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**Smith-Magenis Syndrome:
Teacher and Support Staff Training**

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What does ABA stand for?

APPLIED-interventions used with individuals in their natural settings and target behaviors significant for the person's social and day to day living

BEHAVIORAL – interventions are based on behavioral principles

ANALYSIS-therapeutic decisions are based on ongoing data collection

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ABA is not

ABA is not just for special education
ABA is not one program
ABA is not just for schools or therapy settings

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Behavior

BEHAVIOR IS NOT ALL BAD

Behaviors

- Raise a hand
- Read words
- Answer a question
- Ask for assistance
- Follow directions
- Complete work
- Help another person
- Drop to the ground
- Pull out fingernail
- Cry or yell
- Bang head on ground
- Destroy materials
- Refuse to do a task
- Repeat a question

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“What happened?”

Out of blue
Nothing
Upset

Behavior

Behavior is:

- caused (*antecedents/triggers*)
- observable (*recordable*)
- communication
- serves a function (*why*)

Challenging or Problem Behavior


- Function is not usually the problem
- Same behavior may have several functions
- Interferes with learning new skills
- Socially isolates the learner

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Functions of Behavior

Gain

- Attention
- Objects
- Activity
- Sensory Input

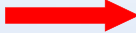


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Functions of Behavior

Escape/Avoidance

- Attention
- Objects
- Activity
- Sensory Input



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Functional Behavior Assessment FBA

Identify and Define (initially a hypothesis)

- Challenging or inappropriate behavior
- Function of the behavior(s)
- Strategies to prevent or antecedent strategies
- Strategies for alternative/replacement behaviors
- Consequences that will not maintain inappropriate behaviors

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FBA outcomes

- Behavior Plan or Intervention/Treatment Plan
- Strategies developed by the team
- Identify medical conditions
- Identify positive reinforcers
- Environmental changes to minimize triggers
- Data collection, analysis and revisions

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A-B-C's of Behavior

A

Antecedents and Setting events

- What happened immediately before the behavior(s)?
- What triggered the behavior (s)?
 - Person, place, activity, sound, smell, demand/request
- Slow triggers
- Quick triggers
- Hunger, thirst, pain, fatigue

A-B-C's of Behavior

B

Behavior or response; observable and recordable

A-B-C's of Behavior

C

Consequences

- What happened after the behavior e.g., attention, escape
- Includes corrective feedback
 - Verbal such as "Good" "No" "Wrong" "It isn't..." "you can do better"
 - Nonverbal such as smile, frown, thumbs up, pointed finger

Consequences

Consequences are not all bad!!!
 Consequences occur after the behavior

Consequent strategies Reinforcement

- Attention (depends on the student- highly individual)
- Stickers
- Token economy
- Rewards
- Extra computer time
- Escape
- Avoidance




Reinforcers

Less you have the more valuable it is

Loss is greater when you have less to lose

Consequent Strategies - Punishment



- Simple correction
- Overcorrection
- Restitution
- Time out
- Response Cost
- Corporal punishment e.g., spanking (not recommended)

Consequent Strategies Disadvantages

- Timing – occur after a behavior and is reactive
- Behavior occurred and is practice
- Student has not learned a replacement
- Behavior interferes with all learning in the classroom

Consequent Strategies Advantages

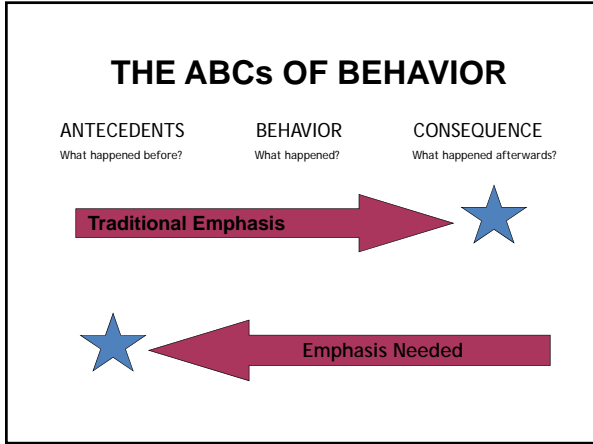
- Familiar and available
- Effective to increase, shape or maintain behaviors
- Can be administered on an individual or group basis

Antecedent Strategies Disadvantages

- Initially more time consuming
- Not as readily understood by others
- May need to “sell” these strategies – not just “walking on eggshells”

Antecedent Strategies Advantages

- Consider behavioral and learning styles of students with SMS
- Parent/staff control the opportunities
- Interrupt behavior chains
- Less disruptive and more time to practice the desirable behavior and learn



Multiple functions and maintaining consequences

Can you implement extinction procedure for problem behavior maintained by attention in the school, community or home setting?

- Can you ignore the behavior?
- Is there potential harm to student, classmate & staff?
- Do you have the resources?
- Can you remove attention from ?
- Can you provide safety to individual, staff and others?
- Are you teaching anything else during this procedure?
- Is it sustainable and able to be implemented in natural settings?
- Will you possibly have to give attention if aggression or self-injury becomes severe?

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Positive Characteristics.

- Engaging and endearing
- Appreciative of attention
- Eager to please
- Sense of humor
- Communicative
- Responsive to structure/routine
- Motivated by variety of reinforcers
- Triggers for outbursts and aggression can often be identified
- Interruption of behavioral chains is sometimes successful

Challenging Characteristics.

- Self-injurious behaviors
- Attention-seeking behaviors
- Aggressive hugging of others
- Impulsive
- Overreactive
- Emotional volatility
- Sleeping or tired during day

Characteristics that can go either way

Remorse: person may prolong remorsefulness to gain attention

Visual learners: may become distracted by visual stimuli; visual impairment is common

What can you do to set up success?

Control

- *Your behavior*
- *Schedule*
- *Reinforcers*
- *Reinforcement schedule*
- *Materials available*
- *Seating arrangements*
- *Planned breaks*
- *Response to appropriate break request*
- *Classroom environment*
- *Staff*
- *Structure and Routine*

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Staff

Staff need to:

- be on their "A" game
- be emotionally neutral
- avoid power struggles
- be comfortable with close proximity
- be versatile but not volatile
- be creative
- think on their feet
- have a good sense of humor!

Setting

Close Staff: Student ratio
Many students also need a 1:1
Natural breaks in schedule
Structure and routine
Many planned highly motivating activities
Good communication among staff
Staff training/consistency of approach

Strategies - Often successful

Redirection and distraction
Interrupt behavior chains
Transition warnings
Handshakes, not hugs

Strategies - Often Successful

High interest materials
"Structured novelty"
Mixed and varied level of activities
Humor

Strategies - Often successful

Choice
Variety of reinforcers
Overlapping positive behavior systems
Opportunities to help

Strategies - Often successful

Individualized schedule
Individualized behavior chart
Visual reminders
Planned breaks
Opportunities to request breaks
Preferential seating

Strategies – Often unsuccessful

- Time-out in classroom
- Isolating the student in a room
- Teacher or aide getting visibly upset or raising voice
- Ignoring the student rather than distracting, redirecting, or engaging
- Counseling, coaxing, touching the student during an outburst
- Counseling after the fact
- Physical restraint during an outburst, except when necessary to avoid injury to self or others

Students with SMS are motivated to earn stickers, rewards, and praise
 BUT
 Antecedent and setting events are often more powerful!

- ### Common Triggers
- Fine motor tasks
 - Waiting
 - Rushing
 - Transitions
 - Seeing people out of context
 - Lack of clear expectations
 - Competition for attention
 - Highly-charged emotional atmosphere

Setting the Stage

Prevention vs. Intervention Emphasis
 Proactive vs. Reactive Emphasis
 Antecedent vs. Consequence emphasis

- ### Strategy Selection
- Learn a new skill
 - appropriate or acceptable replacement behavior
 - Increase behavior
 - on task time
 - Decrease behavior
 - Perseveration on topic
 - Honor the function
 - Request a break
 - Cannot honor the function
 - Remain in room during fire drill

- ### Antecedent Strategies Following directions
- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>Target (increase)
 Following requests and directions</p> | <p>Strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visual supports • Photo or video • Practice with "positive" requests • Nonverbal reminders e.g. signal or manual sign • "Can you help"? • Adult Attention, proximity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Proximity - Collaboration • Preferred adult places demands • Reinforce following directions • Humor e.g. "clean up the palace: • High Probability "Feed the class pet and get out your folder" |
|---|---|

- ### Antecedent Strategies Task Completion
- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>Target (increase)
 Task completion</p> | <p>Strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Which one do you want to do first?" • "You will play on the computer after you" • Visual schedules/Timers • 80% easy/20% hard tasks • Adult Attention <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proximity • Collaboration • Preferred adult places demands • Reinforce task completion • High Probability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Feed the class pet _____ and put away your backpack" |
|---|---|

Antecedent strategies Transition

Target (increase)

Transition e.g., from one place to another; one activity to another activity; preferred activity to non-preferred activity

Strategies

- Visual Schedule (actual items, pictures, photos along with printed words)
- Preferred items or fidget toys as distractors (individual basis)
- Non verbal cues e.g. sign, point to schedule
- Pre-specified reinforcers
- Two minute warning

Antecedent Strategies Move within building

Target (increase)

Moving within the building or down the hallways

Strategies

- Visual Schedule (actual items, pictures, photos along with printed words)
- Preferred items or fidget toys as distractors (individual basis)
- Create jobs e.g. ,assistant to bus monitor, mail delivery, attendance
- Adult support
 - Speak in low volume, engage
 - Block inappropriate behaviors, e.g., ripping down bulletin boards
- Social Story and mantra
- Video model

Antecedent Strategies Decrease Property Destruction

Target (decrease)

Decrease property destruction

Strategies

- Story or video of appropriate play with materials and friends
- Interrupt behavioral chain
 - Distract, redirect BEFORE escalation
- Recognize signals that student is escalating
- Refrain from saying “remember don’t.....”
- Remind student of appropriate behavior or response
- Remain calm

Antecedent Strategies Transportation

Target

Increase safe bus behavior e.g. ,wearing seatbelt, getting on and off bus, keeping hands to self

Strategies

- Adult support – aide on bus
- Bus ticket program
- Job – bus monitor or attendance
- Photo/video appropriate bus behavior
- Powerful safe activity or object (change @ week or month) – only accessible on bus/car ride
- Positive reinforcement for good ride on bus or in car
- No nonsense – “like a hot stove” response to unsafe behavior
- Arms length distance from others

Antecedent Strategies Decrease Stripping

Target

Decrease removing clothing

Strategies

- Interrupt Behavior Chain
 - Distract, redirect, reinforce
- Remove the “audience”
- Protect privacy and dignity
- Select clothing that “slows down” the ability to strip
- Identify and utilize powerful competing reinforcers

Antecedent Strategies Decrease Feces Smearing

Target

Decrease feces smearing

Strategies

- Regularly scheduled toileting or diaper changes
- Select or adapt clothing that limits access to feces
- Minimize your reaction to the “mess”
- Remove the “audience”
- Do not have the student help clean up
- Minimize eye contact and talk when changing clothing

Behavior change is not
just about the student with SMS!

Remember

- Attention is Attention
- Distraction and redirection are effective tools
- Motivating activities and adult attention/support often prevent behavioral outbursts
- Schedules and visual supports are essential
- Whenever possible offer choices (limit to two)
- Avoid power struggles
- It's not always what you say but how you say it
- Don't underestimate the value of calm
- Control what you can

Resources – Schedules, Checklists, Social Skills

do2learn.com
schoolbehavior.com
specialedabout.com
interventioncentral.org
thegraycenter.org
socialthinking.com

Resources

Autism & Developmental Medicine Institute ADMI
www.geisingerADMI.org

Parents and Researchers Interested in
Smith-Magenis Syndrome
(PRISMS)
www.prisms.org

Smith-Magenis Research Foundation
www.smsresearchfoundation.org