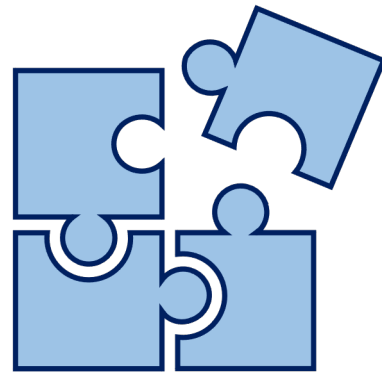


An Introduction to the Treatment of Severe Problem Behavior Associated with Autism



Matthew Carbone, BCBA

Problem Behavior and Autism

- Problem behaviors such as self-injury, aggression, and meltdowns are more prevalent in children with autism
- What are some common ways that problem behaviors are addressed?

“Managing” behavior

Use arbitrary rewards to inspire “good behavior”



Attempt to make life as predictable as possible



Eliminate all “triggers” for problem behavior

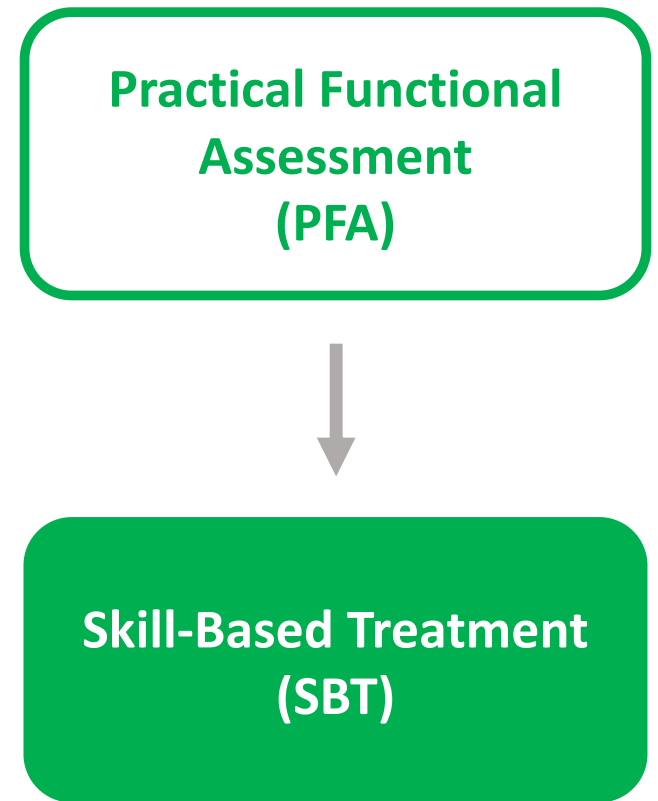
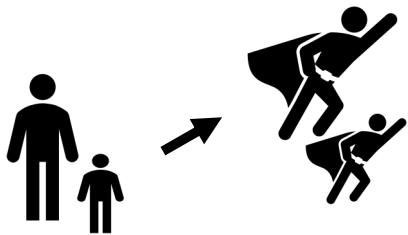


Beyond “managing”

- Severe problem behavior can be successfully treated
 - Using relevant reinforcers instead of arbitrary rewards
 - Without tokens, timers, and charts
 - In a way that teaches the child to appropriately handle the unpredictability of life
 - By leverages challenging situations to teach the child to respond effectively in those situations.

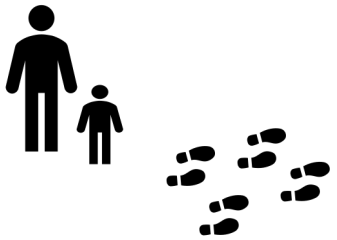
PFA & SBT

- Prioritizes **safety, dignity, and rapport**
- Shown to produce socially meaningful outcomes



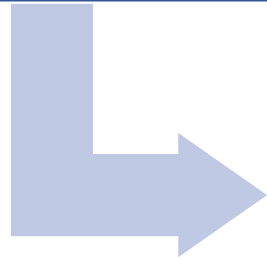
(Hanley, Jin, Vanselow, & Hanratty, 2014)

The path forward



Partner with a professional

Board Certified
Behavior Analyst
(BCBA)



Trained in PFA & SBT



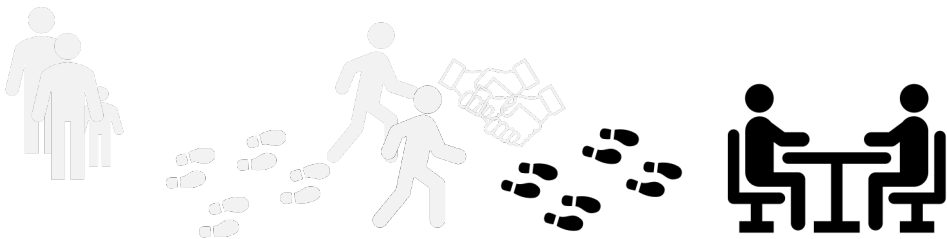
Practical Functional Assessment (PFA)



Interview

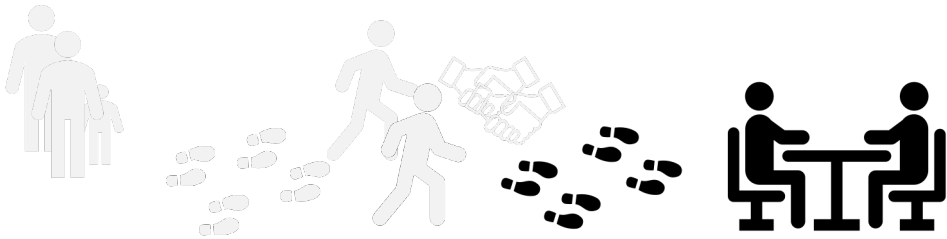


IISCA



Begin by *understanding* before
treating

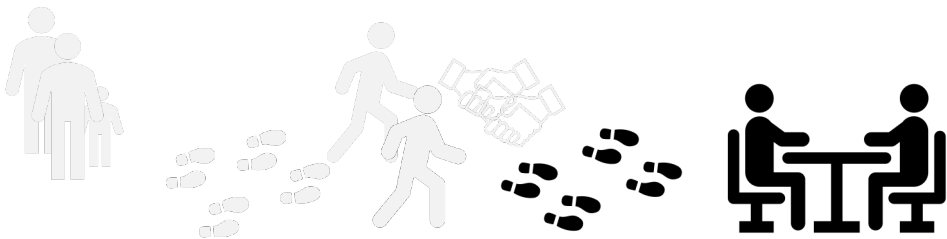
Interview



Interview

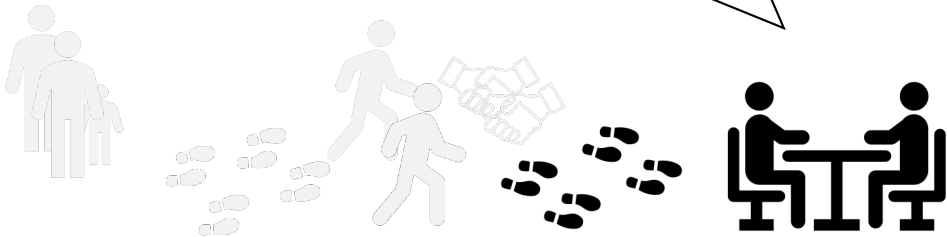
What is the most concerning problem behavior?

What are all the non-dangerous behaviors that precede or co-occur?



Interview

The most concerning behavior is aggression. I know she is about to start hitting because she will start clenching her fists, stomp her feet, loudly protest, and grimace.

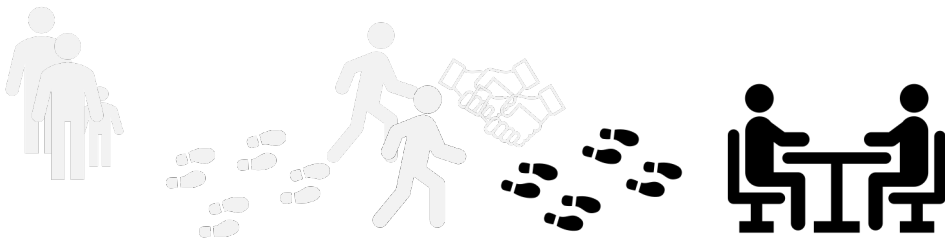
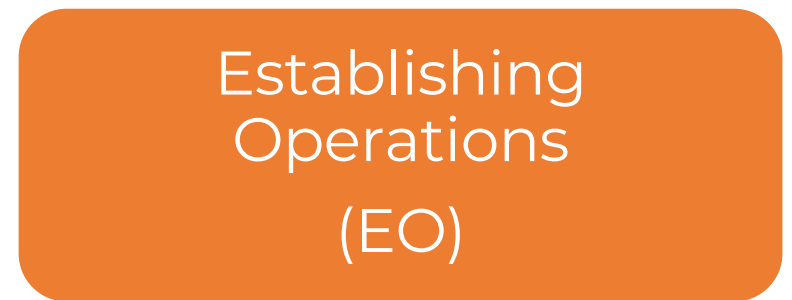


Establishing
Operations
(EO)

Reinforcing
Events

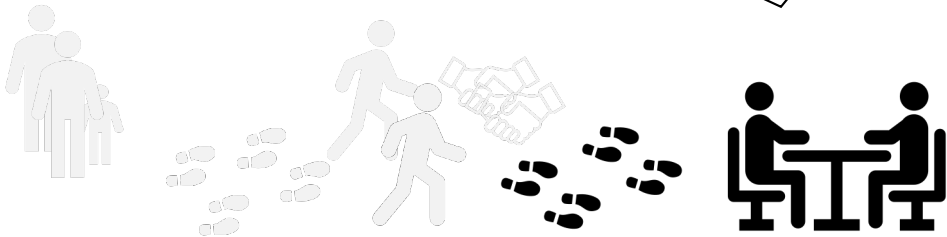
Interview

What are the events and interactions that reliably evoke problem behavior?



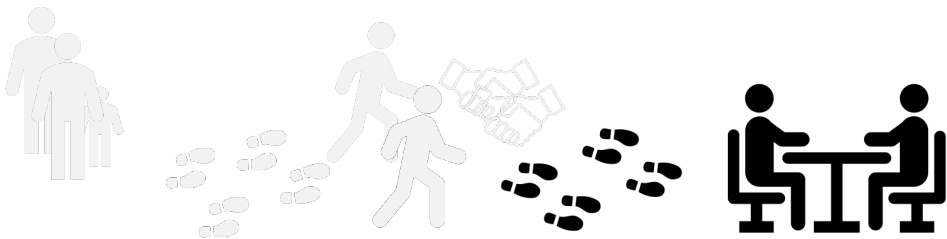
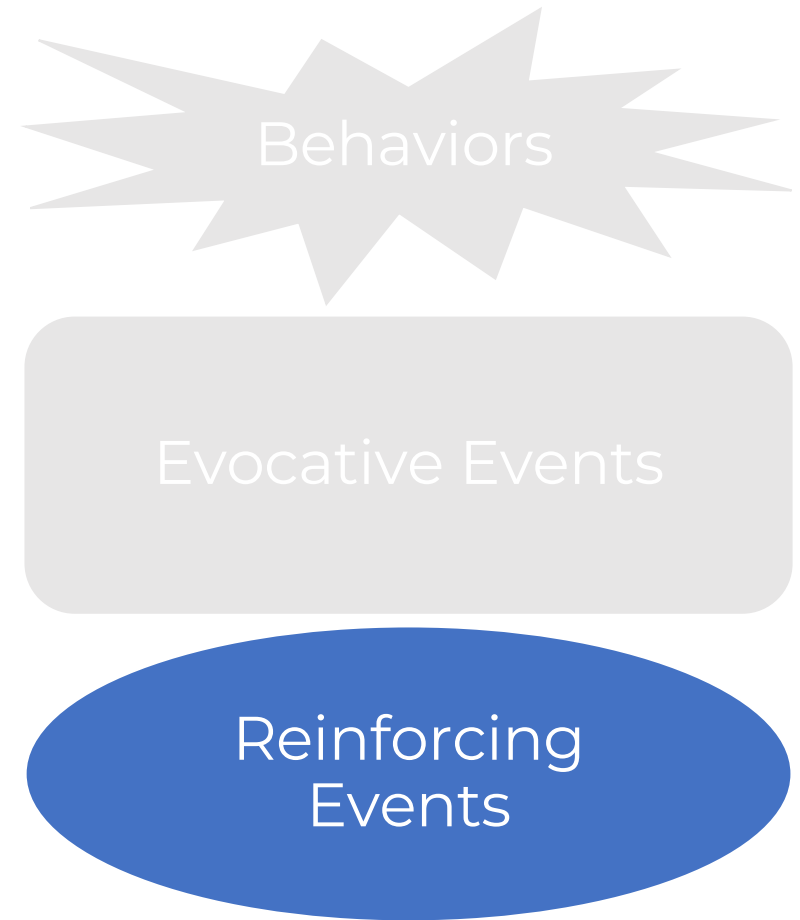
Interview

When I tell her to stop playing with her dolls or video games and do her chores or homework, especially writing. It is even worse when she has to do her work while I help her little sister while she does her homework.



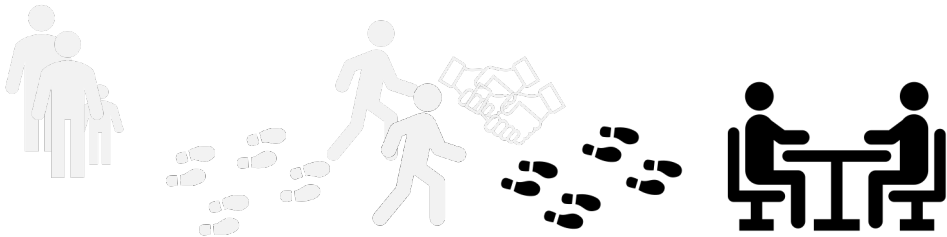
Interview

What events and interactions safely and reliably stop problem behavior and would result in the learner being happy, relaxed, and engaged?



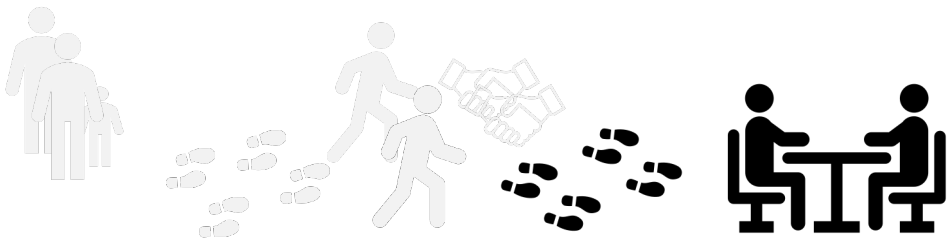
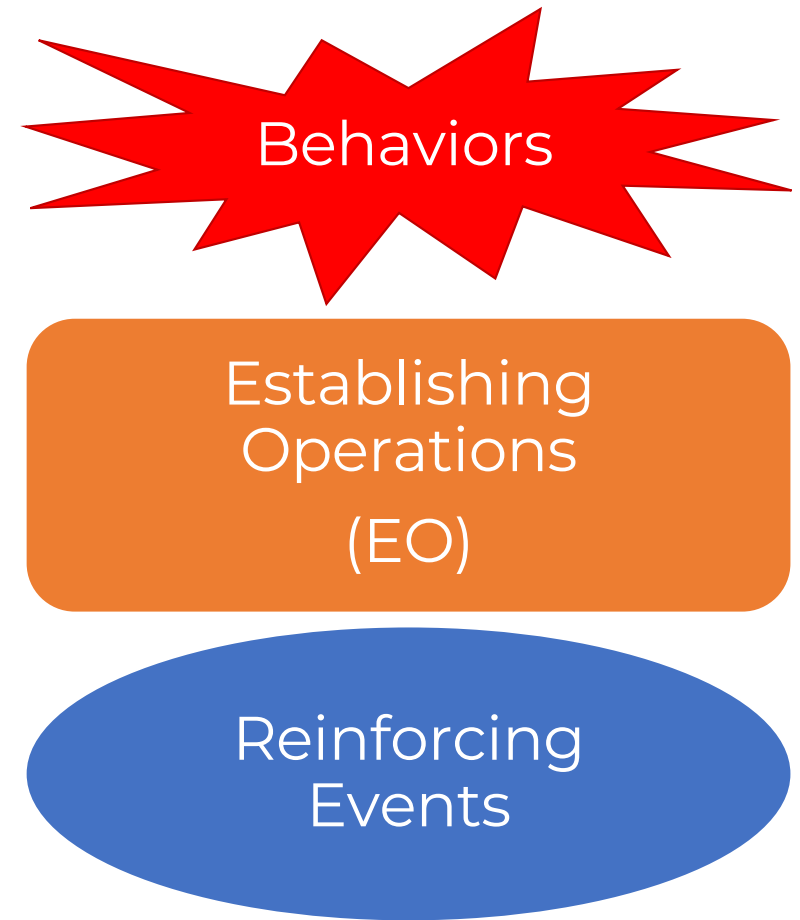
Interview

I would tell her she doesn't have to do her homework or chores, let her go back to playing with her toys, and give her my undivided attention.



Interview

Once we complete the interview, we design and conduct a functional analysis.



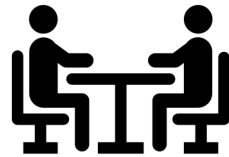
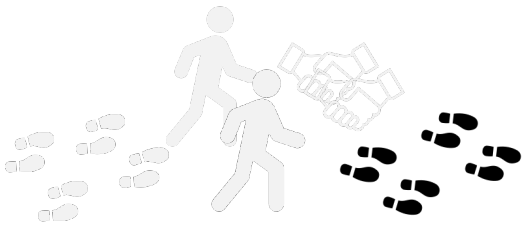
Practical Functional Assessment (PFA)

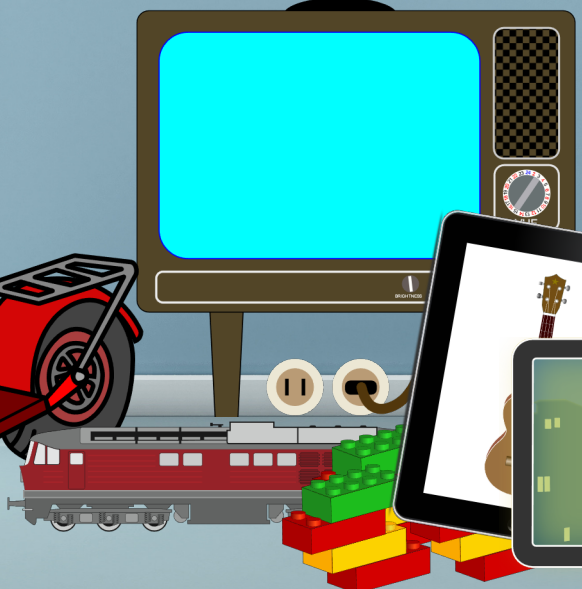
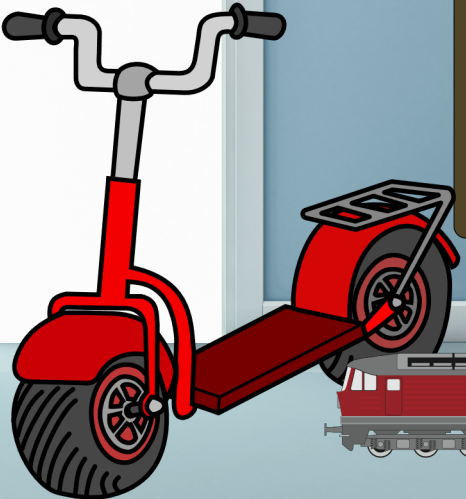


Interview

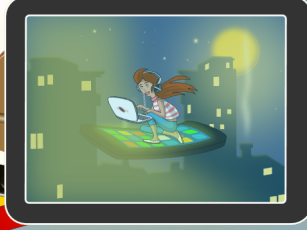


IISCA





Reinforcement



EO

Reinforcement



Child-led

The child is free to explore

Undivided attention

Be responsive

Withhold demands, corrective
feedback, and adult
expectations



EO



Adult-led

Hold the child to high
expectations

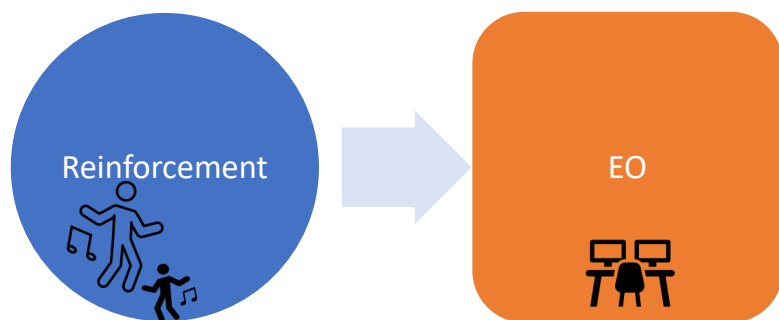
IISCA

We begin the analysis in the reinforcement condition until the child is **Happy, Relaxed, and Engaged** for an extended period of time



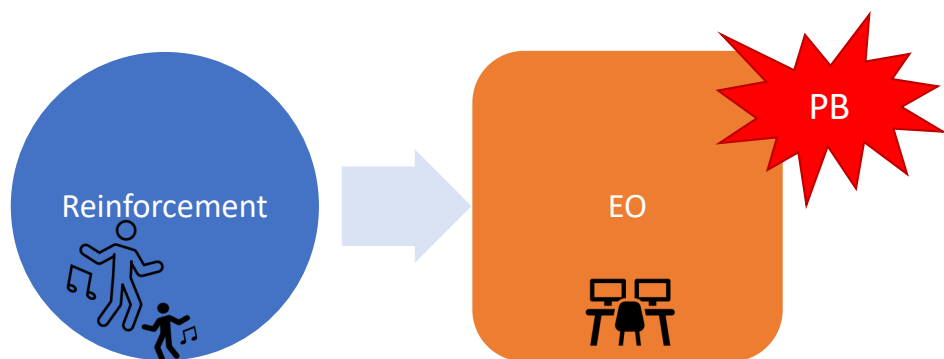
IISCA

Transition to the EO condition



IISCA

Following any reported problem behavior,

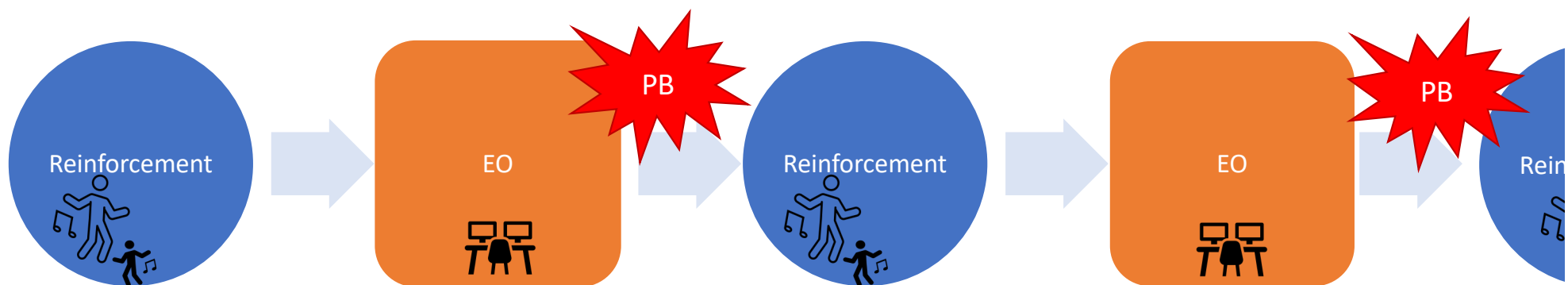


IISCA

Following any reported problem behavior, immediately go back into reinforcement



IISCA



IISCA

- **Success:** Safe, televisable, and rapport-building



IISCA

- **Success:** Safe, televisable, and rapport-building
- **What did we learn?**
 - The EO is reliably evocative
 - Reinforcement safely “turns off” problem behavior and the child returns to being happy, relaxed, and engaged
- We can now use those motivating situations we identified to teach skills that produce the same reinforcing consequences



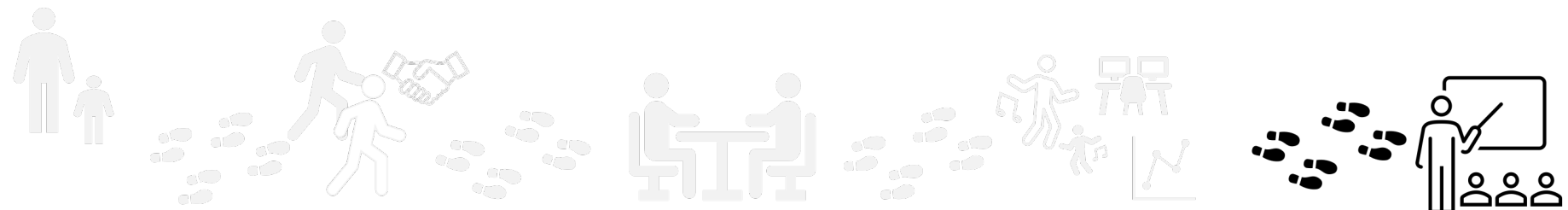
Skill-Based Treatment (SBT)

Use the motivating situations we identified in the analysis to teach skills that produce the same consequences

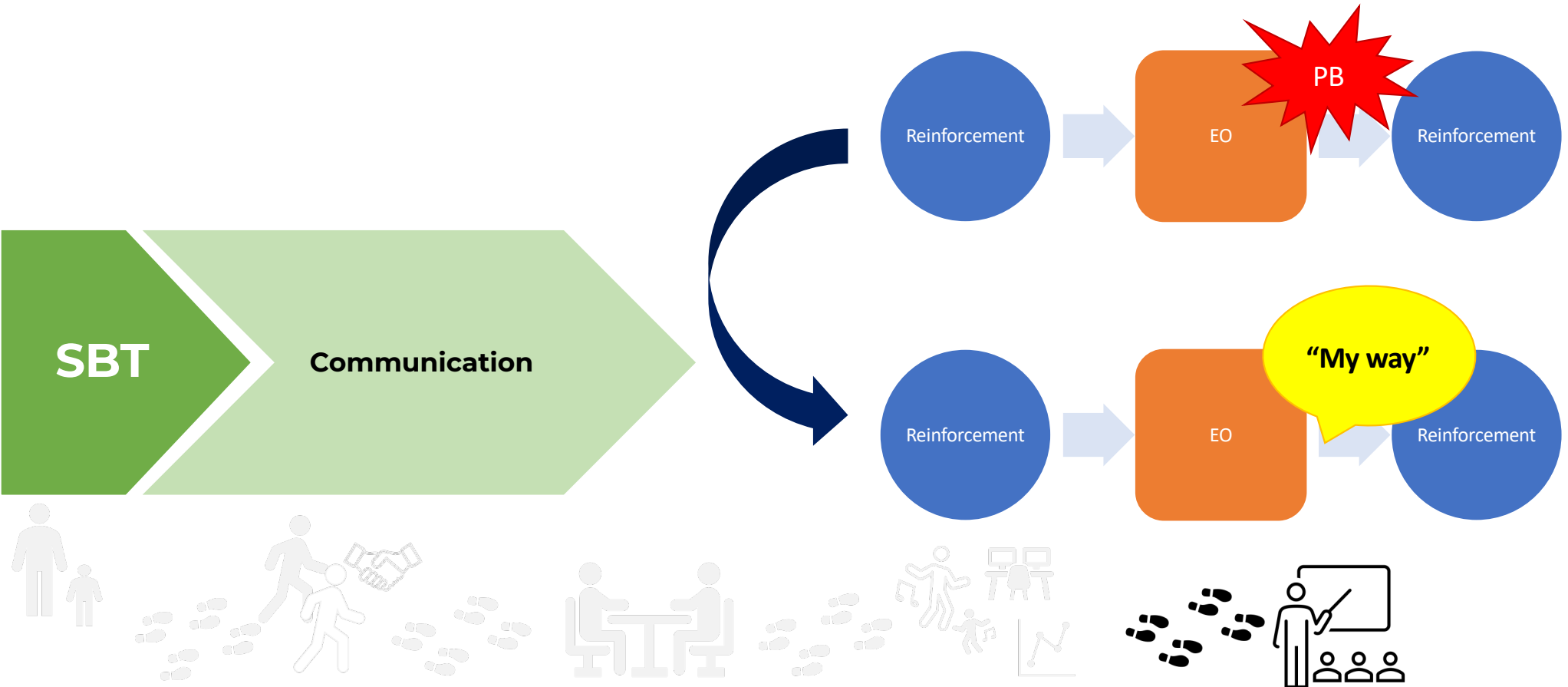


Skill-Based Treatment (SBT)

Teach the learner how to appropriately **communicate** for their reinforcers



Skill-Based Treatment (SBT)



Skill-Based Treatment (SBT)

Teach the learner how to **tolerate** denials and delays to their reinforcers.

Time to clean up your toys

May I have my way?

SBT

Communication

Toleration



Skill-Based Treatment (SBT)

Teach the learner how to **tolerate** denials and delays to their reinforcers.

Time to clean up your toys

May I have my way?

No, not right now

SBT

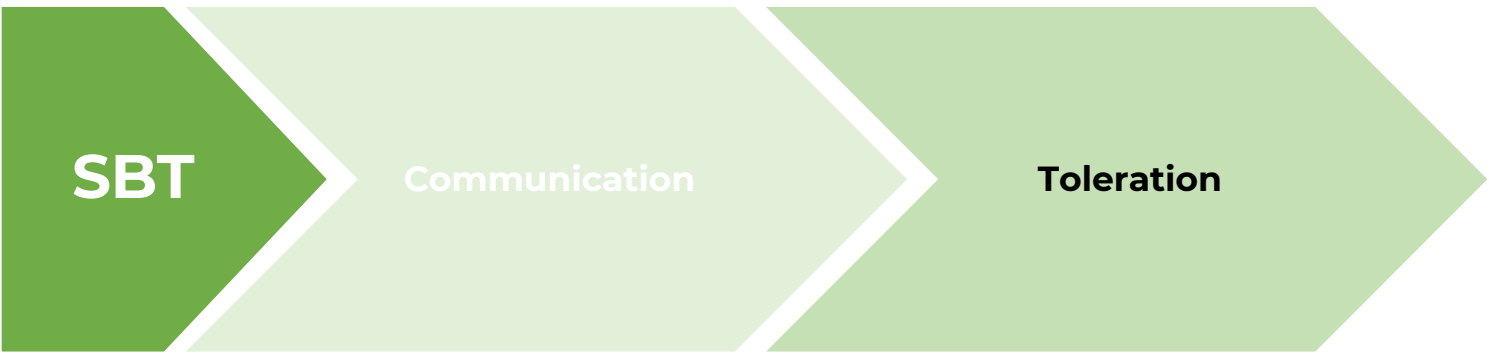
Communication

Toleration



Skill-Based Treatment (SBT)

Teach the learner how to **tolerate** denials and delays to their reinforcers.



A cluster of five speech bubbles. Three are yellow and two are light blue. The text inside the bubbles is as follows:

- Yellow bubble: "May I have my way?"
- Light blue bubble: "Time to clean up your toys"
- Light blue bubble: "No, not right now"
- Yellow bubble: "That's cool"



Skill-Based Treatment (SBT)

Teach the learner to **cooperate** with high expectations across situations.



Skill-Based Treatment (SBT)

Skills are shaped on an intermittent and unpredictable schedule throughout treatment

SBT

Communication

Toleration

Cooperation



Skill-Based Treatment (SBT)

- Treatment is extended to
 - People
 - Locations
 - Extended periods
- Success is a socially meaningful outcome

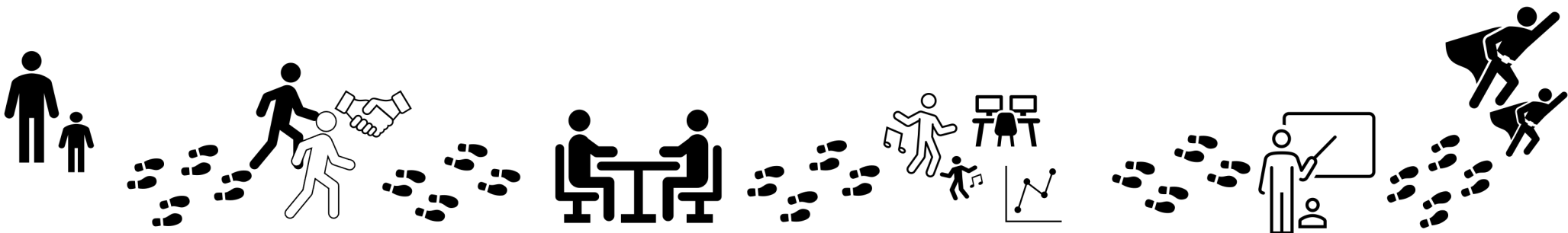


Meaningful outcomes are attainable

- In collaboration with a BCBA
- By understanding the situations that occasion the problem behavior and identifying the consequences that maintain the problem behavior
- And using those motivating situations to teach skills that produce those same consequences

Resources

- Free website (www.practicalfunctionalassessment.com)
- FTF Behavioral Consulting (www.ftfbc.com)
- Videos of PFA & SBT (YouTube: Upstate Cerebral Palsy)
- BACB certificant registry (www.bacb.com)



Thank you!