

## **Case Study**

### **Step 1**

Jenn is a 22-year-old person who is labeled as having moderate intellectual disabilities. She is currently receiving full-time supported living services in an apartment she shares with another resident with disabilities. She spends approximately 8 hours per day split between a variety of potential supported employment sites (e.g., a bagel shop, a florist, a 7-11 store) and a skills training day program. The same agency provides support to Jenn in both home and community settings. She is known to her friends, family, and support staff as a mostly happy and friendly person who likes to engage in basic conversations about her favorite TV shows, go out for burgers or pizza, and go roller skating at least once a week. Her family is very supportive of her and want to be involved in decisions regarding her life. Her mom is her legal guardian.

Recently Jenn's behavior has become more challenging in certain circumstances. She has begun to engage in frequent verbal (and sometimes physical) altercations with her roommate. While attending skill training sessions at her day program settings, she increasingly refuses to engage in tasks and activities, yells and screams in a loud voice, and tries to throw and/or destroy various items and materials in the setting (e.g., work task materials, etc.). Agency staff and her family members have decided to come together to engage in an assessment and intervention planning process to try to increase the frequency of desired behaviors and decrease the likelihood of challenging behaviors.

Jenn was referred to the agency behavior specialist by her administrative staff. The behavior specialist then contacted the supervisors at the apartment and the skills training program to set up an initial consultation. The first meeting included the behavior specialist (facilitator), the administration staff who referred her, program supervisors (skills program and apartment), and the three direct support staff who worked most frequently with her.

#### **Using the agenda provided, come up with a team consensus of:**

- How often does the team need to meet?
- Who needs to be at each meeting (does everyone need to come to each meeting, or can some people come as needed?)
- What is going to be the best way for the team to communicate?
- Assign roles to each member of the team.

## **Step 2:**

For Jenn, the team created intensity rating scales for altercations with roommates, outbursts, and task engagement. These scales addressed levels of task engagement and the numbers and intensity of outbursts (e.g., voice volume, exhibition of physical aggression).

Jenn's behaviors often start with her saying "no", "go away", or "stop it!". They will then typically escalate to her raising her voice, talking faster, and tapping her leg. They may escalate to yelling, swearing at staff and her peers, rocking her body back and forth, and "gallop" running around. As a worst case scenario Jenn will hit others in the environment using both hands with closed fists alternating swings.

### **Come up with a rating scale for the INTENSITY of Jenn's outbursts:**

Rate this behavior's intensity from 1-5.

5 (Worst day possible):

4 (Typical bad day):

3 (So-So day):

2 (Typical good day):

1 (Best day possible):

### Step 3

All six of Jenn’s team members who do direct support work were given the PTR FBA Checklist and asked to fill it out before the meeting. Let’s fill one out as a team. Fill out the FBA Questionnaire with the following information.

Jenn tends to engage in Outbursts in the following scenarios:

- At skills program, especially when she first gets there on Mondays
- Around her roommate
- When there are no other activities planned for long periods of time
- When her roommate is being loud
- When there is lots of noise in the environment.

Jenn almost never engages in outbursts in the following scenarios:

- Around mealtimes and bedtime.
- One on one time with staff
- Community outings

Behavior	Antecedent (Prevent data)	Function (Teach data)	Consequences (Reinforce data)
Altercations	Afternoons Free time Activities with others Roommate Unstructured time Peer teasing Excess noise Menstrual cycles Sleep Deprivation	<b>Peer attention?</b> No <b>Adult attention?</b> Yes(2)/No(1) <b>Obtain objects?</b> No <b>Delay transition?</b> No <b>Terminate or delay activity?</b> No <b>Get away from peers or adults?</b> Yes(3)  <b>Social Skills?</b> Peer interaction, conversation skills, making prosocial statements <b>Problem Solving Skills?</b> Recognizing the need for help, asking for help, ignoring peers <b>Communication Skills?</b> Asking for help, Requesting wants, expressing emotions	<b>Consequences for behavior:</b> Verbal reprimand Sent to another room Stated rules Calming/soothing Verbal redirect Peer reaction Delay in activity  <b>Enjoy Praise?</b> Yes <b>Does appropriate behavior result in acknowledgment?</b> Sometimes <b>Does problem behavior result in acknowledgment?</b> Always  <b>Things she finds enjoyable:</b> Social interaction Music Watching TV Burgers/Pizza Activities - Roller skating
Hypothesis Statement	<b>When:</b> Jenn is bored, and her roommate is loud	<b>Then:</b> Jenn will start verbal and/or physical altercations	<b>As a Result:</b> staff will intervene (giving her attention).

**Step 4a: Pick an Intervention**

For the altercations, the team decided to use a non-contingent attention procedure and teach her the functional communication phrases “It’s too loud” and “Please stop” to let her roommate know when she was getting upset.

**Step 4b: Create an intervention**

**Come up with your own NCA intervention using the Task Analysis below**

Intervention Type	Specific Steps
<b><i>Prevent Behavior Interventions</i></b>	
NonContingent Attention/Positive Comments	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="456 678 1406 743">1. Review FBA and determine situations or events that lead to challenging behavior. _____</li> <li data-bbox="456 863 1406 928">2. Develop a list of comments or nonverbal attention strategies that can be used within the existing routine. _____ _____</li> <li data-bbox="456 1079 1455 1113">3. Decide on physical proximity of staff and individual when delivering NCA. _____</li> <li data-bbox="456 1190 1117 1260">4. Decide how frequently NCA should be given? (fixed/variable/positive:negative, length of interval) _____</li> <li data-bbox="456 1337 1395 1371">5. How will staff know when to give NCA? (timer, phone, motivator etc.) _____</li> <li data-bbox="456 1449 1417 1518">6. Plan for when challenging behaviors do occur. (*Don’t bring attention to the challenging behavior, praise around etc.) _____ _____</li> <li data-bbox="456 1669 1446 1703">7. Establish criteria to change the NCA schedule. (When to fade or increase?) _____ _____</li> </ol>

### Step 4c: Train on the Intervention

**Let's practice training with the below example**

Intervention Type	Specific Steps	Fidelity/Training (Staff completed accurately?)
Prevent Interventions		
Non-Contingent Reinforcement (Attention)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. During downtime (anytime where there is 10 or more minutes of unstructured time where Jenn and K are in the same room).</li> <li>2. List of Positive Comments or Phrases:                Hey Jenn!                What's up buttercup?                I wanna rock and roll all night!                Sing a song                Tell a joke                Ask her about what show she is watching.</li> <li>3. Staff should be in the same room and in close enough proximity to be able to speak normally without yelling.</li> <li>4. Staff should engage with Jenn every 5 minutes.</li> <li>5. Staff will have a timer that buzzes every 5 minutes as a prompt.</li> <li>6. If Jenn engages in challenging behavior, staff will provide one prompt for Functionally Equivalent Replacement Behavior (FERB) and follow reinforce instructions.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Y/N</li> <li>2. Y/N</li> <li>3. Y/N</li> <li>4. Y/N</li> <li>5. Y/N</li> <li>6. Y/N</li> </ol>
Total	Divide the number of steps completed by total number of steps to get a fidelity percentage.	___ / 6 = ___%

## Step 5

Following the implementation of Jenn's behavior support plan, data indicated improvements in her outburst behavior at work, so no changes were made. Reductions in altercations were occurring more slowly, in that the frequency was not diminishing but the intensity was decreasing (e.g., only verbal vs. physical altercations).

**What would you do? Use the flowchart below to make a data-based decision**

