



The Skill Builder

Fall 2007 Edition

Interactive Kids

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Who are we?

Interactive Kids offers a variety of services to improve the lives of individuals from ages 2 to 22.

Consultation:

Serves individuals, professionals, and other providers based on the best practices in assessment and treatment of behavior, learning, and socialization challenges in homes, schools, and the community.

Social Skills Groups:

Using small group instruction teaches the skills necessary to be successful in developing interpersonal relationships.

Workshops/Trainings:

Interactive Kids recognizes that it is crucial to remain knowledgeable and well-versed in the most up to date technologies. We can help you meet today's challenges—by designing and delivering programs that meet your objectives and ensure your success.

For more information visit our website:
www.interactivekidsllc.com

Help! This Child's Out of Control!

As we hold our newborn baby in our arms we imagine the perfect life ahead and somewhere in that scenario the thought of misbehavior never even crosses our minds. As a new year approaches for teachers they often anticipate the academic curriculum they will cover in the classroom without considering the behavior challenges that may also arise. As both parents and teachers are aware problem behaviors occur and can transform a peaceful environment into utter chaos.

When these situations arise a functional behavior assessment (FBA) should be conducted to diagnose the causes and to identify interventions to address problem behavior. The FBA looks beyond the actual behaviors to identify biological, social, affective, and environmental factors that initiate, sustain, or end the behavior in question. This approach leads the observer beyond the "symptom" (the behavior) to the individual's underlying motivation to escape, "avoid," or "get" something (which is, to the behavior analyst, the root of the problem). Research and experience have demonstrated that behavior intervention plans stemming from knowledge of "why" a child misbehaves (i.e. based upon a FBA) are extremely useful in addressing a wide range of problem behaviors.

The individual conducting the FBA begins by interviewing those who interact with the child exhibiting the challenging behaviors, such as parents, teachers, extended family members, therapists, etc. Information obtained through the interview should include a clear operational definition of the behavior, under what circumstances the behavior is occurring (e.g. what is the activity, who is present, where is the activity, the time of day, etc.), treatment strategies used in the past (successful and unsuccessful), medical concerns (allergies, medications, health problems, etc.), and possibly the completion of rating scales. The most important component of an FBA is the observation which should include some form of data collected on how often the behavior is occurring, those present, the activity, what the antecedents (what is happening immediately before the behavior) are, and what the consequences (what is happening immediately after the behavior) are. The information gathered through this process is analyzed and a function can be identified.

Continued on the next page.

Free Workshops*:

9/12/07 ~ **Getting Rid of Unwanted Behaviors**, Melissa Torpey, MEd, BCBA

10/10/07 ~ **Community Integration and Parent Networking**, Christine Masterson, MEd, BCABA

11/7/07 ~ **Surviving School Breaks**, Megann Czekalski, MA, BCABA, CBIS

12/12/07 ~ **Improving Communication Between Home and School**, Christine Masterson, MEd, BCABA

1/9/08 ~ **Sensory Integration Uncovered**, Mary Hartsell, MS, OTR-L, Occupational Therapist, Mary's Place Rehab

2/13/08 ~ **Special Plans for Special People (financial Planning)**, Gwen Faulkner, Special Care Planner, Faulkner Financial LLC

*All presentations are at 6:30.

**Call today to reserve your space
(856) 810-7599!**

Fall and Winter Social Skills Groups are accepting enrollments; ask for Nicole to sign up your child.

Also, we can now assess your child's learning, social, communicative, & adaptive skills using the ABLLS-R.

Help!... cont.

The functions of behavior are not usually considered inappropriate; rather it is the behavior itself that is judged appropriate or inappropriate. For example, hitting another person and saying "excuse me" may serve the same function (i.e. to get attention from another person), yet the behaviors that lead to the individual saying "excuse me" are judged to be more "correct" than hitting. If the FBA results in information suggesting that a child is hitting others to receive attention, a behavior intervention plan can be developed to teach the child to meet that need through more socially acceptable means (e.g. saying "excuse me" or raising a hand), thereby fulfilling the child's need for attention with an alternative mean that serves the same function, or purpose, as the inappropriate behavior.

In our next addition... *The FBA is complete... Now what?*

Tips for a Successful School Year:

- 1. Get a large wall calendar for your child's room.** Keep track of upcoming projects, tests, reports as well as activities and social events. Take a few minutes each night to fill in the calendar with anything new then each morning review the calendar to see what is going on that day.
- 2. Use a basket right inside the bedroom** to hold all of the things needed for school each day. This can be books, notes, keys, pens, paper, money or anything else. In the morning, your child can just grab everything out of the basket and go.
- 3. Prepare the night before.** Teach your child to get her clothes ready and check the basket to make sure everything is in there. Review the calendar to plan for the next day.
- 4. If you have a hard time remembering things or writing information down,** buy a small portable recorder for your child to talk into when he has something he needs to remember, i.e. homework assignments, upcoming tests or a new friend's phone number. When he gets home, he can transfer the information to his calendar.
- 5. Make sure your child eats breakfast each morning,** although many children rush out of the house each morning with nothing to eat, their day will be better if they stop to eat. Stock up on breakfast bars, yogurt and fruit that you can grab on the way out the door and eat on the go.
- 6. Find out if teachers post assignments online** so you can check homework completion.
- 7. Ask about having an extra set of books at home** so "I forgot my book" can't be an excuse!
- 8. Advocate for your child.** Talk to teachers about learning challenges and how it impacts schoolwork. If your child falls behind, talk to the teacher immediately and ask for assistance.
- 9. Break down projects and reports into smaller pieces** instead of working on the entire project in one day. Use the calendar to chart what has been done so far and deadlines for completing a section of the report.
- 10. Set expectations for your child about joining activities and clubs** that *they* are interested in. Schools usually have many different clubs that serve a variety of interests. Try to find one that interests your child and help them to get involved.

Remember... Tomorrow is always fresh, with no mistakes in it!