



Socially significant behaviors

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What are socially significant behaviors

- It is an essential element of ABA
- Behaviors that have positive impact on the learner's life and well-being, both long-term and short-term
- Behaviors that benefit the child and their social relationships in a meaningful way



Assessing social significance



Will this behavior benefit the child?

- Any target behavior should benefit the child directly or indirectly
- The behavior should contribute to the child's competences in everyday life
- The behavior should be reinforced
 - In the natural environment
 - After the intervention ends



Will this behavior be reinforced in the natural environment?

- The behavior should be functional and applicable to the child's daily life
- This is determinant whether the behavior will be maintained and have long-term benefits
- This also means the behavior change is for the learner's benefit and not someone else's



Is this behavior a necessary prerequisite for a useful skill?

- Target behavior may be not very important by itself but be a necessary prerequisite for building other functional skills
- These behaviors have indirect benefit
- Teaching phonics as a prerequisite for reading



Will this behavior lead to the new opportunities?

- The behavior will increase access to new environments
- Other important behaviors can be learned and used
- Access to new reinforcers and new contingencies, such as crawling or reading (behavioral cusps)
- Behaviors, that once learned, produce adaptive variations in novel environments, such as approaching others or functional communication (pivotal behaviors)

Will this behavior facilitate social interactions?

- The behavior change that enables others to interact with the child in a more supportive way, beneficial to the child



Is this an age-appropriate behavior?

- Behaviors that are age-appropriate and setting-appropriate, even if in an adaptive way, are more beneficial and more likely to be maintained



Is replacement behavior available?

- Behavior reduction intervention should always start with identifying alternative replacement behavior



Does this behavior represent an actual problem or goal?

- Behaviors of interest should not be confused with indirectly related behaviors
- On-task behavior does not mean increased quality of work
- Remaining seated in the classroom does not mean correct completion of worksheets
- Also, we need to distinguish between what people and what they do



Is it a behavior?

- Is target behavior a behavior, and not a result or product of other behaviors?
- Examples:
 - Weight loss vs. reducing food consumption
 - Earning higher grades vs. increasing duration of practicing
 - Having more friends vs. practicing social interaction skills

Interactive break

- Which of the following behaviors would you target first for a 13 year old boy who is able to communicate, but has no play skills and limited academic skills?
 1. Functional play with toy cars
 2. Reading words
 3. Solving subtraction problems
 4. Doing grocery shopping



Prioritizing target behaviors



Does the behavior pose any danger?

- Behaviors that may cause harm to the child or others must receive first priority



How often does the behavior occur? Is it long-standing?

- Behaviors of priority will be those that will provide many opportunities for a child to use and receive reinforcement
- If we target behavior for reduction, behaviors that occur more often will take precedence
- Also, chronic behaviors are more important than behaviors that just recently surfaced

Will the behavior produce higher levels of reinforcement?

- Priority should be given to behaviors that will produce higher and more sustainable level of reinforcement



Is it important for future skills?

- Target behaviors should lead to developing other important behaviors that will help reach maximum levels of independent functioning in future



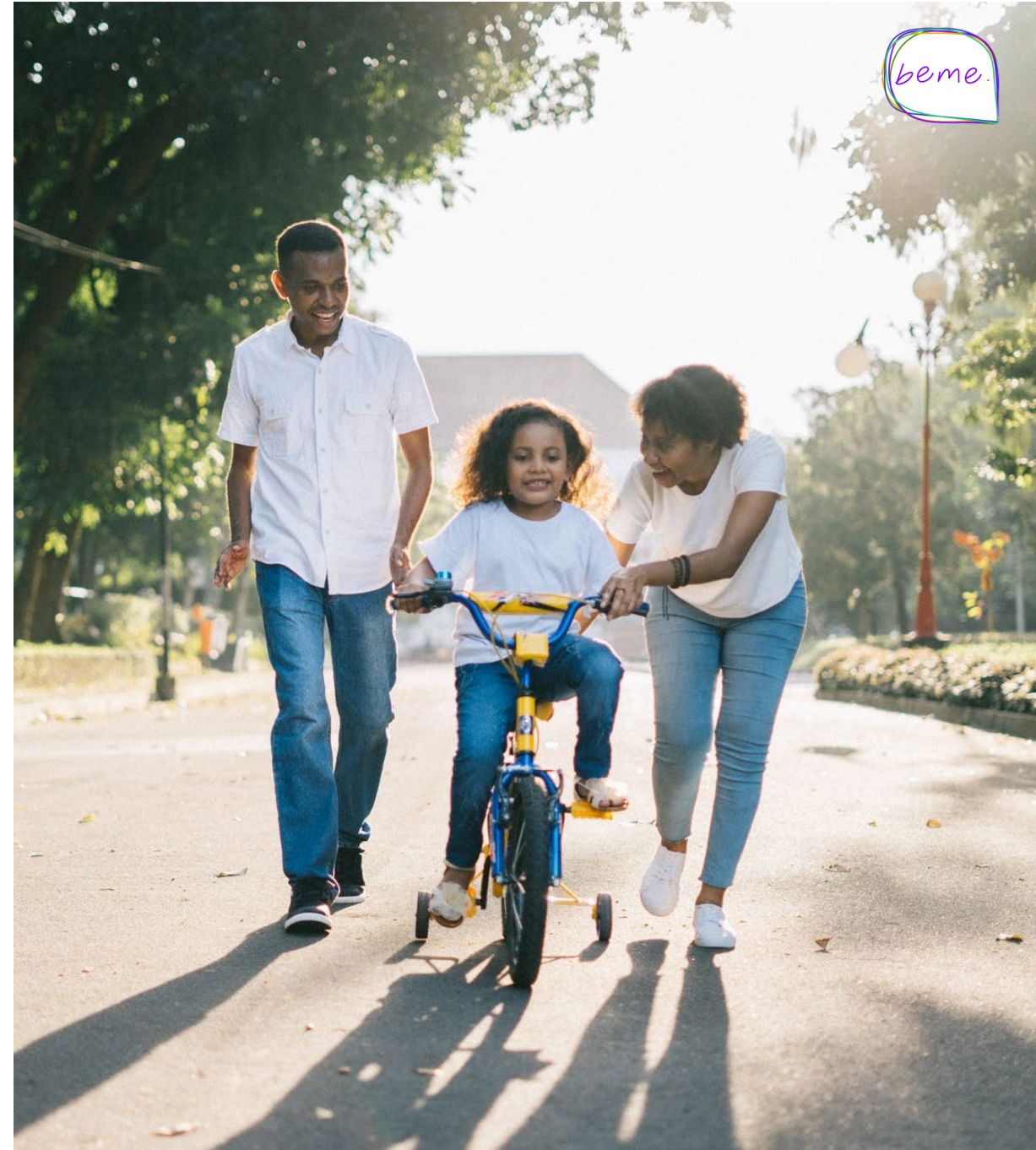
Will the negative attention from others be reduced?

- Some behaviors are not maladaptive, but cause unnecessary problems and negative attention from others, these behaviors can be prioritized as well



Will significant others benefit?

- Even though behaviors should not be changed for the convenience of others, neither should their effects on significant others be overlooked



How likely is success?

- What does the literature say?
- How experienced is the team?
- To what extent can environment be controlled?
- Are the resources available?



How much will it cost?

- Financial costs, including materials, salaries, transportation, equipment
- Time, in particular, client's time
- Logistics



Questions?





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References

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Thank you!

