**Responding to Challenging Behaviour:**

**Effective responses in the primary classroom**

**Behavioural Approaches**

**‘Antecedants – Behaviour – Consequences (ABC) Chart’**

**Booklet**

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# Introduction

This booklet details the ‘ABC Chart’ behaviour analysis tool.

# What is the ABC Chart?

The ABC chart is a direct observation tool used to collect, and interpret, information about the events occurring within a child or young person’s (CYP) environment.

The chart is filled in with the following information:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| A: Antecendant | B: Behaviour | C: Consequence |
| The activity/event preceding an incident | The observed behaviour | The consequence of the behaviour |

Below is an example of how the chart may be completed:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| A: Antecendant | B: Behaviour | C: Consequence |
| Child is asked to finish task | Swears and rips up work | Child is given detention |

In this instance, with further observations, the adult may find the trigger for this child is adult demands or transitions.

Common antecedents include critical feedback from others; absence of attention; (avoiding) specific tasks, activities, situations or settings; acquiring preferred items or food.

 The consequence may be that the teacher sends the child out of class every time he throws equipment. Over several observation, it may become clear that the child is engaging in problem behavior to escape from class.

# The Purpose of the ABC Chart

An ABC Chart is used to organize information over several observation sessions by recording the types of behaviors observed and the events that precede and follow the behavior. Observing and recording ABC data assists the team in forming a hypothesis statement and gathering evidence that the function maintaining a problem behavior has been identified.

An ABC chart can be used to identify antecedent events that are associated with the nonoccurrence of problem behavior.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| A: Antecendant | B: Behaviour | C: Consequence |
| Adult reminder to raise hands | Raises hand and participates in class discussion | Positive attention for hand raising and participation |

Some intervention strategies involve modifying a student's environment by introducing antecedents and consequences that are associated with desirable behavior in other situations.

However, in another setting, the adult does not respond to the student when he raises his hand…

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| A: Antecendant | B: Behaviour | C: Consequence |
| Low levels of positive attention throughout class from adult, no reminders to raise hand. | Calls out, out of seat. | Adult reprimands misbehaviour. |

# Functional Behaviour Analysis

Functional behavioural analysis aims to provide a broader understanding of the function or purpose behind behaviour. Behavioural intervention plans based on an understanding of "why" a student misbehaves are extremely useful in addressing a wide range of problem behaviours.

Confidence in a hypothesis (theory/idea about why the behaviour occurs) increases when evidence for the function maintaining a behaviour shows up across a number of functional assessment tools. Direct observation is especially important because it is less biased than strategies which rely on memory and a person's perceptions.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Antecedent | Behaviour | Consequence | Possible Function |
| Child is asked to record their work | Swears and refuses to engage | Child is sent out | Avoidance of writing1:1 attention out of class |

# The ABC Chart as an Assessment Tool

The ABC Chart is a type of functional behaviour analysis. Confidence in a hypothesis (theory/idea about why behaviour occurs) increases when evidence for the function maintaining a behaviour shows up across a number of functional assessment tools. Direct observation is especially important because it is less biased than strategies which rely on memory and a person's perceptions.

# What are the advantages and disadvantages of the ABC Chart?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Advantages | Disadvantages |
| * Record descriptive information about child and environment
* Systematic
* Organised
* Easy to use
 | * difficult to see patterns quickly
* data may need to be summarised to look for patterns related to antecedents and consequences, particularly if:
* there are multiple problem behaviours;
* several antecedent events;
* behaviour is maintained by multiple functions
* data is only correlational which means the causal relation cannot be confirmed.
 |

# How do you know when you have collected enough observational data?

Data should be collected until the team members are confident about the function or functions maintaining a student's behavior. In simple situations, this may occur within 3-5 sessions. In more complicated cases, direct observation data may be needed across a number of settings and for longer periods. If your team remains unsure that the hypothesis statement(s) are accurate, you may want to seek further support from other members of staff and/or external agencies.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Name of Person Observed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Observer: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Behaviour(s) of Interest: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Time** | **Antecedent** | **Behaviour** | **Consequence** | **Possible Function** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
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