Writing High-Quality Functional Goals in K-12: Addressing Non-Academic Needs

PROGRESS Center

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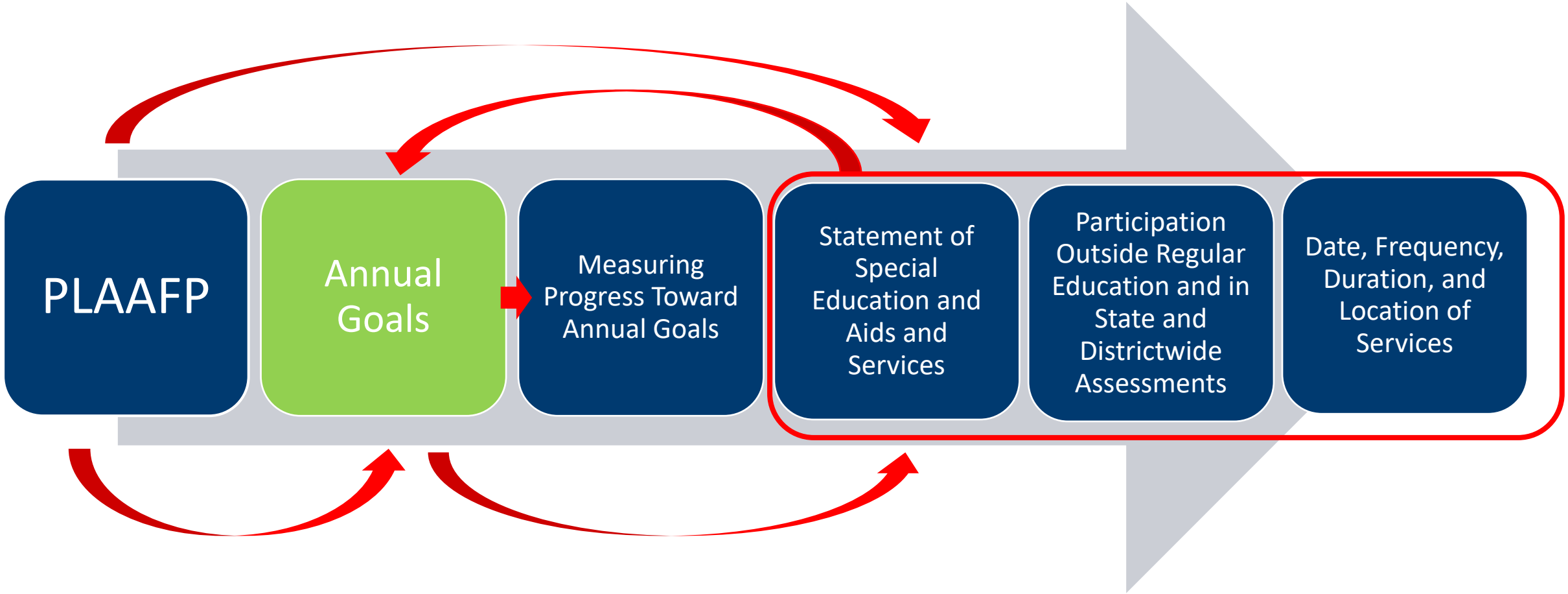
Ensuring Appropriate Progress

Endrew F. v. Douglas County School District RE-1 (2017)

- "To meet its substantive obligation under the IDEA, a school must offer an IEP reasonably calculated to enable a child to make progress appropriate in light of the child's circumstances." (emphasis added)

Role of the Goal in the IEP



Setting the stage for appropriately ambitious goals.

To effectively design goal to promote appropriately, ambitious growth, we most

- Maintain high expectations
- Articulate what we want the student to do (Teacher clarity = ES .75; learning goals = ES .68; appropriate challenging goals = ES .59)
- Know the child and their circumstances [PLAAFP Statement, IDEA Sec. 300.320 (a)(1); *Endrew F.*, 2017]
- Know what knowledge, skills, and strategies the student **needs** to do to meet ambitious goals

Hattie, 2018

Goal setting starts with the **right** questions!

- What do you and the family want for the student?
- What is the student's current reality and unique circumstances?
- What is the student's primary functional need that requires specialized instruction?
- How can we maximize our resources to support the student?

Role of the Present Level of Academic and Functional Achievement (PLAAFP) Statement

Foundation for Goal Setting

What Does IDEA Say About the PLAAFP Statement?

(1) A statement of the child's **present levels of academic achievement and functional performance**, including—

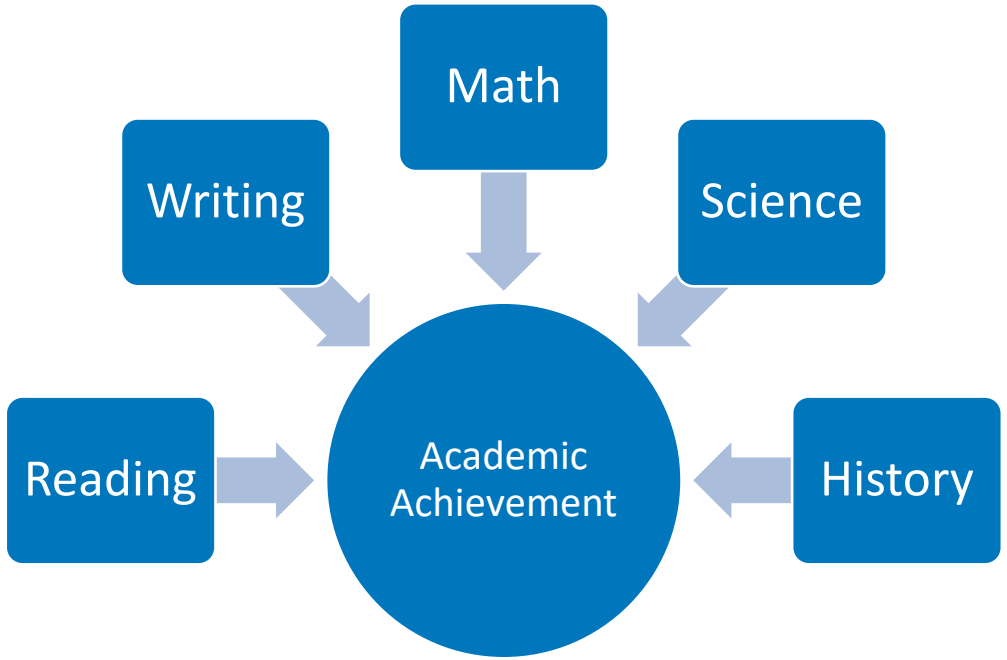
(i) How the child's disability **affects the child's involvement and progress in the general education curriculum** (i.e., the same curriculum as for nondisabled children); or

(ii) For preschool children, as appropriate, **how the disability affects the child's participation in appropriate activities**.

Source: IDEA, Sec. 300.320 (a)(1); emphasis added.

What is meant by present levels of academic achievement?

"Academic achievement" generally refers to a **child's performance in academic**. It could vary depending on a child's circumstance or situation; therefore, a definition of academic achievement is not included in the IDEA regulations.



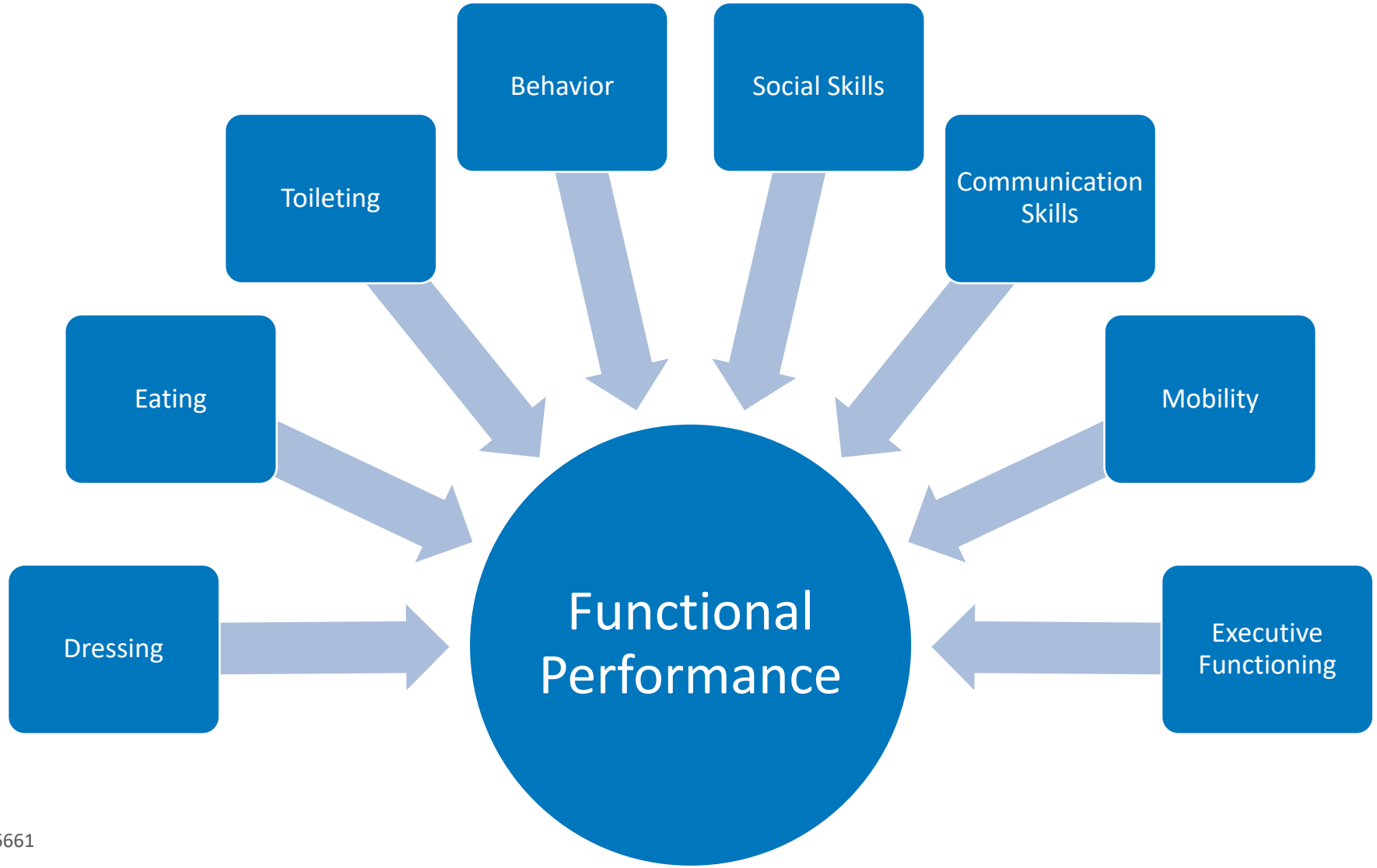
Source: 71 Fed. Reg. at 46662.

What is meant by present levels of functional performance?

- “Functional performance” generally refers to activities that are not considered academic or related to a child’s academic achievement.
- “Functional” often is used in the context of routine activities of everyday living.

Source: 71 Fed. Reg. at 46661

What are some examples of functional skills?



Source: 71 Fed. Reg. at 46661

Did You Know?

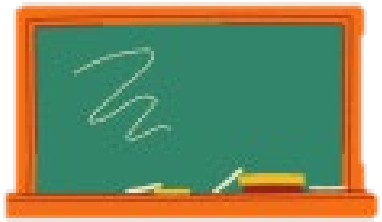
Regardless of the student's disability and areas of need, the IDEA requires an IEP to include "a statement of the child's present levels of academic achievement **and** functional performance."

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C. § 300.320 (2004).

What information does the PLAAFP statement provide for function goal setting?

Student Needs

Baseline Information



Effect on Progress in General Education

Connection to Goals and/or Services

This content was adapted with permission from the IRIS Center module titled *IEPs: Developing High-Quality Individualized Education Programs. High-Quality PLAAFP Statements (*p. 6).

Developing Functional Goals

Leveraging the PLAAFP Statement

Steps for Goal Setting

1. Select a Target and Measure
2. Establish Baseline Performance
3. Choose a Strategy for Setting the Goal
4. Write a Measurable Functional Goal

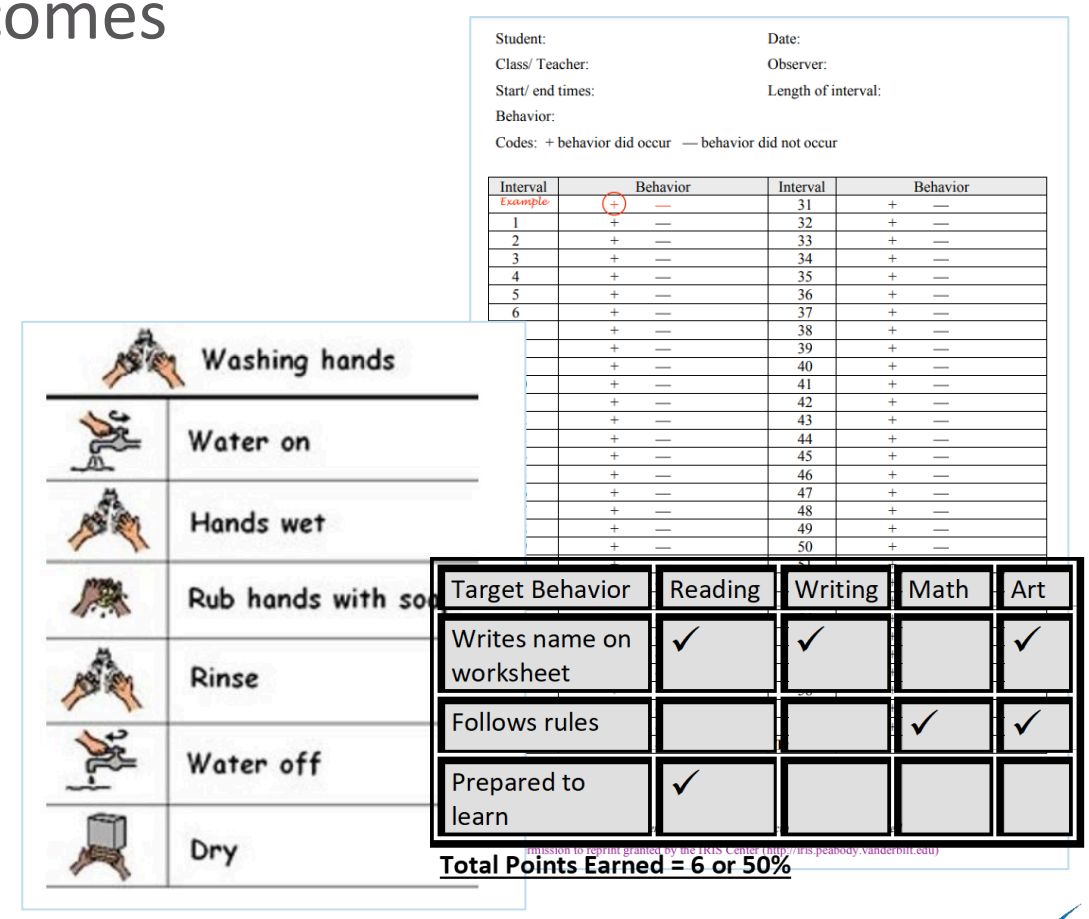
Guiding Questions for Goal Setting

What do you want the student to be able to do?

How will you know if the student can do it?

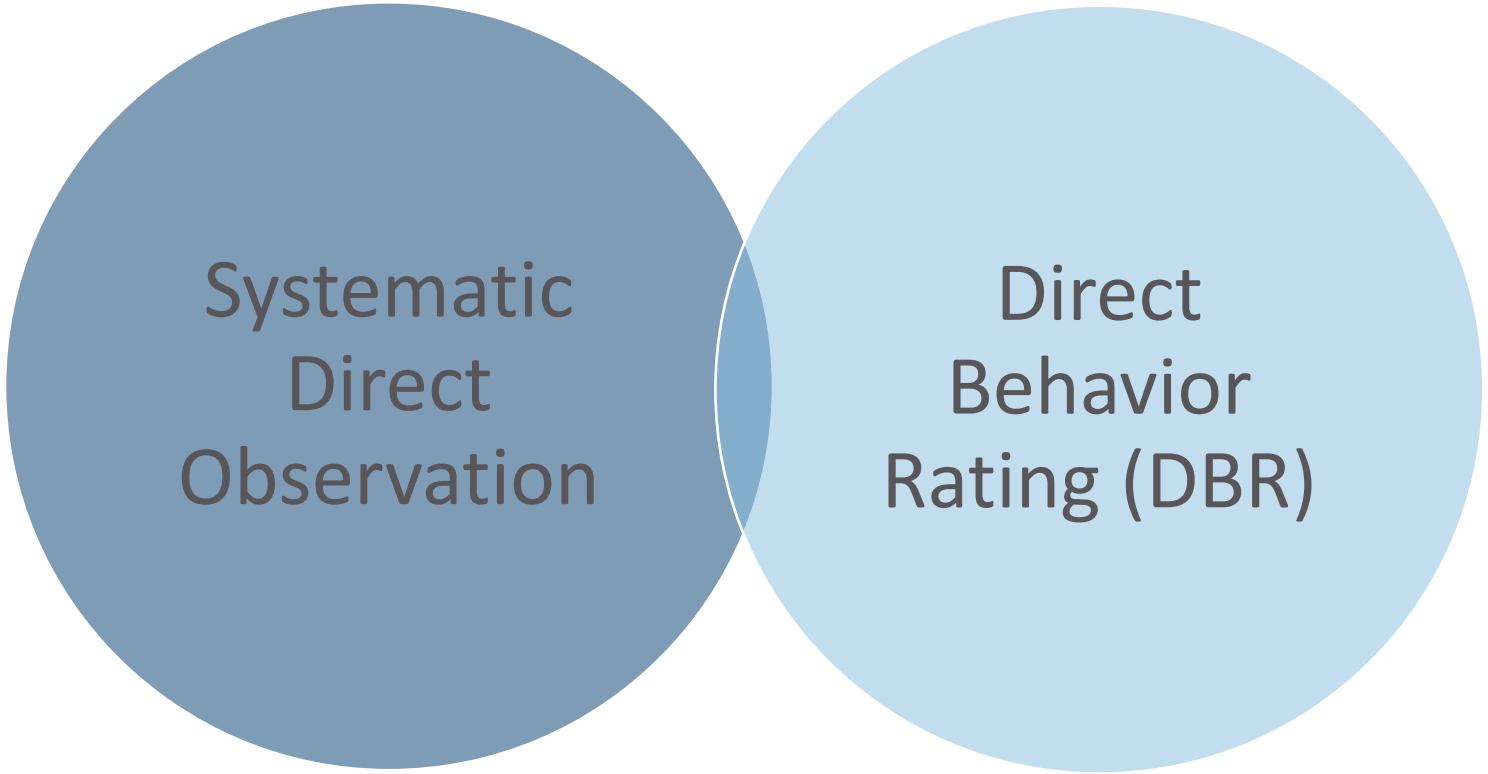
Key Characteristics of Functional Measures

- Valid and reliable measure
- Align to relevant, age-appropriate outcomes
- Allow for repeated measurement
- Brief
- Feasible
- Can be graphed!



Step 1: Select and Define the Target and Measure

Focus functional goals on a skill that can be taught, measured, and graphed.



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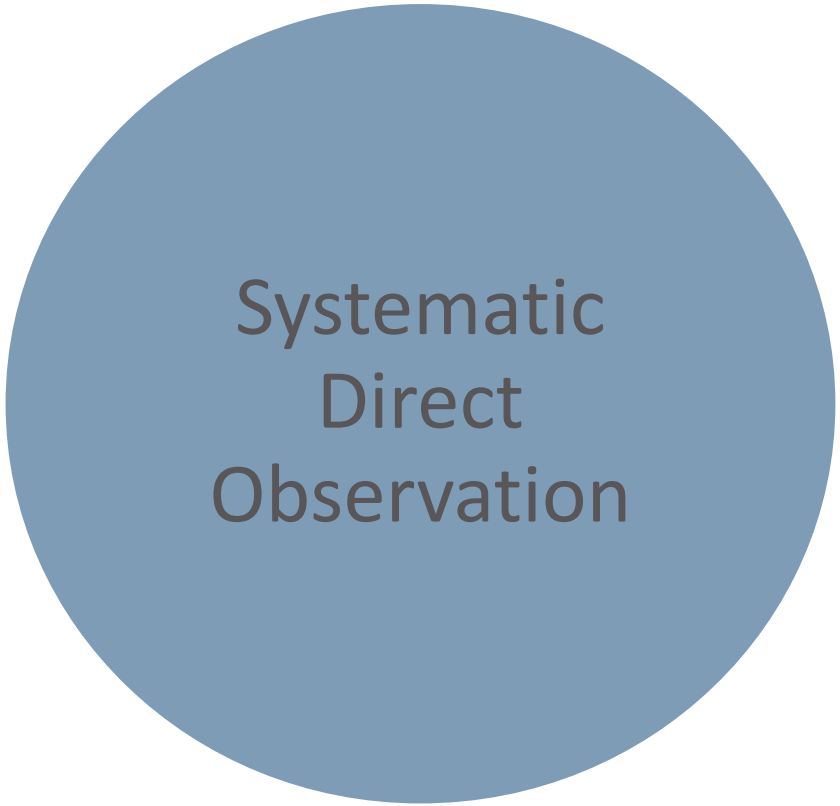
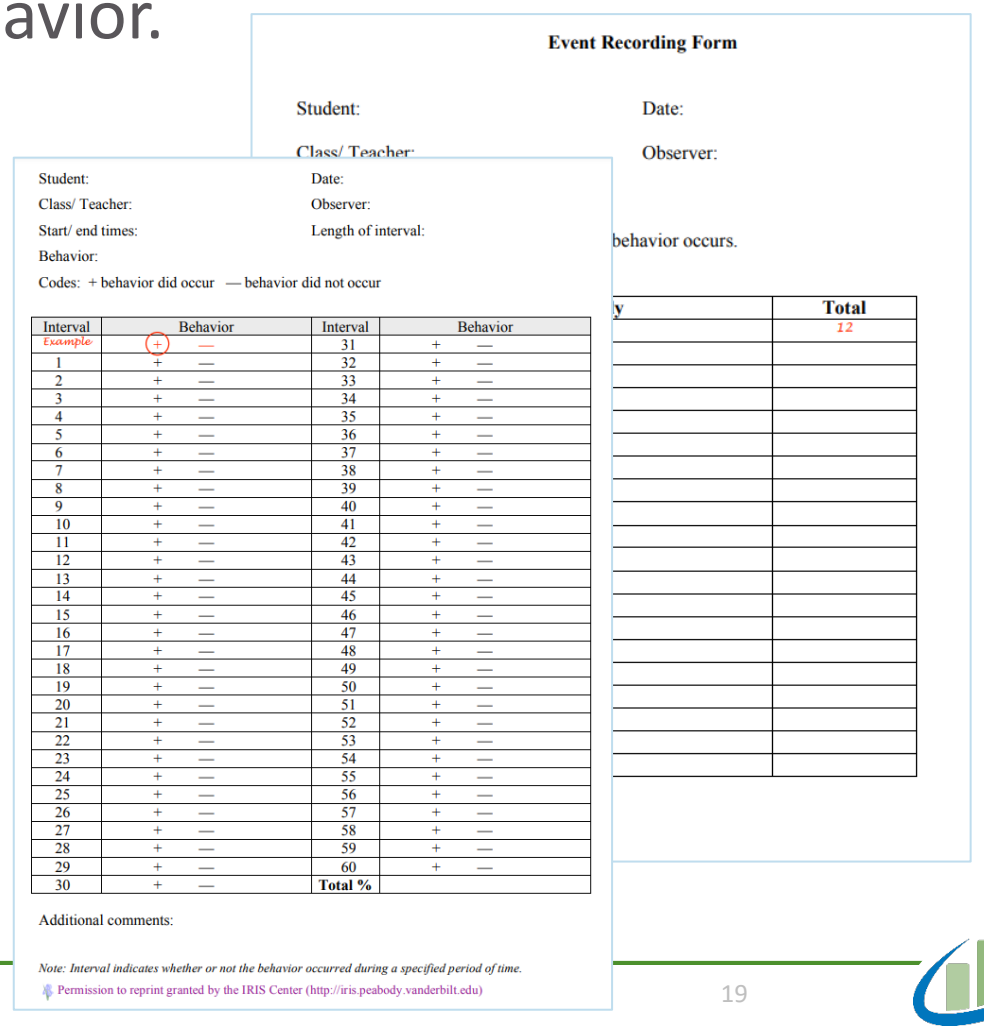


- Stay in seat
- Use toilet independently
- Say hello to a peer
- Hands to self
- Cook a dish
- Look at speaker

Systematic Direct Observation

- The process of watching the student or environment for a period of time and systematically recording the functional behavior.
- Examples of observation:
  - Total number of times a student utters a word
  - Amount of time spent out of seat
  - Percentage of appropriate peer interactions



Event Recording Form

Student: Date:

Class/ Teacher: Observer:

behavior occurs.

y	Total
	12

Student: Date:

Class/ Teacher: Observer:

Start/ end times: Length of interval:

Behavior:

Codes: + behavior did occur — behavior did not occur

Interval	Behavior	Interval	Behavior
Example	+ —	31	+ —
1	+ —	32	+ —
2	+ —	33	+ —
3	+ —	34	+ —
4	+ —	35	+ —
5	+ —	36	+ —
6	+ —	37	+ —
7	+ —	38	+ —
8	+ —	39	+ —
9	+ —	40	+ —
10	+ —	41	+ —
11	+ —	42	+ —
12	+ —	43	+ —
13	+ —	44	+ —
14	+ —	45	+ —
15	+ —	46	+ —
16	+ —	47	+ —
17	+ —	48	+ —
18	+ —	49	+ —
19	+ —	50	+ —
20	+ —	51	+ —
21	+ —	52	+ —
22	+ —	53	+ —
23	+ —	54	+ —
24	+ —	55	+ —
25	+ —	56	+ —
26	+ —	57	+ —
27	+ —	58	+ —
28	+ —	59	+ —
29	+ —	60	+ —
30	+ —	**Total %**	

Additional comments:

Note: Interval indicates whether or not the behavior occurred during a specified period of time.

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Systematic Direct Observation Strengths

- Observation data are a direct representation of the behavior.
- Direct observation is applicable to a wide range of observable behaviors.
- Adaptable procedures can measure various dimensions of behavior.

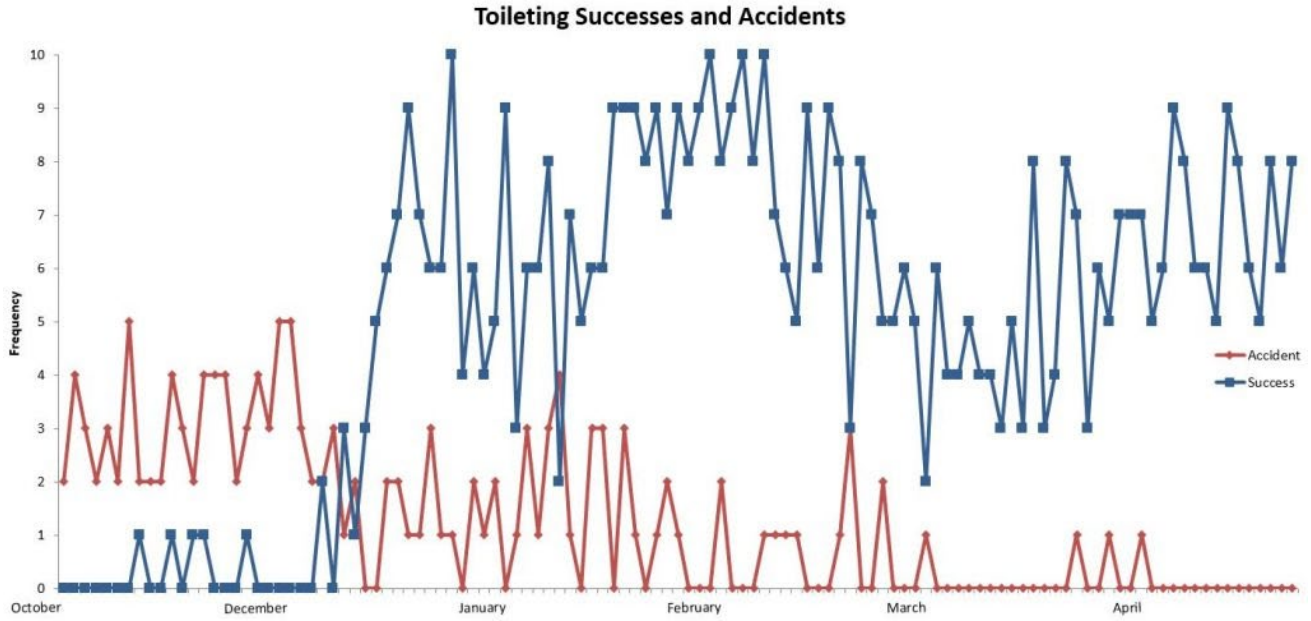


Image: http://knappcenter.org/sample-page/treatment-programs/initial-steps/toilet-training/

Systematic Direct Observation Dimensions

Behavior can be measured in terms of the following:

- **Frequency** – number of times behavior occurs
- **Rate** – number of times it occurs within a given time period (e.g., 10x/hour)
- **Duration** – amount of time the behavior lasts
- **Latency** – temporal relation of behavior to other events (e.g., time to respond)
- **Intensity** – the magnitude or strength of the behavior
- **Level of Prompting** – how much support is necessary to complete skill

Systematic Direct Observation Limitations

- May not be feasible in classroom context
  - Time intensive
  - May require trained observer
  - Can be difficult to implement if observer must perform other duties at same time, such as teaching or behavior management

Step 1: Select and Define the Target and Measure

Focus functional goals on a skill that can be taught, measured, and graphed.

Direct Behavior Rating (DBR)

- Peer or class engagement
- Non-disruptive behavior
- Respectful behavior
- Actively listens
- Communicates verbally

Direct Behavior Rating (DBR)

Behavior	Date					
Disruption	9+	5	5	5	5	5
	7 – 8	4	4	4	4	4
	5 – 6	3	3	3	3	3
	2 – 4	2	2			
	0 -1	1	1			

Target Behavior	Reading	Writing	Math	Art
Writes name on worksheet	✓	✓		✓
Follows rules			✓	✓
Prepared to learn	✓			

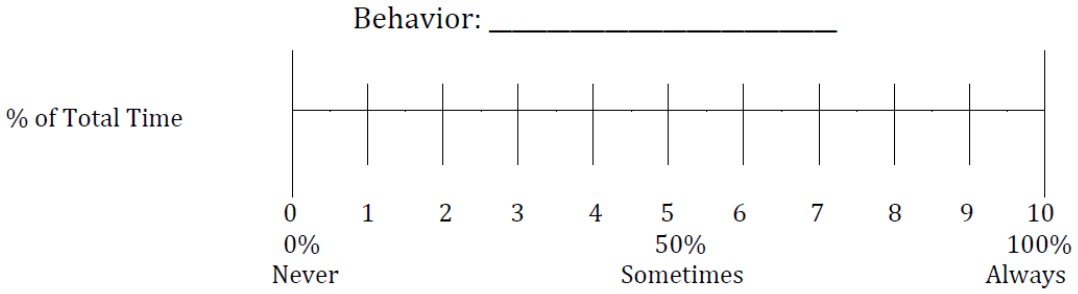
Total Points Earned = 6 or 50%

DBR Single-Item Scales (DBR-SIS)

Direct Behavior Rating (DBR) Form – Fill-in Behaviors

Date: M T W Th F	Student: Rater:	Activity Description:
Observation Time: Start:_____ End: _____ ☐ Check if no observation today	Behavior Descriptions:	

Directions: Place a mark along the line that best reflects the percentage of total time the student exhibited each target behavior. Note that the percentages do not need to total 100% across behaviors because some behaviors may co-vary. If desired, an additional behavior may be defined and rated.



- Behavior Goals DBR Form
- Direct Behavior Rating Individualization Form

(Chafouleas, Riley-Tillman, & Christ, 2010)

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www.directbehaviorratings.org

Define the Behavior: DBR-Academic Engagement

Academic engagement

- Active or passive participation in the classroom activity

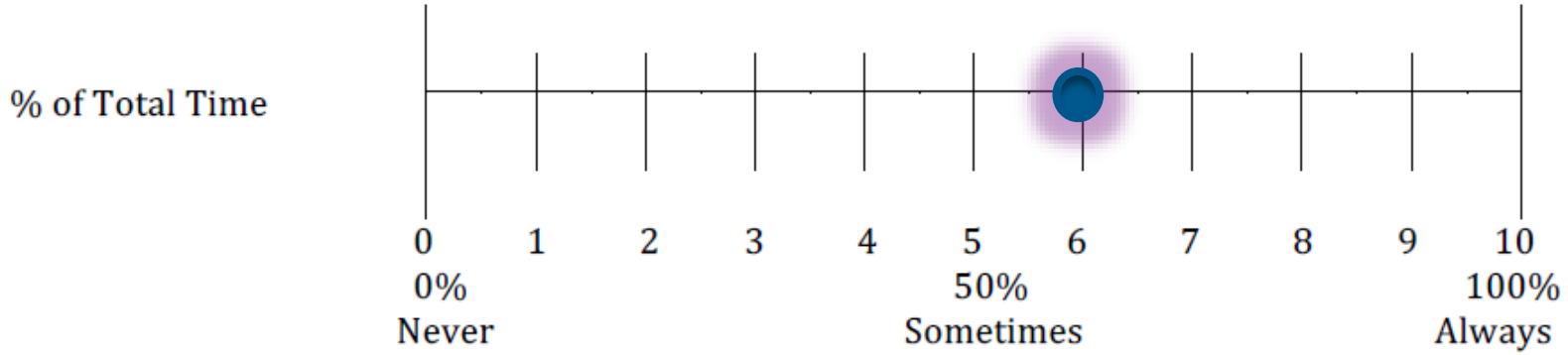
- *Examples* include writing, raising hand, answering a question, talking about a lesson, listening to the teacher, reading silently, and looking at instructional material.

(Chafouleas, Riley-Tillman, Christ, & Sugai, 2009)

Engagement Example

Academically Engaged

Place a mark along the line that best reflects the percentage of total time the student was academically engaged during math today.



Interpretation: The teacher estimated that the student displayed *academically engaged* behavior during 60 percent of large-group math instruction today.

Slide adapted from Chafouleas (2011) with permission.

Step 2: Establish a Baseline

Establish baseline using the same tool that will be used for progress monitoring and include in PLAAFP statement.

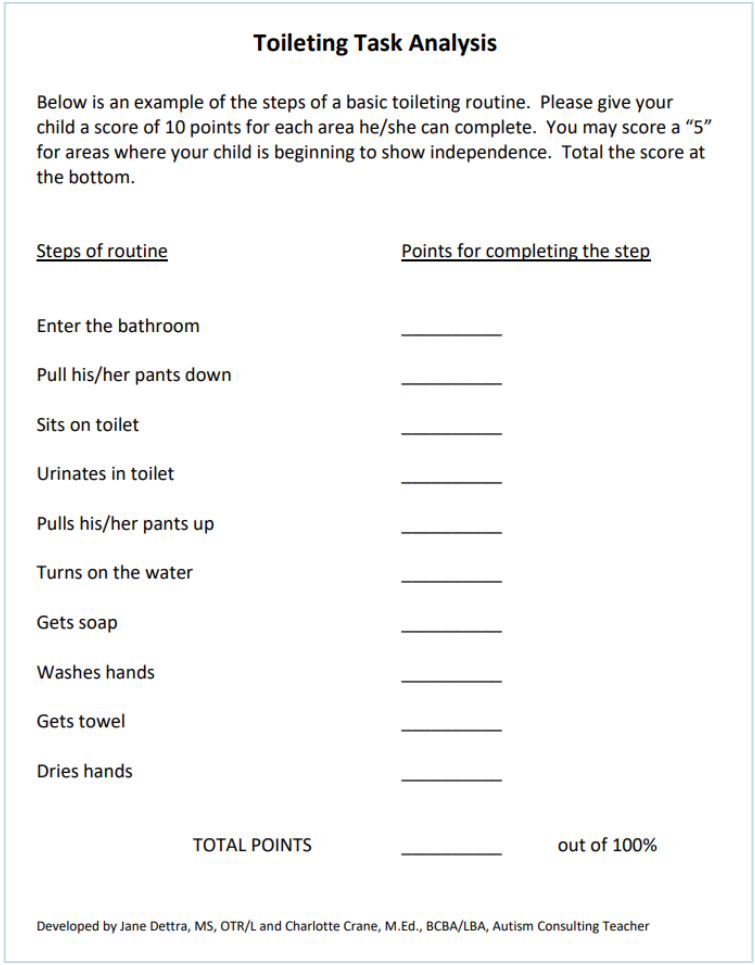
Approaches:

- Use benchmark score (if available).
- Use the **median** of three probes or **mean** of three consecutive probes.
- Consider at least 3-5 behavior data points to achieve a stable baseline.

Establish and document baseline.

- The student's baseline score should be used when writing PLAAFP statement in the student's IEP. For example:

BASELINE: "When prompted to use the bathroom before break, Chris completes 0/10 steps independently while same aged peers can complete 10/10 steps independently or with minimal verbal reminders. He currently requires physical prompting to complete 7/10 steps and verbal prompting to sit down and dry hands. He urinates in the toilet 3/5 times opportunities per week.



Toileting Task Analysis

Below is an example of the steps of a basic toileting routine. Please give your child a score of 10 points for each area he/she can complete. You may score a "5" for areas where your child is beginning to show independence. Total the score at the bottom.

Steps of routine	Points for completing the step
Enter the bathroom	_____
Pull his/her pants down	_____
Sits on toilet	_____
Urinates in toilet	_____
Pulls his/her pants up	_____
Turns on the water	_____
Gets soap	_____
Washes hands	_____
Gets towel	_____
Dries hands	_____
TOTAL POINTS	_____ out of 100%

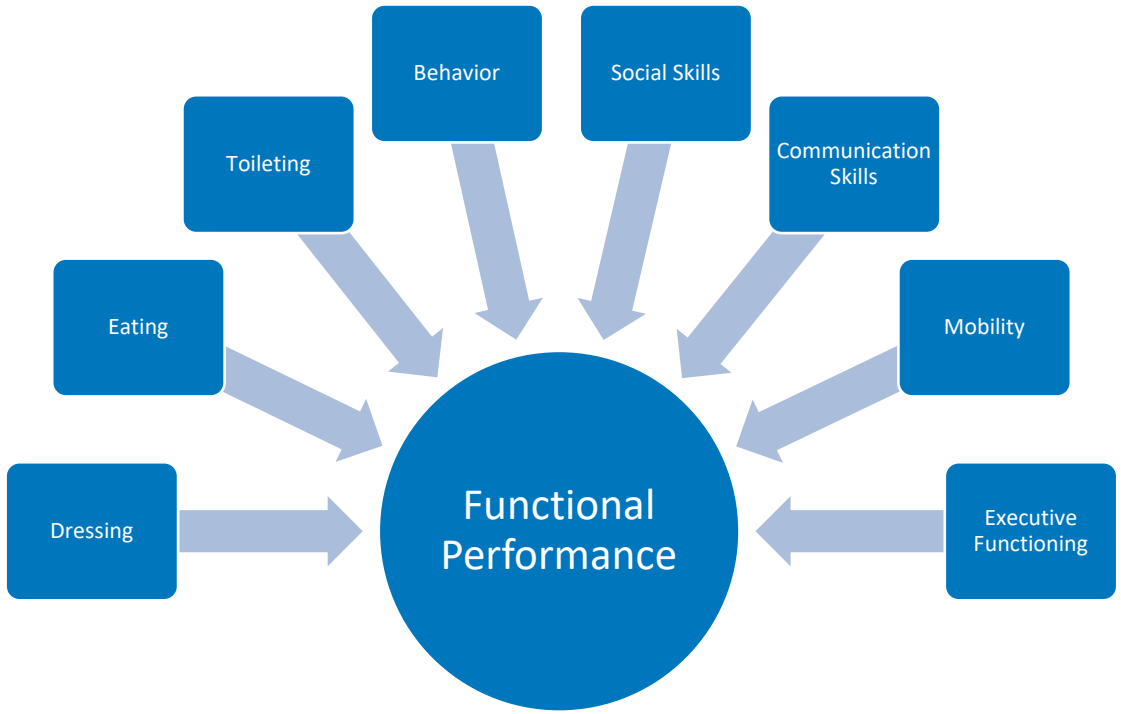
Developed by Jane Dettra, MS, OTR/L and Charlotte Crane, M.Ed., BCBA/LBA, Autism Consulting Teacher

Step 3: Choose a Strategy for Setting the Goal

There are two validated approaches to setting goals:

1. Benchmarks or Criterion

2. Intra-individual framework



Setting Goals Based on Logical Practices

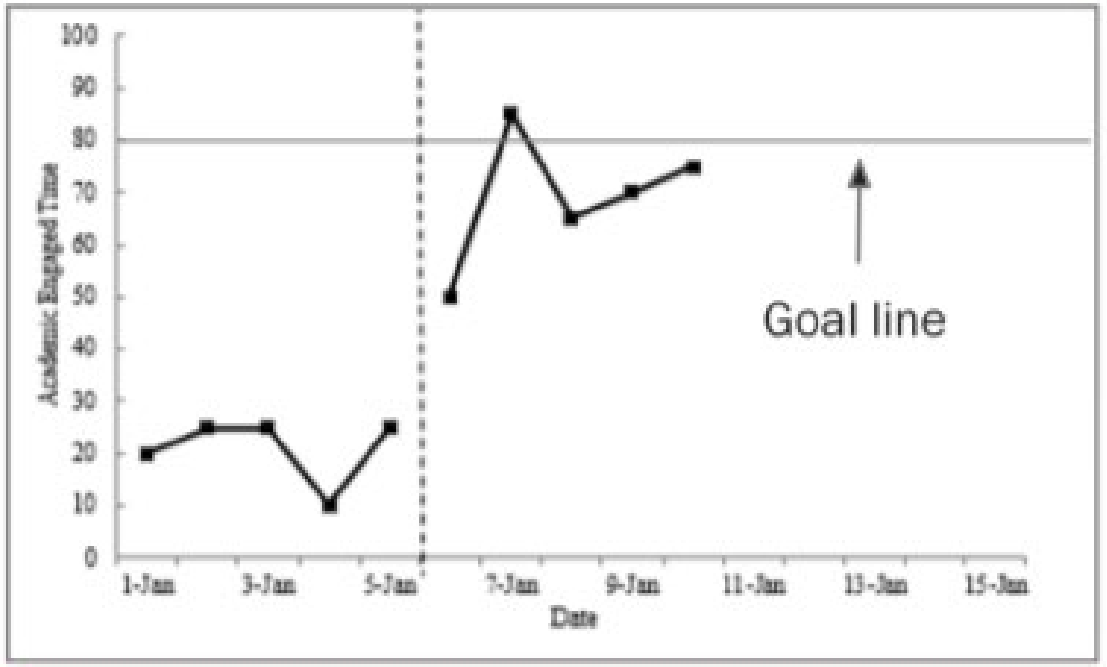
Team members must know…

- **How** the goal was set
- **Why** the goal was set that way
- The **intensity** of the intervention provided to meet the goal

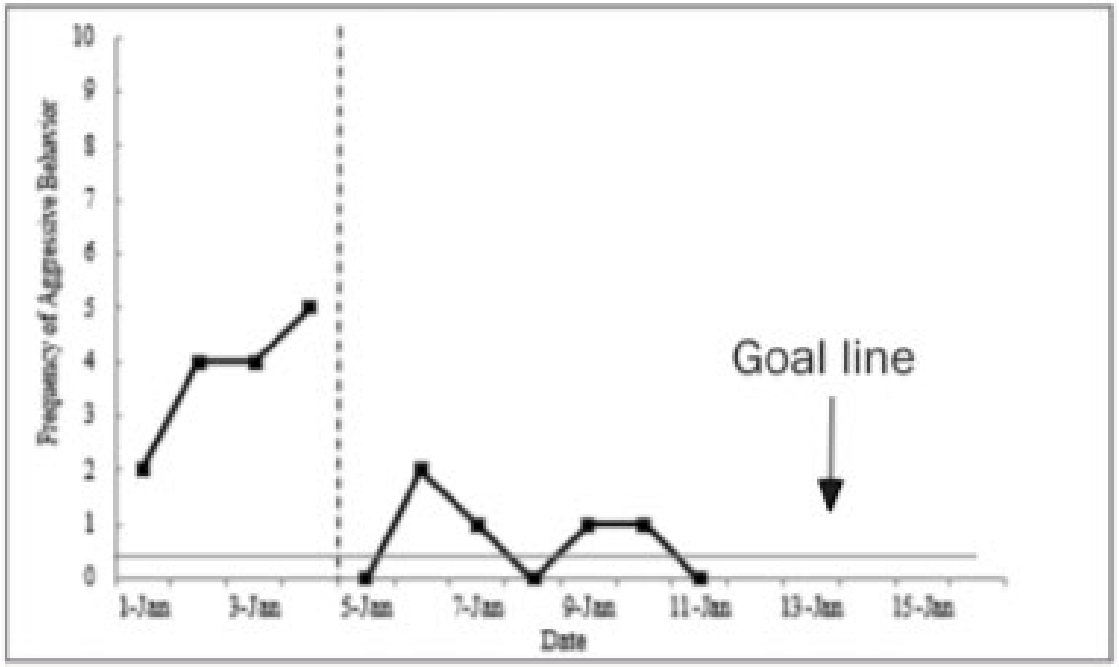
Knowing the goal helps educators select appropriate interventions/specially designed instruction to help students reach the goal.

Benchmarks for functional behaviors use peer expectations/ norms.

Increasing Academically Engaged Time



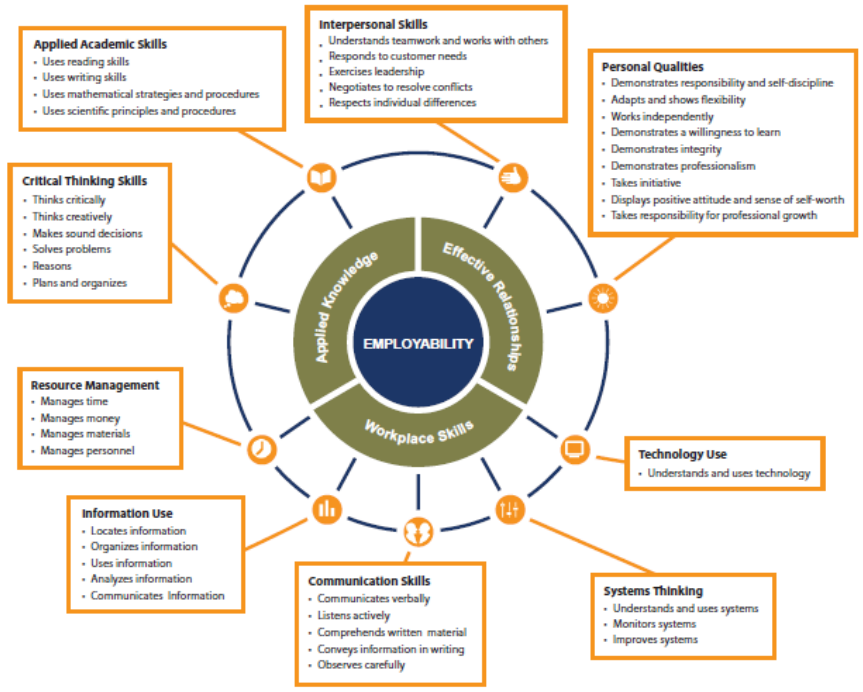
Decreasing Frequency of Aggressive Behavior



*Always include a **goal line** on the graph to help you visualize progress!*

What would be a benchmark/criterion for these behaviors for the students you work with?

- Toileting
- Communication
- Hands to self
- Put materials away
- Attention



What is typical for same age peers? How do we know?

Average Attention by Age

- 6 years old: 12 to 18 minutes
- 8 years old: 16 to 24 minutes
- 10 years old: 20 to 30 minutes
- 12 years old: 24 to 36 minutes
- 14 years old: 28 to 42 minutes
- 16 years old: 32 to 48 minutes

Option 2: Using Intra-Individual Framework

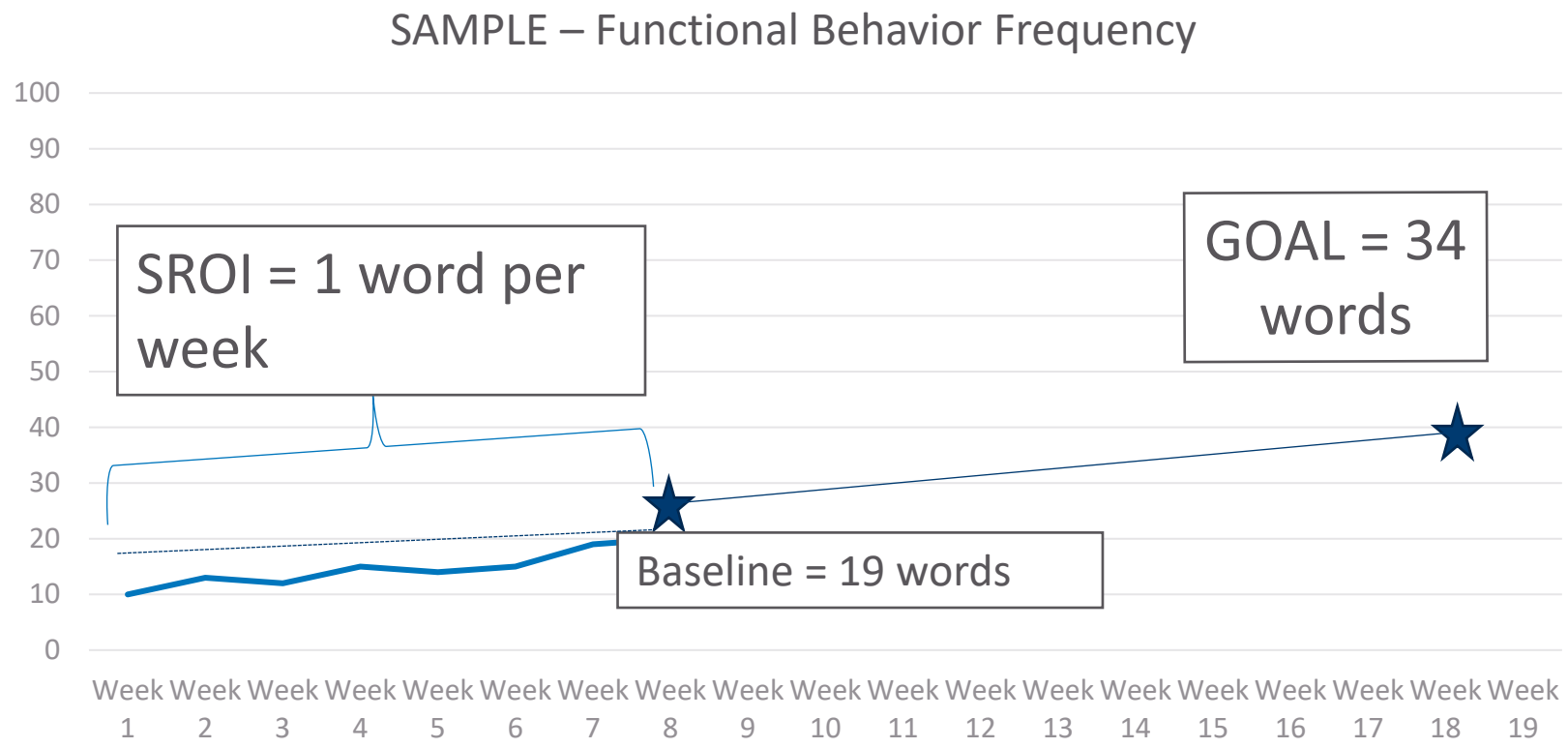
- Often used for students performing far below grade level or with very low skills, where typical growth rates are not appropriate.
- Use three most recent data points to calculate baseline score.
- Calculate student's ROI (SROI) based on at least eight data points.

SROI × 1.5 × # Weeks

\+ **Student's Baseline Score** (mean of 3 most recent scores)

GOAL

Goal Setting – Using Intra-Individual Framework



Using Intra-Individual Framework

Advantages

- Useful when students are performing far below age/grade expectations and standard growth rates are not appropriate.

Considerations

- May be difficult to understand and calculate and, therefore, may require more training and support.
- Requires collection of six to nine data points before setting the goal.
- May not be necessary for students performing at or near grade level.

Step 4: Write a Measurable Goal

- Quality goals address the condition, or context in which the skill will be performed, target behavior, and level of proficiency/timeframe.

Sample template for goal structure:

When given **[age/grade level and condition],** the student will **[observable behavior and goal] [level of proficiency and timeframe].**

Closing and Next Steps

Resources

- Module: The What and Why of Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP) (30 minutes)
- Module: Complete The What and Why of Measurable Annual Goals (30 minutes)
- Strategies for Setting Data-Driven Behavioral Individualized Education Program Goals

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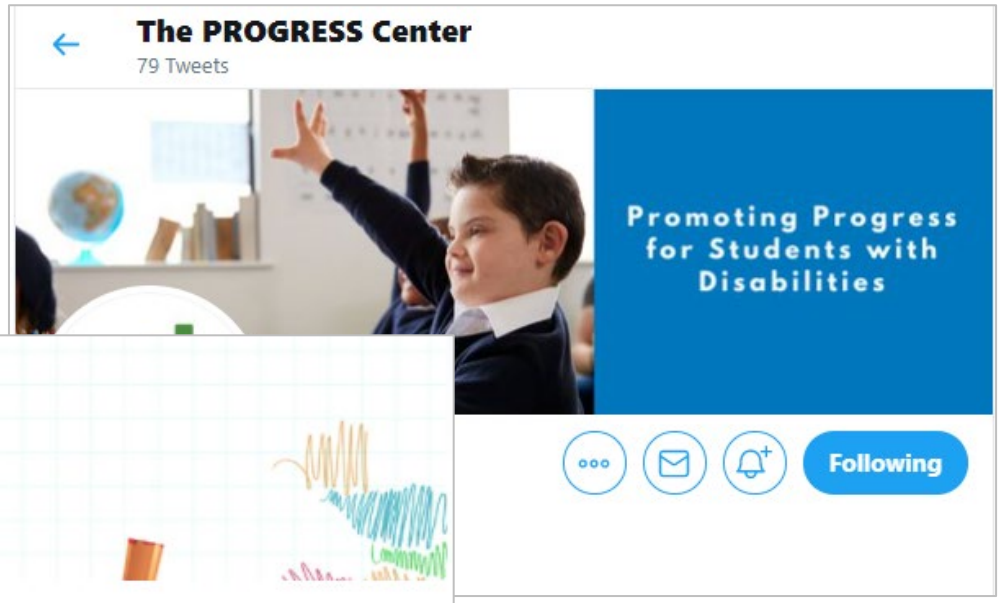

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