

Toward Meaningful Outcomes from Kind Processes that Address Problem Behavior of Persons with Autism



Improving Outcomes through Research-Based Innovations

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Main Takeaways

Autism does not necessarily lead to a restrictive lifestyle, marked by isolation and limited community involvement, for the person with autism or for their family

Main Takeaways

Severe problem behavior (SPB) leads to highly restrictive lifestyles, marked by more limited community involvement and connection

SPB is prevalent but not inevitable for persons with autism

Main Takeaways

Freedom from severe problem behavior is attainable for all persons with autism and their families

It is attainable

without off-label medication use

without extended inpatient hospitalizations

without isolation, denigration, or escalation,

and

without candies, stickers, and token boards

It is attainable

**by first
understanding* why
the child is engaging
in the problem
behavior**

**understanding can be
obtained quickly, safely,
and analytically**

It is attainable

**when children are taught
skills* to help them
navigate the complex
social world**

***Communication,
Toleration,
and various
Contextually Appropriate
Behaviors (CABs)**

A Brief Note on Fundamental Differences

Behavior Modification & Behavior Mollification Versus Behavior Analysis

Stay tuned:

Practical Functional Assessment
Vs. Traditional Functional Assessment

Freedom from Problem Behavior is possible with *Today's ABA*

To access this perspective paper,
go to www.practicalfunctionalassessment.com



Practical Functional Assessment

Understanding Problem Behavior Prior to its Treatment

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A Perspective on Today's ABA from Dr. Hanley

ghanley19 / January 25, 2021

This is today's ABA when starting therapy with an autistic person, especially one who routinely engages in problem behavior.

Today's ABA (applied behavior analysis) is about continually learning about the predilections of the autistic person being served so that preferred learning contexts can be developed en route to developing skills that can be appreciated by the autistic person as well as others. What follows is a guide for those implementing today's ABA but written for those who are curious about what today's ABA involves.

Learn by listening.

Ask the autistic person and/or ask people who know and love the autistic person about what he/she they loves and hates. Be sure to review the love, aversion, and indifference towards activities, objects, furniture, contexts, and especially social interactions. Ask that person about the autistic person's voice. How do they routinely communicate? And, especially, what are they communicating with their problem behavior? In other words, today's ABA starts with asking questions, listening, and learning about the autistic person by people who know and love the autistic person.

Learn by creating joy.

From that conversation, put together a context in which the autistic person will be happy, relaxed, and

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A Perspective on Today's ABA from Dr. Hanley

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Translate

Select Language 

What is Today's ABA?

- 1. It starts with asking question (e.g., interviewing caregivers and clients)**

Today's ABA teaches from joy

- not through escalated
problem behavior -

What is Today's ABA?

1. It starts with asking question (e.g., interviewing caregivers and clients)

2. Creating a context in which the probability of problem behavior is zero.

Create a non-threatening context that
promotes:

- content to **happy** affect,
- **relaxed** to jazzed demeanor,
- **engagement** in preferred activities,
- social bids towards teacher (or at least no hairy eyeballs)

HRE

What is Today's ABA?

1. Interviewing caregivers and clients
2. Creating a context in which probability of problem behavior is zero.
Create a non-threatening context that promotes content to happy affect, relaxed or jacked-up demeanor, engagement in preferred activities, social bids towards teacher (or at least no hairy eyeballs towards teacher).

3. Empowering the learner

Progressively introduce a challenging situation and reinforce first instance of PB or protest response

What is Today's ABA?

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Create a non-threatening context that promotes content to happy affect, relaxed or jacked-up demeanor, engagement in preferred activities, social bids towards teacher (or at least no hairy eyeballs towards teacher)
3. Empowering the learner
Introduce challenging situation and reinforce first instance of PB or protest response

4. Shaping Skills

Communication, toleration, cooperation

Making Peaceful Progress

What is Today's ABA?

1. Interviewing caregivers and clients
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3. Empowering the learner
Introduce challenging situation and reinforce first instance of PB or protest response
4. Shaping Skills
Communication, toleration, cooperation

5. Then assessing/teaching everything else

Consistent with *Today's ABA* and proven effective for addressing **severe problem behavior:**

PFA & SBT

- **Practical Functional Assessment and Skill-Based Treatment**
 - Shown to produce socially meaningful outcomes
 - Shown to be a socially valid and generally applicable process
 - Shown to be effective without coercion or physical management

Meaningful effects:

*Journal of
Applied Behavior Analysis*

JOURNAL OF APPLIED BEHAVIOR ANALYSIS

2014, 47, 16–36

NUMBER 1 (SPRING)

*PRODUCING MEANINGFUL IMPROVEMENTS IN PROBLEM
BEHAVIOR OF CHILDREN WITH AUTISM VIA SYNTHESIZED
ANALYSES AND TREATMENTS*

GREGORY P. HANLEY, C. SANDY JIN, NICHOLAS R. VANSELLOW, AND
LAURA A. HANRATTY

WESTERN NEW ENGLAND UNIVERSITY

(2014) **JABA**

J Autism Dev Disord
DOI 10.1007/s10803-015-2617-0

ORIGINAL PAPER

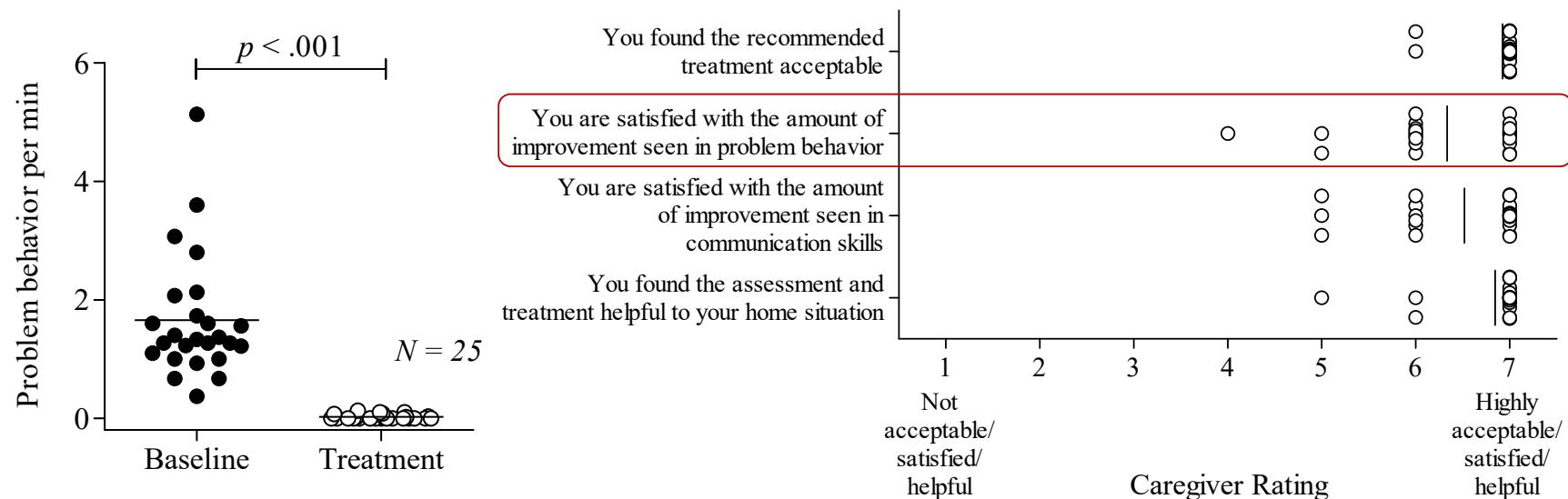
**The Generality of Interview-Informed Functional Analyses:
Systematic Replications in School and Home**

Joana L. Santiago¹ · Gregory P. Hanley^{2,3} · Keira Moore^{4,5} · C. Sandy Jin^{4,6}

(2016) **JADD**

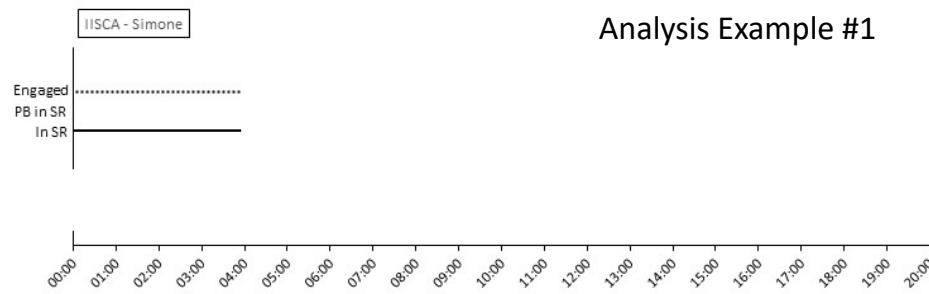
	<p><i>Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis</i> JOURNAL OF APPLIED BEHAVIOR ANALYSIS 2014, 47, 16–36 NUMBER 1 (SPRING)</p> <p><i>PRODUCING MEANINGFUL IMPROVEMENTS IN PROBLEM BEHAVIOR OF CHILDREN WITH AUTISM VIA SYNTHESIZED ANALYSES AND TREATMENTS</i></p> <p>GREGORY P. HANLEY, C. SANDY JIN, NICHOLAS R. VANSELLOW, AND LAURA A. HANRATTY WESTERN NEW ENGLAND UNIVERSITY (2014) JABA</p> <p>J Autism Dev Disord DOI 10.1007/s10803-015-2617-0</p> <p>ORIGINAL PAPER</p>
<p><i>Similar effects reported in these studies from other research groups</i></p>	<p>The Generality of Interview-Informed Functional Analyses: Systematic Replications in School and Home Joana L. Santiago¹ · Gregory P. Hanley^{2,3} · Keira Moore^{4,5} · C. Sandy Jin^{4,6} (2016) JADD</p>
<p>The process has strong and unprecedented treatment utility</p>	<p>Strand & Eldevik (2017) <i>Beh. Int.</i> Herman, Healy, & Lydon (2018) <i>Dev. Ne.</i> Jessel, Ingvarsson, Metras, Hillary, & Whipple (2018) JABA Beaulieu, Clausen, Williams, & Herscovitch (2018) BAP Taylor, Phillips, & Gertzog (2018) <i>Beh. Int.</i> Chusid & Beaulieu (2018) JABA Ferguson, Leaf, Cihon, Milne, Leaf, McEachin, & Leaf (2019) ETC</p>

Jessel, Ingvarsson, Metras, Hillary, & Whipple (2018, *JABA*)
Achieving Socially Significant Reductions in Problem Behavior following the Interview-Informed Synthesized Contingency Analysis:
A Summary of 25 Outpatient Applications



**Similar evidence for any other functional assessment or treatment process addressing problem behavior does not exist.*

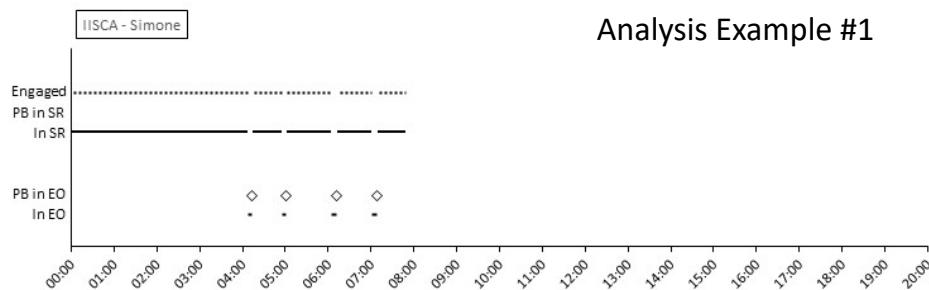
1. It starts with asking question (e.g., interviewing caregivers)
2. Create and assess context in which the probability of problem behavior is zero.



From Canniello, Hanley, Iovino et al., 2020

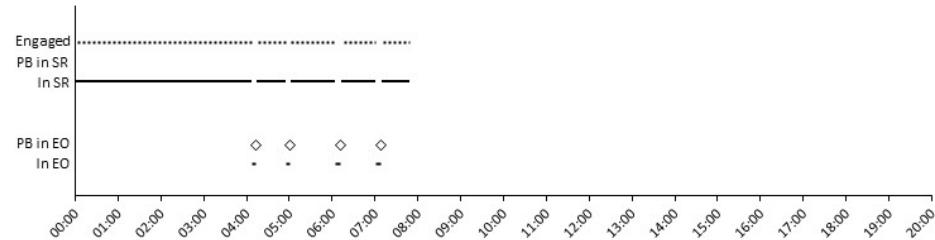
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- 2. Create and assess context in which the probability of problem behavior is zero.**
- 3. Empowering the learner**

Progressively introduce a challenging situation
and reinforce first instance of PB or protest response

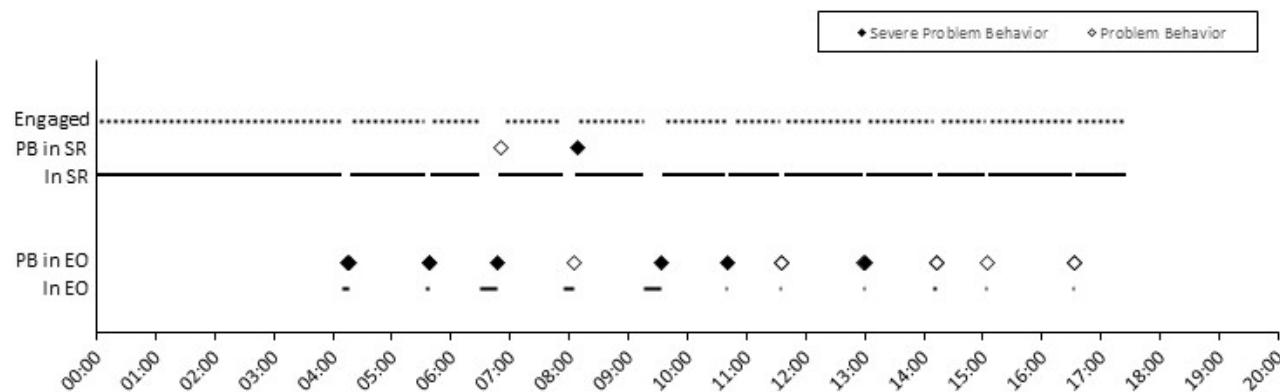


From Canniello, Hanley, Iovino et al., 2020

Analysis Example #1



Analysis Example #2



From Canniello, Hanley, Iovino et al., 2020

Assumptions

Multiple events co-occur to evoke problem behavior

e.g., request to stop doing what he is doing, presentation of difficult/non-preferred task to complete alone, while no one honors any mands, preferences, etc.

Multiple events occur simultaneously to reinforce (strengthen) problem behavior

e.g., escape from _____ to access _____ while people are available to_____

Different forms of problem behavior by the same child are often maintained by the same **synthesized reinforcement contingency**

Aim of a Practical Functional Assessment

NOT to identify the function of a problem behavior

**Aim is strong influence of problem behavior
via ecologically-relevant reinforcement contingency**

Practical Functional Assessment

Focuses on **Functional Control**

not Functional Classification

Implications of strong control of problem behavior

You can turn off problem behavior

= analysis informed treatment process can be safe & effective

You can turn on problem behavior

= skills may be developed in treatment

With an ecologically relevant contingency

= problem behavior reductions and skills
may transfer to relevant context

Important Analysis Recommendations

- 1. Have child/client directly enter and experience the SR context**
 - a. Access to multiple preferred activities
 - b. Experience, promise of no instructions, redirections, or restrictions
 - i. Freedom of movement
 - ii. Stereotypy unrestricted and admired
 - c. Availability of attention/interaction, mand compliance
- 2. Rely on an “open-door analysis;” observe where client goes and what they do**

Important Analysis Recommendations

3. Progressively implement the EO each time; know this foreshadows the same actions you will take as you extend the CAB chains in treatment

- A. Stand
- B. Softly clap
- C. Close space and stand with side to child/client
- D. Give instruction to stop doing/moving & relinquish object/toy/game
 - adopt a prompt hierarchy that progresses or holds expectation without evoking SPB
- E. Give instruction to transition to table of high expectations (same prompting as above)
- F. Give prompts to get ready to learn (and manage body position and stereotypy)
- G. Teach while holding the highest of expectation

Important Analysis Recommendations

4. Provide:

**all suspected reinforcers
immediately following
the first response suspected as being part of the response class**

Warner, C. A., Hanley, G. P., Landa, R. K., Ruppel, K. W., Rajaraman, A., Ghaemmaghami, M., Slaton, J. D. & Gover, H. C. (2020). Toward accurate inferences of response class membership. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, 53, 331-354.

Slaton, J. D. and Hanley, G. P. (2018). Nature and scope of synthesis in functional analysis and treatment of problem behavior. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, 51, 943-973.
doi:10.1002/jaba.498

Slaton, J. D., Hanley, G. P. & Raftery, K. J. (2017). Interview-informed functional analyses: A comparison of synthesized and isolated components. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, 50, 252–277.

Landa, R., Hanley, G. P., Ghaemmaghami, M. (in press). An evaluation of prompting procedures during functional communication training. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*.

Important Analysis Recommendations

5. Make all decisions based on child/client behavior

e.g., when to implement SR (immediately following 1st PB)

when to implement EO (after at least 30 s of HRE)

when to end analysis (after 4 quick turn offs with quick returns to HRE)

do not make decisions based on mere passage of time:

e.g., 30 s of SR, 5-min sessions, 30 min analysis

What is Essential in Today's ABA?

Priorities of safety, televisibility, and rapport

Safety can be found in your analytic tactics

Provide:

**all suspected reinforcers
immediately following
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Warner, C. A., Hanley, G. P., Landa, R. K., Ruppel, K. W., Rajaraman, A., Ghaemmaghami, M., Slaton, J. D. & Gover, H. C. (2020). Toward accurate inferences of response class membership. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, 53, 331-354.

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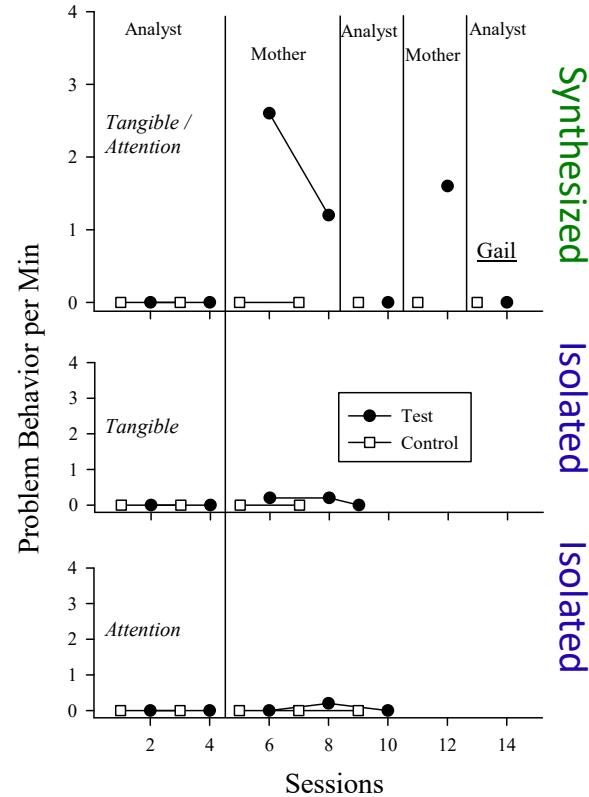
Personalized & synthesized reinforcement contingencies

From Hanley et al., 2014, *JABA*

Case Example
Gail, 3 yo, dx: PDD-NOS
Setting: Clinic

Isolated contingencies sometimes do not control behavior whereas synthesized contingencies do.

This is not a paradox, just a classic example of an interaction without main effects

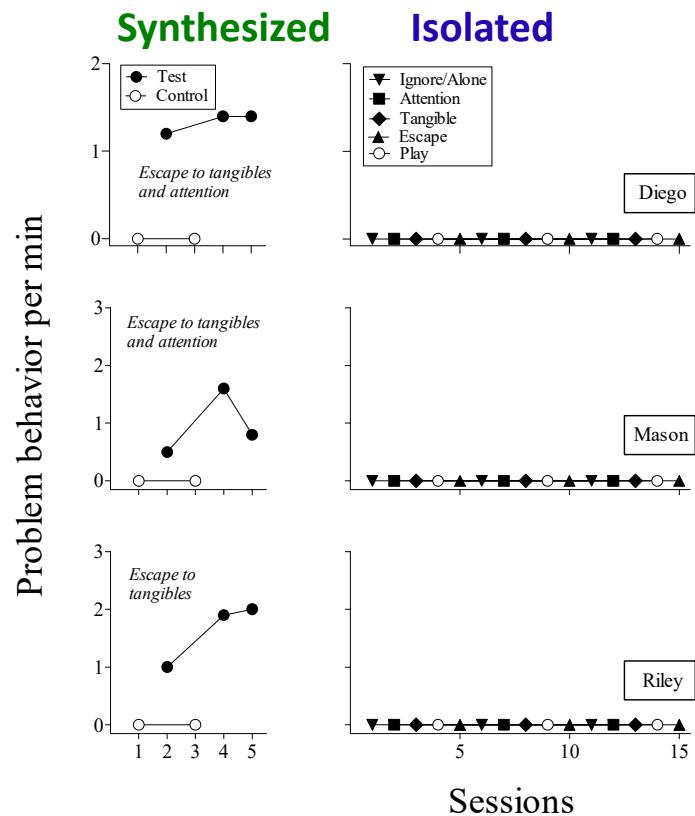


Synthesized

Isolated

Isolated

From Slaton et al., 2017, *JABA*



Synthesized

Comparative analyses usually show that synthesized reinforcement contingencies influence problem behavior whereas isolated ones do not

Whole contingencies have properties that sometimes cannot be found in the parts of the contingency

Single tests of individual reinforcers are not capable of verifying the irrelevance of synthesized reinforcers

Questions on Practical Functional Assessment?

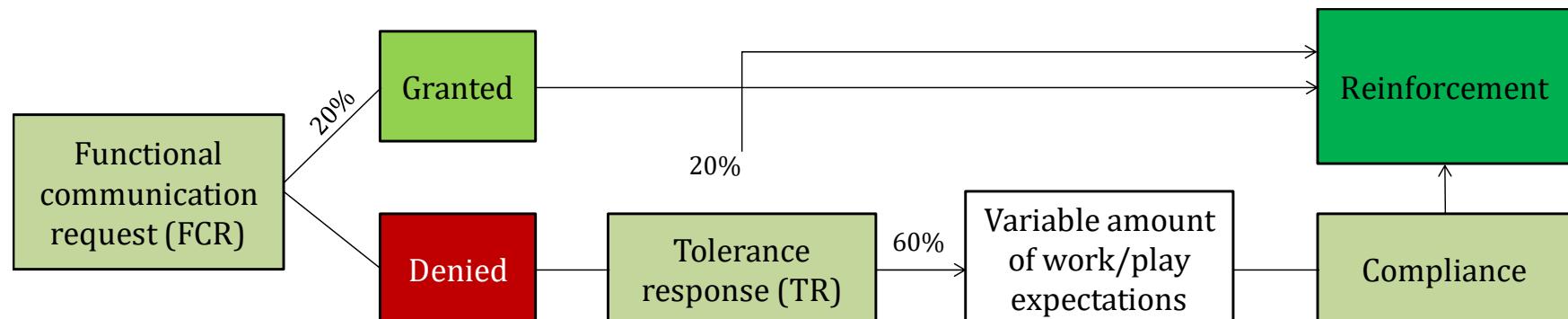
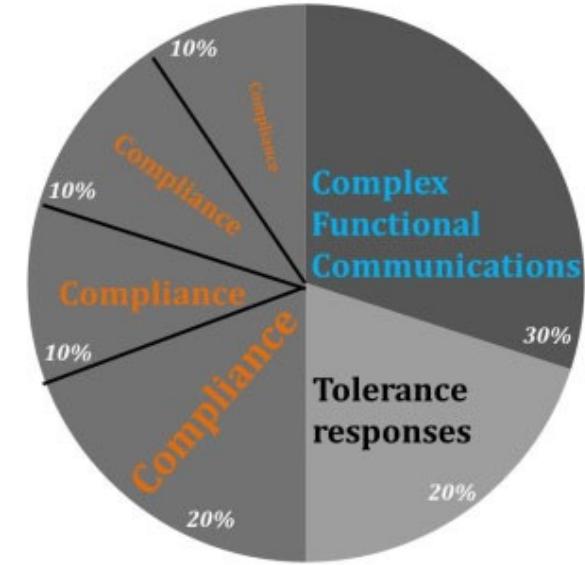
What is the treatment????

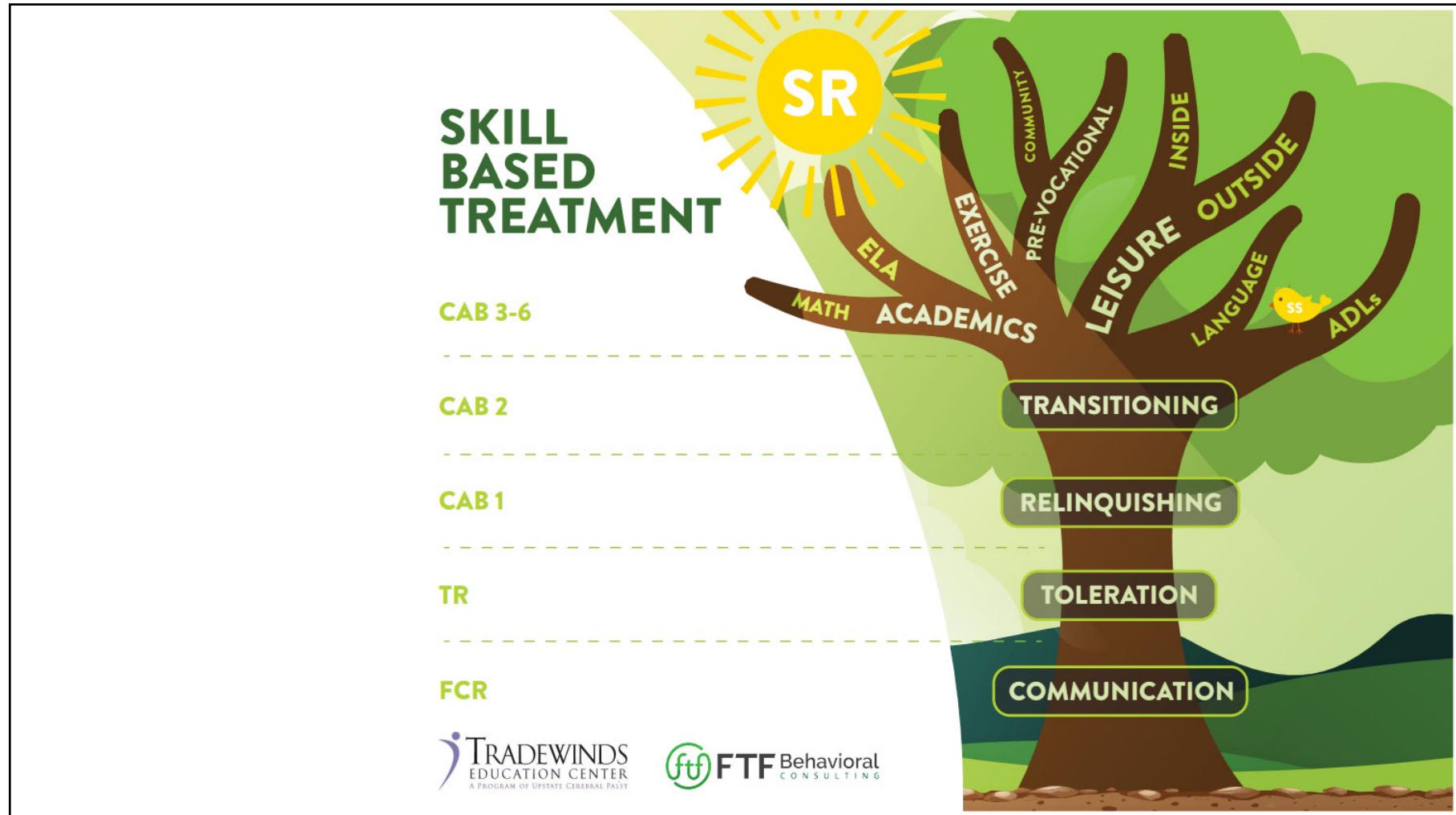
Intermittent and unpredictable reinforcement of life skills:

Functional Communication

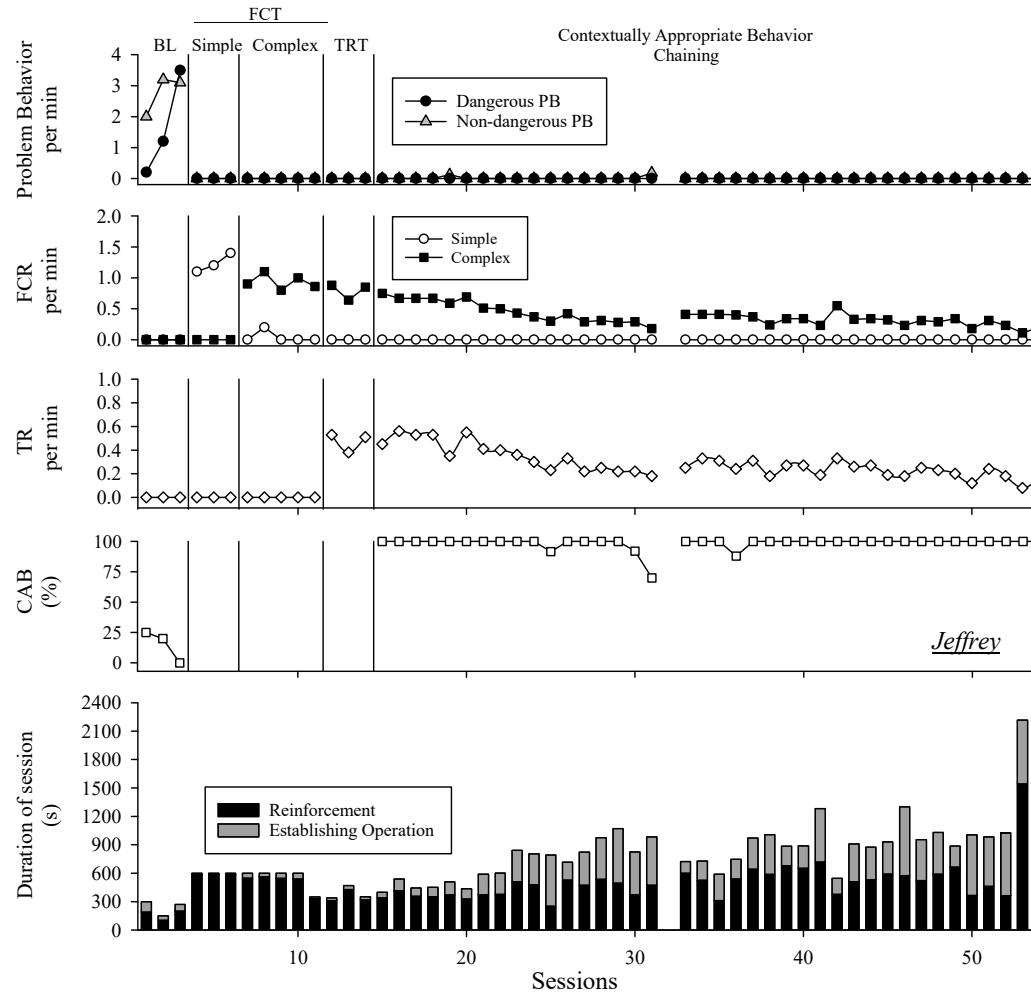
Delay/denial toleration

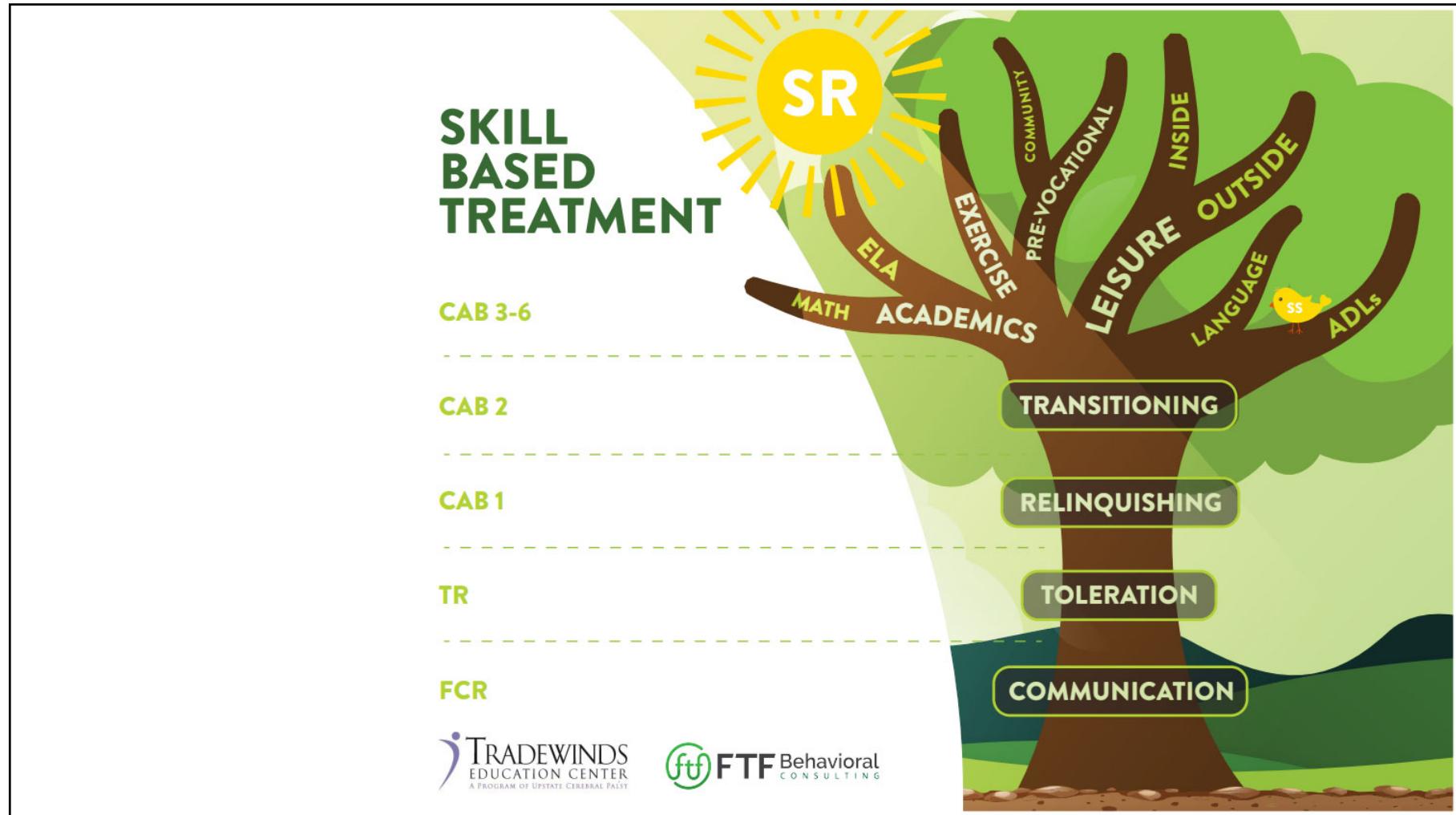
Contextually appropriate behaviors





SKILL-BASED TREATMENT EXAMPLE





Wicked Important Guidelines when Developing Contextually Appropriate Behavior (CABs)

- 1. Start by gaining instructional control over relinquishing positive reinforcers.**
- 2. Then gain instructional control over transitioning and readying to listen/learn**
- 3. Then gradually increase the average amount of behavior (not just time) required to terminate the delay**
- 4. Terminate the delay for various amounts of behavior (sometimes expect very little behavior sometimes request larger or more complex types of behavior during the delay)**
- 5. Probably best to not signal how much behavior or what type of behavior is required to terminate the delays**

Wicked Important Guideline: Contextually Appropriate Behavior

1. Start by gaining instructional control over the reinforcers.
2. Then gain instructional control over the student's ability to listen/learn
3. Then gradually increase the average amount of behavior required to terminate the delay
4. Terminate the delay for various amounts of behavior (note: very little behavior sometimes requires a lot of behavior during the delay)
5. Probably best to not signal how much behavior or what type of behavior is required to terminate the delays

In case it is not apparent:

Shorties never go away.

**This is the way
we keep hope
alive!**

Take Home Point:

What is required for a Meaningful Outcome?

Personalized & Synthesized Reinforcement Contingencies

and

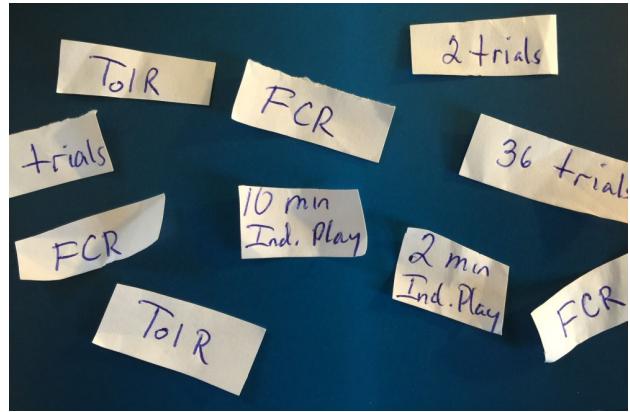
**a progressively developing,
skill-Based treatment process that
relies on unpredictable and intermittent reinforcement
*to maintain effects***

Data Sheet and Guide for the Skill-Based Treatment of Problem Behavior (Revised: May 2019; FTF Behavioral Consulting, Inc.)

Organization: _____ Client Name: _____ Skills Teacher: _____ Supervisor: _____

Diversified Chaining Branch: _____ / New people: _____ / New locations: _____

Step	Date	Responses Reinforced <i>Write in specific form; note if form changes within step</i>	Progressively Changing Response Requirements																																					
			Trial 1 EO		Trial 2 EO		Trial 3 EO		Trial 4 EO		Trial 5 EO																													
			SR		SR		SR		SR		SR																													
14		CFCR, TR, CAB 1, CAB 2, or CAB3	TR	Eng	CAB2	Eng	CAB1	Eng	cFCR	Eng	CAB3	Eng																												
14		<i>Communicate, tolerate denial, relinquish positive reinforcers, transition and get ready to learn, and/or cooperate/comply/respond accurately to 1-3 instructions within 1 activity</i>	CAB2	Eng	cFCR	Eng	CAB3	Eng	TR	Eng	CAB1	Eng																												
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15		CFCR, TR, CAB 1 or 2, or CAB4	CAB4	Eng	cFCR	Eng	CAB1	Eng	CAB4	Eng	TR	Eng																												
15		<i>Communicate, tolerate denial, relinquish positive reinforcers, transition and get ready to learn, and/or cooperate/comply/respond accurately to 1-3 instructions within multiple activities</i>	cFCR	Eng	CAB4	Eng	TR	Eng	CAB4	Eng	CAB2	Eng																												
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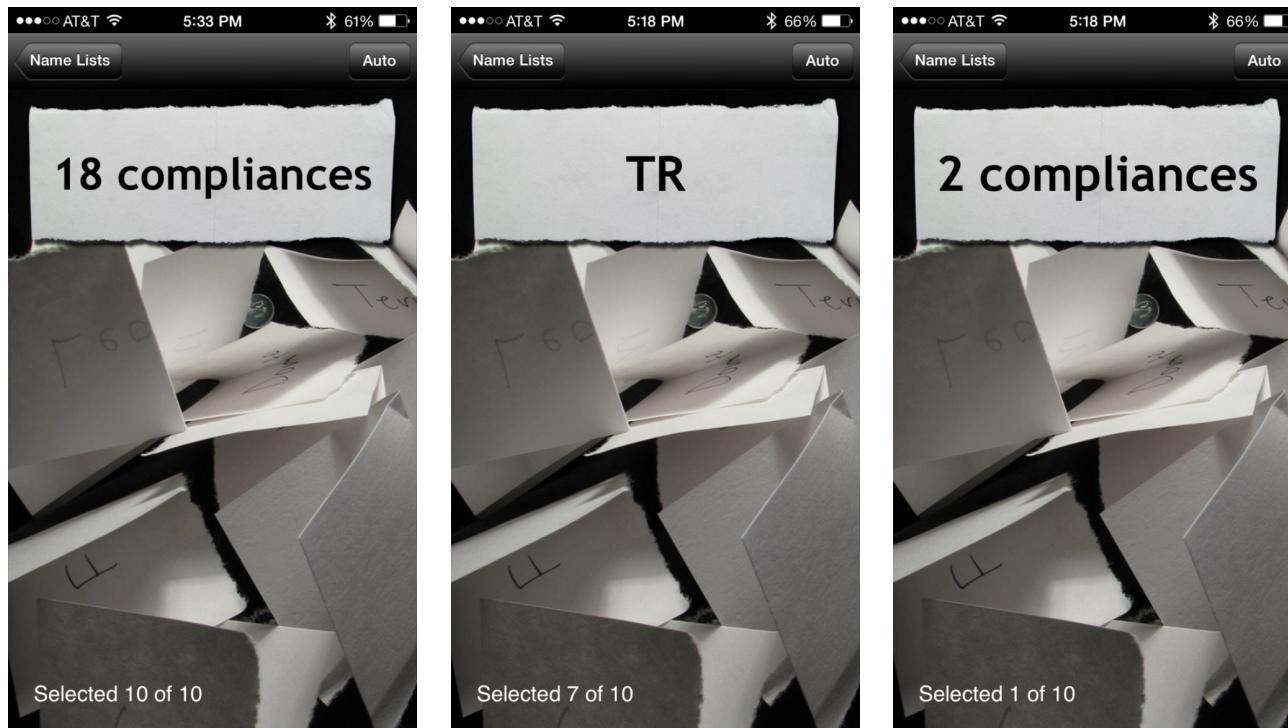
Treatment Implementation

1. Put these in your pocket
2. Pull one out while child is experiencing their reinforcers
3. Keep it to yourself
4. Require that behavior next time

***Materials not needed:**

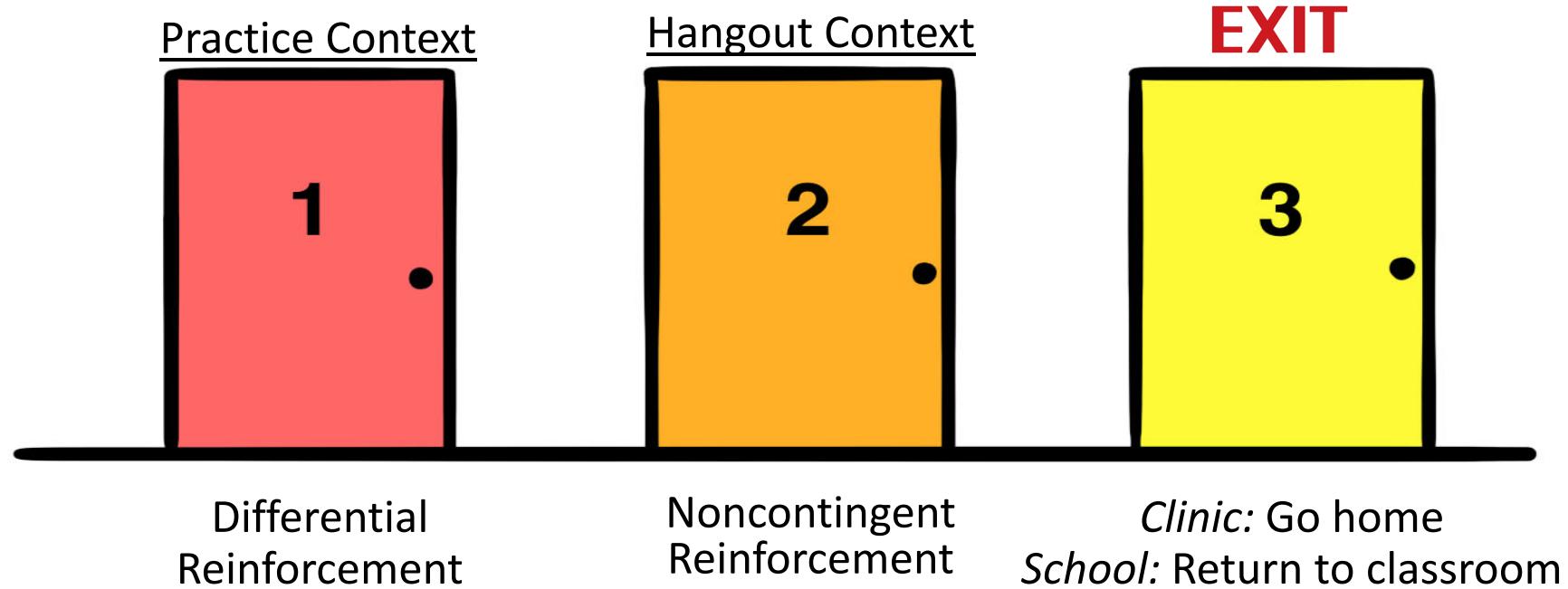
Laminate
Laminating machine
Glue guns
Vis a vis markers
Velcro
Tokens
Token boards
Timers
Stickers
Candies
Anything that was not already in
the child's environment!

App called “Names in a Hat”



The Enhanced Choice Model

Rajaraman, A., Hanley, G. P., Gover, H. C., Staibitz, J. L., Staibitz, J., E., Simcoe, K. M., & Metras, R. L. (2021). Minimizing escalation by treating dangerous problem behavior within an enhanced choice model. *Behavior Analysis in Practice*.

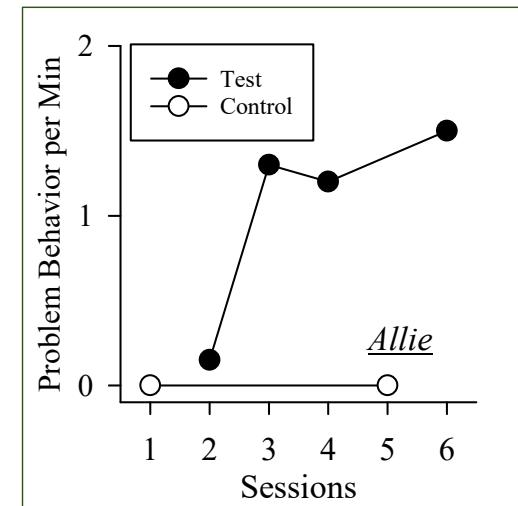


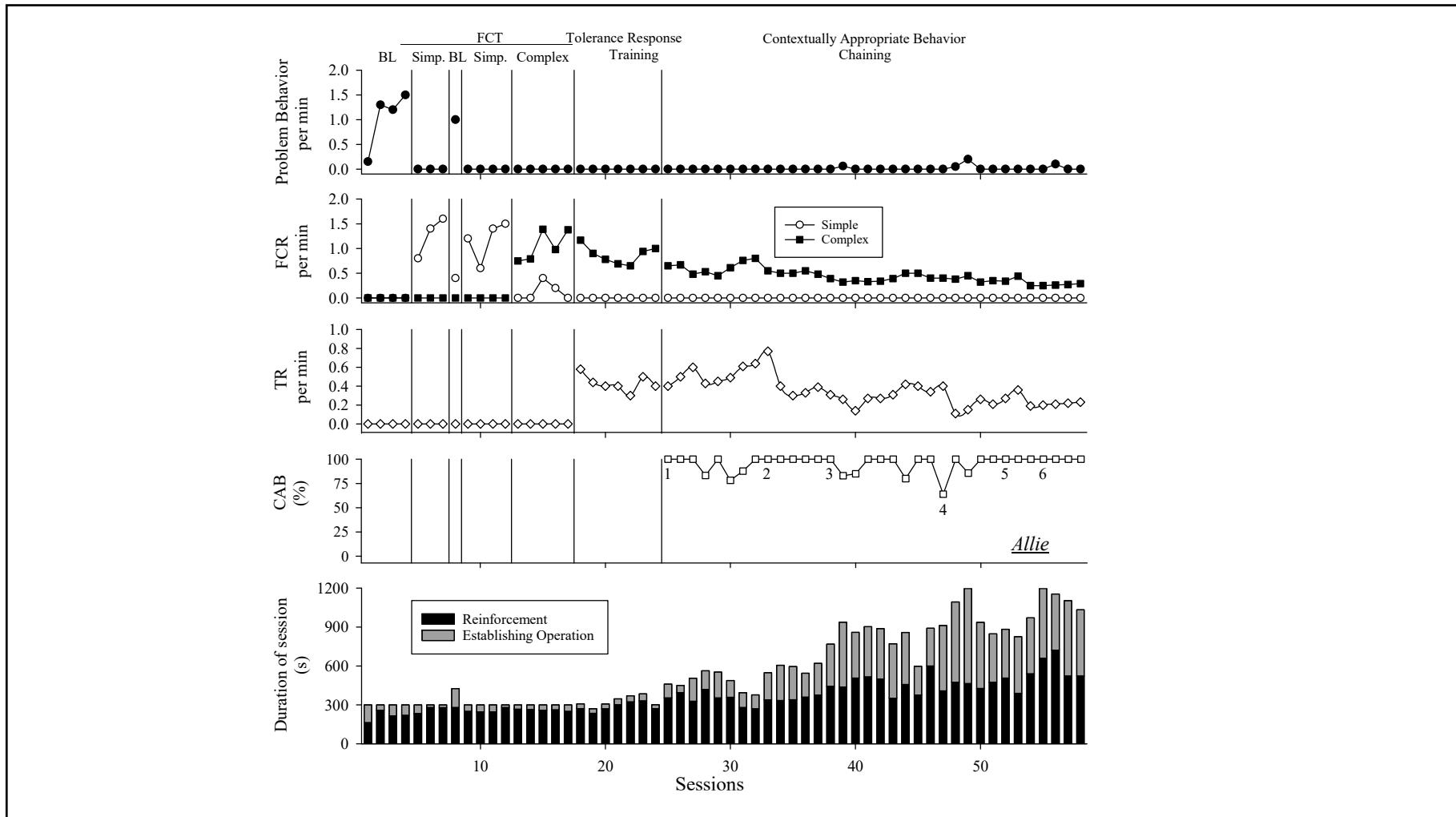
Allie
4
ASD

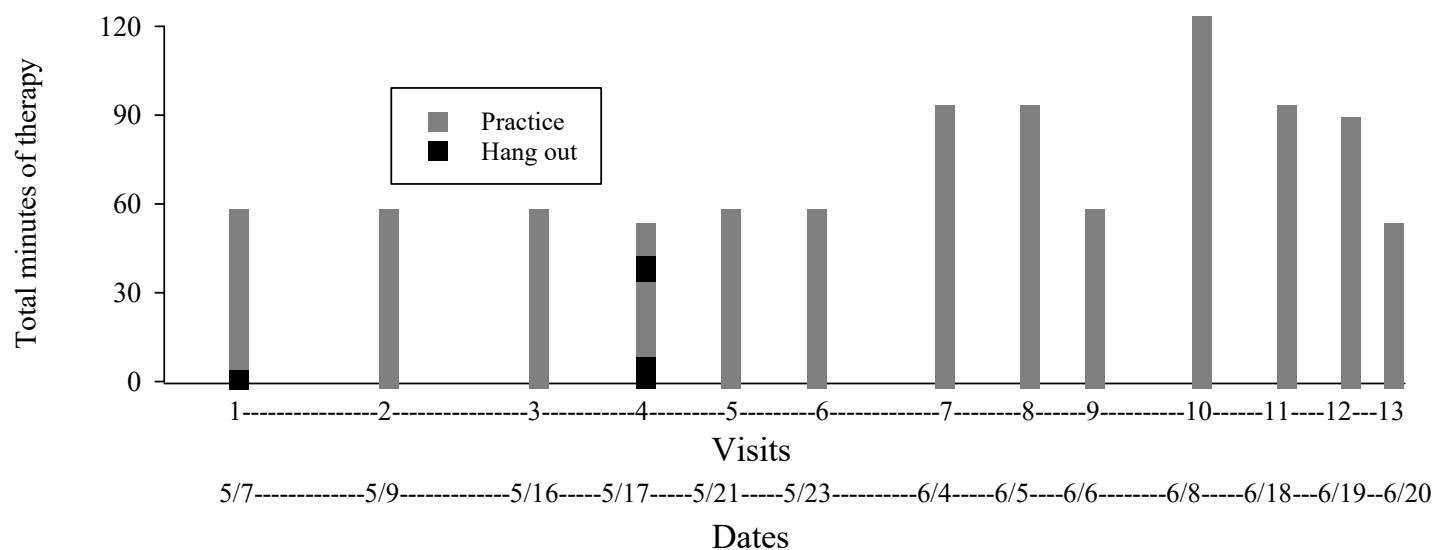
Aggression (often toward siblings), property destruction, elopement and tantrums
lasting up to 1 hour in home

Contingency assessed:

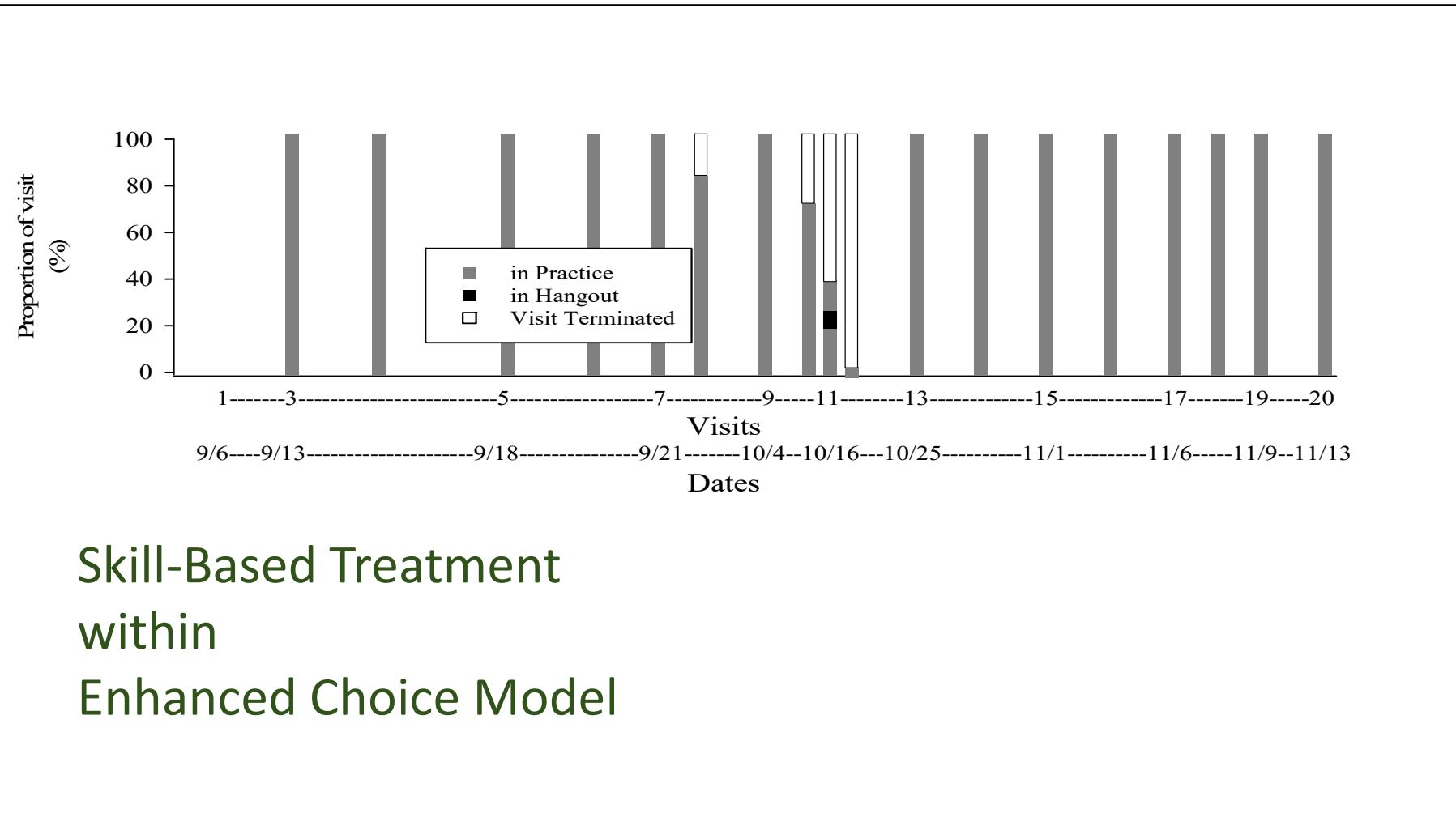
	Escape from...	to Tangibles	to Attention	to Mand compliance
Allie 4 ASD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Cleaning up toys -Sharing preferred toys -Playing alone with less preferred toys -Letting others win/go first 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Stuffed Animals -Farm animal figurines -Doctor play set -Picture Books 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyst role-played "Doctor" with stuffed animals as patients 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyst and parent complied with any of Allie's reasonable mands

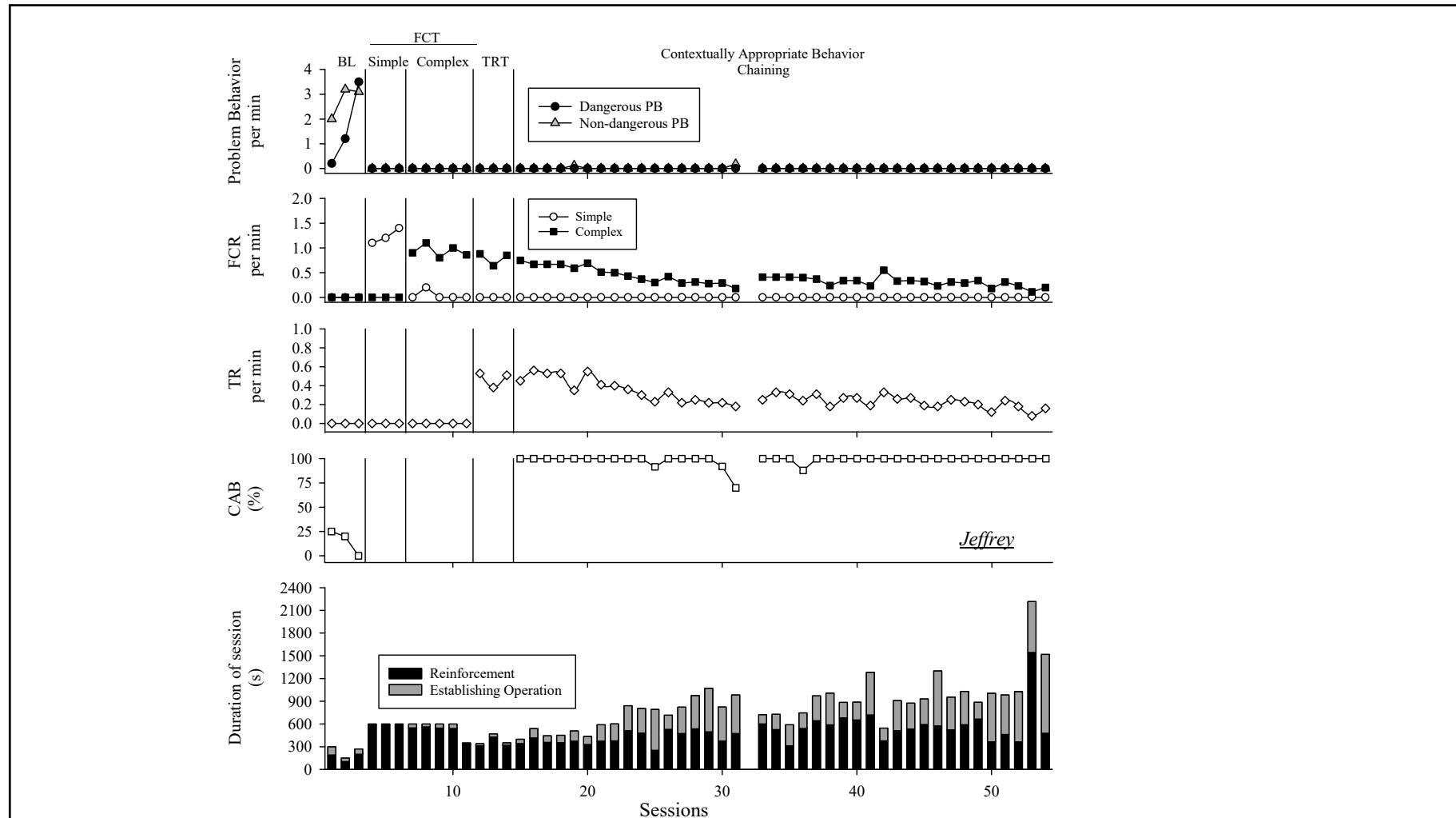






Name	Reason for referral
Jeffrey 9 ADHD/GAD	Aggression, meltdowns, and elopement from school and home Had required several police escorts from school after eloping to unsafe locations following disagreements with friends/teachers.





Implications of ECM

1. Can assess and treat severe problem behavior without seeing much if any severe problem behavior and without any escalation
2. More humane, safe, and televisable process
3. Allowed for expansion of clients served

What is Essential in Today's ABA?

Priorities of safety, televisibility, & rapport

Personalized & synthesized reinforcement

Progressively developing, skill-based treatment process that relies on unpredictable and intermittent reinforcement

Performance-based decisions

Practice, lots of it, under an ever-widening set of conditions

PFA and SBT are consistent with Trauma-Informed Care

Chart by the Institute on Trauma and Trauma-Informed Care (2015), University of Buffalo

Safety



Ensuring physical and emotional safety

Choice



Individual has choice and control

Collaboration



Definitions

Making decisions with the individual and sharing power

Trustworthiness



Task clarity, consistency, and Interpersonal Boundaries

Empowerment



Prioritizing empowerment and skill building

Questions on **Skill Based Treatment** **(or the enhanced choice format)?**

Thanks for listening.

For support implementing Today's ABA, go to:

www.ftfbc.com

FB: "PFA and SBT Community"

www.practicalfunctionalassessment.com



Improving Outcomes through Research-Based Innovations