NCYC
National Center for Youth in Custody

THE PARTNERSHIP
National Partnership for Juvenile Services

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT:

SHAPING YOUTH SUCCESS THROUGH COACHING, MODELING AND TEACHING

Participant Guide

Behavior management is a **strategic system of practices** used to increase appropriate behaviors, decrease inappropriate behaviors and teach new behaviors that is **relational**, and grounded in the **organizational culture** with sensitivity to **youth culture.**

Strategic system of practices **–** When trying to assist someone in changing behavior, we can do things that will either:

- Increase the probability of a desired/positive/appropriate behavior or
- Reduce the probability of an undesired/negative/inappropriate behavior.
- Teach new skills

Relational – Behavior management is all about relationships. The most important tool you have in our toolbox is the relationships you develop with the youth.

Organizational Culture – What is our role? What is our mission statement for the organization? What type of language do we use (supportive or demeaning)? How do we view residents (here "first name "Con" last name "Vic.")? Do we value youth rehabilitation or behavior change? Do we provide an avenue for youth development?

Youth's Culture – Youth personality, core beliefs, value systems, family culture, experiences including trauma.

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Course Objectives

Upon completing this training, participants will be able to:

1. Use the A-B-C model to explain the process of manipulating the antecedents and consequences to influence youth behavior.
2. Use criteria provided in class to evaluate a daily schedule of activities for values/behaviors – both learned and unlearned.
3. Based on information presented in class, list programmatic strategies for increasing appropriate behavior, decreasing inappropriate behavior and teaching pro-social skills.
4. Use guidelines for effective rule writing to write a sample rule(s) for an assigned topic.
5. Based on a role-play situation of a potential explosive behavior, create the appropriate staff response to diffuse the situation.

A-B-C Approach to Behavior

Antecedents:_____

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Behavior:_____

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Consequences:_____

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Leah Scenario:

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I CONTROL THE WEATHER . . .

- "I've come to a frightening conclusion that I am the decisive element in the facility. It's my personal approach that creates the climate. It's my daily mood that makes the weather. As a "direct care staff", I possess a tremendous power to make a youth's life miserable or joyous. I can be a tool of torture or an instrument of inspiration. I can humiliate or heal. In all situations, it is my response that decides whether a crisis will be escalated or de-escalated a youth humanized or dehumanized."

Haim G. Ginott

Why is it important to you to develop strong relationships with residents?

Response	Job Title	Years of Service
"In order to know them, you have to understand them. Knowing where they come from helps you serve them."	Supervisor	5
"If you work with these residents and don't build a relationship, you're simply monitoring them. Once you connect with them, that's when the learning starts."	Trainer	1
"It helps them ascertain the knowledge and skills that they may not have that will help them become more productive citizens."	Caseworker	18
"If you develop a strong relationship with a resident, once they leave custody, they will have goals and ideas they've developed with you that may help with future incarceration."	Youth Care Worker	3.5
"For me it's important because it's a way to avoid conflicts and major disturbances. If you have no rapport with a resident, it's impossible to de-escalate him. Having a good relationship will resolve a crisis 90% of the time."	Youth Care Worker	3
"One of the keys to working with this population is trust. Forming trust with residents is vital to the safety and security of the pod. It helps you de-escalate a resident. In a crisis, he's more likely to listen to you when you have a strong relationship. If he doesn't trust you, he'll only hear you."	Youth Care Worker	1
"It makes the job easier. It gives you different ways to reach them and give them options on what to do not to come back."	Youth Care Worker	3

Bartholomew County Youth Services Center (BCYSC) Staff Quotes

Response	Years of Service	Job Title
If a child can learn that there is a bright future to strive for, then they might second guess the future they are heading towards.	<1 yr	Youth Care Worker
In order to build rapport with the youth, we need to have an appropriate relationship with them. If we want to help the children that come into our building, whether it is to teach them life skills or holding them accountable for their choices, we need to get to know the residents in an appropriate manner. For some youth, we may be the only people in their lives that will listen, give unbiased advice, or even praise the child. We have to have the relationship with the residents in order to understand each one's strength and weaknesses. This is the best way to improve the weaknesses and enhance the strengths.	2 yrs	Control Officer
I feel it is important to have a relationship with the youth for several reasons. Being able to build a relationship creates rapport. Having a rapport helps strengthen respect and boundaries. We have all been kids before, and I think it is safe to say we remember those who positively impacted our life…as well as those who did not. By nature of the job (being a youth care worker), you are an authority figure; however, you can also be a role model to kids. It is important to inspire, encourage, motivate, and challenge the youth, for you may never know whose role model you may be.	18 mos	Youth Care Worker
#1….Establishing, building and maintaining a relationship is vital if you want the kids to absorb anything you have to teach. Relationships are built on trust and respect and without those two elements your impact on a kid is moot or negative. #2…. The relationships I have built with the kids I have worked with have enabled me to verbally deescalate many situations that possessed a high probability of turning into a restraint situation.	8 yrs	Youth Care Worker
Relationship building is everything. If the kids don't trust us or respect us then they will not respond to any of our efforts to help them better themselves. When the kids see us as people	3 yrs	Youth Care Worker

wanting to help them get their lives back on track, they may actually listen. Most of the kids that come through here have been let down by enough adults in their lives. Their guards are up and they are ready for us to fail them too. When they see we actually respect them as people and believe in their ability to succeed, they are more likely to respond back with respect and maybe even listen and apply the things we are teaching them.		
A relationship with a resident is the most important tool you can have, in my opinion, as a youth care worker. It is helpful to the resident as it provides comfort, stability and someone modeling an appropriate adult-youth relationship, which they may have been lacking. It is helpful as Staff because a resident is less likely to escalate or is more likely to come to you with a problem before escalating or acting out. A resident thinking about self-harm is much more likely to approach you if you have a rapport with them.	3 yrs	Youth Care Worker
I believe that the key to a youth wanting to change is the motivational relationship you create with them. Youth want to be praised and make others proud and we have the best opportunity to offer them praise by offering them skills that will help them with future success. I have noticed that the youth are always eager to report back how the skills I have taught them worked for them in order to receive praise or feedback. I feel that kids are so much more receptive to what you offer them if they know you care, thus my reasoning for always working to establish a motivational relationship.	13 yrs	Youth Care Worker
How effective I am in the detention classroom is completely related to the relationship I have with the youth I am working with. It helps create an open environment where my students know it is ok to learn and do well that they don't have to maintain a reputation or look hard. Getting to know and having a relationship with the students I have also helps create buy-in. The youth are way more likely to actively listen or accept what we are talking about if they trust that I am interested in helping them and not just another authority figure or someone tied to the system.	7 yrs	Teacher

Guidelines for Writing Effective Rules/Expectations

1. **Seek input for the expectations.** At a minimum staff should have input into the meaning of expectations. This process will help to clarify the expectations for all concerned and clarity will help them to be simplified. It also will empower the staff and help them understand their importance to the facility's operation. Finally, if you involve all the individuals that will enforce the expectations, they are more likely to enforce them. Being involved in the process from the beginning establishes "buy-in" for the staff.

2. **State behavioral expectations in positive terms whenever possible.** That is tell people what you want them to do; not what you do not want them to do. Telling a person not to do something such as, "don't ask a question in that manner" – does not explain to them how you want the question asked. If a rule must be written as a "don't," limit the rule to a dangerous behavior (don't fight).

3. **State the expectations simply and concisely.** Expectations should be short, only one or two sentences. Simplicity is elegance. It is also very hard work. Crafting and writing good expectations will usually require some time and effort. However, the construction of the expectations, just like the construction and negotiation of any contract, is the key to its success.

4. **Keep the number of expectations to a minimum.** Both staff and youth should be able to remember what are the rules, which means the number of rules/expectations should be reasonable—no more than 10 concise and simply stated expectations for each program area.

5. **Put the expectations in writing.** The expectations a contract and if it is a good, it should last for a long period of time without the need for change. However, in the event of an expectations change – put the change in writing. Regardless of the situation, anything and everything must be in writing. If it isn't in writing it doesn't exist according to the courts.

6. **Explain the expectations.** Expectations should be in a resident handbook and posted where staff and residents can easily see them. Explanation should be given to new residents and training classes should be given to new staff. Posters help with explanations and help to remind people. Complicated expectations can have additional explanations or guidelines written for staff but the rule itself should always be stated in one or two sentences. Put the explanations in separate teaching handouts, so that the rules can remain a small list of simple statements. Some research says that something needs to be heard 7 times before we can really learn it – repetition and explanation is key to the long-term retention of a rule.

7. **Maintain consistent application of the rules.** Inconsistency in interpretation and enforcement will result in resident misbehavior. The basis for good enforcement of expectations is staff understanding and commitment. A good practice to consider: review the policy and procedure manual on a yearly basis and make sure everything is stated clearly, update anything that needs clarification, and determine if all the expectations still apply. You should consider the involvement of both staff AND youth in this process.

Daily Schedule

Time	Activity	Value/Behavior	Important ✓
6:00 a.m.			
7:00 a.m.			
8:00 a.m.			
9:00 a.m.			
10:00 a.m.			
11:00 a.m.			
12:00 p.m.			
1:00 p.m.			
2:00 p.m.			
3:00 p.m.			
4:00 p.m.			
5:00 p.m.			
6:00 p.m.			
7:00 p.m.			
8:00 p.m.			
9:00 p.m.			
10:00 p.m. 06:00 a.m.			

TYPES OF REINFORCERS

A **material reinforcer** is any tangible item you give a person following the occurrence of a target behavior you want to strengthen. Material reinforcers may include such things as food, toys, clothes, jewelry, recreation equipment, or even a new car.

An **activity reinforcer** is designed to allow the person to engage in an activity which the person enjoys doing.

A **social reinforcer** can be thought of as any human interaction which follows someone else's behavior and strengthens it. The most common form of social reinforcement is verbal praise. In addition to verbal praise, social reinforcement consists of anything you do or say to make a person feel good, appreciated, accepted, or important. It is good practice to use some form of social reinforcer with every other reinforcer – material, activity or token.

Approval, attention, and recognition, in any form are usually reinforcing. Simply listening to someone and indicating that you have heard and understood what was said can also be reinforcing.

Another form of social reinforcement which is quite effective is feedback. An advantage of feedback is that it enables you to comment quite specifically on behaviors you want to accelerate. Feedback doesn't always have to be verbal. Letter, report cards, charts, and displays are excellent feedback providers.

A **token reinforcer** is especially powerful, because tokens may be exchanged for any of the other three categories of reinforcers; therefore, tokens are to each individual what they want them to be. Tokens then almost always work as a reinforcer and intervention tool, because individual residents can decide what the token means to them (social, material, or activity reinforcement), and this reduces staff effort in identifying the appropriate reinforcers for each person on a day to day basis. [When social, material, or activity reinforcers are exchanged for tokens they are usually called backup reinforcers.] Tokens are also very powerful because they are like the real world; almost every group of persons living together has developed a token system in the form of exchangeable money as an easy form of reinforcement and commerce. Consequently, tokens in the form of points or program money are easily understood and readily acceptable to youth in detention (Griffis, 1972).

Consequently, it is easily seen that the number of reinforcers is limited only by imagination and budget or ability to obtain donations. Security considerations may govern certain items that are distributed to the youth while in detention. The only difficulty may lie in determining what is reinforcing for a particular resident; again the advantages and utility of using a token system of reinforcement is easily seen.

Guidelines for Reinforcing Behavior

1. Reinforcement should always be given after the target behavior you want to strengthen is performed or after the rule is followed. This means that reinforcement is never given for promises, only actions; it also means when the rule is followed the person should be rewarded.

2. Do not reinforce undesirable behaviors. Do not give attention or criticism to nuisance behaviors.

3. Reinforce immediately. Social reinforcement can always be provided. Again, it is much easier to give token reinforcement quickly then it is to provide actual material and activity reinforcers.

4. When using activity, material or token reinforcers, always add social reinforcement (praise).

5. Always choose the least disrupting type of reinforcer available to give. The utility of token reinforcement is again apparent.

6. Make the system fair and "make everyone aware." Reinforcement should be available to everyone on an equal basis and each staff member and resident needs to know the rules and available reinforcers. This is accomplished by following the rule making system described earlier.

Remember: Reinforcement is any consequence that follows a behavior that increases or accelerates the frequency of that behavior. The number of reinforcers is infinite, but reinforcers fall into the four categories of material, activity, social, and token. A detention program must be sure that any reinforcer offered can actually be given and that the reinforcer is easily accessible to the staff person who will be responsible for issuing it. If a chosen reinforcer is not available when the target behavior occurs, the effectiveness of that reinforcer will be greatly diminished, if effective at all. Therefore, token reinforcement systems have great utility in increasing appropriate behavior in detention settings

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Strategies for Decreasing Inappropriate Behaviors

Principles of Discipline:

Disinvolvement:_____

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Encouragement:_____

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Logical and Natural Consequences: _____

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Five common RESPONSES
to discourage inappropriate behavior in confinement facilities:

1. Ignoring
As staff, you always want to choose the least intrusive intervention necessary to change or influence the behavior. Therefore, if you can ignore an inappropriate behavior and the behavior ceases, that is your first choice of interventions.
Keep in mind that there are times when attention paid to minor inappropriate behaviors is actually viewed by the youth as reinforcing, thus increasing the probability that the behavior will occur again in the future.

2. Time Out
The term "time out" means "time out from positive reinforcement." When using time out, one can either remove the individual from the positive reinforcement situation or remove the reinforcing situation from the individual. For example, if a youth on the unit is angry and upset, taking the other youth to the gym or a classroom or taking the youth who is upset to the classroom while staff works to calm the youth down. Keep in mind: if the youth is being removed from a situation he or she does not want to be a part of anyway, this method would not be effective.

3. Token Economy System – Response Cost
Many confinement facilities have now incorporated token economy systems to use as their behavior management structure, often in the form of point sheets and/or level systems. This has proven to be effective for some youth, particularly when the token reinforcers can be exchanged for other reinforcers that matter to the particular resident.

4. Behavior Plan
The use of individualized behavior plans has proven to be very effective in confinement facilities. Behavior Plans are a creative method for youth to work on controlling their behavior through insights to their own responses/trigger and the development of control strategies.

5. Failure to Earn (Loss of Privileges)
Many residents look forward to activities that they enjoy and often take them for granted. If a young person's behavior is poor and he or she has not responded to other consequences, they may then fail to earn some of the privileges that are available to them in the program. Some common ones are:
- loss of gym/recreation
- discipline trays (eat in their room)
- loss of token store
- loss of room items
- loss of TV privileges

Teaching New Behaviors

Modeling: Behavior modeling is powerful, and it can just as easily be negative as it can be positive. We cannot, through our actions say to youth, "Do as I say, not as I do."

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Coaching: Coaching is about teaching and re-teaching. Repetition helps us retain information. Regular review of behavioral expectations in our facilities is a good example. Is it enough for us to have youth simply read a resident manual upon admission, or will we need to review that information and our behavioral expectations of youth on a periodic basis?

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Evidence-based and Evidence-informed Practices: Evidence-based refers to the use of research and scientific study to determine what should be considered best practice in a given field. The evidence-based movement is relatively new having begun in the 1990s primarily in the field of medicine. Evidence-based practices have been subjected to research that is grounded in scientific methods such the use of control or comparison groups, conducted on multiple program across a number of sites and evaluated for an extended period of time.

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Coaching-What is it?

Think of a person you would describe as an ideal coach – a teacher, parent, minister, sports coach, etc. This could be a person who was your coach or a coach you happened to know about. Now list those characteristics that you think make, or made, them a great coach.

Characteristics of a great coach:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

Describe what a great coach does to help others succeed:

Describe how you see yourself coaching youth in your role as a youth care worker.

Role-play Response Sheet

For each role-play respond to the following questions:

Role Play #1

1. What behavior is the youth exhibiting that indicate he/she is anxious?

2. What events/feelings may be contributing to the anxiety of the youth?

3. What type of response (supportive, directive or limit setting) would be the appropriate first response of staff?

4. Write exactly what the staff should do or say to the youth at this point.

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Role Play #2

1. What behavior is the youth exhibiting that indicate he/she is anxious?

2. What events/feelings may be contributing to the anxiety of the youth?

3. What type of response (supportive, directive or limit setting) would be the appropriate first response of staff?

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Role Play #3

1. What behavior is the youth exhibiting that indicate he/she is anxious?

2. What events/feelings may be contributing to the anxiety of the youth?

3. What type of response (supportive, directive or limit setting) would be the appropriate first response of staff?

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