

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



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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**

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

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What is Today's ABA?

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

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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)

**Today's ABA
teaches from joy**

- not through escalated
problem behavior -

HRE

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

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

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4. Shaping Skills

Communication, toleration, cooperation

Making Peaceful Progress

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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. VANSELOW, AND
LAURA A. HANRATTY

WESTERN NEW ENGLAND UNIVERSITY

(2014) *JABA*J Autism Dev Disord
DOI 10.1007/s10803-015-2617-0

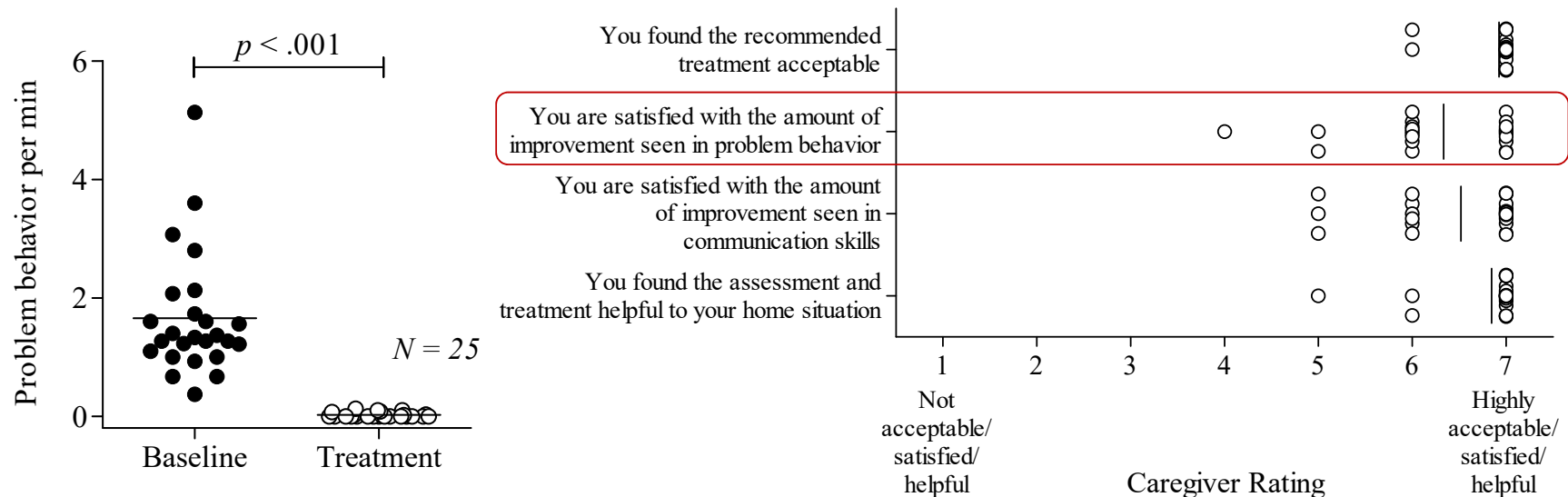
ORIGINAL PAPER

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*

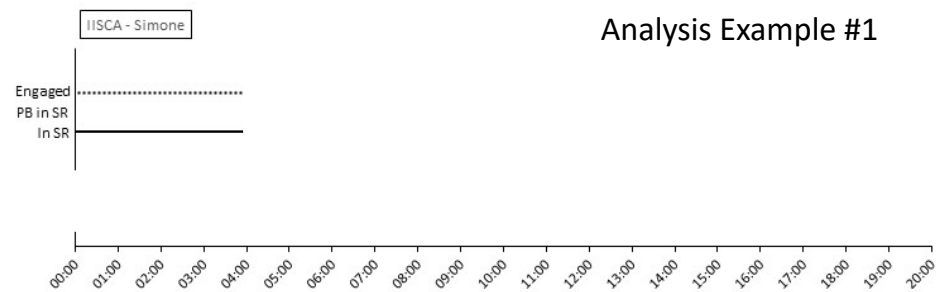
	<p><i>Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis</i> JOURNAL OF APPLIED BEHAVIOR ANALYSIS 2014, 47, 16–36 NUMBER 1 (SPRING)</p> <p><i>PRODUCING MEANINGFUL IMPROVEMENTS IN PROBLEM BEHAVIOR OF CHILDREN WITH AUTISM VIA SYNTHESIZED ANALYSES AND TREATMENTS</i></p> <p>GREGORY P. HANLEY, C. SANDY JIN, NICHOLAS R.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



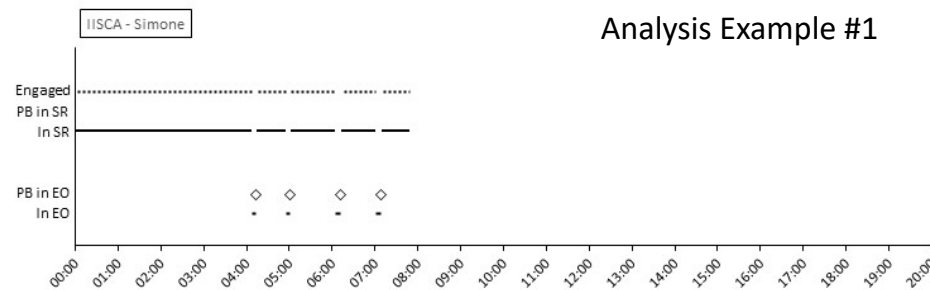
**Similar evidence for any other functional assessment or treatment process addressing problem behavior does not exist.*

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



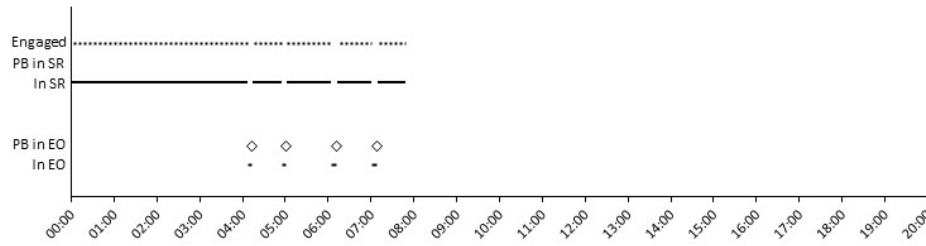
From Canniello, Hanley, Iovino et al., 2020

1. It starts with asking question (e.g., interviewing caregivers)
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Progressively introduce a challenging situation
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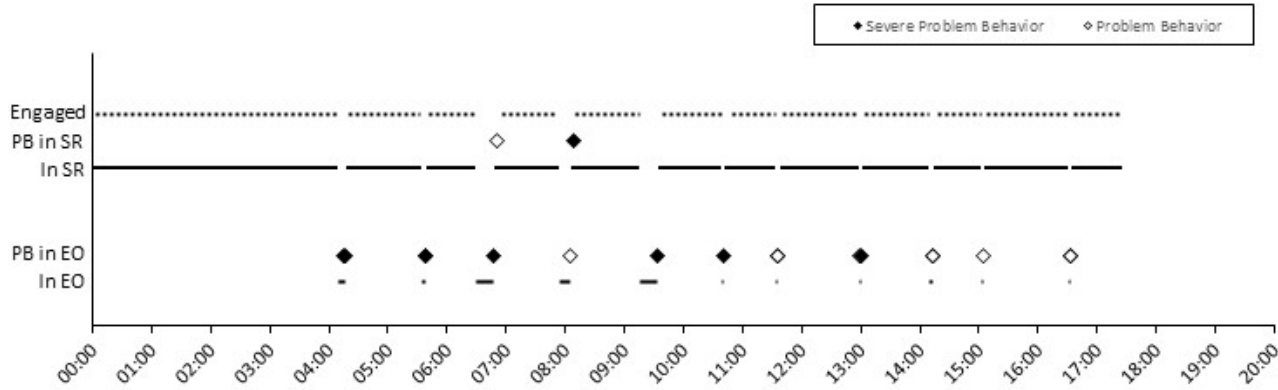


From Canniello, Hanley, Iovino et al., 2020

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., Ghaemmamghami, 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., Ghaemmamghami, 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
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., Ghaemmamghami, 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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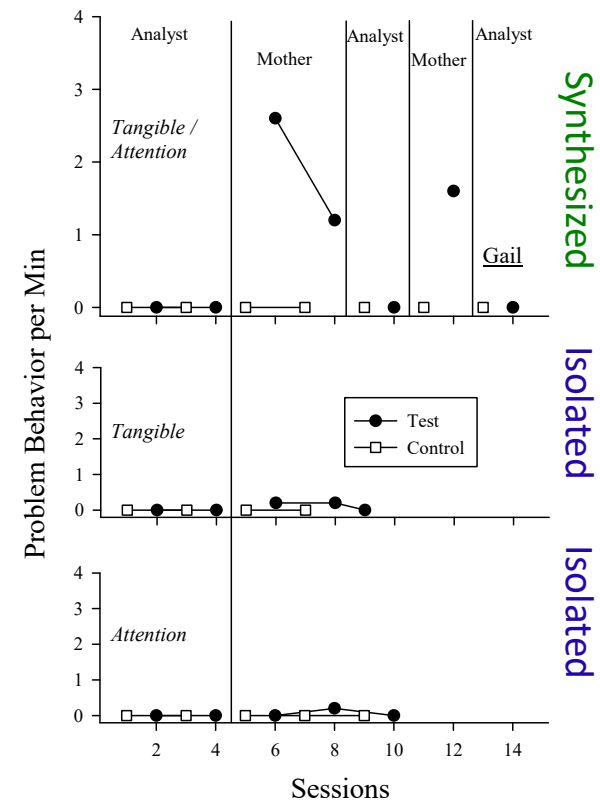
Personalized & synthesized reinforcement contingencies

From Hanley et al., 2014, *JABA*

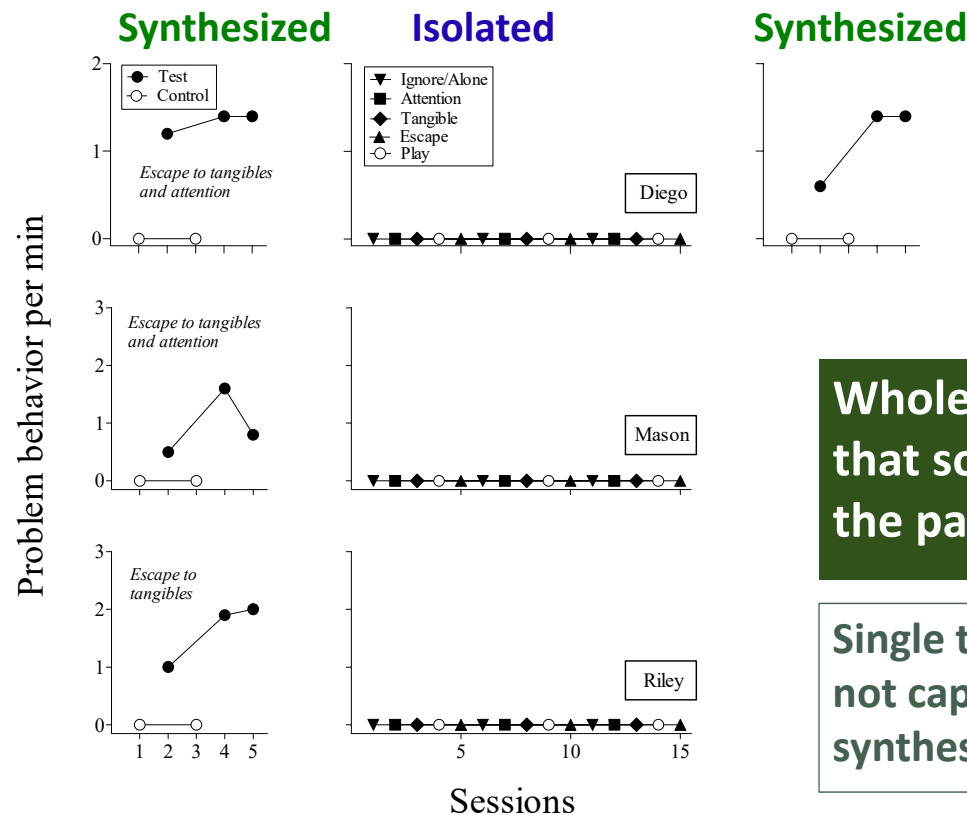
Case Example
Gail, 3 yo, dx: PDD-NOS
Setting: Clinic

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*



From Slaton et al., 2017, *JABA*



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?

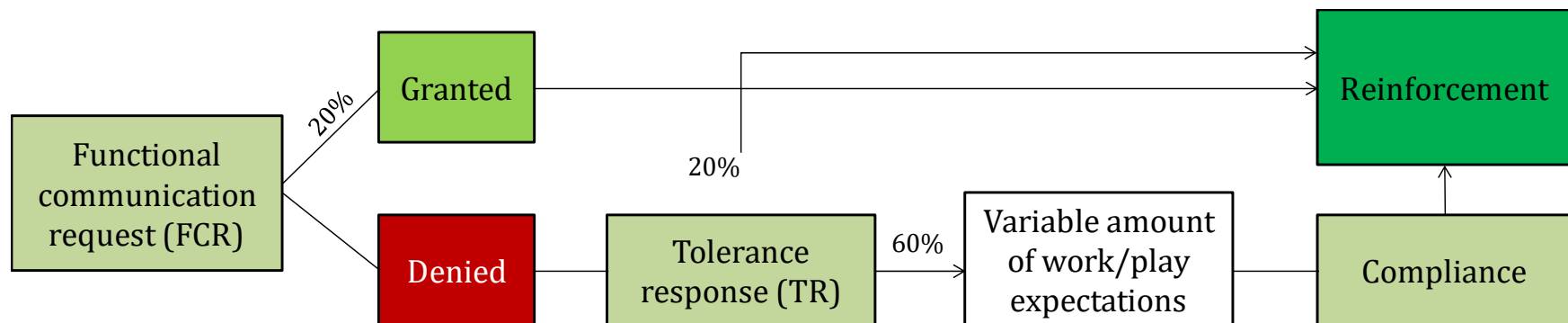
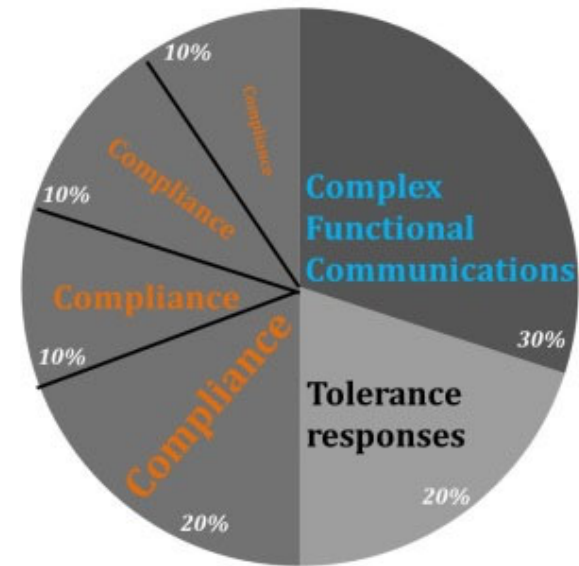
What is the treatment????

Intermittent and unpredictable
reinforcement of life skills:

Functional Communication

Delay/denial toleration

Contextually appropriate behaviors



SKILL BASED TREATMENT

CAB 3-6

CAB 2

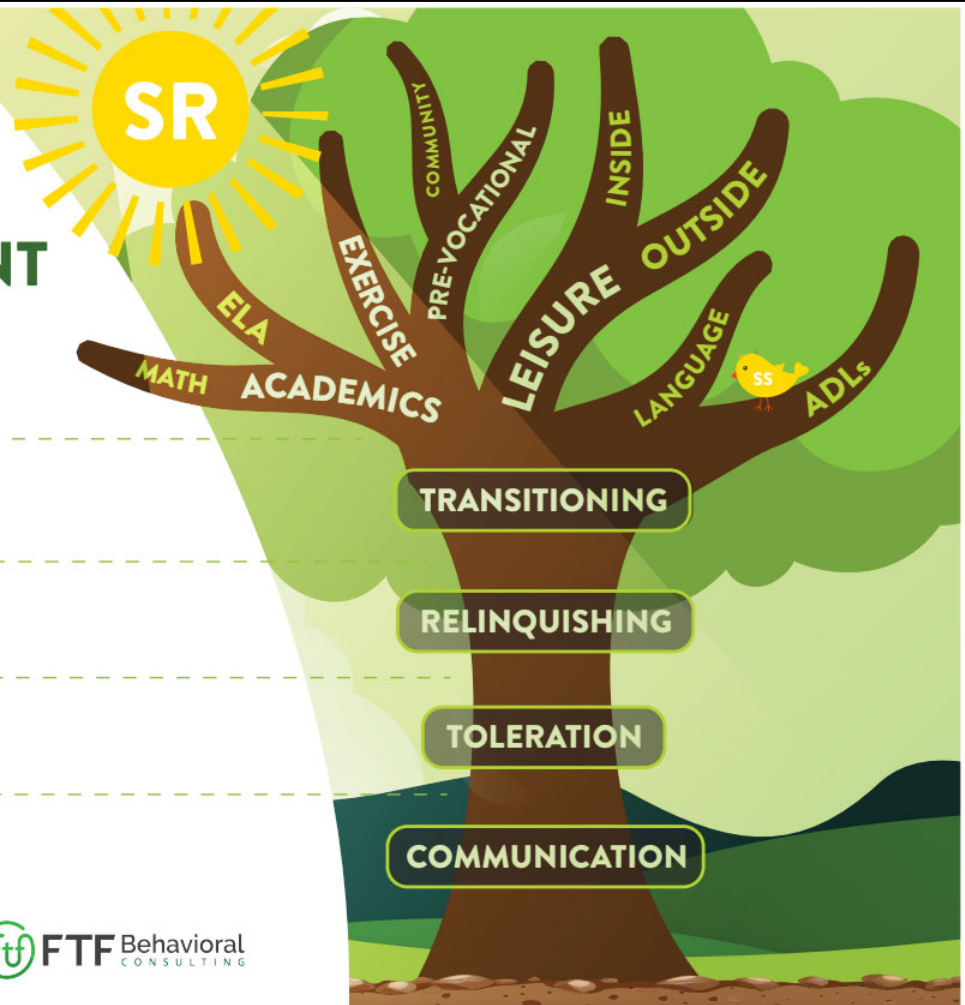
CAB 1

TR

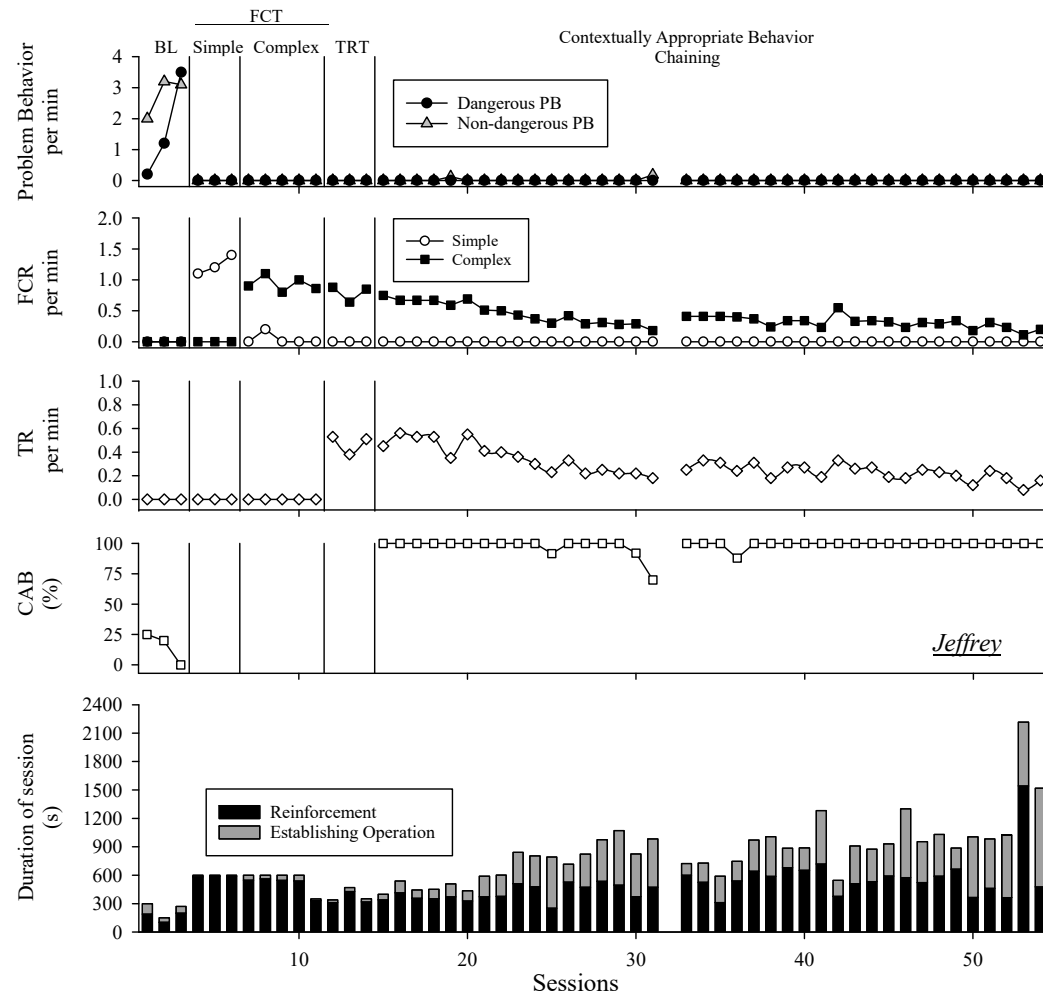
FCR

 **TRADEWINDS**
EDUCATION CENTER
A PROGRAM OF UPSTATE CEREBRAL PALSY

 **FTF** Behavioral
CONSULTING



SKILL-BASED TREATMENT EXAMPLE



SKILL BASED TREATMENT

CAB 3-6

CAB 2

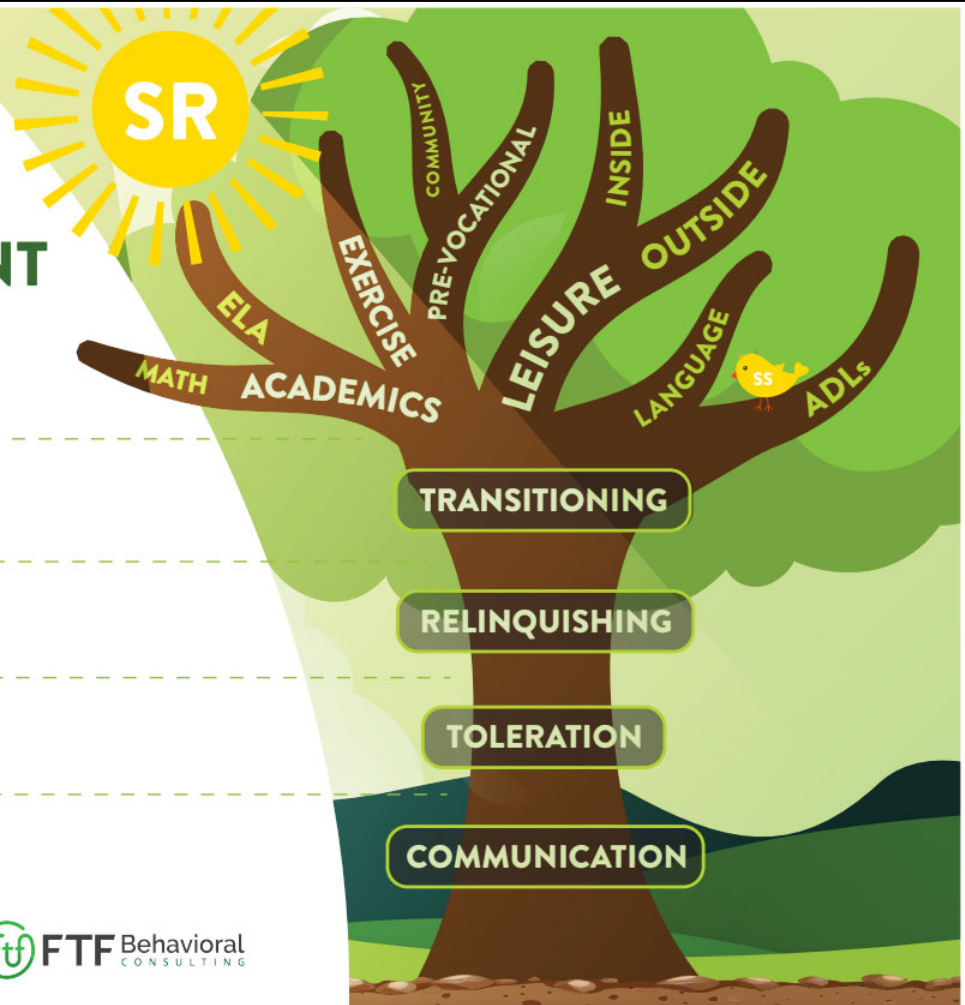
CAB 1

TR

FCR

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CONSULTING



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 Guidelines Contextually Appropriate Behavior

1. Start by gaining instructional control over reinforcers.
2. Then gain instructional control over listen/learn
3. Then gradually increase the average required to terminate the delay
4. Terminate the delay for various amounts of very little behavior sometimes required 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

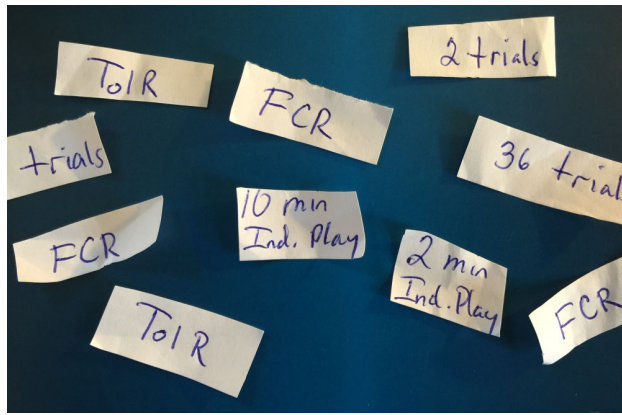
Data Sheet and Guide for the Skill-Based Treatment of Problem Behavior (Revised: May 2019; FTF Behavioral Consulting, Inc.)

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									
			<i>Trial 1</i> EO	SR	<i>Trial 2</i> EO	SR	<i>Trial 3</i> EO	SR	<i>Trial 4</i> EO	SR	<i>Trial 5</i> EO	SR
14		CFCR, TR, CAB 1, CAB 2, or CAB3	TR	Eng	CAB2	Eng	CAB1	Eng	cFCR	Eng	CAB3	Eng
14		Communicate, tolerate denial,	CAB2	Eng	cFCR	Eng	CAB3	Eng	TR	Eng	CAB1	Eng
14		relinquish positive reinforcers,	CAB3	Eng	cFCR	Eng	CAB1	Eng	CAB2	Eng	TR	Eng
14		transition and get ready to learn, and/or	cFCR	Eng	CAB1	Eng	TR	Eng	CAB3	Eng	CAB2	Eng
14		cooperate/comply/respond accurately	TR	Eng	CAB3	Eng	CAB2	Eng	cFCR	Eng	CAB1	Eng
14		to 1-3 instructions within 1 activity	CAB3	Eng	cFCR	Eng	CAB2	Eng	TR	Eng	CAB2	Eng
14			CAB1	Eng	cFCR	Eng	CAB3	Eng	CAB2	Eng	TR	Eng
14			cFCR	Eng	CAB2	Eng	CAB1	Eng	TR	Eng	CAB3	Eng
14			TR	Eng	CAB2	Eng	CAB1	Eng	cFCR	Eng	CAB3	Eng
14			CAB3	Eng	cFCR	Eng	CAB1	Eng	CAB2	Eng	TR	Eng
14			cFCR	Eng	CAB1	Eng	TR	Eng	CAB3	Eng	CAB2	Eng
14			TR	Eng	CAB3	Eng	CAB2	Eng	cFCR	Eng	CAB1	Eng
14			CAB3	Eng	cFCR	Eng	CAB2	Eng	TR	Eng	CAB2	Eng
14			TR	Eng	CAB3	Eng	CAB2	Eng	cFCR	Eng	CAB1	Eng
14			CAB3	Eng	cFCR	Eng	CAB2	Eng	TR	Eng	CAB3	Eng
14			CAB3	Eng	cFCR	Eng	CAB2	Eng	TR	Eng	CAB2	Eng
15		CFCR, TR, CAB 1 or 2, or CAB4	CAB4	Eng	cFCR	Eng	CAB1	Eng	CAB4	Eng	TR	Eng
15		Communicate, tolerate denial,	cFCR	Eng	CAB4	Eng	TR	Eng	CAB4	Eng	CAB2	Eng
15		relinquish positive reinforcers,	TR	Eng	CAB4	Eng	CAB2	Eng	cFCR	Eng	CAB4	Eng
15		transition and get ready to learn, and/or	CAB4	Eng	cFCR	Eng	CAB4	Eng	TR	Eng	CAB1	Eng
15		cooperate/comply/respond accurately	CAB1	Eng	cFCR	Eng	CAB4	Eng	CAB4	Eng	TR	Eng
15		to 1-3 instructions within multiple activities	cFCR	Eng	CAB4	Eng	CAB1	Eng	TR	Eng	CAB4	Eng
15			TR	Eng	CAB2	Eng	CAB4	Eng	cFCR	Eng	CAB4	Eng
15			CAB4	Eng	cFCR	Eng	CAB4	Eng	TR	Eng	CAB1	Eng
15			cFCR	Eng	CAB4	Eng	TR	Eng	CAB4	Eng	CAB2	Eng
15			TR	Eng	CAB4	Eng	CAB2	Eng	cFCR	Eng	CAB4	Eng
15			CAB4	Eng	cFCR	Eng	CAB4	Eng	TR	Eng	CAB1	Eng
15			CAB1	Eng	cFCR	Eng	CAB4	Eng	CAB4	Eng	TR	Eng
15			cFCR	Eng	CAB4	Eng	CAB1	Eng	TR	Eng	CAB4	Eng
15			TR	Eng	CAB2	Eng	CAB4	Eng	cFCR	Eng	CAB4	Eng
15			TR	Eng	CAB4	Eng	CAB2	Eng	cFCR	Eng	CAB4	Eng
15			CAB4	Eng	cFCR	Eng	CAB4	Eng	TR	Eng	CAB1	Eng

EO = establishing operation; SR = synthesized reinforcement; PB = problem behavior; Eng = Engagement; cFCR = Complex FCR; TR = Tolerance responses; CAB = Contextually appropriate behavior



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:

Laminates
 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!

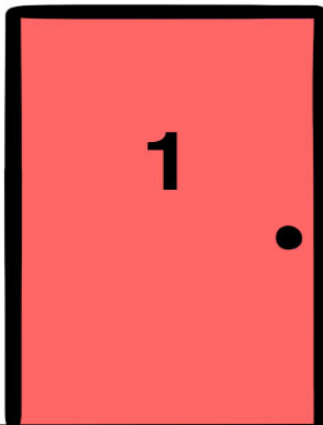
App called "Names in a Hat"



The Enhanced Choice Model

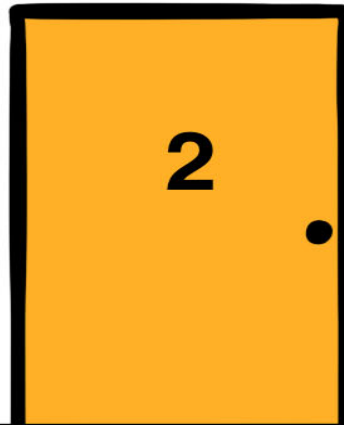
Rajaraman, A., Hanley, G. P., Gover, H. C.,
Staubitz, J. L., Staubitz, J., E., Simcoe, K. M.,
& Metras, R. L. (2021). Minimizing
escalation by treating dangerous problem
behavior within an enhanced choice model.
Behavior Analysis in Practice.

Practice Context



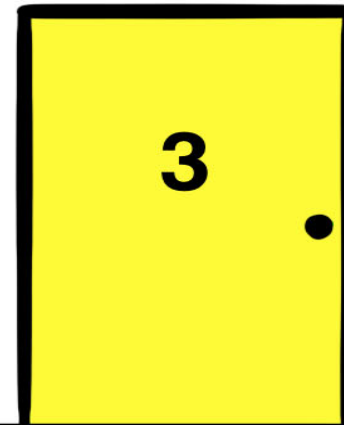
Differential
Reinforcement

Hangout Context



Noncontingent
Reinforcement

EXIT



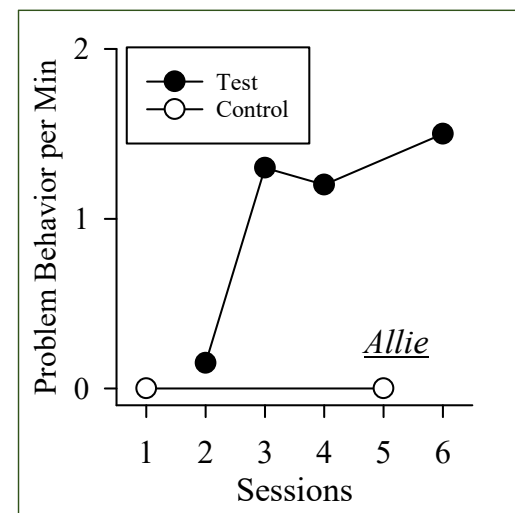
Clinic: Go home
School: Return to classroom

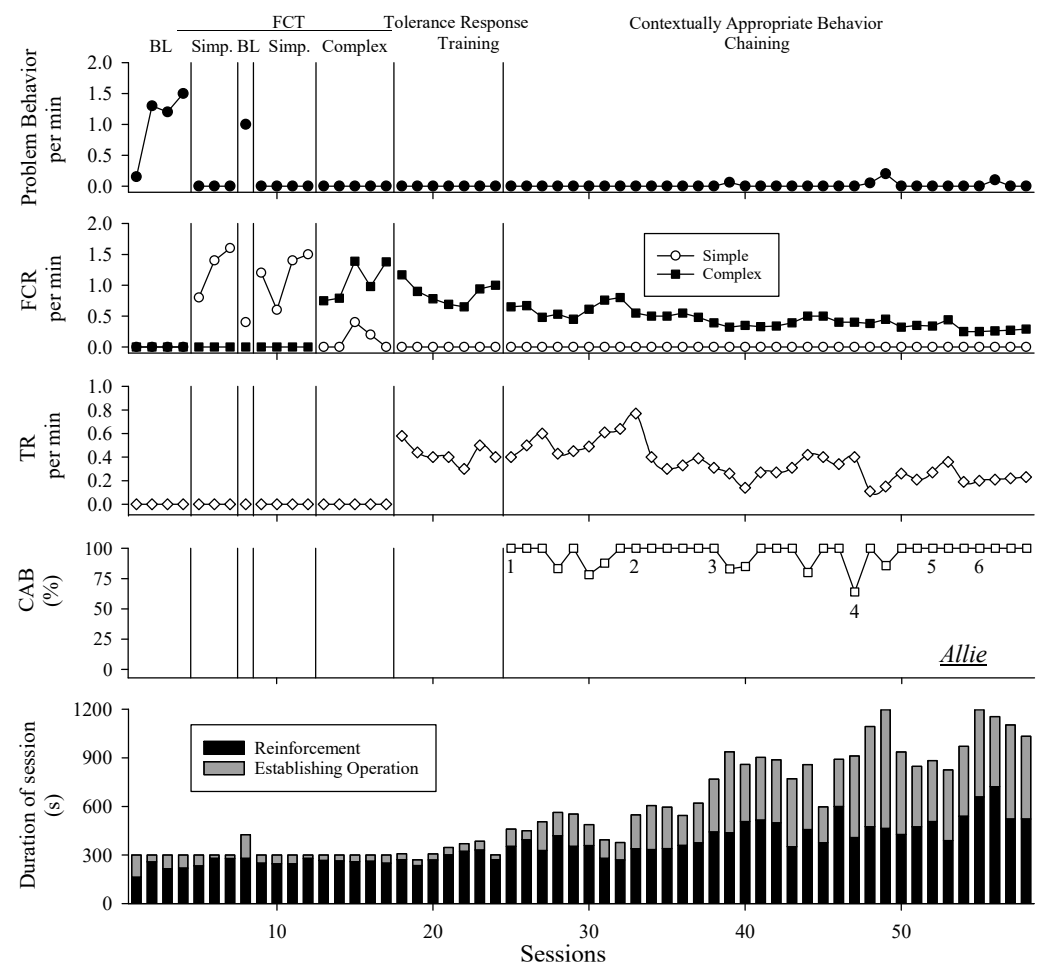
Allie
4
ASD

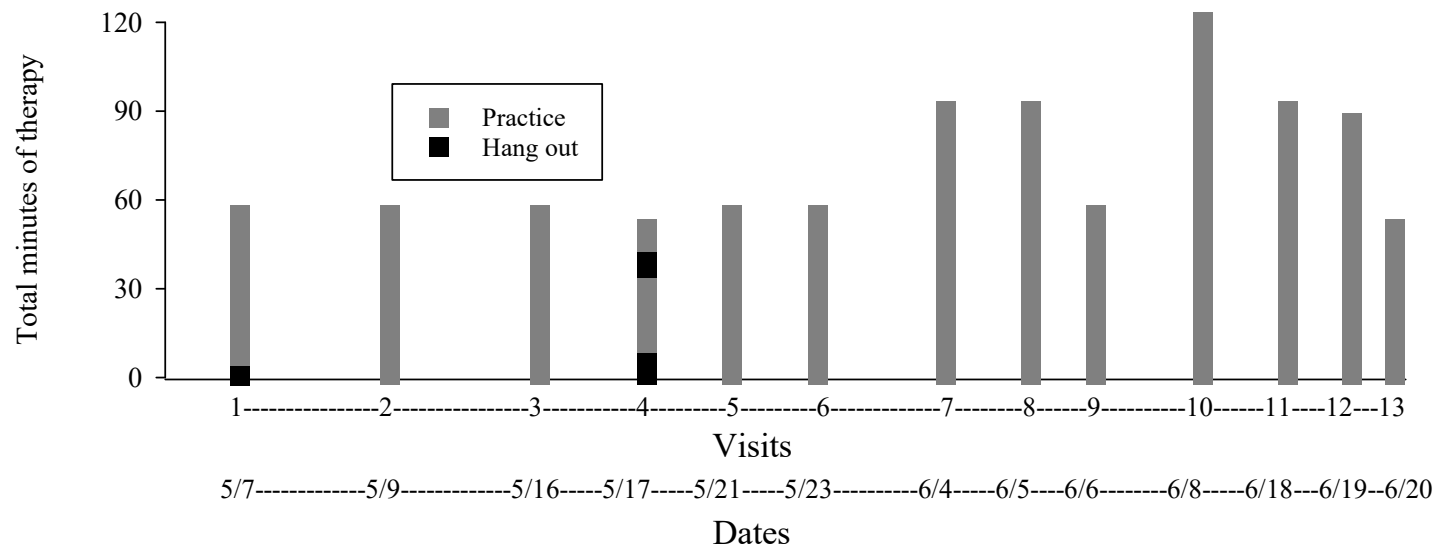
Aggression (often toward siblings), property destruction, elopement and tantrums
lasting up to 1 hour in home

Contingency assessed:

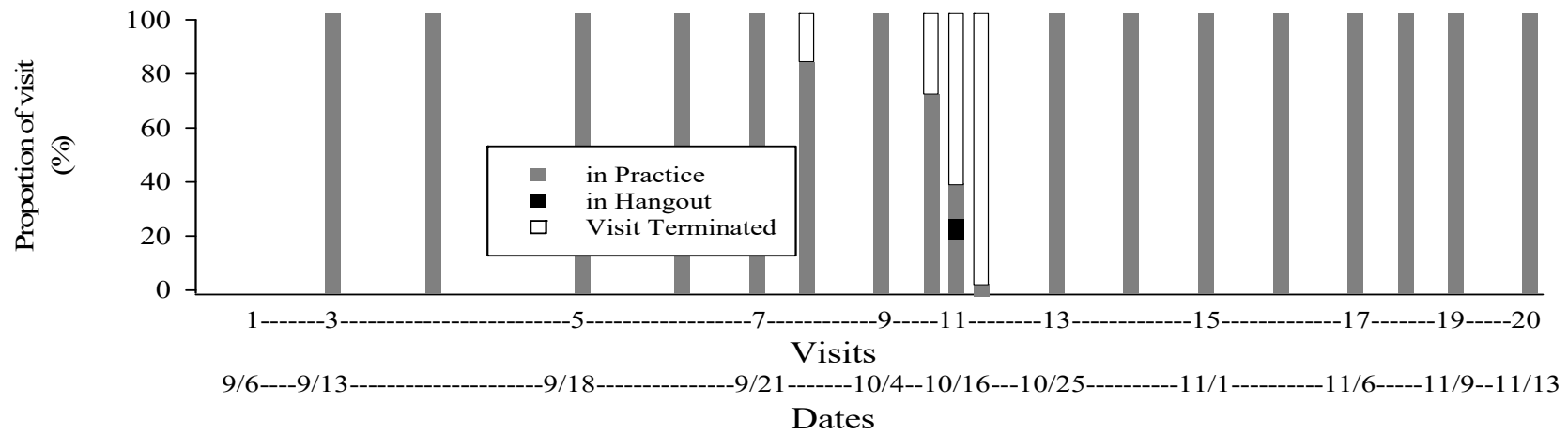
	Escape from...	to Tangibles	to Attention	to Mand compliance
Allie 4 ASD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Cleaning up toys -Sharing preferred toys -Playing alone with less preferred toys -Letting others win/go first 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Stuffed Animals -Farm animal figurines -Doctor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



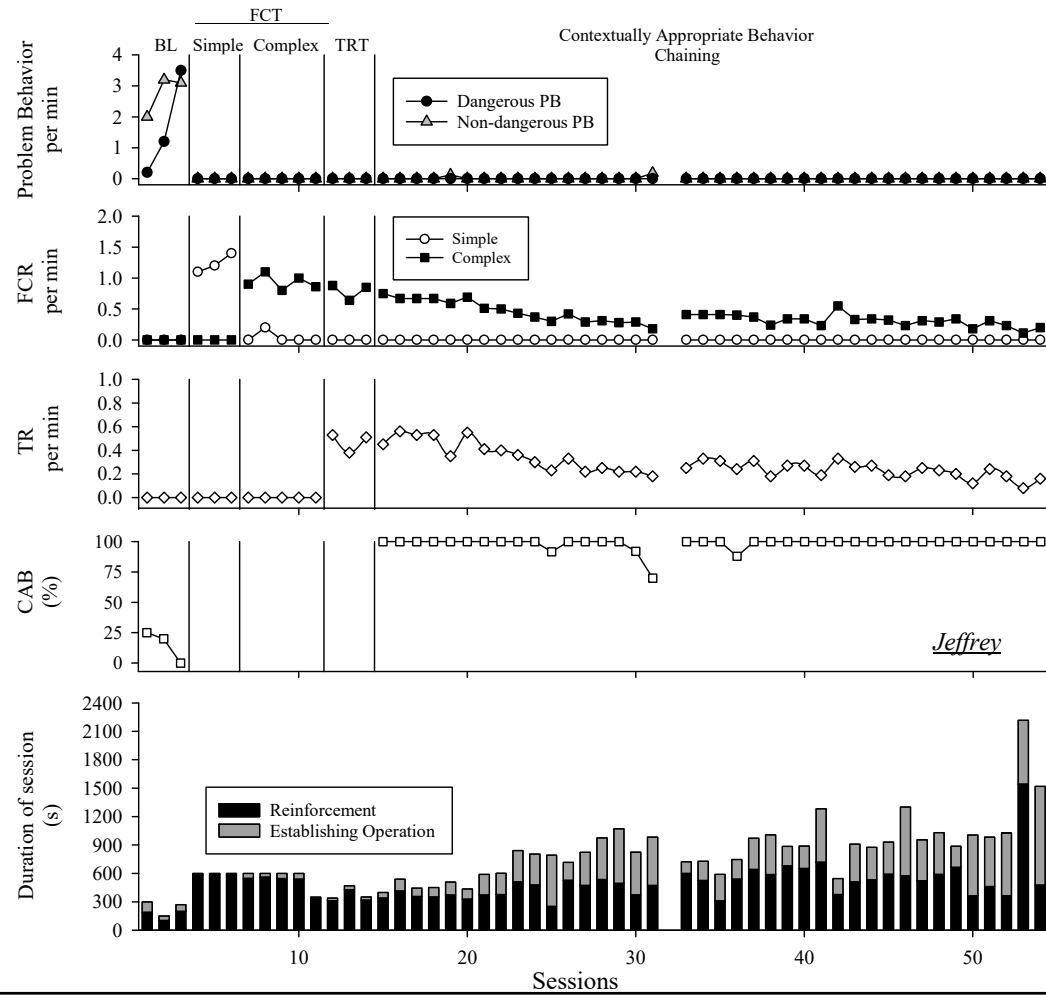




Name	Reason for referral
Jeffrey 9 ADHD/GAD	Aggression, meltdowns, and elopement from school and home Had required several police escorts from school after eloping to unsafe locations following disagreements with friends/teachers.



Skill-Based Treatment
within
Enhanced Choice Model



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, televisability, & 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



Making decisions with the individual and sharing power

Trustworthiness



Task clarity, consistency, and Interpersonal Boundaries

Empowerment



Prioritizing empowerment and skill building

Definitions

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.practicalfunctionalelement.com

