Podcast 5: Behavior Intervention Plan

The Competing Behavior Model we looked at earlier provides a way to outline the functional assessment data and develop interventions for each segment of the pathway. The behavior intervention plan that is developed from the competing behavior model must be more thorough and describe the strategies that adults will implement to increase appropriate behavior and to reduce or eliminate inappropriate behavior. The strategies listed in the Behavior Intervention Plan should directly reflect the result of the functional assessment and describe strategies for addressing antecedents for problem behavior, for teaching new replacement behaviors and allow the student to access consequences that are maintaining the challenging behaviors in a more appropriate way. It is critical to choose replacement behaviors and interventions strategies that work as efficiently and effectively for the student as the challenging behavior. In other words, the replacement behavior must be functional for the student.

This is often referred to as the matching law, which states that the rate of any behavior is determined by the rate of reinforcement for that behavior. If the target behavior produces reinforcement every time it occurs but the desired replacement behavior is only reinforced intermittently, the inappropriate
behavior will continue at a high rate whereas the desired alternative will occur infrequently.

Another consideration when choosing replacement behavior is behavioral efficiency. Students tend to use behaviors that require the least effort to produce desired results. Therefore any alternative behaviors must be equally efficient at producing reinforcement with similar or less effort than the problem behavior. It is also important that the problem behavior is no longer effective at producing reinforcement; therefore extinction strategies must be in place to eliminate any reinforcement of the challenging behavior. For Craig’s Behavior Intervention Plan, the team has developed antecedent strategies that will eliminate the need for the problem behavior, procedures to teach the desired replacement behaviors, and strategies for extinction of the problem behavior. Notice that primary focus of the plan is what the adults will do differently to support Craig much more than what Craig will do to change his behavior.