

**Function-Based Thinking
(Hershfeldt, Rosenberg, & Bradshaw, 2010)**

Gather Information
Describe the problem behavior.
Form an operational definition of the problem behavior (i.e., targeted behavior).
What information have you gathered about the behavior? When does it occur? What happens directly before the behavior (i.e., the trigger)? What happens directly after the behavior occurs (i.e., the consequence)? Do you detect any patterns?
Hypothesize why the student may be exhibiting the problem behavior. Behaviors typically occur for a limited number of reasons; what do you hypothesize is the reason this student is demonstrating the behavior (e.g., attention seeking or avoidance)?
Develop a plan
If the student is trying to access attention then how can he/she get attention in a way that is acceptable in the setting? If the student is trying to avoid a task or interaction, how can the student avoid the task (at least temporarily) that is in the setting?
Operationally define the goal behavior you would 'ideally' like the student to demonstrate.
Knowing that learning new behaviors takes time (just like with academics), what behavior would you 'settle for' while the student develops mastery of the new behavior?
Is there anyone else (aside from you and the student) who could help the student learn or could reinforce the student when s/he demonstrates the new behavior?
How will reward the student for demonstrating the new behavior (i.e., reinforcement to increase the likelihood that the behavior will happen again)?
Is there anything that will prevent the student from being successful with this plan (substitute teacher, no breakfast, peers)? How will we 'pre-correct' for this ahead of time?
Measuring the success of the plan
How will you know if the new replacement behavior is happening more often? If the old problematic behavior is happening less often?