

F.A.I.R Plan for Sexualized Behaviors

Introduction

Sexualized behaviors can look different depending on the individual, setting, and context. Students who engage in sexualized behavior can present in the form of crude language, self-stimulatory, or physical interaction with other persons. The behaviors can also manifest as social deficits, including invading other individuals' personal space, fixating on another individual, or social communication deficits. Not all students who engage in sexualized behaviors have experienced trauma or abuse in the past. Sexualized behaviors may function for attention seeking, self-stimulation, or as a result of developmental or other disorders (e.g., bipolar, anxiety, et al.).

Literature Review

Limited research on sexual behaviors with adolescents has been conducted in the scope of behavior analysis. However, some research exists about cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) intervention strategies and management of problematic sexual behaviors (PSB). One such study was conducted in 2020 with 31 adolescent males and caregivers who completed a CBT education program that occurred over 44 sessions, 90 minutes each. The training package included the following: Who to Tell and How to Respond, Monitoring Sexual Situations, Sexual Health, Principles of Healthy Sexual Behavior, Cognitive Behavioral ABCs of Behavior, Juvenile Justice Guest Speaker, What Rules Should Caregivers Set, Caregiver-Teen Communication, Reasons for Illegal Sexual Behavior, Disclosure, and Restitution and Apology. The article expresses the intervention package showed a significant reduction in PSB but cites that “caregiver engagement is pivotal in contributing to treatment completion and the subsequent reduction of PSB is consistent with existing research highlighting the importance of caregiver involvement in creating sustainable change in child and adolescent behavior and family functioning” (Jenkins et al., 2020, p. 6).

Davis et al. (2015) conducted a meta-analysis of journal entries discussing sexualized behavior with students considered developmentally delayed. “A target behavior [dependent variable] was considered inappropriate if it grossly violated social norms (e.g., occurred in public locations past age-appropriate norms, violated personal space and privacy); significantly interfered with other activities, responsibilities, or instruction; or was hazardous to the individual or others (e.g., masturbation at a frequency or intensity to cause tissue damage to genitals, sexual assault of others)” (Davis et al., 2015, p. 391). The independent variables delineated included instructional revision, manipulation of motivating operations, NCR, DRA, DRO, extinction, and punishment procedures (independent variables). Results recommend that after the function of the behavior has been determined, a combination of the interventions mentioned above can be used to address the unwanted behaviors. The authors recommend that all procedures be tailored to the

individual's unique circumstances. Overall, this resource provides a good reference for ABA-aligned practitioners to address possible solutions across seven forms of intervention that may be effective treatment options for students with and without developmental disabilities.

These articles provide intervention strategies and definitions of behavior that may provide therapists, teachers, and caregivers with strategies to address the various topographical forms of sexualized behavior in neurotypical and neurodivergent youth.

Participant and Setting

Targeted Behaviors: Sexual innuendo to preferred female peers, cursing, and vulgar language spoken by “D”.

“D” is a ten-year-old white male currently in the 4th grade in a nonrestrictive environment. He has been observed by his homeroom teacher and the specialists (e.g., art, music, physical education) as having a “potty mouth” and using foul language, many times of a sexual nature. He has been reprimanded for these behaviors, and some students have begun to feel uncomfortable by his statements. His parents were contacted and reported that “D” does not use that language at home and have never observed these behaviors. The function of the behavior appears to be positive and negative attention from peers and adults. A formal functional analysis was not conducted but should be considered to find a functional relationship between antecedents and consequences that have maintained the behaviors.

Methods

Environmental: “D” is well-liked by his ingroup that consists of five other males. He has a tendency to influence the other students' behaviors negatively. Initial strategies may include:

- Modified classroom (separation from peers with similar profiles or previously targeted persons)
- Seat the student close to the teacher in order to provide more direct supervision
- Maintain visibility to the student
- Be mobile and frequently near the student
- Do not allow the student to be left alone or unsupervised with other students
- Alternative lunch
- Allow for monitored breaks
- Calming area
- Time-out area
- Make necessary adjustments in the environment to prevent stress, frustration, et al.
- Avoid triggering topics of sexual nature
- Assess the appropriateness of the social situation and place the student in a group in which she will be most successful

Executive Function: Currently, “D” exhibits a high frequency of impulsivity and would be considered “rowdy.” Additionally, his grades would improve if “D” would adopt better scheduling and study habits.

- Write a contract with the student specifying what behavior is expected (e.g., controlling language) and what reinforcement may be made available when the terms of the contract have been met (see Appendix A)
- Have the student record (e.g., journal, personal check lists, log) their own progress in order to have tangible evidence of success
- If the student has the ability, use an ABC chart to monitor what was happening around the event if “D” engages in the problem behavior (see Appendix B)
- Deliver a predetermined signal when the student begins to display problem behaviors
- One-on-one tutoring sessions with an educator for attention
- Planned attention from adult
- Establish a schedule for predictability and activity to reduce downtime and keep him engaged

Curricular: “D” has a “C” average across subjects, but excels at physical education. Increasing the duration of attending to curricular work may show multiple benefits across behavioral domains.

- Offer preferred activities
- Alternative assignments and activities
- Evaluate the appropriateness of the task to determine if it is too difficult or inappropriate length of time scheduled for the task.
- Visual schedules
- Task analysis
- Evaluate the appropriateness of the task to determine: (a) if the task is too difficult and (b) if the length of time scheduled to complete the task is appropriate
- Provide the student with success-oriented tasks. The expectation is that success will result in a more positive attitude and perceptions toward self and environment.
- Provide the student with a variety of social and academic successes
- Calling on the student when they will most likely be able to answer correctly (if previous agreement with the student to respond in this manner)

Replacement Behaviors: Teaching the student to use various forms of functional communication to indicate how he is feeling when non preferred activities or tasks are required. Additionally, increasing his repertoire of vocabulary would allow “D” to engage in a conversation with peers and adults with more maturity. Other techniques would be the ability to advocate for themselves when task demands, or skill levels are too high for their current repertoire.

- Teach the student acceptable ways to communicate their emotional disposition
- Teach the student to “think” before acting (e.g., ask herself, “What is happening?” “What am I doing?” “What should I do?” “What will be best for me in the long run?”)
- Utilize FCT alternatives
- Change of environment
- Planned attending time from an adult
- Pair with a more mature peer for curricular projects

Training Underdeveloped Skills and Self-Management:

- Give the student responsibilities in the classroom (e.g., teacher assistant, peer tutor, group leader, et al.)
- Conduct a preference assessment to find what the student enjoys doing or a curricular topic they show interest in
- Create a self-report frequency data tracking sheet for the student to review when, what, or how the behavior occurred
- Present awareness inventory of self
- Emotion regulation worksheet if “D” becomes frustrated or agitated with the intervention strategies (see Appendix C)
- Teaching restitution strategies (e.g., positive practice, apologizing, over-correction, et al.)

Interaction Strategies

The adults will maintain high levels of positive interaction with “D” throughout the day and provide positive attention. NCR and GCR may provide alternatives to unstructured downtime and transitions. Eventually, a graduated exposure to non-preferred peers and activities where “D” can use the appropriate language may promote a larger repertoire of communicative behavior.

- Make certain the student knows exactly which sexually-related behaviors are unacceptable at school (e.g., words, gestures, comments, touching, exposing, et al.)
- One-on-one tutoring by the teacher
- Teacher provided accommodations
- Eventually a graduated exposure exercise with non-preferred peers
- Multiple check-ins with a preferred adult
- Generalized conditioned reinforcement (e.g., praise, high-five, et al.)
- Use of NCR by attending adults ("Catch 'em being good!")
- Reduce situations that contribute to the sexualized language (e.g., loud and over-stimulated environments, novel persons, group gatherings, et al.)
- Allow students to perform operational tasks for interaction with other students and for the teacher
- Well-defined network of persons for wrap-around support (e.g., parents, caregivers, select peers, teachers, aides, et al.)

- Treat the student with respect. Talk in an objective manner at all times
- Model socially acceptable behavior for the student (e.g., appropriate verbal communications, handshake, et al.)

Response Strategies: Demand duration for non-preferred activities should be reduced to shape skill acquisition and confidence.

- Punishment procedures (e.g., time-out, response cost)
- Use noncontingent reinforcement
- Graduated exposure to non-preferred activities and peers
- Replacement activities
- Teacher cues for self-management
- Provide alternative activities
- Token economy
- Avoid shaming

Generalization and Maintenance

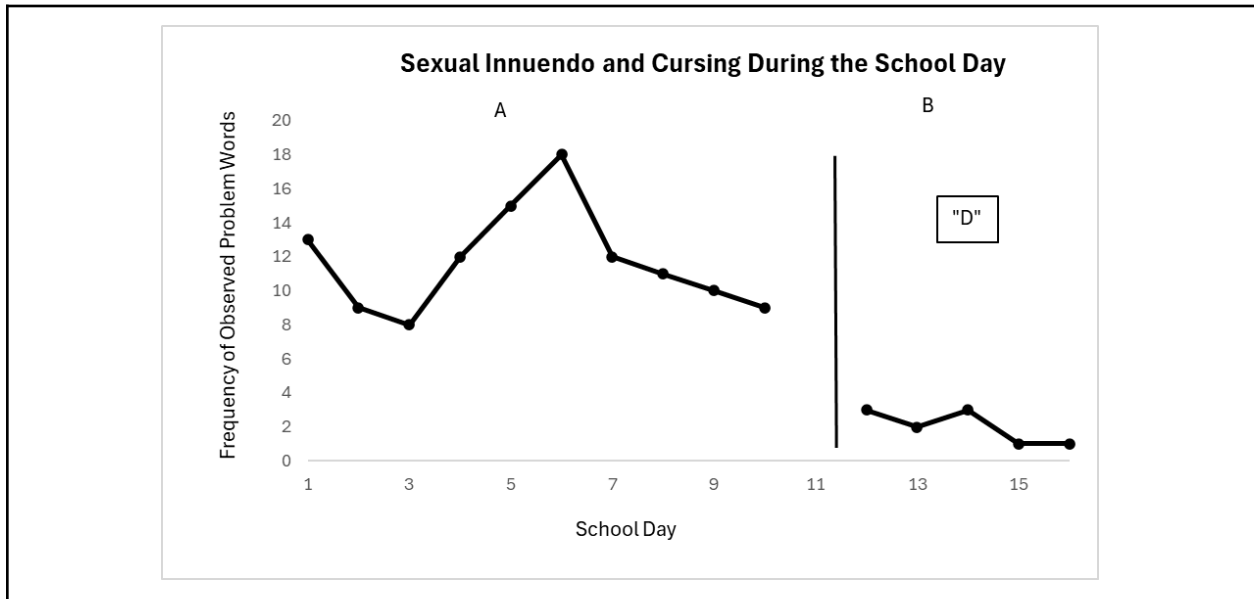
The schedule of reinforcement and task requirements will be inversely proportional before fading. As compliance and engagement increase, the interval of reinforcement will recede. This strategy will be implemented with the other specialists and classroom teachers and recorded on a tracking worksheet (see Appendix D). This tool will be used to determine efficacious practice and investigate potential setting events that show a correlation with corrected or adverse behaviors. The charts will be compiled weekly and will include areas for anecdotal description for the behavioral team to review. Additionally, the parents may track behavior away from the school setting to inform future behavior intervention strategies. Including the primary caregivers is paramount to provide a holistic and socially significant change in the student's well-being and promote consistency of reinforcement and corrective strategizing. Additionally, the caregivers will receive a strategizing chart as a reference and recording device at home (see Appendix E).

Projected Graph

An AB design will be used during the primary intervention phases. As the rates of sexualized and crude behaviors absolve and a steady trend is shown, intervening strategies will be faded, thinned, or omitted if corroborating evidence from school and home indicate as such. An alternating treatment design would be warranted if the initial training package did not provide results. However, a teacher or other supervising adult would have to be trained to record and differentiate the various intervening tactics and strategies to show a functional relationship. For this reason, data would be collected based on the collective strategies employed.

Figure 1

Sexual Innuendo and Cursing During Class by "D"



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Appendix

Appendix A

Sample Behavior Contract

BEHAVIOR CONTRACT

Date: _____

GOAL BEHAVIOR

I, _____, agree to work on this behavior:

REWARD

The reward I will receive for meeting this goal is:

REVIEW

We'll check in on how this contract is going on this date: _____


Student Signature Adult Signature



Appendix B

Sample ABC Worksheet

THE ABC OF CBT – blank template – create several versions with B and C outcomes

A	ACTIVATING EVENT OR SITUATION	
B	BELIEFS AND THOUGHTS	
C	CONSEQUENTIAL PHYSICAL FEELINGS (THREAT RESPONSE – NERVOUS SYSTEM)	
CONSEQUENTIAL BEHAVIOUR		CONSEQUENTIAL EMOTIONAL FEELINGS

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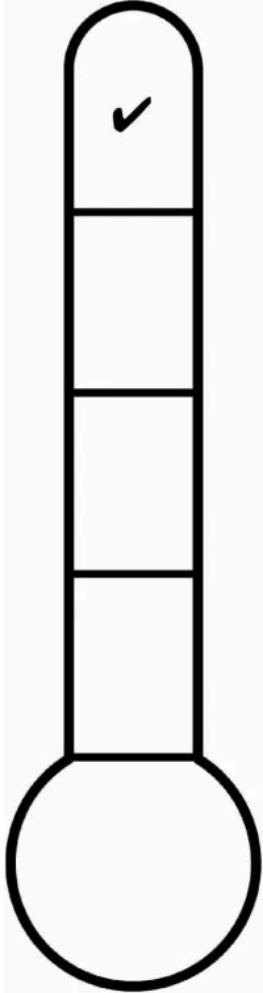
Appendix C

Sample Feelings Thermometer Worksheet

Your Practice Name Here
 Therapist Name: Therapist Name Here
Feelings Thermometer Worksheet

Client Name: Client Name Here
 Today's Date: 02/02/2022

A feelings thermometer is a visual tool that you can use to measure how you are doing emotionally and provide steps to help you shift your mood.



How Do You Feel?	Why?	What Can You Do About It?
Angry Furious Explosive Steaming		
Frustrated Annoyed Irritable		
Anxious Worried Unsettled Jittery		
Sad Down Negative Lonely		
Happy Joyful Calm Content Relaxed		

Appendix D

Sexualized or Crude Language Tracking

Sexualized or Crude Language Tracking Chart					
Student: _____ Dates: _____					
	M	T	W	TH	F
1st period					
2nd period					
3rd period					
4th period					
Lunch					
5th period					
6th period					
7th period					
Homeroom Teacher Comments: 					
Specialist Teacher Comments: 					

Take away preferred item for specified duration								
Other: _____								
Reinforcement:								
NCR and GCR								
Preferred edibles								
Preferred activity at home								
Other: _____								
If inappropriate language persists::								
Time-out (short duration)								
Response cost if token economy is used at home								