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Behavior Management Plan: An Overview of Assessment, Goals, and Interventions

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A Behavior Management Plan (BMP) or Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) is a plan constructed for students with an individual education plan (IEP) whose in-compliant or disruptive behaviors need management by a team of school personnel. The school personnel that make up the IEP team create a BMP/BIP once a series of interventions have failed and after administering a Functional Behavior Assessment. This behavior plan becomes part of the student's IEP and is a legal, binding document. It is important that the IEP team meet routinely and revisit the BMP/BIP to discuss its effectiveness and make any necessary changes that may help the student be successful.

If a student's behavior adversely affects his/her acquisition of new skills or creates a negative learning environment for other students, then a BMP/BIP should be in place. Behavior management plans can exist for many reasons and for students with various types of disabilities.

What Is a Functional Behavior Assessment?

The term FBA comes from what educators know as a Functional Assessment or a Functional Analysis within the field of applied behavior analysis. This assessment process determines causes of behaviors before trying to develop any plans for behavior intervention. Making a behavior management plan without knowing the **causes** of the student's behaviors would be useless. The basis of the intervention plan is *to address the causes of the behaviors and use particular strategies to encourage compliance to rules and other social expectations.*

Some examples of questions in an FBA are:

- What are the problematic/inappropriate behaviors the student is exhibiting?
- Which behaviors has school staff defined/targeted? How is the student demonstrating non-compliance?
- What triggers these inappropriate behaviors?
- How do these behaviors present themselves?
- Do teachers have observations, data, and information that document these behaviors?

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- When and where do behaviors occur?
- Who is present when these behaviors occur?
- Are there underlying causes of these behaviors?
- What are the goals to help diminish these behaviors?
- Is there an action plan currently in place (i.e., behavior plan) to address the behaviors?
- What behavioral observations have parents brought forth?

What Should a Behavior Management Plan Include?

A BMP/BIP should address *issues of behavior*. For example: what was going on just before the behavior, the behavior itself and what happens as a result of the behavior, and target goals and interventions for achieving desired behavior.

A BMP/BIP should address *target goals*. For example: Jack will learn to abide by classroom and school rules as evidenced by a decrease in referrals to the principal; Jack will improve his social skills as evidenced by less reported conflicts with peers; and Jack will have academic success, evidenced by passing grades on his report card and standardized testing.

A BMP/BIP should address *intervention strategies*. For example: verbal praise for completing work and compliance to rules; weekly/daily reports to parents describing each day's behaviors and grades; seating near or at the front of the classroom; free time upon completion of assignments or compliance; contact with the guidance counselor to make sure assignments are complete and to receive counseling on social skills and peer relationships; in-school suspension (ISS) if student fails to comply or complete necessary tasks; outside counseling; verbal redirection from any member of the school staff if behavior is disruptive or uncooperative; and visits to the assistant principal or principal when behavioral redirections fail.

What If the Plan Is Not Working and Needs Changing?

The IEP/Behavior Management Team determines a date at the initial meeting to reconvene and assess the BMP/BIP, evaluate the intervention strategies, and make any necessary changes. If the student receives a referral to the principal's office for improper behavior and/or noncompliance, the school notifies the parents, and the IEP/Behavior Management Team meets to discuss the issue(s). The team then determines the correct course of action to take in accordance with Law 504 and Section B, IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act), and the School Code of Conduct, as it applies to Law 504 and Section B of IDEA. Again, the team must reconvene and agree to make any changes, as may be appropriate.

Resources:

Concord SEPAC. (last modified 2007). *Functional behavioral assessment*. Retrieved June 3, 2009, from <http://www.concordspedpac.org/FBA.html>

Concord SEPAC. (last modified 2008). *Behavior management plan*. Retrieved June 3, 2009, from <http://www.concordspedpac.org/BMP.htm>

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