

This form is intended to help early childhood educators determine if a child is exhibiting a challenging behavior and, if so, how to support the child by developing an intervention plan that aims to promote positive behaviors in place of challenging ones.

STEP 1:

Understand the behavior and your response (see forms on pages 2-3)

Use this section to better understand the child's behavior and your response to it. See handouts on pages 2-3 to facilitate this process.

STEP 2:

Observe (see forms on pages 4-5)

If, after reflection, the behavior is still concerning to you, observe the child and document what you see happening immediately before and after the challenging behavior. The information you gather will help you form a hypothesis about why the child seems to be using the behavior.

Directions: Use this form to document what triggers the behavior (Antecedent), details of the actual incident (Behavior), and what follows the behavior (Consequence). You can fill it out each time the behavior of concern occurs, or compile information about multiple instances of the behavior at the end of a day. The more observations you make, the more complete your understanding of the behavior will be. With this information, make a hypothesis or best guess about why the child is engaging in the challenging behavior (Possible Function). Typically, children engage in challenging behavior to get something or avoid something.

STEP 3:

Plan and Teach (see forms on pages 6-7)

Once a pattern emerges in your observations and there is a clear understanding of the behavior and why it seems to be happening (the function), you can plan for the positive behavior(s) you will teach to replace the challenging behavior. Replacement behaviors help the child communicate the same message, but through the use of safe and socially appropriate behavior.

Directions: Use this form to determine the new skill(s) you will teach to replace the challenging behavior, how you will try to prevent the challenging behavior from being triggered, and how you will reinforce the new behavior and respond to the challenging behavior.

Example:

Challenging Behavior: Child bites using teeth on skin. After observing, the pattern shows that the child uses the behavior to communicate that he wants to, but cannot, get a toy from another child.

Replacement Behavior: We will teach the child to point and say "please" with sign language to request a toy. Initially, the child will get the toy every time; eventually, we'll teach waiting skills.

STEP 1:

Understand The Behavior And Your Response

What is challenging behavior?

Challenging behavior is any severe or repeated pattern of behavior that interferes with learning or building relationships.

Why do children exhibit challenging behavior?

Behavior has meaning. A child who has not learned, or been encouraged to use, appropriate ways to get their wants and needs met, will resort to other creative and sometimes disruptive ways of communicating.

What are the components of behavior?

Form: What the behavior looks like or what you see.

Function: Why the behavior is happening or the message that the behavior is trying to communicate.

What kinds of things do I look for when observing and documenting the challenging behavior?

- Frequency—how often the behavior occurs
- Intensity—how intense the behavior is
- Duration—how long one instance of the behavior lasts

How do I know if a child's behavior is "challenging" or if it's just my perception?

Adults ultimately decide what behaviors they expect in their learning environment and when a child's behavior is challenging. Defining a behavior as challenging is influenced by the adult's culture, beliefs, and biases. In addition, the child's temperament, home environment, and cultural norms influence behavior. It is important to explore these influences to get a clear understanding of the child's behavior and whether or not it is alarming and in need of intensive support.

How do I explore my perception of a child's behavior more deeply?

Consider the three Rs when trying to better understand a child's behavior and your response to it: **Review** proactive strategies, **Reflect** to uncover biased thoughts or behavior, and focus on building **Resilience**.

Review proactive strategies:

- How have I worked to establish a strong relationship with this child?
- In what ways have I intentionally designed the environment to support the child's learning and interactions?
- How am I teaching the child to understand and regulate emotions?
- How am I teaching the child problem-solving skills?
- Are my expectations developmentally appropriate?
- Have I thought about health or lifestyle influences on the child's behavior? (sick, tired, hungry, on medicine, noise level or other sensory triggers, changes at home, unexpected loss). How have I mediated these influences in an effort to reduce their impact?
- How have I incorporated the child's culture and values in my planning and expectations?

Reflect to uncover biased thoughts or behavior:

- Is there something about this child's cultural background that conflicts with my own?
- Is there something in my values or past that makes this behavior a particular trigger for me?
- Am I making any unfair assumptions about the child's intentions?
- Am I treating this child in an open-minded way that offers equitable opportunities?
- Am I treating this child in a way that offers equitable opportunities?
- What has the family shared with me regarding this child's behavior? Is it happening at home?
- If there is a difference in the behavior between home and school, what are some possible reasons this might be true?

Focus on building Resilience:

- What steps do I take to calm myself down when I start to feel triggered by this child's behavior?
- Does my typical response to the child's behavior make me feel better or worse?
- How does my typical response impact the child's behavior? Does it persist? Does it stop?
- Am I generally feeling like my best self when I am with the children in my care?
- What are things I can do to take care of myself so that I have the capacity to be patient with all children in my care?

STEP 2: ABC Observation Card

Child's Name: _____ Date/Time: _____

Activity: _____ Observer: _____

Who was there/involved (other adults or children)? _____

Any unusual health concerns or changes at home? _____

Antecedent What Happens before?	Behavior What happens during?	Consequence What happens after?

Possible Function:

STEP 2: ABC Observation Card (With Prompts)

Child's Name: _____ Date/Time: _____

Activity: _____ Observer: _____

Who was there/involved (other adults or children)?

Any unusual health concerns or changes at home?

Antecedent What Happens before?	Behavior What happens during?	Consequence What happens after?
<input type="checkbox"/> Child is directed to do something <input type="checkbox"/> Child is told “No”, “Not”, “Don’t”, “Stop” <input type="checkbox"/> Child is asked to do a less-preferred activity <input type="checkbox"/> Child is asked to do a difficult task/activity <input type="checkbox"/> Child is required to switch activity or location <input type="checkbox"/> Child is playing alone <input type="checkbox"/> Child tries to request something <input type="checkbox"/> An object is removed or taken from child <input type="checkbox"/> Another child receives attention <input type="checkbox"/> An activity changes or ends (transition) <input type="checkbox"/> An object is out of reach <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify) _____	What does the behavior look like? Intensity: Frequency: Duration:	<input type="checkbox"/> Child doesn't have to follow through with request <input type="checkbox"/> Child is given positive attention <input type="checkbox"/> Child is given assistance/help <input type="checkbox"/> Child is given an object/activity/food <input type="checkbox"/> Child is removed from activity/area <input type="checkbox"/> Child is reprimanded <input type="checkbox"/> Child's request or demand is delayed <input type="checkbox"/> Child is put in 'time out' <input type="checkbox"/> Child is ignored <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify) _____ _____
Possible Function:		

STEP 3: Behavior Support Plan—Prevent, Teach, Respond (PTR)

Child's Name: _____ Date/Time: _____

All team members that agree to implement the plan: _____

Antecedent What Happens before?	Behavior What happens during?	Consequence What happens after?
	<div>Function</div>	
Prevent	Teach New Skills	Respond
		<p>To challenging behavior:</p> <p>To new skill:</p>

STEP 3: Behavior Support Plan (Example)—Prevent, Teach, Respond (PTR)

Child's Name: Sonia Date/Time: 4/10 10:15 am

All team members that agree to implement the plan: _____

Mom, Dad, Lead Educator, Colleague 1, Colleague 2

Antecedent What Happens before?	Behavior What happens during?	Consequence What happens after?
A peer takes the toy the child is playing with	<p>Child bites peer, usually on the arm</p> <div> <p>Function</p> <p>Pattern shows that child bites to get toy back and possibly attention from adults</p> </div>	Peer drops the toy and adults rush in to respond to both children
Prevent	Teach New Skills	Respond
Choose one adult who will always be close by to anticipate the behavior and encourage peers to find a new toy or ask/wait for the child's toy.	When a peer takes the child's toy, we will teach child to sign "stop" or say "please wait" using verbal and visual reminders for "stop" and "please wait" and make sure peers don't interfere with play	<p>To challenging behavior: Child does not get access to the toy when dropped by the peer and attention is only given to the peer.</p> <p>To new skill: Celebrate with verbal praise, high-fives, and a friendship loop.</p>