

The Why Behind the What: Seeing Behavior Through a New Lens

Research and Resource Guide

Introduction

This research and resource guide summarizes lessons from the session, provides additional topical resources to further develop your application of the topic, and offers research to expand your knowledge.

Lessons from the Session

The Why Behind the What helps you understand how behavior reflects what youth may not be able to say in words and strategies for supporting them including the use of affective statements and restorative questions.

The Functions of Behavior¹ - Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) outlines behaviors having one of four primary functions: sensory stimulation, escape, attention, and tangible access. Each of those functions looks different in practice. The overall point is that knowing why a behavior is happening because interventions aligned to function are more effective, less frustrating, and more sustainable.

Affective Statements² - Affective Statements are an interpersonal tool to manage conflict or disruptions in a way that preserves relationships and reduces defensiveness. "I-statements" express how you feel and what impact the student's behavior has on your environment.

Restorative Questions³ - Restorative Questions are based³ on the work of Restorative Practices. These questions are structured to help youth involved in misbehavior to reflect on what happened, how they felt, and how they can repair harm.

Resources and Tools

- [Free ABA Parent Training | The Function of Behavior⁴](#)

¹ Bucio, T. (2025b, July 18). What are The Four Functions of Behavior? - Cultivate BHE. Cultivate Behavioral Health & Education. <https://cultivatebhe.com/what-are-the-four-functions-of-behavior/>

² Smith, D., Fisher, D., & Frey, N. (n.d.). Removing labels, grades K-12 (By Corwin). https://www.corwin.com/docs/default-source/resources-documents/us-1584857-technique-5-affective-statements.pdf?sfvrsn=df51039f_0&srsId=AfmBOopP2WYUYQtBYjlfYUkjAwhxK0g4XBjxYa_IR84-AhnUCZXTXVx

³ School, I. G. (2016, August 17). *Time to think: Using restorative questions*. IIRP Graduate School. <https://www.iirp.edu/news/time-to-think-using-restorative-questions>

⁴ Admin_Alex. (2025, August 29). Free ABA Parent Training | The Function of Behavior - ABA-LLC, KY. ABA. <https://aba-llc.com/function-of->

- [The Four Functions of Behavior | ABA](#) ⁵
- [Affective Language: How to use Affective Statements | Teacher Training Webinar | Part 1](#) ⁶
- [The Secret Sauce of Classroom Management: Building Relationship feat. LaTisha Ware](#) ⁷
- [How To Master Classroom Management Strategies feat. Carol Miller](#) ⁸

Research and Information

- [The Big Four: Functional Assessment Research Informs Preventative Behavior Analysis](#) ⁹
- [Use of Behavior Function and Teacher Practices to Intensify Tier II Intervention: A Comparison of Check-In, Check-Out Adaptations](#) ¹⁰
- [Restorative Approaches Lesson 9: Affective Statements & Questions](#) ¹¹
- [Restorative Practices in the Classroom](#) ¹²

[behavior/#:~:text=When%20these%20behaviors%20are%20exhibited%20they%20are.and%20forth%2C%20hand%20flapping%2C%20humming/auditory%20production%2C%20etc.](#)

⁵ Hacking Behavior® Analysis. (2022, November 29). The Four Functions of Behavior | ABA [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XmO9rZOYO1M>

⁶ Laura Mooiman. (2020, May 1). Affective Language: How to use Affective Statements | Teacher Training Webinar | Part 1 [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wxHPWxShUew>

⁷ S 5 EP 1: The Secret Sauce of Classroom Management: Building Relationship feat. LaTisha Ware | School: After Hours - The podcast for all things Education and Afterschool Programming. (2024, September 10). School: After Hours - the Podcast for All Things Education and Afterschool Programming. <https://schoolafterhours.podcastpage.io/episode/s-5-ep-1-the-secret-sauce-of-classroom-management-building-relationship-feat-latisha-ware>

⁸ S 4 EP 16: How To Master Classroom Management Strategies feat. Carol Miller | School: After Hours - The podcast for all things Education and Afterschool Programming. (2024, May 6). School: After Hours - the Podcast for All Things Education and Afterschool Programming. <https://schoolafterhours.podcastpage.io/episode/s-4-ep-16-how-to-master-classroom-management-strategies-feat-carol-miller>

⁹ Ala'i-Rosales, S., Cihon, J. H., Currier, T. D. R., Ferguson, J. L., Leaf, J. B., Leaf, R., McEachin, J., & Weinkauff, S. M. (2018). The big four: Functional assessment research informs preventative behavior analysis. *Behavior Analysis in Practice*, 12(1), 222–234. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40617-018-00291-9>

¹⁰ Chauvin, C. B., Wehby, J. H., & Kern, L. (2023b). Use of behavior function and teacher practices to intensify Tier II intervention: a comparison of Check-In, Check-Out adaptations. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions*, 26(1), 27–38. <https://doi.org/10.1177/10983007231172195>

¹¹ Center for Dispute Resolution, Maryland Carey Law, Charles Crane Family Foundation, & University of Maryland Francis King Carey School of Law. (2022). Restorative Approaches Lesson 9: Affective statements & questions. <https://www.law.umaryland.edu/media/sol/sol-2022-images-and-files/academics/programs-and-centers/dispute-resolution-program/pdfs-docs-and-files/Lesson-Plan-9-Affective-Statements-&-Questions.pdf>

¹² Wachtel, J., & Wachtel, T. (2009). Restorative practices in the classroom. In *The Restorative Practices Handbook*. International Institute for Restorative Practices. https://www.iirp.edu/images/pdf/Restorative_Practices_Continuum.pdf