Bringing Research to Practice: Training General Educators to Use Function-Based Support

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What is function-based support (FBS)?

3 consecutive processes:

• Conducting functional behavioral assessment

• Developing a behavior support plan

• Implementing and evaluating the behavior support plan
Why train general educators?

Less intense, high frequency behaviors are often as disruptive to the teaching and learning process as the problem behaviors exhibited by students with severe disabilities.

(Liaupsin et al., 2004)
Challenges

Feasibility vs. Research Rigor

“Although traditional, rigorous FBS methodologies should not be abandoned, training should be adapted and grounded in effective procedures that are sustainable by school personnel with little or no assistance from researchers or others.”

Scott et al. 2004
Challenges

Lack of consensus regarding procedures that comprise each FBS process
(Fox & Gable, 2004; Weber, Killu, Derby, & Baretto, 2005)

Use of FBS in school settings is complex
(Sasso, Conroy, Stitcher, & Fox, 2001)

Little empirical investigation of how to train school personnel or to what standards
(Quinn et al., 2001)

FBS may be too complex to master without prior ABA training
(Wallace, Doney, Mintz-Resudek, & Tarbox, 2004)
### Setting

Suburban, Title I, elementary school

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Students</strong></th>
<th><strong>Faculty</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>662 students</td>
<td>30 general educators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>74% Caucasian</td>
<td>4 special educators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22% Hispanic</td>
<td>1 part-time school psychologist</td>
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<tr>
<td>4% Other</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13% with disabilities</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>19% ELL</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>43% free or reduced lunch</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Participants

**Students**

- **Phase 1**
  - 6 Males
    - 4 Caucasian
    - 2 Hispanic

- **Phase 2**
  - 3 Males
    - 2 Caucasian
    - 1 Hispanic

- **Phase 3**
  - 1 Female
    - Caucasian

**Teachers**

- **Phase 1**
  - 6 Females
  - Grades K-4

- **Phase 2**
  - 3 Females
  - Grades 2 & 4

- **Phase 3**
  - 1 Female
  - Grade 4
Participants

Teacher

3 years experience
B.S., ESL endorsement

Students – 4th grade

Phase 1 – Cameron
Caucasian
On grade level

Phase 2 – Juan
Hispanic
On grade level

Phase 3 – Amy
Caucasian
On grade level
Function-Based Support Training

Phase 1

Lecture
- 4 one-hour sessions
- Interactive group setting

Independent reading
- 10 brief reading assignments

Knowledge tests

Applied assignments
- 10 independent applied activities (rubrics)

2 Individual consultations
- After FBA completion
- After BSP completion
## Applied Activities

### Function-based Assessment

1. Identifying & defining target behavior
2. Teacher & student interview
3. ABC observations
4. Identifying function
5. Identifying replacement behavior

### Behavior Support Plan

6. Selecting an intervention method
7. Establishing the intervention
8. Behavior support plan
9. Graphing data
10. Intervention evaluation
Umbreit, Ferro, Liaupsin, & Lane (2007)
Function-Based Support Training

Phase 2

Study guide discussion
  5 one-hour sessions
  Interactive group setting

Applied assignments
  Completion of FBA
  Completion of BSP

3 Individual consultations
  After FBA completion
  After BSP completion
  During intervention
Function-Based Support Training

Phase 3

Independent study
Review of 5 study guides

Applied assignments
Completion of FBA
Completion of BSP

3 Individual consultations
After FBA completion
After BSP completion
During intervention
Experimental Designs

Phase 1
AB Design

Phase 2
ABAB Design

Phase 3
ABAB Design
# Results

## Phase 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student: Amy FBA</th>
<th>Target Behavior</th>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Replacement Behavior</th>
<th>BSP</th>
<th>Antecedent Adjustment</th>
<th>Reinforcement Adjustment</th>
<th>Extinction</th>
<th>Data Collection Method</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Off-task:</td>
<td>PR-Attention</td>
<td>On-task: Sitting in seat in learning position</td>
<td>Adjust the contingency (self-management)</td>
<td>Monitor instruction</td>
<td>Teacher attention</td>
<td>1-minute momentary time sampling (variable)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Drawing in notebook</td>
<td>NR-Escape</td>
<td>Working on assigned material</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Tokens</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Walking around</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Reinforcer Exchange Free reading time</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sitting without working</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reading instead of working</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not sitting in seat correctly</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Results

Phase 1

![Off-task Behavior Graph](image)
Results

Phase 2

![Graph showing on-task behavior over sessions in baseline and intervention phases. The graph displays data points for observer and teacher.](image.png)
Results

Phase 3

Amy - Off-Task Behavior

Percentage

Sessions

Baseline
BSP 2 min
BSP 2 min
BSP 4 min
BSP 8 min
Social Validity

Students

1. I liked what the teacher did to help me do better in school.

2. My favorite part of what my teacher did was

3. I would want my teacher to do the same thing again if I needed help.

4. What my teacher did helped me do better in school.

Phase 1
No data

Phase 2
Neutral – same thing again

Phase 3
“...rewarded me with reading time”
Social Validity

Teachers

Phase 1
- Slightly agreed - willing to spend more time learning the material
- Most beneficial - time spent talking and sharing ideas
- “I am going to continue to implement these strategies!”

Phase 2
- Favored discussion sessions over text, handouts, individual consultation
- Would recommend same methodology to instruct other teachers
- Would encourage others to learn FBS
- Would use FBS to help other students

Phase 3
- Strongly agreed text, study guide keys, and consultations were most effective
- Agreed that the study guides were effective
- Helped to “comprehend more of the actual process of FBS”
Conclusions

- Balance between rigor and feasibility without compromising effectiveness
- More evaluation of training methodologies
- More investigation of independent implementation of FBS by practitioners
http://education.byu.edu/pbsi/

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David O. McKay School of Education

There is true nobility in the soul of that man or woman who sincerely desires and strives to lead children out of contaminating influences into an environment of high ideals and lofty endeavor.

David O. McKay, 1953