



Intensify and Intervene  
as Needed

HLP Pillars

HLP 20

Provide intensive  
intervention for  
academics and behavior.

Embedded HLPs

HLP 10: Conduct  
functional behavioral  
assessments to  
develop individual student  
behavior support plans.

Embedded HLPs

## HLP 10: Conduct Functional Behavioral Assessments (FBAs) to Develop Individualized Behavior Support Plans (BSPs)

Creating individual behavior support plans (BSPs) is an essential skill for all special educators. The key to successful behavior support planning is to conduct a functional behavioral assessment (FBA) to identify what occasions or triggers and what maintains behavior that is problematic in certain contexts.

This resource is intended to support school leaders looking to embed the HLPs in professional development, implementation, teacher observation, and feedback efforts at their school site.

### Teachers Who Effectively Conduct FBAs to Develop Individualized BSPs

- Consider the five classic functions of behavior when trying to determine why a student is demonstrating a specific problem behavior. Those five functions of behavior are:
  1. *Social Attention/Communication* (positive social reinforcement)
  2. *Access to tangibles or preferred activities* (material or activity reinforcement)
  3. *Escape, delay, reduction, or aversive tasks or activities* (negative reinforcement)
  4. *Escape from or avoidance of other individuals* (negative social reinforcement)
  5. *Internal stimulation* (automatic or sensory reinforcement)
- Ensure that all essential components of a Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) are included in this assessment process. These components are (Hirsch et al., 2017):
- A clear description of problem behavior;
- Identification of events, times, and situations that predict the behavior(s);
- Identification of the consequences that maintain the problem behaviors;
- A hypothesis regarding events that prompt and support the problem behavior; and
- Collection of direct observation data that support the hypothesis.
- Apply the Antecedent-Behavior-Consequence (A-B-C) model when developing a hypothesis statement within an FBA.
- Analyze data collected through the FBA, select an appropriate replacement behavior based upon the function of the problem behavior, and develop an individualized Behavior Support Plan (BSP).
- Explicitly teach and reinforce the selected appropriate replacement behavior to the student.
- Incorporate environmental modifications within the student's BSP to prevent reoccurrence of the problem behavior(s).
- Incorporate environmental modifications within the student's BSP to make the replacement behavior more effective and efficient than the problem behavior, thereby increasing likelihood of the student using the replacement behavior.
- Collect data and monitor the student's progress with the current BSP, meeting with key stakeholders to adjust or continue intervention planning as needed.

### Tips for School Leaders to Support Teachers

- The team involved in conducting FBAs may vary between districts and schools; however, focus should be on a team-oriented process when conducting FBAs and soliciting support from all members.
- Identify and recruit staff members who are skilled in connecting with students who have difficulty forming relationships to create pre-established student support teams.
- Provide educators with instruction, professional development, and/or coaching in the steps of the FBA process, leading an FBA meeting, and creating and implementing a BSP.
- Provide ongoing feedback and support to educators on their use of available data sources for decision-making throughout the FBA process.
- Support teachers'/team members' development and use of data collection tools to ensure ongoing progress monitoring data collection. Check in with individuals frequently to offer additional supports with data collection as needed/warranted.

### Questions to Prompt Discussion, Self-Reflection, and Observer Feedback

- What are some examples of appropriate replacement behaviors that satisfy the five classic functions of behavior?
- Why is it necessary to consider and make environmental modifications when developing and implementing a BSP?
- What role should leaders play in this (FBA and BSP) process?
- Why should school leaders encourage and promote a team-oriented approach to conducting and implementing FBAs and BSPs?

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