



FUNCTIONAL BEHAVIORAL ASSESSMENT: WHAT IS IT?

The term Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) comes from what is called a “Functional Assessment” or “Functional Analysis” in the field of applied behavior analysis. It is the process of determining the cause (or “function”) of behavior before developing an intervention for behaviors that may cause disruptions at school, home, or in the community.

The intervention developed should be based on a hypothesized cause (function) of behavior. To do so, the FBA will attempt to identify the events that control the display of problematic behaviors. The assessment will document the Antecedents, (what comes before the behavior), and Consequences (what happens after the behavior), by observing the individual in each environment where the problem occurs. The FBA also takes into account clinical interviews of school staff, teachers, and parents.

The organization of the analysis focuses around five specific subcategories:

1. Description of the Behaviors. This analysis attempts to describe the presenting behaviors in such detail that they are objectively measurable.
2. Antecedent Analysis. The antecedent analysis attempts to identify the conditions that control the display of the problematic behaviors. Some of the specific antecedents explored include the setting, specific persons, times of the day, and specific events that may occur regularly in the individual’s environment.
3. Consequence Analysis. The consequence analysis attempts to identify the reactions and management styles that might contribute to and/or increase the likelihood of adaptive and maladaptive behaviors occurring. It also focuses on the effects that the behaviors might have on the immediate social and physical environment, on the possible function(s) served by the problem behaviors, and on the possible events that might serve to maintain or inhibit their occurrence. For example, these might include

social attention, escape from demand and/or delay of demand, and/or sensory gratification.

4. Analysis of Meaning. The analysis of meaning brings together all of the above analyses, and it attempts to identify the functions served by the behaviors.
5. Recommendations. Based on all data and analysis of meaning, recommendations to increase the individual's success are presented.

Related Articles:

- [Applied Behavior Analysis \(ABA\)](#)
- [Behavior Intervention Plan](#)
- [The Importance of Data in Measuring Progress](#)

Recommended Link:

- [CAR Resource Directory \(Select Mental/Behavioral Health - Behavior Therapy\)](#)

Additional Resources:

- [Functional Behavioral Assessment How-to Guide for Educators, from the Center for Effective Collaboration and Practice](#)
- [Functional Behavioral Assessments: What, Why, When, Where, and Who?, from Wrightslaw](#)
- [Conducting a Functional Behavioral Assessment](#)

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