Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports

Transcription of the Online Webinar hosted on May 27, 2009 by the Utah Parent Center

**Presented by: Rebecca Turley,
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Welcome to our webinar today on "Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports." My name is Jody Jones and I am introducing and giving announcements today. I am a Parent Consultant here at the Utah Parent Center and we are so happy to have you participating and learning a little more about this topic. Before we begin, we want to let you know that there is a series of previously recorded audio webinars and video workshops that are located on the Utah Parent Center website. The Utah Parent Center is excited that we have moved into the age of technology at easy-to-access internet trainings, webinars, videos and materials. You will now be able to enjoy training and accessing information right from your computer. You can watch or listen to the information specifically related to transition and IEP (or Individualized Educational Program) and plans by going to our website at www.utahparentcenter.org and then clicking on resources and materials, and then click on the button that says training, webinars, videos and materials. You can listen to any of the webinars or watch a series of video workshops choosing from our four in-depth videos on transition or the four in-depth videos on IEP.

Today we are pleased to have with us Rebecca Turley. Rebecca is a parent consultant and trainer for the Utah Parent Center. She enjoys serving parents who have children with disabilities and helping them find resources that they need to be successful. Rebecca understands the importance of influencing public policy on disability issues, and serves on several committees, including the Youth Special Education Advisory panel and the No Child Left Behind Committee for

Jordan School District. From her own experiences, Rebecca understands how disabilities can impact a family. She is married and she has two children. Her husband has an eye disease called retinitis pigmentosa, and is currently legally blind. She also has a 14 year old daughter with severe disabilities. Prior to joining the Utah Parent Center, Rebecca lived in San Diego, and was vice-president on the Board of the Learning Disability Association, as well as a consultant and presenter for four years. We are so glad to have Rebecca with us, and the time is now yours Rebecca.

REBECCA: I'd like to welcome everyone here today. I hope you can all hear me. If for some reason one of you can't, just type in a little note to me and I can talk louder or we can kind of troubleshoot the situation. As Jody mentioned, I do have a daughter with several severe disabilities, and I thought I'd start by talking a little bit about her. One of her disabilities is a severe speech and language disorder, and it's called apraxia. She also has an intellectual impairment, and she also has severe ADHD. She has been a joy and a blessing in our family, but as I look at the pros and cons, probably one of the more difficult things about raising her has been behavior issues – probably targeted to her ADHD and some of those characteristics that go along with that. It has been difficult for her sibling. She has a sister and in that relationship, behavior and issues have also been difficult with her relationship with us her parents, at times, as well as, it migrated into the school as well, and there have been many episodes where we've had to come together as a team to try to troubleshoot some of the behaviors that she was showing. So, I am empathetic to parents and teachers out there. It is difficult to deal with behavior issues and I think that's why it's important to take a look at this technique of positive behavioral interventions and the IEP. From my own experience as we've sought help out into the community, I know that behavioral specialists incorporate this into their trainings and help for parents, and I know that this is a best practiced technique that is used

through the different schools, and certainly once you learn the technique as parents, you can incorporate this into what you do at home, and it can improve your relationship with all your children at home, and especially as we're talking about today, your child that may have a disability. But as we know, and we do get a lot of parent calls here that have to do with behavior, some children really just have a difficult time behaving appropriately. Sometimes it's because of a diagnosis. Some children, just by nature, like my own daughter, with her ADHD, she is impulsive. Many times they may have characteristics of being oppositional, they may have anxiety or depression, they may have a mental health diagnosis, such as bipolar and some of the mental things; and it is difficult – it impedes learning in the classroom a lot of times, which we'll talk about quite a bit today. So, with that, let's go ahead and get started with some of this philosophy.

We begin with a slide. It says, "If I had but one life to give for my country, it would be Billy, in the third row." You can tell by the expression on this poor educator's face it was definitely a difficult day, and I would have to say for Billy, as well, in the third row. I think we have to respect the fact that it is a very difficult job to be a teacher. Having a child with behavior issues in the classroom can certainly be, can take a lot of energy, emotional energy, and it certainly takes a lot of consistency in the interventions used to turn problematic behavior into positive behavior, whether you're a teacher, whether you're a parent as well. But I have to say it is worth our time and our effort to try different strategies to use because in the long run, it will make the environment better for both the teacher and the student, which is what our goal is.

"There is logic behind the behaviors of our children. Our challenge is to understand its context." For me in my life, I have found that once I figure out what the context is – and sometimes that takes exploring and investigation to determine what the context is and what some of those triggers are that

are causing behavior – then it really does become logical and I understand the logic behind it and it's much easier to design an intervention when you can figure out these things and to remember that it is possible to find logic.

This slide shows a model of a negative perspective. The way that we view the child affects the way that we act towards them. In this model, the negative perspective of behavior, the child is a problem, and that is the view that is taken. So, as a parent or a teacher, your thoughts might be that this child is mean, disrespectful, or deliberate, and that may cause you to have feelings, such as: you may have anger towards the child, you may feel threatened by the child, for example, and that may influence your behavior. Your behavior might be to punish that child or to offer an ultimatum. It's very easy to get caught up into this negative perspective of behavior. It's a cycle that can go on and on, and it can become a habit. I want you to think for a moment what this negative cycle can mean for a child that happens to be the one that you're projecting this onto over time. I'll let you kind of think about that to yourself. Perhaps you know a child in which this has occurred, or maybe a teacher and you feel like you have been in this cycle. There's lots of things that maybe you can think of, but for one thing, many children turn off after being in this negative cycle and hearing negative messages over a period of time. Many children will just disengage, many may not listen anymore. The things that you're saying may become like white noise if they've heard it so much and they don't want to hear it anymore - they may just completely disengage. It can certainly lead to feelings of hopelessness and despair in the child. Now I have to mention that, with my own daughter, sometimes when I do find myself in this cycle, you know, she has used, maybe you've heard of the fight or flight response. Some kids are more prone to the flight response and they really disengage. My child is more the opposite. She exhibits sort of the fight response, so if I'm angry or I'm punishing her, that just ignites her even further, and she seems to, it just

increases her tantruming and negative behavior. So we have learned to be very careful with the way we show anger towards her, and to use a non-threatening voice and to keep her level so it doesn't escalate and then we're there for a long period of time dealing with a severe tantrum situation. So it's important to realize that when we're in this cycle that children respond differently to it, and to just be aware of it.

And in contrast to this, there is a different cycle that we want to take a look at. It's more of a positive perspective of behavior. And I want you to notice the contrast in this. In this model, the child <u>has</u> a problem, instead of the child *is* a problem as in the previous one. So the thoughts are a little bit different. Instead of thinking the child is mean, disrespectful or deliberate, the thoughts are more: the child may be unhappy, the child is discouraged or frustrated. So the feelings look a little bit different if you think about that the child <u>has</u> a problem - the feelings of concern and empathy. And then the behaviors would be more towards wanting to support the child, encourage the child, looking for ways of helping the child. So, you can see that as a contrast. I want you to think for a moment: What are some of the problems children might have that contribute to problem behavior? Well many of our kids with disabilities, they do have disability issues, such as, for example, lack of communication. I happen to have a daughter with a severe speech and language disorder and for her, many times, it's been difficult for her to express her desires and her feelings. Sometimes she comes across as unintelligible, and so it's very frustrating to her, and because of this disability issue, she gets upset, sometimes she'll throw a tantrum, and definitely we see problem behavior because of that. Many kids have sensory issues: their sensory development isn't the same as typical children, so seeing, touching, hearing, feeling, smelling, may be affected by the type of disability.

I remember when my daughter was younger it was very difficult for her to be around a microphone or a PA system. In

fact, just being close by the PA system would just set her off into a meltdown and she would throw a tantrum and we would have to quickly remove her from that environment. With some kids, just certain clothes they don't like, fluorescent lights, there may be different things that definitely are triggers for behavior issues. Many kids seek acknowledgement, whether they have a disability or not, this is very frequent – they want to be noticed by the people that they look up to: parents and teachers. So, in order to gain your attention, they might exhibit either positive behavior or negative behavior in seeking your acknowledgement. Many kids try to escape things; things that they don't want to do: people, activities, or class, things they don't want to do, getting dressed for school is something difficult that you might go through as a parent, or getting on the bus, or even completing tasks at school that are very difficult. All of these things are triggers that can cause behavior issues, so it's important that we try to recognize the function of what these different behaviors are so that we can come up with interventions that will be appropriate and be successful.

"If the model for developing power resides in the powerful, that is, if what we learn about how to behave is by observing those who have power over us – then those in power must assume responsibility for modeling appropriate behaviors." So, to me, this means that children learn from the examples of others, especially those who are role models to them: a parent or a teacher. So if a teacher or a parent threatens or punishes excessively, you have to realize that that may be setting the standard for future adult behaviors by the child. And you may be showing the student or the child this is how to respond to the undesirable behaviors of others. In fact, there's a lot of studies that show that when teachers and parents who rely on punishment as the primary intervention, you actually may see an increase in the level of unacceptable behaviors as the children begin to copy the behaviors of their models. So you might notice this as parents (I teach this more from a parent perspective, you'll notice). I remember when my kids were

younger and they role played playing school or playing house and they're in the parent role, and you'll notice them saying things, little things, that you say frequently. You'll just notice that they pick up on your cues. They're like little sponges and they take everything in and they learn from your behavior. So I think it's important to recognize that they are observing us and that we teach them future behaviors by how we act towards them.

We want to talk a little bit about the IEP team and what the responsibilities of the team are when they have a child whose behavior impedes their learning. This is what is stated in the law. It says that, "In the case of a child whose behavior impedes his or her learning or that of others, consider, when appropriate, strategies, including positive behavioral interventions, strategies, and supports to address that behavior." So this shows that the school really does need to consider when a child's behavior affects their learning, and there really needs to be some proactive plan, some supports, that they need to come up with to address these needs.

This is a model that shows the philosophy of what we're talking about today: the positive behavioral supports. And it's a model of increased positive behaviors. The box towards your left, we'll start with that – it states that positive behaviors that result in desirable consequences for the child are likely to be retained or strengthened. And I think it's human nature that when we do something, and we're praised for it, and we're rewarded for it, we want to repeat this kind of behavior. And that's what it's saying, that we want to play on that human nature there and to offer reinforcement for positive behaviors, in an effort to keep those positive behaviors continuing on. Now, reinforcement can be used in a lot of different ways. We should always praise a child for what they are doing correctly. But there's lots of other things that can be used with reinforcement, along with praise, such as: edibles for a smaller

child, special privileges, stickers are used, extra time for a preferred activity.

We have a little comment. Let me stop there for a minute. From Katie, she says, "I think it's important to note that parents should be part of the IEP team." And thank you for that comment. Yes, parents absolutely should be part of that IEP team, and we're going to talk a little bit about more of those responsibilities of the parent and the school as we continue on, but thank you for that comment and absolutely, parents need to be aware of that.

Now, getting back to reinforcements, I just wanted to tell you my own personal experience with my daughter, when she was younger, one of the difficult things for me to do was to take her out in the community because some of the behaviors that we had. She was volatile sometimes, and I was always fearful of a tantrum out in public and what I would do, and that kind of thing. Some of you might relate to that. So, one of my strategies was that I had a pocketful of Skittles that I would take (Jody here is laughing with me; I think some parents can relate to this), and I had a little check-off sheet. These are things, she had to earn her Skittles, but these were things that she would have to do. It was very helpful like when we went to the grocery store: "Keep your hands to yourself, don't take the food off the shelves, etc.", whatever it was, and then she would get rewarded with a Skittle. And now she's older, she's 14 years old now, so we thankfully have graduated from Skittles. Now what she will work really hard for is, and I use this a lot with her because it's what motivates her, is she will pretty much do anything to earn a dollar because she likes to spend money and she's my little shopaholic. We've settled on the amount of a dollar for certain things, especially when we're working on a replacement behavior, which we currently are. She can earn a dollar, she collects enough that she can go buy this item that she really really wants. So as our kids get older, the motivators might be different, but still I think a lot of our kids just really need

that motivation to keep them plugging along and keep them with the desire to keep wanting to work on behavior and to do things appropriately.

The circle up at the top right, I'm just going to continue on a little bit. It says, positive behaviors are governed by positive consequences. So that reinforces the idea that those positive consequences or reinforcement is really important. I wanted to share with you that, well before I do this example, I wanted to mention that our goal with positive reinforcement is to have a much higher ratio of reinforcement including positive comments than to the negatives. I was looking at the website of the Utah Youth Village recently, and was impressed by what they do. One of the things that the Utah Youth Village does, is they try to change the lives of troubled teens. They take them and work on behaviors, and before they send them back into the homes, they do offer parenting classes and different things, so that when the kids return that it's a good environment at home. On their website, they do have tips for parents. One of the things on their website that I took note of, that I think kind of reinforces what we're talking about here, is it says that parents are to praise children 10 times more than they criticize, and that's what they recommend. So you can see that this is really, really important. And in a situation where a teen is getting negative messages for such a long time that they're now considered a troubled teen and is sent to this type of facility, that this is a type of technique that is used to really turn things around. It just goes to show that it is really important and it's a big guiding principle of this model.

Now the last little section says that, "Negative behaviors that do not result in desirable consequences are discarded or weakened." So the theory behind this philosophy is, if you maintain a high level of positive reinforcement, then what you should see is that the negative behavior should decrease, and that's what we're after, that's our goal. A note about consequences: I want to mention that consequences are okay

and are important to any kind of behavior plan. What I feel works the best is, if you decide what the consequences will be ahead of time; maybe even decide with your child what the consequence is, so that in the heat of the moment you don't lose it. And I just find that that's a really good strategy that I have found myself to work really good. I also want to make a note about reinforcement, that you need to be really careful that you're not reinforcing negative behavior. And I'll share with you an example of this. One of the difficult things was for my daughter to go to church and to stay in her class. She would frequently leave her class and would be in the hallway. After some investigation, I noticed that she happened to know where some of the certain men were that carry candy in their pockets, and so she would find these men and she would take the candy out. That was really, really reinforcing for her. She was getting a lot more reinforcement outside of the class than she was inside the class. Once we figured out that this is what was happening, we had to just tell them not to give her treats unless she had earned them, if she had the parents' permission, or her teacher's permission, and this did help a lot. So sometimes we need to analyze ourselves and what we're giving reinforcement towards, making sure it's the positive things and that they're earning these things and not reinforcing the negative.

Okay, let's talk about consequences a little bit. This is a model, it's a widely-used model, let me start over there. It's a widely-used approach to dealing with difficult behavior, and that is to wait until the behavior occurs. So, in this case, it's Mary hit Anne. So as soon as that behavior occurs, then you impose a consequence. So, parents and schools using this approach simply expect children to be good, and then they punish them when they're not. I think we can all feel ourselves, that we've done this from time to time whether we want to admit it or not. It's easy to do; it doesn't take a lot of forethought. You just expect them to be good and then you lie down and offer that consequence. One of the flaws of this

approach is that it doesn't teach replacement behaviors, so that appropriate skills can be learned. And what our goal is, is that if a child is able to learn appropriate behaviors to achieve the same desired outcome as is gained using inappropriate behaviors, then the need for negative behaviors no longer exists.

So in contrast to this, I'd like to show you a positive intervention approach, so that you can see what the difference is. Positive behavioral interventions are planned interventions that take place before the onset of problem behaviors, before escalation of those behaviors, or to prevent the behaviors from reoccurring. So, you notice this model looks a little bit different. There are things going on before Mary hit Anne, that little section there. There's a lot of things that we can do to try to prevent Mary from even wanting to hit Anne. If you look at the conditions and the environment that's happening before: What are the triggers that are causing Mary to escalate to the point where she's hitting Anne? So, we need to investigate that a little bit, and that can be done through collection of data, asking yourself some questions: Is there a pattern? What are some of the things that are setting off the situations? And then you want to plan some interventions and to put those into place. Maybe modify the environment in some way.

Part of the intervention should be teaching appropriate replacement behaviors, and that's really key - to teach them what to do instead. Schools are really great and they have a lot of training in interventions and in what to do, and so they have offered me a lot of ideas that I have tried at home, based on what I have seen done at school. I wanted to mention a couple of interventions that could be considered, either in the classroom or at home. One is a social story with pictures that show replacement behaviors. I am actually currently using that as a method at home myself for my daughter on something we're trying to improve on. It's a social story that shows exactly

what she's to be doing. We read it through every single evening, and if she sits and listens to it, she gets a reward or a little treat or something for even role-playing or doing the different behaviors appropriately. There's a video, you can use a video, with child modeling to correct behaviors, and that's used quite a bit. Teaching calming activities is a great one. Some kids really have a difficult time with anger management and learning how to relax, and learning how to stop what they're doing. So if you can teach them ways of relaxation this can be a really good strategy.

Something having to do with a replacement behavior rather than having a big blow-up or a tantrum; role-playing as well. I wanted to share with you a story of my daughter, where we had to come up with some of these different interventions. She pretty much got herself kicked off the bus. She was a real screamer, and as soon as she left home and the bus would take off, she would scream, and it was very distracting for the bus driver and the other students. It got to a point where the bus would get to a certain point on the route, and if she was still screaming, she would take her home to me. She actually was being reinforced again. By her screaming, she got to go home, and she kind of learned that that was how she could go back home and not get to school. It was an emergency situation that occurred, and I had to call the IEP team together, including someone from transportation. Of course, I as a parent, was a part of that team, and we had to come up with strategies for her to use on the bus and many things we talked about we actually incorporated into her plan. Some of the school came over to my home with a video camera and actually videotaped her saying goodbye to mom, getting on the bus appropriately, greeting the bus driver, etc. She herself was in this video which made it even more fun. She would sit down on the bus and would show all of the replacement behavior that we were asked her on the video and I would play it for her every morning. Every morning we also had her teacher call her, which was going beyond the call of duty, to

remind her to have a safe bus ride, and that if she had a safe bus ride, there would be a reward for her at school. So there was that reinforcement element, it was something that she really wanted and was willing to work for, so these are things that, by using these interventions I should say, it didn't happen right away. It took some time, it took some consistency, but it really did make a difference and she's 14 now, and she will actually ride the bus and there's no problem. In fact, her bus driver tells me one time she was left on the bus and her bus driver said, "It's because she's so quiet that I forgot she was there." You can see what a big turnaround she had from her screaming self to how she is now, so that was really effective.

Okay, positive behavioral interventions: This slide breaks down each of the words with a little definition, so let's go through. Positive is characterized by or displaying approval, acceptance or affirmation. Behavior is the manner of conducting oneself; something a person does in response to its environment. And then intervention is to enter a course of events so as to hinder or change it. There's a lot of proactive words; you seek out what's happening in the environment, intervention is actually very proactive to actually enter into a course of events in an effort to hinder and change it. So that does take some effort; it doesn't always come that easy, it does take some planning, and it's a process that we all go through.

"Whose problem is it? The problem is not just with the child, but in relationships between the child and the environment. Interventions must involve the environment as a whole, not just the child alone, or even just the child and family." It uses the words environment quite a bit. There are many environmental factors that can trigger behaviors like we've talked about. We need to examine both the school and the home environment for different clues. Many times, the event that occurs right before the behavior manifests itself then puts the behavior into context. I have a little example.

Perhaps a child throws his book loudly onto the floor before having to read out loud. With further investigation, you may find that the child has difficulty reading, and rather than embarrassing himself in front of the class, he chooses to be disruptive, and he faces having to leave the classroom. So, this is a situation that could happen, and you might just think, "Well, this child is disruptive," but if you really look at the environment as a whole, you notice that there's something more to that; there's something triggering that behavior, so creating a plan to address the reading will decrease the behavior.

We're going to get a little bit more into some of the school responsibilities now. The functional behavioral assessment looks at why a child behaves as he or she does given: the nature of the child, and what is happening in the environment. So this is a very important assessment to be aware of for teachers and for parents. If you have a child that struggles with behavior, perhaps you have a child that's been already suspended 1 or 2 days and is at risk for being suspended again; if that child, the normal and typical strategies that are used in the classroom don't work for your child, your child might need a little bit more. Be aware that this assessment exists and you can certainly advocate for your child and ask that this type of assessment be done.

The functional behavioral assessment guides decision-making about the needs of your child; leads to strategies to help meet the need; is required when a child is to be removed from his or her educational program beyond 10 days; and should be considered in any evaluation when behavioral concerns have not responded to standard interventions. So this is a type of assessment that many times is done by a psychologist or someone who is perhaps a behavioral specialist to come in and collect some data and to take a look at what the different triggers are that is causing the behavior because we want our kids to be available for learning. And if there's something that can be done intervention-wise to be put into

place in a behavioral intervention plan, then this would be very important to have this type of assessment done.

"Problem behaviors are context-related and they arise in response to environmental events." So this lists different types of environments, so we'll begin by the classroom environment. These are things that could affect behavior. Seating – maybe for a child with ADHD, where that child is placed in the classroom can have a big affect on his behavior. Noise level – a lot of kids feel overwhelmed with a lot of noise, perhaps they have a sensory issue. Disruptions and temperature. Then there's child-specific conditions, such as medication effects. I've had a lot of personal experience with this area in trying to figure out which medication is the best one, is there a medication that's going to work, etc. No one knew, the doctors just said, "You just need to try them and see." Definitely, medication can affect behavior.

There's a question: "Is the FBA required if the child is removed from the classroom for 10 days?" Yes, if the child is suspended for more than 10 days, it is mandatory. It's mandatory, I think it was covered in the last slide. Let me go back: It says it is required when a child is to be removed from his or her educational program beyond 10 days. So after 10 days it's considered change of placement. And then it becomes necessary to perform a functional behavioral assessment at that point, especially if a child is on an IEP. Michelle says, "Is it 60 hours or 10 days?" I think the main thing we want to bring across is you don't have to wait until 10 days have gone by or your child is suspended for more than 10 days. I want to let you know as a parent, that you can advocate for this, if you feel it's necessary for your child. If you feel like your child has already been suspended for a couple days, it's not 10 yet, but just a few, the quicker we try to solve these problems, the better. We can get these interventions into place and make a plan to try to extinguish these behaviors so that it doesn't escalate to more suspensions. So, yes, the law states

that after 10 days, it's an absolute requirement that needs to be performed, but the main point that I want you to know is that you don't have to wait that long. I think schools are open to the idea of solving problems early.

A parent mentioned that "we discovered that with my daughter that red food dye triggered uncontrollable emotions. After using the Feingold diet she is easier to deal with – her epilepsy medicine was pink ironically!" Well, okay, thank you for sharing that! We know, as parents, there are little triggers like that: allergies, sickness, anxiety, fatigue, etc. I won't go through each one of these individually, but setting events: a peer issue. That's a big one. I just had a parent call recently, where a teacher placed a child next to someone that was bullying him (I don't believe she knew that), but it just set off a big event, behavioral event, that happened. So, you have to be careful. Where a child is placed in the classroom can make a big difference. Teacher interaction; is it positive, is it negative? New persons: when my daughter is in her class and there's a substitute teacher, or someone new in the classroom, she just freezes up, and that affects her behavior for the whole day.

Instruction and curriculum: work too hard or too easy; are they trying to escape from something that's too hard like throwing the book on the floor; or is it too easy and they're bored? All these things can affect behavior. Transitions, oh boy, you know, like my daughter on the bus, transitioning from home onto the school bus was a nightmare. And also just transitioning from preferred activity to non-preferred activity was something we've really had to work on over the years. Directions, length of assignments: is there too many problems on a page? All of these things can affect students in the classroom; sometimes they need accommodations to deal with some of these issues that they're faced with. No choices: oh my goodness, for a child that seems to need control over their environment; no choices, that could affect them a lot,

too. So it just depends on your child, and it's important to just be aware of little things, little triggers, and I'm sure teachers would appreciate hearing from you. If there's some trigger at home that's going on, let them know at school so they don't have to have the same experience – we can all learn from each other.

"Problem behaviors serve a function." So, it's important to consider what the student is getting from the behavior. For example, the child might want to get something, such as getting your attention, your approval, a reward; they're seeking some positive reinforcement from you. Or to escape or to avoid something; like attending school; or peers or adults, maybe there's a certain peer that the student is trying to escape from; doing work, now that's a common one. They might be seeking negative reinforcements. Whether it's positive or negative, they look for both sometimes. Or to control something; so it's important to try to understand the context and the function of the behavior so that we can come up with an intervention that's going to be successful.

"The ABC's of Behavior." Maybe some of you have heard this term used. When they do a functional behavioral analysis, a lot of it is based on observation. One of the things that they will look for is: what is the antecedent (the A in the ABC's). The antecedent is the event, cause or condition that influences behavior. What happened right before the incident that may have triggered it? And they want to look at all of these things and have the big picture in mind. B stands for behavior, which is what one does, what was the behavior. Then C is the consequence of that behavior – what happens as a result of the behavior? All of this information is collected and, as a team, you want to look at this and determine some possibilities for intervention based on the data that is collected, and what you can come up with as a team, or as a parent at home. I've used this a lot at home too, by trying to collect some data, or at least analyze the situation so that I can form a plan.

The functional assessment of behavior answers these types of questions: What is the behavior of concern? Where does the behavior occur? What are the antecedents to the behavior? What happened beforehand? Is there a consistent pattern? Can the behavior be predicted? That just makes it even the more easy, to come up with an intervention if you can see some pattern. What does the student "get" from using the behavior? What is the reinforcer? What are some reasons for the behavior? What replacement behaviors can be taught that serve the same function – which is what we've been talking about. So, these are wonderful questions. Ask yourself these questions – those of you who are parents at home – these are really good questions that will help you decide on interventions to use. These are great for teachers and psychologists in the school to try to determine these things.

So, here are some general interventions that may or may not work for your child. Every child is different, so these are very general. "Make changes in the environment to meet individual needs (look at seating, traffic patterns, the room arrangement, etc.)." "Provide opportunities for the child to make choices". This is important for many of our kids that seem to need that control. "Make adaptations or accommodations in the curriculum." "Reinforce positive behaviors." "Teach appropriate replacement behaviors or skills." We've talked a lot about these things already and how important they are. "Develop (if needed) a crisis intervention plan." Now a crisis intervention plan: if you happen to have a child that hurts him or herself, hurts others, whether it's at home or it's at school. Either place, it would be great to have a crisis intervention plan. At school, it would be recommended that you meet as an IEP team and decide together with the parent involved, what this crisis intervention plan should look like, who would be responsible for what, in case of an emergency situation. And have that in place and make sure that all of the teachers are aware of it. This can be very helpful to you.

"Behavior Plans": Many times behavior plans are referred to as behavioral intervention plans. They need to be in writing; they are team developed; they are based on a functional assessment, which we just got through talking about; they have a manipulation of the antecedents. And remember, antecedents are what happened right before the event or the behavior. You want to include strategies to strengthen appropriate behaviors. Include a crisis intervention plan, if needed. Have general educator input, especially if your child is in the general education setting. Include modifications in the curriculum and/or classroom expectations. So, all of these things can be looked at. As parents, you're part of that team and can be there to add input. You have the history with your child that maybe that new teacher doesn't have. So, you can bring a lot of information to the table that can be very useful in developing these type of behavioral plans.

Now we have a case study that we're going to go through together about Billy, and then we're going to come up on this case study, we'll go through the process of investigation, figuring out what to do, and coming up with some different strategies to help. It says, "NOT 'Billy is disruptive', BUT Billy is out of his seat an average of 6 times per class hour (class average is .75). The greatest frequency of 9 times is in math and geography, and the lowest, 2 times, is in art." So, I like what they've done here. Instead of just labeling him as being disruptive, they've actually gone through the process of collecting data. Because to make a goal, you want to make a goal based on observable behavior, which is what they've done here. It shows very clearly how often Billy is out of his seat, which class is the greatest frequency, and which class is the lowest. So they've done some investigation here which is really important. And then it goes on to say that, "When out of his seat, Billy tries to engage other children in conversation. If ignored, he pokes at or touches them or their belongings." So, it continues on and talks more about observable behavior,

what they're actually seeing from Billy. "During one observation, Billy was asked by another student to return to his seat; he then threw that student's papers onto the floor." So there's some definite behaviors that are affecting his ability to learn in the classroom here.

We want to break down each of those behaviors and come up with a hypothesis of what possibly could be the trigger of the behaviors. So, we break it down into, "Billy pokes at other kids when they ignore him." That was one of the observable behaviors. It's possible that Billy does not know how to make friends; so that's one idea. Or, Billy is trying to get attention (from the teachers or students). So, it's important to not be afraid to put down your ideas of what you think it might be. Just kind of brainstorm, and get them all out there; then you can kind of choose the best choices later on.

So, let's move on to the next one which is: "Billy has a hard time staying in his seat during math." So, possibilities for that would be: math is too hard; Billy does not understand directions; Billy cannot read the math book; there may be too many problems on a page so Billy is overwhelmed; Billy needs breaks during academic activities. So, these are all ideas for that particular observable behavior.

We'll continue down to the third one: "Billy does stay in his seat more during art." So, probably Billy likes art, or is good at art; Billy seems to need hands-on activities, he enjoys that; Billy works well with color. So, there are some ideas for that.

One more hypothesis: "Billy tries to engage other children in conversation; if ignored, he pokes at or touches." Well, maybe Billy is bored; Billy wants the teacher's attention; another idea that they came up with is Billy wants the other children to like him; or Billy does not have good problem-solving skills. So, they have a lot of ideas here. We need to come up with some possible interventions for Billy. So, the team should

take all of these ideas, break them down, what are the best ideas, and come together with something that's workable, something they can try and get going. So, possible interventions for Billy would be to make an extra effort, plan to provide more attention; schedule activity breaks; alternate curriculums at learning level; use additional artwork as earned reward for increasing in-seat time. I liked how they took what he was really good at – art – and using that as a reinforcer for him, for increasing his in-seat time. Pair a child with another student for social reinforcement; teach problem-solving skills; and then it has other with a question mark. This is what the team came up with, and it's a plan to start. Well, what happens if they start this plan and it's not working, they're not seeing an improvement? Sometimes that happens, and you need to reconvene as a team, and you need to look at what you've tried, eliminate that one, maybe try a different approach. Sometimes, I think that these plans are written, and then that's it. Then you're not seeing a big improvement. I know it takes extra effort to bring the team back together, but I think ultimately you're going to need to do this if you're going to be successful at the plan if need be.

"Something to Consider: Can my child follow the school district and building discipline policy?" "Agreeing that a child is able to follow the discipline policies is agreeing that the consequences are appropriate. This determination must be based on data. If a child is frequently disciplined for not following the district policy, the team should consider whether the consequences are appropriate. If necessary, the team can modify the policy." Every year, at the beginning of the school year, I get a little note from school all about the discipline policy. I'm asked to sign that discipline policy, my daughter is also asked to sign, right next to my signature, that discipline policy, and I really don't think much about it. But as I've come to learn that your signature on that discipline policy is very significant – you're agreeing to the consequences. If you have a child with maybe a mental health diagnosis, or a

child that just simply, you know in your heart of hearts as you look at what's expected in that discipline policy, that they will be unable to follow that. You can have that modified on your IEP, and you can come together as a team and have a modified policy, so I just want to make sure that you're aware that that is possible to do. If you have a child that's at risk of suspension, because of the discipline policy is usually what they referred to, you might want to look into seeing if they would be able to modify that policy for your child.

"Three Little Words…Where's the data?" So, this shows the importance of data collection when you're doing these plans. The best practice certainly would be to collect some data, do an observation and collect data, before the plan is in place, and then you'll want to monitor the plan as a parent; and you'll want to recollect data periodically to see if you're on track – to see if these replacement behaviors are more prevalent, see if the plan is working as it should be. It's very important. Don't be afraid, as a parent, to ask: what is your data showing, is this plan working, are you collecting data? Maybe we need to do it again and reconvene.

I want to mention a booklet, it's called, "Least Restrictive Behavioral Interventions." It's the best practical manual that is put out by the Utah State Department of Education, the Special Education Department. It describes strategies and behavioral intervention procedures. It begins with positive behavioral supports and interventions that can be used in your classroom environment; and then it also gives different levels of consequences. So, there's Level 2, which are called "mildly intrusive contingent procedures," is how they word it in the booklet; then it gets a little more restrictive consequences: Level 4 would be considered a "highly intrusive contingent procedure." So it shows in there examples of how these contingent procedures, or consequences, would be used in the classroom. I think it's important that teachers are aware of this booklet, to know that it exists; and also parents as well, you

can go ahead and read through that and see: it's a book that is based on a lot of research and best practice out in the field, so be aware of that. You can potentially look at the booklet – it's on the Utah State Office of Education website, and I'll tell you how to get to it if you're interested. The web address is www.usoe.k12.ut.us and then you would click on the Special Education section, and then if you click on "technical assistance manual and guidelines," you will then see the option for the "Least Restrictive Behavioral Interventions" booklet, and then you can have access to that. I think it's really important to have your IEP team know about this booklet, and I hope that they already do; but to have them know about the strategies that are involved in there. My supervisor here just said that they've changed the website, let me let you know what that is. It is "schools.utah.gov" and they're changing everything over to that. Now I happened to get on the website just yesterday so that I'd be able to give you this web address, and it actually worked for me just yesterday, so I don't think the transition has happened yet – it's not complete – but just be aware that they're changing it to "schools.utah.gov" for the future.

This is a model for self-management for youth, and I think it's really important as youth, that we really try hard to get them self-sufficient in the way they monitor their own behavior. This is a strategy that can be used, and it's a strategy that can be a part of an IEP team, maybe some goals in these different areas. The first thing is, it's a strategy of "Stop!!!", first you "Stop," then you teach them to "Relax," then you teach them to "Think" as a problem-solving technique. So, the first thing that youth would need to be taught is how to stop what they are doing so that they can proceed to the next step. This isn't always easy for our impulsive youth sometimes, to stop; sometimes they may need a visual reminder, such as a stop sign or a signal that a teacher can use in the classroom, that they need to stop. Then the other part of this is to relax. They will need to learn, some need to learn, these relaxation techniques. It really needs to be systematic training in this area of relaxation, because it

doesn't come naturally to some kids. They need to think to themselves: how does it feel to relax; what visual image is relaxing; what sound is relaxing? This can be taught; also there are specific techniques, such as clenching one's hands or dropping the shoulders that make physical relaxation easier. Once a student has then mastered relaxation, then they can begin to think of a plan to address the problem they are having: such as, to think through the situation: What is the problem? What do I (really) want? How many solutions can I find? What is the possible result of each solution? What is the best solution? It's a challenge for some of our youth to be able to move through this process, but just think about how more ready they will be as adults if they can self-manage their behavior. These are techniques that can be used, you can talk to your IEP teams about, that perhaps could be worked on as IEP goals.

Then lastly, we're going to go through some various types of planned interventions, and these are just some examples; there are many other examples out there. So, let's go through a few of these. The first one is behavior shaping. This is where you reinforce behavior that is close to the desired behavior, then you raise the criteria for reinforcement in small steps until reaching the desired goal. This just goes to show that some of our kids aren't able to immediately meet your expectation, but they come close, and so we want to reward them for their efforts. With that reinforcement, we hope that they will continue to learn and grow and actually reach the desired behavior.

"Maintain Clear Routines and Expectations: Go over classroom rules and expectations daily, demonstrate if necessary. Remind students of rules: 'Remember, the classroom rules say that you are not to interrupt others.' Reminders that do not redirect the behavior must be followed with established consequences." I know that schools are really good at doing this – having the classroom rules up on the wall.

They remind the student; I think it would benefit me to have this at home more – have it on my refrigerator: these are the rules of the house, these are the consequences, and to keep reminding them of that. I think this is a great strategy as well.

Other planned interventions are: give attention to children who are performing well so that other children can hear. We all want to feel reinforced, and they'll want to copy that behavior. Encourage youth to ask for help, but do not withhold help for those who are too shy or angry to ask. Find opportunities for a child to be of service to others: line leader, food drives, etc. I have a little story as far as how service to others can really make a difference in a child's self-esteem in life and in changing things around. We had at our monthly conference a keynote speaker which was Dr. Robert Brooks, and he shared this example that I'd like to share with you – it touched me and I hope that you'll appreciate it. He is an author of many books; he talks about raising resilient children, building the self-esteem of our children. He talks a lot about how to be careful with a lot of negative messages. He does workshops and different trainings throughout the country. He shares this experience of someone who attended his training; it was an administrator. He decided he wanted to incorporate the things he had learned, and so he set some goals for himself. He had a particular student in mind, who was in high school and who was failing out of school basically. One of his goals was: he wanted to identify two strategies. One was to find her strengths; he calls them her "island of competence." And then, the second one was to provide her with opportunities to help others, or to provide service. So, this is what he would do with this student. It was kind of an unusual idea, but he set up an internship for her to go into the elementary school and to be a teacher's assistant, and to help young kids with their schoolwork, and to give service that way. He decided on that internship because he talked with her and spent some time with her and found out what her islands of competence were. One of the things she really liked to do was to work with

children, and the other one was she was very musical. So he built on that strength that she had. So, she went in there and did that for quite some time. He reported back that when she came back into the high school, because of that experience, she was more willing to have students in the upper grades come in and help her and tutor her. She was open to that experience, and it really turned her grades around; it happened over time, it really helped her with her attitude, it built her self-esteem, just as being of service to others. Then it was last reported that her grade point average was 3.5, which is really remarkable. So it was a huge change. I really appreciated that story. I really think that you lose yourself in the service of others. We may not be able to do something quite as extravagant as this administrator was able to set up, but simple things like is suggested here (the line leader, food drives) helping others and giving them those opportunities can be very self-esteem building.

Provide advance notice of a change in activities; reminders to students who perseverate. My daughter, as I mentioned earlier, had a hard time with transitions from preferred to non-preferred activities, so we did try this. This was very helpful for us: we'd give her that 5-minute notice (we're going to move on to math), or whatever it is that I know that she doesn't like to do. That was a nice little buffer for her, and it helped with just preparing her in advance. These things can really be useful, depending on the child or the student.

Our last page of interventions: Place low priority behavior before high priority behavior, such as, scheduling spelling just before recess. Now keep in mind this is from the perspective of the student. The low priority for us would be recess, but for the student it would be the spelling. So, try to sneak those non-preferred activities in and have a natural reinforcer, such as, if you do this then you can go to recess and have a great time. Teach youth how to keep track of their own behaviors, and we talked about a model for that. And then, lastly, move about

the classroom. Acknowledge anything a child has done acceptably well. We talked about how important reinforcement was, and my example of ten positives to the one negative; and keeping those reinforcers up to a high ratio, a high level.

Are there any questions at this point about anything that we've gone over? Here's your big chance; I will try to do my best to answer them. Nothing, nobody? Well, you guys are great! Thank you so much for joining us. I want to let you know that our next slide is the evaluation. If you wouldn't mind filling out the evaluation, that would be really helpful to us. We can improve our presentation, and I'd be happy to listen to any comments that you would have to say. I want to thank you all for being here. Feel free to call me, or call the Utah Parent Center, if you have additional questions about discipline policies, if you have a specific situation that you're dealing with that you may like some coaching on, or would like to know what the law states about whatever it may be. Feel free to contact our Center, and thank you so much for being here.