

The Intervention Decision Model

(Umbriet, Ferro, Liaupsin & Lane, 2006)

The Intervention Decision Model is a straightforward and specific technique developed by Umbreit, Ferro, Liaupsin & Lane (2006) for directly linking interventions to the identified function of the problem behavior. The technique employs a series of questions to identify which of three methods will most directly address the behavioral function, decrease the problem behavior, and increase the replacement behavior.

There are three basic intervention strategies and methods (Sugai, et al., 2000):

1. Adjustments to the environment that reduce the likelihood of problems
2. Teaching replacement skills and building general competencies
3. Manipulating consequences to promote positive behaviors and deter problems

These three categories make up the methods used in the Function-Based Intervention Model.

Method 1: Teach the Replacement Behavior(s)

Key Elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adjust antecedent conditions so new behaviors are learned and aversive conditions avoided.• Provide appropriate reinforcement for replacement behavior• Withhold the consequence that previously reinforced the target behavior
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Method 2: Improve the Environment

Key Elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adjust antecedent variables so the conditions that set the occasion for the target behavior are eliminated and new conditions are established in which the replacement behavior is more likely to occur.• Provide appropriate positive reinforcement for replacement behavior• Withhold the consequence that previously reinforced the target behavior
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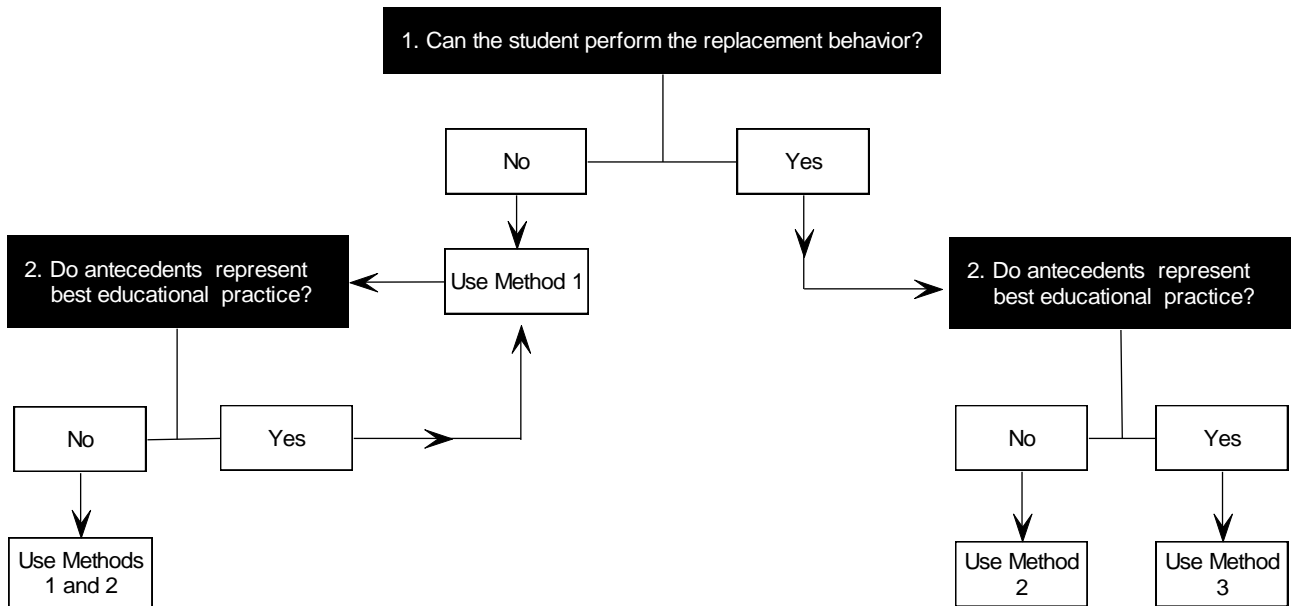
Method 3: Adjust the Contingencies

Key Elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The consequence that previously reinforced the target behavior is provided for the replacement behavior;• The consequence that previously reinforced the target behavior is withheld when the target behavior occurs (extinction); and• The antecedent conditions are adjusted to make it more likely that the replacement behavior will occur.
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Step One: Review the FBA results

Step Two: Ask two questions to identify the intervention method or methods that are appropriate to use for the target behavior and antecedents identified in the FBA.

1. Can the individual perform the replacement behavior?
 - If the answer is “NO”, use Method 1: Teach the Replacement Behavior, and
 - Ask the next question
2. Do antecedent conditions represent effective practices for the environment in which the behavior occurs?
 - If the answer is “NO”, use Method 2: Improve the Environment
 - If the answer to both questions is “YES”, use Method 1 *and* Method 2



Step Three: Develop an intervention based on strategies described in the method you identified in step 2.

Intervention Method 1: Teaching the Replacement Behavior

Method 1 Elements	Resulting Intervention Elements
Adjust antecedent conditions so new behaviors are learned and aversive conditions avoided	
Provide appropriate reinforcement for replacement behavior	
Withhold the consequence that previously reinforced the target behavior	

**Intervention Method 1 and Method 2:
Teaching the Replacement Behavior & Improve the Environment**

Method 1 and 2 Elements	Resulting Intervention Elements
Adjust the antecedent conditions so new behaviors are learned and aversive conditions avoided. (Method 1)	
Adjust the antecedent conditions so that the conditions that set the occasion for the target behavior are eliminated and the replacement behavior is more likely to occur. (Method 2)	
Provide positive reinforcement for the replacement behavior. (Method 1 and 2)	
Withhold the consequence that previously reinforced the target behavior when it occurs. (Method 1 and 2)	

Intervention Method 2: Improve the Environment

Method 2 Elements	Resulting Intervention Elements
Adjust the antecedent conditions so that the conditions that set the occasion for the target behavior are eliminated and the replacement behavior is more likely to occur;	
Provide appropriate reinforcement for the replacement behavior.	
Withhold the consequence that previously reinforced the target behavior when it occurs.	

Intervention Method 3: Adjust the Contingency

Method 3 Elements	Resulting Intervention Elements
Provide positive reinforcement for the replacement behavior.	
Adjust the antecedent conditions to make it more likely that the replacement behavior will occur.	
Withhold the consequence that previously reinforced the target behavior when it occurs.	

Antecedent Interventions

Function	Intervention Strategy	Example
Attention	Schedule adult attention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have adult work with student • Have adult provide periodic attention
	Schedule peer attention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pair student with peer • Use peer tutoring
	Increase proximity to student	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move seating arrangement • Periodically move about classroom
	Provide preferred activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When adult is occupied assign more preferred activity
Escape	Adjust demand difficulty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide easier work
	Offer choices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow student to choose: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Task to complete Sequence of tasks to be completed Materials to use Where to complete task When to complete task With whom to complete task
	Increase student preference/interest in activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate student hobbies/interests into activities
	Assure that activities have functional or meaningful outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide activities with valued outcome
	Alter length of task	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shorten activity • Provide frequent breaks
	Modify mode of task completion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change medium/materials • Replace pencil and paper with computer, etc.
	Use behavioral momentum, task dispersal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present easy requests prior to difficult request
	Increase predictability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide cues for upcoming or change in activities (instructional, visual, auditory)
Tangible	Modify instructional delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use pleasant tone of voice
	Provide a warning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indicate activity is about to end
	Schedule a transitional activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schedule a moderately preferred activity between highly preferred and highly nonpreferred activities.
Sensory	Increase accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Put highly preferred items within students' reach
	Provide alternative sensory reinforcement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer radio to student seeking auditory reinforcement, or visual stimuli to a student seeking visual reinforcement
	Enrich environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fill environment with interesting and stimulating activities

Bambara, L.M. & Kern, L (2005). Individualized supports for students with problem behaviors: Designing Positive Behavior Plans. NY: Guilford Press

Three Types of Alternative Skills

Alternative Skill type	Guiding Questions	Purpose and Limitations
Replacement Skills	What will serve exactly the same function as the problem behavior?	<p><i>Purpose</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide student with an effective way of achieving the same outcome as the problem behavior. <p><i>Limitations</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The function of problem behavior cannot always be honored. • A single replacement skill rarely addresses the skills needed to prevent or change problem situations (e.g., work is too difficult)
Coping & tolerance skills	What skills will help the student cope or deal with difficult or unpleasant situations?	<p><i>Purpose</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To teach socially acceptable ways of coping with situations that should not or cannot be changed. <p><i>Limitations</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Usually not effective alone. Works better when student have alternative ways of achieving desired outcomes or can modify problem situations by themselves (e.g., have the skills to address difficult work situations). • Caution: Expecting a student to tolerate unpleasant situations without teaching replacement skills, teaching general adaptive skills, and/or making antecedent/setting event changes may be unethical
General adaptive skills	What related skills will prevent the need for problem behavior? What skills will result in meaningful lifestyle improvements for the student?	<p><i>Purpose</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To expand social, communicative, and academic competence, in order to prevent problem situations and help the student pursue preferences and interests. <p><i>Limitations</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instruction is more labor-intensive than teaching replacement skills. • A student may need to learn replacement skills first to address immediate needs.

Bambara & Kern, 2005

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