

# Step-by-Step Guide

This step-by-step practice guide outlines how to plan for, use, and monitor Antecedent-Based Interventions.

## BEFORE YOU BEGIN...

Each of the following points is important to address so that you can be sure Antecedent-Based Interventions is likely to address the target goal/behavior/skill of your learner on the spectrum.



## HAVE YOU FOUND OUT MORE INFORMATION ABOUT...?

- ☐ Identifying the interfering behavior...?
- ☐ Collecting baseline data through direct observation...?
- ☐ Establishing a target goal or outcome that clearly states when the behavior will occur, what the target goal or outcome is, and how team members and/or observers will know when the skill is mastered...?

If the answer to any of the above questions is 'No,' review the process of how to select an appropriate EBP (<https://afirm.fpg.unc.edu/selecting-EBP>).

For more information about Antecedent-Based Interventions, please visit <https://afirm.fpg.unc.edu/>.

Keep in mind that **Antecedent-Based Interventions** can be used to decrease interfering behaviors and increase engagement.

## STEP 1: PLANNING FOR ABI

The planning step details the initial steps and considerations involved to prepare for using antecedent-based interventions with a learner on the spectrum. Be sure to use a functional behavior assessment (FBA) to identify and define the interfering behavior.

### 1.1 Identify and define the interfering behavior through an FBA

To assist in identifying a behavior that interferes with learning and/or development, team members should complete a functional behavior assessment (FBA). For more information, visit the Functional Behavior Assessment module.

## 1.2 Collect data using direct observation methods

To collect data on the interfering behavior, team members should use A-B-C data charts. A-B-C data charts help team members identify what happens directly before the behavior (antecedent), describe the behavior, and determine what happens directly after the behavior (consequence).

The **ABC DATA CHART** can be used to record observations of the learner's behavior.

## 1.3 Review data collected from direct observations

Data tables (commonly referred to as scatterplots in the FBA literature) can be used to help teams determine possible functions of the behavior, when the behavior is occurring, and times of the day when an intervention might be implemented to reduce the interfering behavior.

The **SCATTERPLOT** can be used to identify patterns in the learner's behavior.

## 1.4 Develop a hypothesis statement and overall goal

Based upon the information gathered, the team develops a hypothesis statement that includes the following:

- The setting events, immediate antecedents, and immediate consequences that surround the interfering behavior.
- A restatement and refinement of the description of the interfering behavior that is occurring.
- The function the behavior serves (i.e., get/obtain, escape/avoid).

The **PLANNING WORKSHEET** can be used to develop a hypothesis and goal for the learner's behavior.

## STEP 2: USING ABI

This step details the process of implementing antecedent-based interventions with a learner on the spectrum through selection of an ABI strategy that addresses the function of the behavior.

### 2.1 Select an ABI strategy that addressed the function of the identified interfering behavior

Based upon information gathered from the FBA and planning step, team members identify an ABI strategy that will address the function of the interfering behaviors (Kern & Clemens, 2007). Possible ABI strategies include:

- Using learner preferences (include highly preferred items within a non-preferred activity to prevent learners from wanting to escape or avoid the activity)
- Changing schedules/routines (create predictable schedules/routines and use visual supports)
- Implementing pre-activity interventions (provide learners with information they need to participate in an activity or routine)
- Using choice-making (offer choices to increase learner's control of a situation)
- Altering how instruction is delivered (adapt or modify instruction in order to promote active participation and engagement with classroom materials and activities) or
- Enriching the environment with sensory stimuli (provide access to preferred sensory stimuli).

These **ABI STRATEGIES** can be used to support your understanding of antecedent-based interventions.

## 2.2 Create a lesson plan that includes the selected ABI strategy

Develop lesson plans that include the following components to ensure the selected antecedent-based intervention strategy is included:

- Weekly objectives for the learner on the spectrum that will lead to a decrease in an interfering behavior,
- A statement of the strategy and what the teachers/practitioners will do, and
- The materials needed to implement the antecedent-based intervention strategy.

This **LESSON PLAN** can be used to identify steps needed for using an ABI strategy.

## 2.3 Ignore interfering behavior

Teachers and practitioners should not provide reinforcement for the identified interfering behavior when it occurs. For more information on extinction, check out the Extinction module.

## 2.4 Provide learner with reinforcement

To promote appropriate behavior, remember to provide reinforcement each time the learner does not engage in the interfering behavior and completes the weekly objective. For more information on reinforcement, check out the Reinforcement module.

# STEP 3: MONITORING ABI

The following step details how to monitor the use of antecedent-based interventions with a learner on the spectrum and how to determine next steps based on the data.

## 3.1 Collect and analyze data

Measure a learner's engagement in the interfering behavior by collecting frequency data and/or duration data.

The **EVENT SAMPLING FORM** can be used to monitor the identified interfering behavior.

The **DURATION (BAR CHART) FORM** can be used to monitor the identified interfering behavior.

## 3.2 Determine next steps based on learner progress

Collecting data will help team members determine if a learner is making progress and reducing the use of the identified interfering behavior. If a learner is making progress based upon data collected, team members should continue to use the selected strategies.

If team members determine that the learner is not making progress, consider the following:

- Is the identified interfering behavior well defined?
- Is the identified interfering behavior measurable and observable?
- Was a functional behavior assessment conducted?
- Did the functional behavior assessment indicate the function of the identified interfering behavior?
- Are the ABI strategies addressing the function of the identified interfering behavior?
- Are team members ignoring the identified interfering behavior?

- Has enough time been devoted to using antecedent-based interventions (frequency, intensity, and/or duration)?
- Were antecedent-based interventions implemented with fidelity (see **IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST**)?
- Does the learner need additional supports?
- Are team members providing the learner with reinforcement for remaining on-task?
- Are the selected reinforcers preferred items/activities for the learner?

If these issues have been addressed and the learner on the spectrum continues not to show progress, consider selecting a different evidence-based practice to use with the learner on the spectrum.