

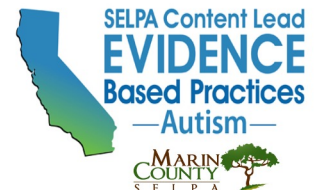
Evidence Based Practice Training:

Functional Communication Training (FCT)

Adapted from Sam, A., & AFIRM Team. (2015). *Functional Communication Training*.
Chapel Hill, NC: National Professional Development Center on Autism Spectrum
Disorder, FPG Child Development Center, University of North Carolina.
<https://afirm.fpg.unc.edu/social-narratives>



www.captain.ca.gov

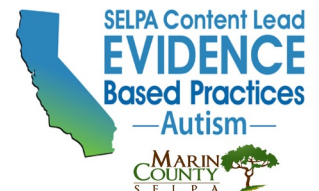


What is CAPTAIN

The California Autism Professional Training And Information Network (CAPTAIN) is an interagency network developed to support the understanding and use of evidence based practices (EBPs) for individuals with Autism across the state of California.



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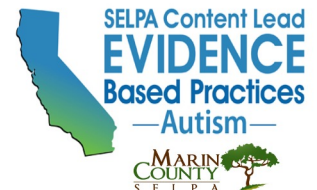
What is CAPTAIN?

Marin County SELPA in partnership with CAPTAIN, are members of the Statewide System of Support as the Special Education Content Lead for Autism.

This project is funded by the California Department of Education and the California Collaborative for Educational Excellence.



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Levels of Professional Development to Reach Implementation



This is a Workshop/Training and is designed to increase your KNOWLEDGE of the topic. Implementation supports to assist you with use of this EBP will be outlined following the TRAINING/WORKSHOP

Before We Begin...

Please complete the **Pre-Training Survey**
sent to your email

Learning Objectives



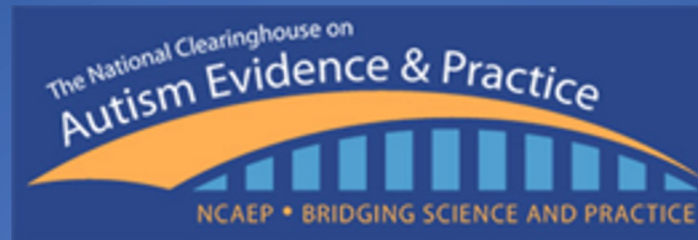
Describe what EBPs are

Define Functional Communication Training (FCT)

Describe how to develop a plan for using Functional Communication Training

Describe how to successfully implement Functional Communication Training in your instructional setting.

What are Evidence Based Practices?



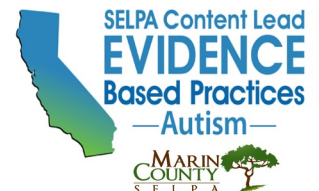
NCAEP definition of an EBP:

“Focused intervention practices that have evidence of efficacy in promoting positive outcomes for learners with ASD.”

Steinbrenner, J. R., Hume, K., Odom, S. L., Morin, K. L., Nowell, S. W., Tomaszewski, B., Szendrey, S., McIntyre, N. S., Yücesoy-Özkan, S., & Savage, M. N. (2020). Evidence-based practices for children, youth, and young adults with Autism. The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute, National Clearinghouse on Autism Evidence and Practice Review Team.



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Evidence Based Practice Matrix (28 EBPs)

Table 3.7 Matrix of evidence-based practices, outcomes, and age categories


Evidence-Based Practices See Table 3.1 to link abbreviations to EBPs	Academic/Pre-academic			Adaptive/Self-help			Challenging/Interfering behavior			Cognitive			Communication			Joint attention			Mental health			Motor			Play			School readiness			Self-determination			Social			Vocational		
	0-5 years	6-14 years	15-22 years	0-5 years	6-14 years	15-22 years	0-5 years	6-14 years	15-22 years	0-5 years	6-14 years	15-22 years	0-5 years	6-14 years	15-22 years	0-5 years	6-14 years	15-22 years	0-5 years	6-14 years	15-22 years	0-5 years	6-14 years	15-22 years	0-5 years	6-14 years	15-22 years	0-5 years	6-14 years	15-22 years	0-5 years	6-14 years	15-22 years	0-5 years	6-14 years	15-22 years			
ABI																																							
AAC																																							
BMI																																							
CBIS																																							
DR																																							
DI																																							
DTT																																							
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RIR																																							
SM																																							
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SN																																							
SST																																							
TA																																							
TAII																																							
TD																																							
VM																																							
VS																																							

Selecting EBPs

Before beginning a new practice with a learner, it is important to follow four planning steps


1. Identify the behavior
2. Collect baseline data on the behavior
3. Establish an observable and measurable goal
4. Choose an EBP
 - Consider the child and family characteristics
 - Consider the teacher and team characteristics
 - Consider other available resources


Selecting an EBP Checklist

 Autism Focused Intervention Resources & Modules

Selecting an EBP Checklist
For more information, please visit: <https://afirm.fg.uinc.edu/>

---Selecting an EBP Checklist---







Learner's Name: _____ **Date/Time:** _____
Observer(s): _____
Target Goal/Behavior/Skill (short): _____
Directions: Complete this checklist to select an appropriate practice to use with the learner with ASD.

IDENTIFY TARGET GOAL/BEHAVIOR/SKILL:


COLLECT BASELINE DATA (OR USE SELECTING AN EBP DATA COLLECTION SHEET):

Date/Time	Frequency/Duration	Total

DEFINE AN OBSERVABLE AND MEASURABLE IEP GOAL:

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Selecting an EBP
AFIRM Team, 2020-R
Page 1 of 3

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Selecting an EBP Checklist
For more information, please visit: <https://afirm.fg.uinc.edu/>

CHECK ANNUAL GOAL FOR:

1. Context (When/Antecedent)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
2. Target goal/behavior/skill (What/Behavior the learner is to perform)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
3. Mastery (How/Criterion for learner progress/mastery)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

IDENTIFY CHARACTERISTICS, CLUES, AND RESOURCES:

Child and Family Characteristics

Student strengths:	Student challenges:
Has worked before (home/school):	Has not worked before (home/school):

Teacher/Team Characteristics




Knowledge level:	Successfully used EBPs:
------------------	-------------------------

Clues found in the IEP Goal


Goal domain:	Potential EBPs (Refer to the Domain Matrix):
--------------	--

Other Resources

Current student supports:	Available equipment:
Team members:	Additional learning experiences:

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Selecting an EBP
AFIRM Team, 2020-R
Page 2 of 3

 Autism Focused Intervention Resources & Modules

Selecting an EBP Checklist
For more information, please visit: <https://afirm.fg.uinc.edu/>

SELECT AN EBP:

--

IF APPLICABLE, IDENTIFY ADDITIONAL EBPs TO BE USED WITH THE SELECTED EBP:

<input type="checkbox"/> Reinforcement (R+)	<input type="checkbox"/> Prompting (PP)	<input type="checkbox"/> Modeling (MD)
<input type="checkbox"/> Task Analysis (TA)	<input type="checkbox"/> Time Delay (TD)	<input type="checkbox"/> Visual Supports (VS)
<input type="checkbox"/> Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA)	<input type="checkbox"/> _____	<input type="checkbox"/> _____

ADDITIONAL NOTES:

AFIRM MODULES

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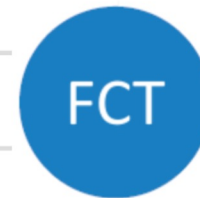
[Earn CE Credits](#)

[Selecting EBPs](#)

AAA

Functional Communication Training

Functional Communication Training (FCT)



Functional communication training can be used to replace interfering behaviors with more appropriate and effective communicative behavior.

What Will I Learn?

The AFIRM model guides the learner through four lessons to facilitate:

- Learning basic knowledge about functional communication training (FCT).
- Applying FCT in activity based scenarios that promote real-world application.

The FCT module will take approximately 1.5 to 2 hours to complete. However, the module is broken into individual lessons to help guide your learning:

Functional Communication Training (FCT) ---Step-by-Step Guide---



This practice guide outlines how to plan for, use, and monitor the practice of functional communication training.

Keep in mind that FCT can be used to help learners with ASD to use and generalize appropriate communicative behaviors.

BEFORE YOU START...

Each of the following points is important to address so that you can be sure the selected EBP is likely to address the learning needs of your student.

Have you found out more information about...?

- Established a goal or outcome that clearly states when the behavior will occur, what the target skill is, and how the team will know when the skill is mastered...
- Identifying evidence-based practices...

If the answer to any of these is "no," review the process of how to select an EBP.

For more information, visit:
www.afirm.fpg.unc.edu

What is Functional Communication?

Getting what we need



Asking for help



Advocating for ourselves and saying “No!”

Expressing our feelings and emotions and thoughts

Functional Communication Takes Different Forms

- Verbal
- Picture Exchange Systems (PECS)
- Voice Output Devices (iPads, AAC Devices)
- Sign Language
- Other (gestures, body language, facial expression, eye gaze)
- Multi-modal or total communication (combination of the above systems)

Communication



- is a critical foundational skill
- impacts independence, academics and social success
- is a fundamental human skill
- is a right every student has
- ensures that all students have an effective way to communicate their needs
- reduces interfering behavior in the classroom and at home





Definition of Functional Communication Training NCAEP Report April 2020

Functional Communication Training (FCT)

Functional communication training (FCT) is a set of practices that replace a challenging behavior that has a communication function with more appropriate and effective communication behaviors or skills. FCT is preceded by a functional behavior assessment to identify the function of an interfering behavior followed by teaching an appropriate communication skill that may serve the same purpose for the learner with ASD. FCT often includes differential reinforcement procedure in which an individual is taught an alternative response that results in the same class of reinforcement identified as maintaining problem behavior. Problem behavior is typically placed on extinction. The distinct component of FCT is that the alternative response is a recognizable form of communication (e.g., a vocalization, manual sign, Picture Exchange Communication System®).

INTERVENTION FACT SHEET

NCAEP Report April 2020

Name of EBP		Functional Communication Training (FCT)					
Definition of EBP		Functional communication training (FCT) is a set of practices that replace a challenging behavior that has a communication function with more appropriate and effective communication behaviors or skills. FCT is preceded by a functional behavior assessment to identify the function of an interfering behavior followed by teaching an appropriate communication skill that may serve the same purpose for the learner with ASD. FCT often includes differential reinforcement procedure in which an individual is taught an alternative response that results in the same class of reinforcement identified as maintaining problem behavior. Problem behavior is typically placed on extinction. The distinct component of FCT is that the alternative response is a recognizable form of communication (e.g., a vocalization, manual sign, Picture Exchange Communication System®).					
Outcome Areas		Age Ranges					
		0-2 Toddlers	3-5 Preschoolers	6-11 Elementary School	12-14 Middle School	15-18 High School	19-22 Young Adults
	Communication		✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Social		✓	✓			
	Joint attention						
	Play		✓	✓			
	Cognitive						
	School readiness		✓	✓			
	Academic/ Pre-academic						
	Adaptive/ self-help		✓	✓		✓	
	Challenging/ Interfering behavior		✓	✓	✓	✓	
	Vocational						
	Motor						
	Mental health						
	Self-determination						
References							

1. Artman-Meeker, K., Rosenberg, N., Badgett, N., Yang, X. Y., & Penney, A. (2017). The effects of bug-in-ear coaching on pre-service behavior analysts' use of functional communication training. *Behavior Analysis in Practice*, 10(3), 228-241. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40617-016-0166-4>
2. Boesch, M. C., Taber-Doughy, T., Wendt, O., & Smalts, S. S. (2015). Using a behavioral approach to decrease self-injurious behavior in an adolescent with severe autism: A data-based case study. *Education & Treatment of Children*, 38(3), 305-328. <https://doi.org/10.1353/etc.2015.0012>
3. Briggs, A. M., Akers, J. S., Greer, B. D., Fisher, W. W., & Retzlaff, B. J. (2017). Systematic changes in preference for schedule-thinning arrangements as a function of relative reinforcement density. *Behavior Modification*, 42(4), 472-497. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0145445517742883>
4. Brown, K. A., Wacker, D. P., Derby, K. M., Peck, S. M., Richman, D. M., Sasso, G. M., Knutson, C.L., & Harding, J. W. (2000). Evaluating the effects of functional communication training in the presence and absence of establishing operations. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, 33(1), 53-71. <https://doi.org/10.1901/jaba.2000.33-53>

- Evidence of the intervention
- Age Range
- Outcome Areas
- References (specific articles that provide the evidence for the efficacy of the practice)

What is Functional Communication Training?

A strategy or intervention that can be used to replace interfering behaviors with more appropriate and effective communication behaviors.



When can Functional Communication Training Be Used?

Following a Functional Behavior Assessment or a Functional Analysis that identifies the function of the interfering behavior or maladaptive behavior.



Building Blocks of Behavior: Reviewed



The A-B-C's of behavior are:

ANTECEDENT → BEHAVIOR → CONSEQUENCE

Example:

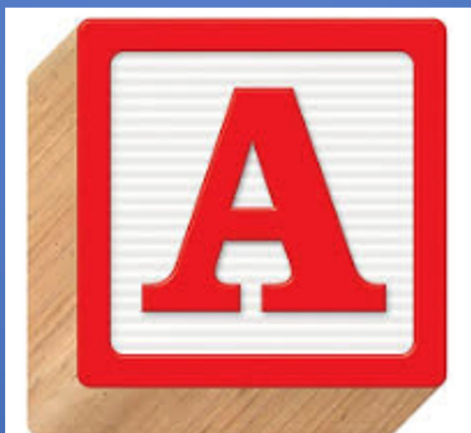
- A= the student was asked to come to circle time
- B= the student yelled out and fell to the floor
- C= the teacher rushed over to check in with the student

Antecedent, Behavior and Consequence patterns highlight the *function* or *purpose* of a behavior (the “*why*”)

ANTECEDENT

Antecedent- what happens before the behavior

- Cues the behavior
- Signals that reinforcement will be available



BEHAVIOR

Behavior- observable and measurable action

- Follows the antecedent
- Results in a consequence



CONSEQUENCE

Consequence- what happens after the behavior

- Reinforces the behavior
- Punishes the behavior
- Maintains the behavior



The consequence influences future behavior.

A-B-C's Recap



Example:

A= What happened right before?

- The student was asked to come to circle time

B= What did the student do?

- Yelled out
- Fell to the floor

C= What happened right after?

- Teacher rushed over to help him

Remember- we are looking for the “why” of the behavior. If we identify the A-B-Cs correctly they will highlight a pattern and help us answer the “why”.

The “why?”



The 4 functions of behavior are:

Sensory (also referred to as Automatically Reinforced)

- Because it feels good

Escape (also referred to as Avoidance)

- To get out of something

Attention

- To gain another’s attention to get something

Tangible (also referred to as Access)

- To get something

Why do we use FCT?

- ✓ to decrease inappropriate or maladaptive behaviors (Avoidance, Attention, Access)
- ✓ to increase relevant communication skills

To develop a new communicative behavior that is a replacement that serves the same function as the maladaptive behavior.



WHY?

AFIRM VIDEO <https://afirm.fpg.unc.edu/resources/case-fct>



Planning for Functional Communication Training

1. Identify an interfering behavior
2. Determine the function of the behavior.



Avoidance, Access or Attention? Think-Pair-Share



Avoidance, Access or Attention? Think-Pair-Share



Avoidance, Access or Attention? Think-Pair-Share



Planning for Functional Communication Training

3. Choose a replacement behavior

Consider these three factors

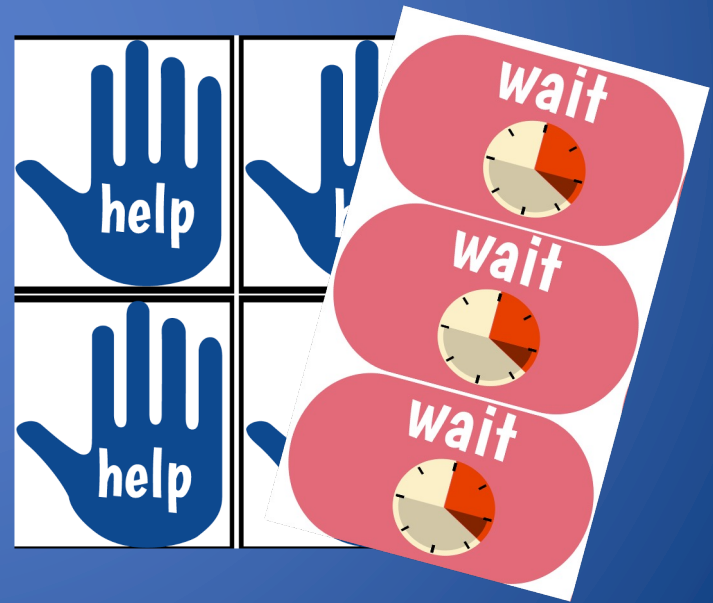
Function: designed to achieve the same function as the interfering behavior

Form: needs to be a form of communication the learner is already familiar with

Effort: low effort

Planning for Functional Communication Training

4. Make sure all team members are familiar with the replacement communicative behavior.
5. Gather and organize all supporting materials





AFIRM

Autism Focused Intervention
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--- FCT Planning Worksheet---

Learner's Name: _____ Date/Time: _____

Observer(s): _____

Interfering Behavior: _____

Conduct a Functional Behavior Assessment:

If a challenging behavior interferes with the child's ability to learn, then a functional behavior assessment (FBA) is needed. A FBA can be used when the intensity, duration, of type of interfering behavior creates safety concerns or impacts a child's development.

Determine the replacement communicative behavior:

Function

What is the function of the interfering behavior?

- Escape/Avoid
- Obtain preferred item/activity
- Other: _____

Form

What is the learner's primary mode of communication?

- PECS
- sign language
- voice output device
- verbal
- Other: _____

Effort

What is the replacement communicative behavior?

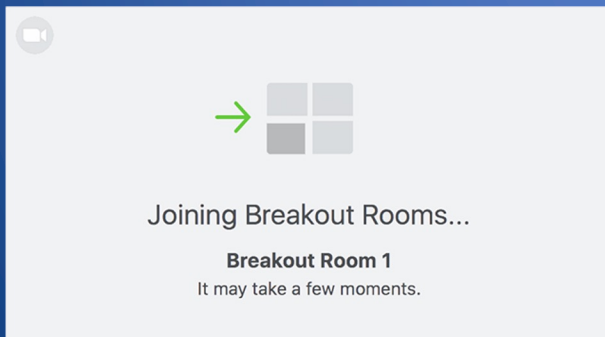
For more
information, visit:
www.afirm.fpq.unc.edu

FCT Planning Worksheet

Small Group Activity

Practice with Feedback

- Think of a student you know who exhibits an interfering behavior.
- Complete the FCT Planning worksheet with your partners.
- Pick a reporter and return to main room when finished.



Using/Teaching Functional Communication Training

1. Teaching the use of the Replacement Communication Behavior

Use a most to least prompting hierarchy with gradual fading as the learner becomes more successful with the new skill.

Most-to-least Hierarchy

	Prompt Level	Description	Examples
6 - Most	Full Physical Assistance	Hand-over-hand guidance is used	Guiding the learner's hand to activate a device or to share/exchange a picture/communication card
5	Partial Physical Prompt	Partially prompting the learner to use the replacement communicative behavior	Touching an elbow or arm to prompt the learner to activate a device or to share a communication card
4	Modeling	Demonstrating use of the replacement communicative behavior	Providing a verbal model of the replacement communicative behavior; modeling use of a device or exchange of a communication card
3	Gestural Prompt	Pointing or gesturing to prompt the learner	Pointing to the device or communication card
2	Verbal Prompt	Telling the learner to use the replacement communicative behavior	Saying "read it" or "say it"; using general prompting such as saying, "use your words" or asking, "what do you want?"
1 - Least	Independent	No prompting is used	Allowing the learner to independently produce the replacement communicative behavior

Using/Teaching Functional Communication Training

2. Reinforce by providing the response that indicates that the replacement behavior obtained the child's desired result.

He gained access....

He escaped or avoided...

He got attention...

Using/Teaching Functional Communication Training

Initially, provide frequent and consistent reinforcement into daily routines.

Function	What is the function of the interfering behavior? • Avoids demands
Form	What is the learner's primary mode of communication? • Verbal
Effort	What is the replacement communicative behavior? • Ask for a break.





Using/Teaching Functional Communication Training

3. Use time delay, most to least prompting or extinction with interfering behavior
4. Support generalization of the communicative behavior
5. Begin shaping the replacement communicative behavior
6. Thin reinforcement



Implementation Fidelity is Critical!

What does this mean?



“Implementing an intervention in the same manner in which it was done in the evidence based research”

Implementation Fidelity is Critical!

How implementation fidelity achieved:

1. Use Implementation Checklists for the EBP to capture fidelity of implementation
2. Refer to NCAEP EBP Fact Sheets
3. Use AFIRM self-learning modules on EBPs
4. Attend training on the EBPs
5. Access coaching on the EBP until fidelity is attained



Functional Communication Training (FCT) ---Implementation Checklist---

Before you start:

Have you...

- Identified the behavior?
- Collected baseline data through direct observation?
- Established a goal or outcome that clearly states **when** the behavior will occur, **what** the target skill is, and **how** the team will know when the skill is mastered.

If the answer to any of these is "no", refer to the "Selecting EBPs" section on the website.

	Observation	1	2	3	4
	Date				
	Observer's Initials				
Step 1: Planning					
1.1 Identify an interfering behavior appropriate for FCT					
1.2 Determine function of interfering behavior through Functional Behavior Assessment					
1.3 Choose a replacement communicative behavior					
1.4 Ensure all team members are familiar with the replacement communicative behavior					
1.5 Gather and organize supporting materials					
Step 2: Using					
2.1 Teach use of the replacement communicative behavior using a most to least prompt hierarchy					
2.2 Reinforce the replacement communicative behavior					
2.3 Remove reinforcement for the interfering behavior					
2.4 Support the learner's generalization of the replacement communicative behavior across people and settings					
2.5 Consider shaping the replacement communicative behavior					
2.6 Thin reinforcement for replacement communicative behavior					
Step 3: Monitoring					
3.1 Collect data on the interfering behavior and learner's replacement communicative behavior					
3.2 Determine next steps based on the learner's progress					

Use the AFIRM Implementation Checklist for FCT to ensure fidelity of implementation!

Monitoring Functional Communication Training

Data Collection for FCT should focus on two areas

1. interfering behavior

	Setting	Antecedent	Behavior	Consequence
Date: 2/21 Time: 8:30 am	Classroom-independent desk work	Given math worksheet	Runs out of room	Given time out
Date: 2/22 Time: 9:00 am	Classroom-independent desk work	Given spelling sheet	Runs into corner of room and hides under table	Sent to office
Date: 2/22 Time: 1:00 pm	Classroom-reading center	Given reading journal	Runs out of room	Sent to office
Date: 2/23 Time: 8:30 am	Classroom-independent desk work	Given math worksheet	Runs into corner of room and hides	Given time out and note home

Monitoring Functional Communication Training

Data Collection for FCT should focus on two areas

2. replacement communicative behavior

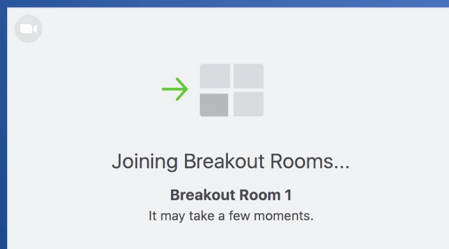
Interfering Behavior (IB):						
Replacement Communicative Behavior (RCB):						
Date	Location	Antecedent	IB or RCB	Prompt Needed	Consequence	Notes

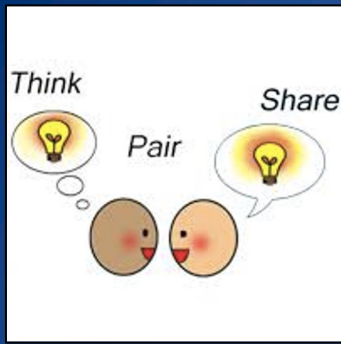
Prompt Key: VP = Verbal Prompt; VC = with Visual Cue; GP = Gestural Prompt; PP = with Partial Physical; FP = Full Physical; I = Independently;

Category/data	Making Progress: Considerations	Not making progress: Considerations
Interfering behavior	Consider exploring opportunities for generalization.	Consider if the replacement communicative behavior is appropriate for the learner, requires little effort, and is being consistently and frequently reinforced.
Replacement communicative behavior	If the learner has achieved independence with the replacement communicative behavior across multiple sessions, consider shaping the communicative behavior or thinning reinforcement of the communicative behavior.	Consider if the replacement communicative behavior is appropriate for the learner, requires little effort, and is being consistently and frequently reinforced.
Setting	Consider other locations/settings that might be appropriate to support generalization.	Consider specifically teaching the replacement communicative behavior in the setting in which the learner is struggling (following the teaching steps outlined in Lesson 3).
Communication partner	Consider expanding the learner's use of the replacement communicative behavior across different communication partners.	Consider specifically teaching the replacement communicative behavior with the communication partner; consider whether the communication partner needs any additional skills or supports.
Prompting	If the learner is successful at one level of prompting over several teaching sessions, consider moving down the prompting hierarchy.	If the learner is not successful without the highest level of prompting (such as full physical guidance), evaluate the appropriateness of the replacement communicative behavior.

Small Group Activity

- Return to the break out room with your group.
- Use the student for whom you previously planned and discuss how you would implement, use and monitor FCT with this student.





My Takeaways

1. What are 4 things you remember from today's training?
1. What are 2 things you see yourself doing?
1. What is the 1 thing you can implement tomorrow?

After the Training...

Please complete the
Post-Training Survey
that will be sent to your email



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Questions, Comments or Ideas to Share

