they they would like to be left alone.



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ANTECEDENTS

- Child is given attention from an adult or another child
- Child is playing with other children
- Child is told to do something



CONSEQUENCES

- Child is given some space
- Child is put in time out
- An activity is removed or delayed
- Other children leave the area



PREVENT

- Set clear behavior expectations
- Frequent positive attention
- Positive descriptive feedback



TEACH

- Request to be done

Replacement skills should match their communicative ability. Use signs or gestures if a child uses limited or no spoken language.

NEW RESPONSE

- Help once calm
- Use verbal reminders

