Positive and Proactive Practices for Middle and High Schools
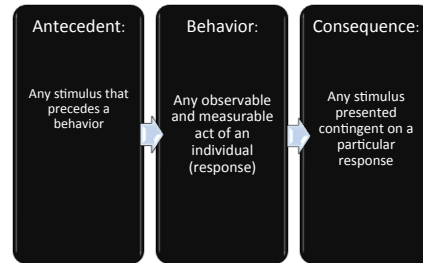
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June 20th, 2018
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The three-term contingency

Antecedent:	Behavior:	Consequence:
Any stimulus that precedes a behavior	Any observable and measurable act of an individual (response)	Any stimulus presented contingent on a particular response

Alberto & Troutman, 2017

Reinforcement

- Reinforcement **increases** the likelihood of a behavior in the future.
  - Whether a consequence is reinforcing or not depends on the **learner**.
  - Only the future rate of a behavior determines if a consequence is reinforcing.

- Reinforcement can be **positive** or **negative**.
  - **Positive**: Something is **added** to the environment.
  - **Negative**: Something is **removed** from the environment.

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Why do we care?

- What do the concepts of reinforcement and punishment have to do with student behavior?

- A few things:
  - Knowing the **mechanisms** behind how behavior works can help you shape behavior: tricks can fail you, but the science never will.
  - Understanding that **reinforcement** and **punishment** are scientific phenomena that affect rates of behavior will help you select consequences based on your observations (rather than on what you think will work).
  - If we know certain consequences increase the likelihood of behaviors we want to see, we can plan to have those consequences follow the behaviors we want to see.

Setting Events

What's a setting event?

Setting event	Antecedent	Behavior	Consequence

A **SETTING EVENT** is a condition or event that temporarily alters the reinforcing value of the consequence of a behavior

Alberto & Troutman, 2017

Why do we care?

- What does the concept of setting events have to do with student behavior?

- A few things:
  - What are some setting events that our students might encounter?
  - Knowing about setting events can help us prevent inappropriate behaviors.
  - Parents and guardians can provide valuable information about setting events.

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Extinction and function

- Extinction:
  - When a previously reinforced behavior is no longer reinforced.
  - Helps teachers understand why behavior change can be slow and why they should not reinforce increase or more intense versions of the behavior.

- Function: the key to depersonalizing behavior.
  - What is the student trying to get?
  - What is the student trying to avoid?

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EBP in classroom management:
What all instructors should be doing in the classroom

1. Maximize structure

2. Identify, define, and teach expectations

3. Increase academic engagement

4. Establish a continuum of supports to encourage appropriate behavior

5. Establish a continuum of supports to discourage inappropriate behavior

Simonsen et al., 2008

Structure and expectations

- What does "structure" in the classroom mean?
  - Physical structure (e.g., furniture, décor)
  - Embedded structure (e.g., routines)

- What are some routines that everyone should know?

- Classroom expectations:
  - Select 3-5 positively stated expectations (can be same as SW)
  - Define expectations within the context of routines

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The matrix alone is not enough!

- How do we ensure that students will follow the routines within our matrix?

- Expectations and routines must be taught **like academics**.

- Consider a model, lead, test format (i.e., I do, we do, you do).
  - Provide multiple opportunities for practice and feedback.
  - Determine how you'll assess students' understanding of content.

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How do we keep students actively engaged?

- How do we keep students actively engaged during instruction?

- What are other teacher behaviors (i.e., besides instructional delivery) that can impact students' behavior?

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Establishing a continuum of supports

- We should be paying **at least** as much attention to the behaviors we want to see (i.e., reinforcing them!) as we do for the behaviors we don't want to see.

- Establish a continuum of support in the classroom, which can include:
  - Behavior-specific feedback
  - Group contingencies
  - Token economies

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What is behavior-specific praise?

- Behavior specific praise looks like:
  - Identifying the learner(s).
  - Identifying the specific behavior begin acknowledged.
  - A statement that occurs directly after (i.e., as a result of) the behavior.

- What are some examples?

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More about delivering praise.

- Why is specific, contingent praise more effective than general praise statements?

- Deliver praise in your natural demeanor.

- Praise should sound sincere.

- Not all students will find praise reinforcing.
  - Why might this be the case?
  - What are some options for providing praise to these students?

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Other ways to acknowledge appropriate behavior

- Group contingencies:
  - Can be **interdependent**, **dependent**, or **independent**.
  - Be sure students work toward something (rather than avoid a loss).

- Token economies:
  - Requires tokens, backup reinforcers, and a **system** for exchange.
  - Take data to ensure success of system.
  - Determine if you will use a response cost.

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Error correction

- First response to minor behavior error should be **specific and contingent error correction.**
  - Identify problem behavior.
  - Identify expected behavior.
  - Reteach if necessary.
  - Provide feedback.
  - Reinforce as soon as appropriate behavior is displayed.

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Other responses to inappropriate behavior

- Be sure that responses to inappropriate behavior do not inadvertently reinforce the behavior.

- Removal from environment is only effective at reducing behavior if the student wanted to be in the environment.

- Consider responses that have a "restitution" aspect and include re-teaching of appropriate behavior.

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Remember: Academic and social behavior

- It is critical for us to remember that **all** behaviors are learned through consequences: academic and social behaviors are both **behaviors**.

- Learning academic behaviors can take a long time. Students may require remediation, extra instruction, and different approaches.
  - The same is true for social behaviors.
  - Keep an instructional mindset.

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