Thinking Functionally

Functions of Behavior

- Sensory
- Escape
- Attention
- Tangible

Function-Based Interventions

Below are examples of potential proactive strategies, by function, to meet student needs and teach replacement behaviors.

**Proactively Meet the Student’s Need**

- **Sensory**
  - Provide opportunities for the student to engage in the behavior at appropriate times/locations

- **Escape**
  - Immediately give the student a break at the first signs of precursor behavior
  - Provide opportunities for the student to take breaks throughout the day
  - Reduce the difficulty of a task
  - Provide additional assistance/support during difficult tasks or situations
  - Adjust the environment to remove the students need to escape/avoid the task or situation

- **Attention**
  - Increase the frequency of praise/attention throughout the day
  - Opportunity for individual attention/interaction with preferred staff
  - Provide opportunity for positive attention/interaction with peers
  - Provide opportunity for the student to be a leader for a task/activity

- **Tangible**
  - Provide opportunities to access preferred items/activities throughout the day/week
  - Provide opportunities to make choices/have control when possible

**Appropriate Replacement Behavior**

- **Sensory**
  - Teach the student appropriate time and place to engage in the behavior
  - Teach the student to engage in a more socially appropriate behavior that meets the same need (if possible)

- **Escape**
  - Teach the student how to appropriately request a break
  - Teach the student strategies to cope in difficult situations that mediate the need to escape
  - Teach the student to self-advocate (e.g., ask for help, request to do something different)
  - Teach the student to request to talk to a trusted adult (e.g., counselor) if appropriate

- **Attention**
  - Teach the student an appropriate way to gain an adult’s attention
  - Teach the student how to tell appropriate jokes to get attention from peers
  - Teach the student to request opportunities to help with or lead an activity
  - Teach the student to request to work with peers when appropriate

- **Tangible**
  - Teach the student to appropriately request access to desired items/activities
  - Teach the student to ask for an alternative activity if the preferred activity is not available
  - Teach the student to ask when they will be able to access a desired item/activity

Need help writing a plan to teach a replacement behavior? Click here to submit a ticket through the Help Desk.

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