

AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

Samantha L. Place for the degree of Honors Baccalaureate of Arts in Psychology presented on June 3rd, 2013. Title: Including Elementary Students in the Functional Behavior Assessment – Behavior Intervention Process.

Abstract Approved:

(Teri Lewis)

The present study seeks to develop a functional behavior assessment interview (FBAI) that would allow elementary aged students to participate in the assessment process. In particular, the assessment will address if elementary students are able to accurately predict the causes of their problem behaviors and identify when they are likely to have issues and what type of support would increase their success. A FBAI is an individual-focused process used to determine the function of problem behavior within an environmental context, and is used with teachers and students to form a better guide for the development of behavior interventions.

After developing the interview protocol, experts in the field of function-based support will be asked to provide information about whether the questions are sufficient for assessment and if they are asked in a way that is understandable for elementary aged children.

Previous literature has documented the accuracy of student-based information for students in 6th grade and higher, therefore, the expected significance of this project is in extended previous findings to elementary students.

Keywords: functional behavior assessment, elementary, student, interview, problem behaviors

Corresponding e-mail address: places@onid.orst.edu

© Copyright by Samantha L. Place
June 3, 2013
All Rights Reserved

Including Elementary Students in the Functional Behavior Assessment –
Behavior Intervention Process

By

Samantha L. Place

A PROJECT

submitted to

Oregon State University

University Honors College

in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the
degree of

Honors Baccalaureate of Arts in Psychology (Honors Associate)

Presented June 3, 2013
Commencement June 2013

Honors Baccalaureate of Arts in Psychology project of Samantha L. Place presented on June 3, 2013.

APPROVED:

Mentor, representing Psychology

Committee member, representing Psychology

Committee member, representing Psychology

Chair, department of Psychology

Dean, University Honors College

I understand that my project will become part of the permanent collection of Oregon State University, University Honors College. My signature below authorizes release of my project to any reader upon request.

Samantha L. Place, Author

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Several people made significant contributions to this project and helped me while working toward the completion of my undergraduate degree. Teri Lewis was a phenomenal mentor for my thesis research, as she went above and beyond in assisting me along the way. She is my role model and I will always look fondly on our time working together.

Angus Kittelman served on my committee and provided support through his expertise on the topic. David Kerr was my other committee member who has been one of the most influential professors I have met at Oregon State University. Dr. Kerr pushes me to be a better writer and his courses have strengthened my interest in clinical psychology, the area of my future profession. Also, the expert panel of reviewers provided invaluable advice about the tool we have created. I very much appreciate their support.

I also thank my Mother, Kimberly Place, for her constant encouragement and undying support in all aspects of my life. She is my best friend and without her none of this would have been possible.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
LITERATURE REVIEW.....	1
Statement of Problem.....	1
Academic Underachievement.....	2
Disruption of Learning Environment.....	3
Teacher Burnout.....	3
Function Based Approach.....	5
Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA).....	5
Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA).....	6
FBA Key Components.....	7
Methods of Assessment.....	8
FBA Effectiveness.....	8
FBA Interviews.....	9
Student FBA Interviews.....	11
Summary.....	13
METHODOLOGY.....	14
Tool Development.....	14
Expert Rating.....	15
DISCUSSION.....	17
Expert Feedback.....	17
Limitations.....	17
Future Directions.....	18
Conclusion.....	19
REFERENCES.....	20
APPENDICES.....	24
Appendix 1. Elementary Student FBAI.....	24
Appendix 2. Expert Rating Questionnaire.....	29

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

	<u>Page</u>
Appendix 3. Expert Rating Statistics Table.....	30

This thesis is dedicated to all of the peers I have met in my psychology courses throughout my time at Oregon State University. There is a wonderful community of scholarly students in the psychology department and their support and friendship has made me love my major and always enjoy coming to class every day. I wish you all much luck in your future endeavors and I am thankful to have shared our collegiate time together.

Including Elementary Students in the Functional Behavior Assessment – Behavior Intervention Process

Statement of Problem

One of the challenges in modern education systems is creating a productive and positive learning environment that consistently meets the needs of all students. However, this idyllic learning environment is difficult to maintain with the occurrence of problematic behavior among students both in the classroom and in other school areas.

Current research on the education system in the United States includes the project “*Primary Sources: 2012 America’s Teachers on the Teaching Profession*”. Sponsored by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and Scholastic, the “Primary Sources: 2012” project questioned more than 10,000 teachers from all 50 states about their experiences as educators and included many questions about working with students with behavioral issues. When asked how the student body has changed since starting their career at their current school, 62% of all teachers and 68% of elementary school teachers (PreK-5th grade) reported that there are more students with behavioral problems that interfere with teaching and significantly reduce overall instruction time than when they first started at the school (based on teachers who have worked for five or more years at the same school) (“Primary sources: 2012,” 2012). There are several hypothetical reasons the surveyors offer as to why teachers report a marked increase in the number of students who exhibit problem behaviors. Examples given in the “Primary Sources” (2012) survey include an increased percentage of students who are (a) living in poverty, (b) who arrive at school hungry, and (c) who are homeless. These outside-occurring factors have increased

significantly in recent years ("Primary sources: 2012," 2012), however, the reasons a child may have behavior challenges are numerous. No matter the source of the problem behaviors, many teachers struggle to manage students with behavioral issues whose conduct (a) negatively affects individual academic performance, (b) disrupts the learning environment of classmates, and (c) is one of the leading causes of job-related stress and burnout for educators (Yong & Yue, 2008).

Problem Behaviors & Academic Underachievement

For decades researchers have found a connection between the presence of behavior problems and the subsequent academic underachievement or failure (Lassen, Steele & Sailor, 2006). In their guide for addressing student barriers to learning, Adelman and Taylor (2005) estimate one-third of students experience psychosocial problems that hinder their capacity to engage in instructional activities, thus inhibiting learning and making academic success a challenge. One way psychosocial problems are classified is as either (a) internalizing disorders, where one is withdrawn from his or her surroundings, or (b) externalizing disorders, where one acts out and outwardly displays behavior problems (American Psychiatric Association, 2000). Frequently researchers assess the relationship between externalized student problem behaviors and academic success by tracking indicators such as office referrals or suspensions (Frank, McIntosh & Spaulding, 2010; Lassen, Steele & Sailor, 2006). In the study by Lassen, Steele, and Sailor (2006) these indicators were found to be significant predictors of student performance on reading and math standardized tests. By working with students with

behavioral problems from early childhood and elementary school it may be possible to prevent externalized behavior problems from affecting academic performance outcomes.

Problem Behaviors & Disruption of Learning Environment

In addition to negatively impacting the student with the behavior problems academically, the behavior problems of one may disrupt the learning of other students and affect interpersonal relationships within the class. Elementary school classrooms in which more than one student exhibits problem behaviors have the tendency to develop into chaotic environments that impact the learning of all students by creating distraction and disrupting the teacher's ability to follow a lesson if constantly disciplining the same students (Epstein, Atkins, Cullinan, Kutash & Weaver, 2008). A separate researcher also supports this claim, explaining the inappropriate behavior first effects an individual's learning but after frequent classroom disruption the student may struggle with social acceptance and inclusion with their peers (Dunbar, 2004). When working to manage the problem behaviors of one student, it is important to consider the positive implications for the classroom at large, including the teacher.

Problem Behaviors & Teacher Burnout

Dealing with behavior issues in the school setting can become a source of frustration and often causes work-related stress for educators (Schiff & BarGil, 2004). First year teachers frequently complain that they are unprepared for the reality of

classroom-behavior disturbances and do not know how to effectively discipline students causing the problems (Freidman, 2000). In a report published by the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (NCTAF) (2010) researchers found that after only five years over 30% of new teachers leave the profession. This constant teacher turnover adds a high cost to already stressed school district budgets, with an estimated \$7.2 billion spent each year nationally for staff replacement (NCTAF, 2010). In a recent study, McCormick and Barnett (2011) surveyed 416 teachers in their investigation of the causal factors of teacher burnout, concluding disruptive behavior of students to be the main cause of job-related stress and teachers wanting to leave the field. Another study also found that 63% of teachers and school administrators report students' problem behaviors and disruptions to be the most exhausting aspect of working in an educational setting (Kuzman & Schnall, 1987). Teaching students with behavior problems causes a significant amount of job-related stress and teacher burnout, and yet this scenario is only becoming more prevalent. A notable 87% of teachers in general education settings report teaching students with behavioral issues ("Primary sources: 2012," 2012). Of these teachers, 72% would like more tangible resources to address the needs of students with behavioral issues and 64% say they need more training in how to address the needs of students with behavioral issues ("Primary sources: 2012," 2012). These responses demonstrate the necessity of accessible tools for educators to use while assisting students with behavior problems.

A Function-based Approach to Intervention

The difficulties that occur when students engage in problematic behaviors can be addressed and improved upon through the usage of functional behavior assessment (FBA) tools and the interventions that are produced as a result (Sugai, Lewis-Palmer & Hagan, 1998; Lewis-Palmer, 1998; Kern, Hilt & Gresham, 2004). Even after identifying a student's behavior as internalizing and externalizing, for intervention purposes, it is beneficial to understand the specific individualized needs of the student. That is, not all students with internalizing behavior have difficulty in the same setting for the same reason. The remainder of the literature review explains the theory and process of using a function-based approach to intervening with students with problem behavior.

Functional Behavior Assessment

Problem behaviors often cause serious turmoil within a student and create a significant amount of stress for parents, teachers, peers, and support staff. When the reason the problem behavior is happening is unclear and it is uncertain how to change the problem behavior, confusion and frustration with the situation also occurs for all involved. A goal of FBA is to bring understanding and order to these often chaotic circumstances through systematic assessment of the variables in the environment during occurrence and nonoccurrence of undesirable behaviors (O'Neill et al., 1997). Systematic assessment of a student's current environment and the events that occur throughout their day provides the information needed to develop comprehensive, effective, and efficient interventions, which is the primary purpose of FBA (Horner, 1994).

The value of FBAs are known amongst professionals as is it endorsed by major national organizations such as the National Association of School Psychologists, National Association of State Directors of Education, and the National Institutes of Health (Kern, Hilt & Gresham, 2004). In addition, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 1997 mandated the use of FBA in disciplinary situations and was reauthorized in 2004, emphasizing the proven effectiveness of using FBA in educational settings with students eligible for special education (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Amendments of 2004). The remainder of this section is a literature review on FBAs with a focus on including students in the FBA process, and a brief review of applied behavior analysis for comprehension of FBA theory.

Applied Behavior Analysis

The study of observable human behaviors that are directly affected by the environment is the foundation of applied behavior analysis (ABA). Major defining features of ABA include an emphasis on the modification of human behaviors through a teaching or learning process, and doing so through functional assessment of behavior in the natural setting (Wolf, 1978). The earliest behavioral analysts urged that certain “socially important” behaviors cannot be studied in a laboratory setting and stressed the importance of observing an individual in the natural environment (Baer, Wolf & Risley, 1968; Wolf, 1978). By studying behavior in the natural setting, the social interactions that reinforce problem behaviors can be noted and used to determine the causes and maintaining consequences of problem behaviors (Wolf, 1978).

An additional principle of ABA is the emphasis on using socially valid intervention strategies to change behaviors (Wolf, 1978). In his article, Wolf (1978) explains the “social validity”, meaning socially relevant to treatment goals and achieved outcomes, of interventions should take into consideration: a) the social significance of the goals, b) the social appropriateness of the procedures, and c) the social importance of the effects. Relating ABA and social validity of interventions to the school setting, several research studies focused on increasing social interactions in children with autism consistently find that peer-guided interventions elicit an increase in positive behaviors and decrease withdrawal (Strain & Schwartz, 2001).

FBA Key Components

An FBA is an individual-focused process of gathering information used to determine the function or “purpose” of problem behavior within an environmental context. The functional-based approach of a FBA seeks to 1) to identify and define the problem behavior, 2) pinpoint the triggering antecedents or events that are predictors of the occurrence of the problem behavior, 3) identify the particular maintaining consequences of events that are likely to cause similar behaviors in the future, and 4) detecting the setting events that contribute to the severity of the problem behavior (O'Neill et al., 1997). These key components, known as the four-term operant, are primary outcomes of the functional assessment process and are the informants for the development of individualized behavior support plans (O'Neill et al., 1997; Scott et al., 2004; Sugai, Lewis-Palmer & Hagan, 1998).

Methods of Assessment

Prior to creating behavior support plans and intervention, a traditional FBA involves a formal and thorough method of collecting information about student behavior through a procedure of multiple direct observations, quantitative analysis of behavioral patterns, and hypothesis testing (O'Neill, Horner, Albin, Sprague, Keith & Newton, 1997)

Collecting FBA information occurs through either informant methods (talking to the student or those who know the student well) and/or direct observation of the student in their natural setting over an extended period of time. Research supports these two methods of collecting FBA data as descriptive contributors to the development of successful function-based interventions (e.g., Ingram, Lewis-Palmer, & Sugai, 2005).

FBA Effectiveness

Interventions designed to reduce student problem behaviors that are based on the results of an FBA can be more successful at reducing problem behaviors than those designed without assessment information (Ingram, Lewis-Palmer & Sugai, 2005). FBA-indicated interventions are more effective because they consider “function” of behavior, or what the student gains from the behavior in relation to environmental and social factors. Examples of function for a student whose problem behavior is “constantly talking out of turn” include gaining peer attention and/or teacher attention.

Although a large proportion of FBA research focuses on individuals with learning disabilities or with autism spectrum disorders (Strain & Schwartz, 2001), a study by Ingram, Lewis, and Sugai found FBA and the following behavior intervention procedures

to be effective and useful for positively altering the social behaviors of highly-functioning students in a general education setting (2005). Other research supports this finding of using function-based planning and assessment techniques in general education and has proven that in conjunction with effective classroom-management and school-wide discipline, FBA is an effective way to reduce the amount of behavioral problems at a school-wide or even district-wide level (Colvin, Sugai, Good, & Lee, 1997; Sugai, & Horner, 2006).

Functional Behavior Assessment Interviews

A functional behavior assessment interview (FBAI) is a method of assessment used to collect information about student behavioral problems. Mentioned before as an “informant method” of FBA, the FBAI is used with two groups of people: 1) those who know the student very well and are keen to the typical expressions and occurrences of problematic behaviors (i.e. teachers, support staff, parents, family members, other relevant people) and 2) the students who are exhibiting the problem behaviors. In the practical handbook “*Functional Assessment and Program Development for Problem Behavior*” (1997) the authors list the four main outcomes of a FBAI as: 1) clear descriptions of the problem behaviors causing distress, 2) identification of predictive factors for problem behaviors (and lack of problem behaviors) in the student’s both general and immediate physical environment, 3) identification of potential purposes the problem behaviors serve in relation to the factors or outcomes maintaining the behaviors,

and 4) development of summarizing reports/statements that describe the relationship between situations, behaviors, and functions.

The first group of informants who may participate in an FBAI are teachers. A teacher FBAI involves a researcher or support staff (trained in FBA) asking the student's instructor a series of questions regarding the student's problem behavior. The interview asks teachers to:

- 1) Describe the problem behaviors.
- 2) Define the setting events with prompts regarding the student's medical health, sleep and eating cycles, an outline of the daily schedule, and listing the other people (peers and staff) the student comes into contact with throughout their day that may influence behaviors.
- 3) Define the immediate antecedents that are predictors to the problem behavior with prompts about time of day, physical setting, people involved, and the activity or task at hand when problem behavior typically occurs.
- 4) Hypothesize the maintaining consequences of the behaviors, with an emphasis on positive or negative reinforcement and reminders that behaviors may serve multiple functions.
- 5) Define the efficiency of the problem behaviors. This is for students who display both appropriate and disruptive behaviors, but choose the problematic behavior at times as a more efficient way to reach their desired outcome.
- 6) Describe the proper and acceptable behaviors the student already knows and has demonstrated. This helps focus future directions by determining if new skills need to be taught.

- 7) Describe the primary ways the student communicates with others.
- 8) Comment on any support recommendations or things that should be avoided while working with the student.
- 9) Comment on things the student enjoys and are reinforcing to him or her.
- 10) Describe any other behavioral modification programs or methods that have been used with the student at any point in time, and if there was any change in behavior or lasting effects from these programs.
- 11) Develop summary statements for each major behavior predictor or consequence of behavior.

Teachers also can conduct a “self-interview” using an FBA interview form and answering the questions in a self-guided fashion. For example, the Functional Assessment Checklist for Teachers (March et al., 2000) has been beneficial in helping teachers and counselors complete FBAs and implement effective behavior intervention plans.

Student Functional Behavior Assessment Interviews

Conducting a student FBAI is similar to an FBAI with other informants, yet differs in multiple ways. The goals of the student FBAI are the same in their intent of determining setting events, triggering antecedents, and maintaining consequences of problem behaviors. These responses can be very meaningful because they are coming directly from the source. However, the student interview is usually shorter in length (20-40 minutes rather than 45-90 minutes), has questions that are worded appropriately for the age of the student, and includes additional questions such as suggestions for a support

plan. There is not a specific person who should conduct the student FBAI, and it can even be done by the student's teacher or parent. However, research suggests the most efficient student FBAIs are those conducted by an outside individual, such as a researcher, who the student does not know (Kinch, Lewis-Palmer, Burke & Sugai, 2001; O'Neill, Horner, Albin, Sprague, Keith & Newton, 1997).

A research study using a student FBAI with children identified as having emotional and behavioral disorders reported positive implications of including students in the interview process, citing the student's valuable input from first-hand explanations of their own behavior and the student's viable recommendations for possible support strategies (Kern, Dunlap, Clark & Childs, 1994). From the same research Kern, Dunlap, Clark and Childs also state the potential benefits of including students in FBAIs such as a) improving the quality of reported information, b) a greater range of information (such as setting events that occur at home an instructor would not have knowledge of), and c) improved efficacy of interventions and support plans (1994). Other research has looked at including students in the functional assessment process and testing for agreement between student and teacher hypotheses about problem behaviors. For example, the study by Reed, Thomas, Sprague, and Horner compared the responses from teacher and student FBAIs and found relatively high agreement on behaviors, predictors, and consequences (1997). The main difference found between teacher and student responses to the FBAI was that students consistently report more antecedents to their behaviors than their teachers, who may not been aware of all that happened throughout student's day (Kern, Dunlap, Clark & Childs, 1994; Wehmeyer, Baker, Blumberg & Harrison, 2004).

Summary

The literature review clearly endorses FBA as a way to support children who have behavioral problems at school (Kern, Hilt & Gresham, 2004; Scott, Bucalos, Liaupsin, Nelson, Jolivette & DeShea, 2004; Sugai, Lewis-Palmer & Hagan, 1998). Also, including students in FBAs is a way to create better behavior support plans that are more effective and efficient (Kern, Dunlap, Clark & Childs, 1994; Wehmeyer, Baker, Blumberg & Harrison, 2004). Currently, the research and FBAI tools and forms that exist are for students with mental disabilities or students at the middle and high school level of education (Lewis-Palmer, 1998). There is a need for a tool that can be used with elementary (K-5th grade) students so that researchers can assess if students of this age group can take part in a FBAI and thus contribute valuable information to the creation of their own behavior support plans and interventions. The present study sought to develop a FBAI tool to be used with elementary school students.

METHODOLOGY

Tool Development

There are many different functional behavior assessment interview (FBAI) forms that are tailored to specific populations of participants (i.e., teachers, students, parents). The previously created FBAI forms also vary across the level of intensity of behavior challenges (i.e., early intervention, at-risk, chronic, etc.). To develop the present Elementary-Student FBAI form multiple validated FBAs of different specifications were compiled and used similar formatting and types of questions that have been proven to be methods of effective interviewing. In addition, incorporating knowledge from other FBAI forms increased the likelihood that the Elementary-Student FBAI met the same standards of usability and completeness. The first draft of the Elementary-Student FBA is presented in Appendix 1.

The present project created a FBAI for elementary students (K-5) and while doing so, took into consideration the age of the students and their cognitive capacities. Similar questions for other FBAI tools and ones that have been identified in FBA literature were included, but the phrasing of questions was modified to reduce complexity and increase comprehension. For example, other FBAI forms pose the question “What appears to set off problem behavior?”, where in this form we changed the wording of the question to: “I am going to ask you some things that make school hard for other students and see if that is the same for you”, followed with a list of seven prompts that also have altered wording. An example of the changed wording on one of the prompts was changing “teacher reprimands” to “teacher correcting you”.

Another significant difference of this Elementary-Student FBA tool is in the table where students (with the help of the interviewer) fill in the parts of the day when they experience the most trouble. Other FBAI forms have older students rate the likelihood of their problem behaviors to occur with a numbered ranking of high likelihood to low likelihood. This type of rating might be confusing for lower elementary (Kindergarten or 1st grade) so we included smiley face choices (☺, ☹, 😞) that students could select to represent their feelings instead.

Expert Rating

After developing a final draft of the Elementary-Student FBAI we asked experts specializing in FBAs to rate the tool to see if it could be used in the field. The reviewers included several individuals who either complete research on school and home based FBAs (professors, graduate students) and practitioners who support elementary and preschool use of FBA. The FBA experts were asked to rate the Elementary-Student FBAI for completeness, accuracy, and usability and provide us with comments and feedback as to improve the tool. Included with the draft of the assessment tool we included a questionnaire (See Appendix 2).

The responses from the FBA experts prompted a few small changes to the Elementary-Student FBAI. There was agreement that the order of the questions made sense, but for the first question, trying to establish student strengths, one of the experts thought it would be beneficial to incorporate “why?” as well. Rather than just asking “what do you like to learn about?” the assessment form also asks “why do you like to

learn about that?” By doing so, it will help the interviewer narrow down what about a certain subject is appealing for a student to further inform later behavior intervention plans. For example, “I like art because I get to work independently” versus “I like art because I get to be creative”.

An additional change made to the Elementary-Student FBAI from the expert review was the wording of “have trouble” for the question about problem behaviors. The Elementary-Student FBAI originally asked “Some other students have told us they have trouble with the following things. Do you have trouble with any of these?”, (followed by a list of prompts). “Have trouble” may be a confusing term for some students, and was changed to “get in trouble for”. For example, a student may have “no” trouble running away from the classroom, but may often get into trouble for doing so.

The expert reviewers agreed the Elementary-Student FBA included questions reflective of current FBA research, all necessary questions for a thorough FBAI were included, and the scripted wording of the tool seemed easy to use. A theme of the expert reviews was that the language was “somewhat” appropriate for both upper and lower elementary students. Additional changes to the wording and language may be changed once the tool is tested in the field.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this project was to develop a FBAI tool to be used with elementary aged students with severe problem behaviors. Taking into consideration the cognitive capabilities of early to middle childhood, we created an assessment tool that is designed for elementary students by altering the wording and way in which the questions of the FBA are asked.

Expert Feedback

The experts believed the Elementary-Student FBAI form is likely to be understood by students, has easy usability for interviewers and teachers, and asks all questions identified in previous literature as necessary for an effective FBAI. To determine a consensus of the expert's reviews we compiled the data from the 1-3 scale from the expert questionnaire into an average score and range of scores for each question. This information, along with a synopsis of each question's commentary is presented in Appendix 3.

Limitations

While including students in FBAs does have a sound research base, there is currently no data about the extent to which younger children can participate. Student inclusion in functional assessment is important because they can be a great source of

information and contribute to the acceptability of behavior support plans, but first we must determine the capacity at which children of elementary age can contribute valuable insight.

An additional limitation was the limited number of responses received from the expert reviewers. Those who did respond did provide valuable insight and recommendations that resulted in a few changes to the Elementary-Student FBAI. However, there were two researcher experts who responded and one practitioner who responded, so there may be information and important ideas or opinions missed because a small number of experts were able to complete the review questionnaire.

Future Directions

The next step for future research after the development of the Elementary-Student FBA form is to perform a study with elementary students using the new tool. Researchers should compare the responses provided from the elementary student interview to the responses from the teacher FBAI to determine if agreement exists between student-generated hypotheses and teacher-generated hypotheses about the antecedents and consequences of problem behaviors. Data from multiple direct observations (coding for antecedents, behaviors, and consequences) should also be collected and compared with the information collected from the student and teacher FBAs. A pilot study of this nature asks the research question: Are elementary students able to accurately predict the causes of their problem behaviors and by doing so can they help to formulate their own intervention strategies?

Once the Elementary-Student FBAI tool has been used with students, the next step would be to use the information gained from the student interview to create a behavior intervention plan (BIP). Behavior intervention planning builds from the results of the functional assessment provides support for the individual to improve their behavior. Therefore, using the new tool will allow elementary students to contribute ideas to the development of their individualized BIP.

Conclusion

While much is known about FBA-BIP there remains a gap in our assessment process. Including the individual in their own assessment increases our access to assessment information from the perspective of the individual, provides useful information about what type of intervention would be considered appropriate and also, how the intervention should be modified to support the person throughout their day. While knowledge exists of proven benefits from including older students in the FBA process, little is known about elementary age students' ability to successfully participate in the FBA process. This project developed an FBAI tool that could assist researchers in exploring this question.

REFERENCES

- Adelman, H., & Taylor, L. (2005). *The school leader's guide to student learning supports: New directions for addressing barriers to learning*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- American Psychiatric Association (2000). *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders, DSM-IV-TR*. (IV ed.). Washington, DC.: American Psychiatric Pub Inc.
- Baer, D., Wolf, M., & Risley, T. (1968). Some current dimensions of applied behavior analysis. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis, 1*(1), 91-97. doi: 10.1901/jaba.1968.1-91
- Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Scholastic. (2012). *Primary sources: 2012 America's teachers on the teaching profession*. Retrieved from Scholastic Inc. website: www.scholastic.com/primarysources
- Colvin, G., Sugai, G., Good, R., & Lee, Y. (1997). Using active supervision and precorrection to improve transition behaviors in an elementary school. *School Psychology Quarterly, 12*(4), 344-363.
- Dunbar, C. (2004). *Best practices in classroom management*. East Lansing, MI: Michigan State University, College of Education. Retrieved from <https://www.msu.edu/~dunbarc/dunbar3.pdf>
- Dunlap, G., Carr, E., Horner, R., Zarcone, J., & Schwartz, I. (2008). Positive behavior support and applied behavior analysis: A familial alliance. *Behavior Modification, 32*(5), 682-698. doi: 10.1177/0145445508317132
- Epstein, M., Atkins, M., Cullinan, D., Kutash, K., and Weaver, R. (2008). *Reducing Behavior Problems in the Elementary School Classroom: A Practice Guide* (NCEE#2008-012). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. Retrieved from <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/publications/practiceguides>.
- Frank, J., McIntosh, K., & Spaulding, S. (2010). Establishing research-based trajectories of office discipline referrals for individual students. *School Psychology Review, 39*(3), 380-394.
- Freidman, I. (2000). Burnout in teachers: Shattered dreams of impeccable professional performance. *JCLP/In Session: Psychotherapy in Practice, 56*(5), 595-606. Retrieved from <http://curriculumstudies.pbworks.com/f/Burnout+in+Teachers+-+Isaac+Friedman.pdf>

- Horner, R. H. (1994). Functional assessment: Contributions and future directions. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, 27(2), 401-404.
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Amendments of 2004, 11 Stat. 37 U.S.C. Section 1401 (2004) *et seq.*
- Ingram, K., Lewis-Palmer, T., & Sugai, G. (2005). Function-based intervention planning: Comparing the effectiveness of FBA function-based and non function-based intervention plans. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions*, 7(4), 224-236. doi: 10.1177/10983007050070040401
- Kern, L., Childs, K. E., Dunlap, G., Clarke, S., & Falk, G. D. (1994). Using assessment-based curricular intervention to improve the classroom behavior of a student with emotional and behavioral challenges. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, 27(1), 7-19.
- Kern, L., Dunlap, G., Clarke, S., & Childs, K.E. (1994). Student-Assisted functional assessment interview. *Diagnostique*, 19(2-3), 29-39.
- Kern, L., Hilt, A., & Gresham, F. (2004). An evaluation of the functional behavioral assessment process used with students with or at risk for emotional and behavioral disorders. *Education and Treatment of Children*, 27(4), 440-452.
- Kinch, C., Lewis-Palmer, T., Hagan-Burke, S., & Sugai, G. (2001). A comparison of teacher and student functional behavior assessment interview information from low-risk and high-risk classrooms. *Education and Treatment of Children*, 24(4), 480-494.
- Kuzman, F. J., & Schnall, H. (1987). Managing teachers' stress: Improving discipline. *Canadian School Executive*, 6, 3-10.
- Lassen, S., Steele, M., & Sailor, W. (2006). The relationship of school-wide positive behavior support to academic achievement in an urban middle school. *Psychology in the Schools*, 43(6), 701-712. doi: 10.1002/pits.20177
- Lewis-Palmer, T. (1998). *Using functional assessment strategies in regular classroom settings with students at-risk for school failure*. (Doctoral dissertation). University of Oregon, Eugene OR.
- Lewis-Palmer, T., Bounds, M., & Sugai, G. (2004). Districtwide system for providing individual student support. *Assessment for Effective Intervention*, 30(1), 53-65. doi: 10.1177/073724770403000105
- March, R. E., Horner, R. H., Lewis-Palmer, T., Brown, D., Crone, D., Todd, A. W., & Carr, E. (2000). Functional assessment checklist for teachers and staff (FACTS). *Eugene, OR: Educational and Community Supports*.

- McCormick, J., & Barnett, K. (2011). Teachers' attributions for stress and their relationships with burnout. *International Journal of Educational Management*, 25(3), 278-293. doi: 10.1108/09513541111120114
- National Commission on Teaching and America's Future. (2010). Who will teach? experience matters. Retrieved from <http://nctaf.org/wpcontent/uploads/2012/01/NCTAF-Who-Will-Teach-Experience-Matters-2010-Report.pdf>
- O'Neill, R., Horner, R., Albin, R., Sprague, J., Keith, S., & Newton, J. S. (1997). *Functional assessment and program development for problem behavior: A practical handbook*. (2nd ed.). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole Publishing Company.
- Reed, H., Thomas, E., Sprague, J., & Horner, R. (1997). The student guided functional assessment interview: An analysis of student and teacher agreement. *Journal of Behavioral Education*, 7(1), 33-49. doi: 10.1023/A:1022837319739
- Schiff, M., & BarGil, B. (2004). Children with behavior problems: Improving elementary school teachers' skills to keep these children in class. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 26(2), 207-234. doi: 10.1016/j.childyouth.2004.01.009
- Scott, T., Bucalos, A., Liaupsin, C., Nelson, C., Jolivette, K., & DeShea, L. (2004). Using functional behavior assessment in general education settings: Making a case for effectiveness and efficiency. *Behavioral Disorders*, 29(2), 189-201.
- Strain, P., & Schwartz, I. (2001). ABA and the development of meaningful social relations for young children with autism. *Focus on Autism & Other Developmental Disabilities*, 16(2), 120-129.
- Sugai, G., & Horner, R. (2006). A promising approach for expanding and sustaining school-wide positive behavior support. *School Psychology Review*, 35(2), 245-259.
- Sugai, G., Lewis-Palmer, T., & Hagan, S. (1998). Using functional assessments to develop behavior support plans. *Preventing School Failure: Alternative Education for Children and Youth*, 433(1), 6-13. doi: 10.1080/10459889809603294
- U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. (2008). *Public school teacher data file: Schools and staffing survey (SASS)*
- Wehmeyer, M., Baker, D., Blumberg, R., & Harrison, R. (2004). Self-determination and student involvement in functional assessment: Innovative practices. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions*, 6(1), 29-35. doi: 10.1177/10983007040060010501

- Wolf, M. (1978). Social validity: The case for subjective measurement or how applied behavior analysis is finding its heart. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis, 11*(2), 203-214.
- Yong, Z., & Yue, Y. (2008). Causes for burnout among secondary and elementary school teachers and preventative strategies. *Chinese Education and Society, 40*(5), 78-85. doi: 10.2753/CED 1061-1932400508

APPENDICES

Appendix 1. The Elementary-Student FBA Interview Form

Student:	Interviewer:	Date:
Grade:	Teacher:	Room:

1. Thanks for meeting with me today. I would like to know more about what you like and don't like about school. First let's talk about what you like to do at school?

- a. What's your favorite thing to learn about? Why do you enjoy learning about that?

- b. What are you good at?

2. Now let's talk about what doesn't go well at school?

- a. What do you find it hard to learn?

- b. What do you do that gets you in trouble?

3. Some other students have told us that they have trouble with the following things. Do you get into trouble for any of these things?

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Touch other people's things | <input type="checkbox"/> Disruptive/Talk out | <input type="checkbox"/> Upset/Crying |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Don't do my work | <input type="checkbox"/> Argue with other students | <input type="checkbox"/> Runaway/Leave Area |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Don't do what teachers ask | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't participate | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ | | |

4. Which of the things that you get in trouble for do think is the most important to change?

_____.

O.K., let's talk more about that.

5. I want to talk about the things that make school hard for you. I am going to ask you some things that make school hard for other students and see if that is the same for you?

- Hard/long work Teacher correcting you Other students bothering you
 Easy/boring work Teacher busy helping other students Not sure what you are supposed to be doing
 Too much noise in the room Other _____

6. During the day, when do you have the most trouble?

Time	Activity (Topic and Format) When (Activity and Setting)	With whom	How Likely		
			High	Low	
			3 ☺	2 ☹	1 ☹
			3 ☺	2 ☹	1 ☹
			3 ☺	2 ☹	1 ☹
			3 ☺	2 ☹	1 ☹

7. What would you like to happen so that you don't do _____ and get in trouble?

- a. What does your teacher do when you do _____?
- b. What would you like them to do instead?
- c. What do other students do when you do _____?
- d. What would you like them to do instead?

8. Here are some things that other students have told us that they like to have happen. Are there any of these that you would like to have happen?

Get/Obtain

___ Teacher talk or helps you

___ Other students talk or help you

___ Get to do something different

Escape/Avoid

___ Teacher stops the work

___ Teacher leaves you alone

___ Other students leave you alone

9. Sometimes things happen that make us have bad days. Tell me if any of these things make you have a bad day.

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Too noisy | <input type="checkbox"/> Tired | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't feel well |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fight with a friend | <input type="checkbox"/> Teased by other students | <input type="checkbox"/> Mom/Dad mad |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Time of Day | <input type="checkbox"/> Hungry | |

Other: _____

10. Let me make sure I understand what you have told me about school. Does this sound right to you?

9. Setting Events	5. Antecedents	3. Behavior	8. Consequences

11. What are things that could happen that would make school better or easier for you? Make it less likely that you will get into trouble?

Academic	Behavioral	Environmental
<input type="checkbox"/> Give you less work <input type="checkbox"/> Make work __Easier __Harder <input type="checkbox"/> Provide extra help <input type="checkbox"/> Let you participate more <input type="checkbox"/> Let you complete the assignment in a different way <input type="checkbox"/> _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Remind you what your are supposed to do <input type="checkbox"/> Make a plan with the teacher <input type="checkbox"/> Give you more praise <input type="checkbox"/> Let you work with a friend <input type="checkbox"/> Let you help the teacher <input type="checkbox"/> Special classroom task <input type="checkbox"/> _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Change where you sit <input type="checkbox"/> Modify the schedule <input type="checkbox"/> Put something on your desk to help you remember <input type="checkbox"/> Keep homework at school <input type="checkbox"/> Make the room quieter <input type="checkbox"/> Let you take a break <input type="checkbox"/> _____

12. What are things that your teacher could do to let you know that you are doing what you are supposed to?

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Let me take a break | <input type="checkbox"/> Tell my parents I had a good day | <input type="checkbox"/> Let me do _____(activity) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Let me play with a friend | <input type="checkbox"/> Give me a snack | <input type="checkbox"/> Tell me I am doing a good job |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Let me go visit
_____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Let me earn
_____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Other:
_____ |

Thank you for talking with me today. Is there anything else that you think would make school better or things that really make school hard for you?

Appendix 2. Expert Rating Questionnaire.

Question	Rating	Comments
Do the questions reflect research on effective FBAs	3 2 1	
Are all necessary questions included in the FBAI	3 2 1	
Does the order of the questions make sense?	3 2 1	
Do you think that practitioners could use the FBAI?	3 2 1	
Is the language appropriate for upper elementary students?	3 2 1	
Is the language appropriate for lower elementary students?	3 2 1	

Appendix 3. Expert Rating Statistics Table.

Question	Mean Rating	Range	Comment Summary
Do the questions reflect research on effective FBAs	3	3	All agree the questions reflect FBA research
Are all necessary questions included in the FBAI	2.66	2-3	Yes, maybe too many questions and therefore too long of an interview for a young child
Does the order of the questions make sense?	2.66	2-3	Yes, maybe rearrange questions 5 and 6
Do you think that practitioners could use the FBAI?	2.66	2-3	Only concern that interpreting and applying information obtained from student FBAI will be lost on untrained practitioners (i.e., teachers)
Is the language appropriate for upper elementary students?	2	2	Concerned about smiley face Likert scale for upper elementary
Is the language appropriate for lower elementary students?	2	1-3	Disagreement that lower elementary students can participate in any capacity

