**Step`1: Guiding Questions to Set Up the Individualized Behavior Rating Scale Tool**

After your team reaches consensus on the top 2-5 goals of intervention, you are ready to set up the behavior rating scale for them to use each day. The following questions will help you in guiding the team to determine the anchors for each behavior.

Prior to setting up the IBRST, ensure that you have done the following two activities:

1. Clearly defined a minimum of one problem behavior to be decreased and one appropriate behavior to be increased. If your team identified more than 5 behaviors to be targeted, guide them to prioritize one or two behaviors to be targeted for the interventions.
2. Attempt to find out whether the team will be interested in tracking behavior occurrence throughout the entire school day, by problematic routine, by period/subject, etc. Some teachers and paraprofessionals will be overwhelmed and may just want to concentrate on a routine in which the behavior occurs (or does not occur) on a consistent basis.

Guiding Questions for EACH behavior that will be targeted:

*If the behavior is one that the child may not have the same number of opportunities to perform each day (e.g., initiate social interactions appropriately, communicate the need to chill out), consider using %age of time.*

1. Starting with the top ranked problem behavior, determine the appropriate metric (frequency, duration, intensity, latency) by asking the following questions:
   1. What concerns you the most about the problem behavior (e.g., hitting, kicking, screaming, yelling out, throwing pencil down, etc.)? Is it (how often, how many times, the number of behavioral episodes), etc.? Or is it how long the behavior or behavioral episode lasts? Or is it how strong or intense the behavior or behavioral episode is?
      1. *(Only ask the following question if the behavior of concern is related to following instructions or starting work when requested)* Or is it how long it takes before the student engages in the requested behavior?
2. Once you have established the metric, you can now ask them questions to help set up the 5-point Likert scale. For **problem behaviors**, ask the following questions related to the time period over which the team stated they would track the behavior (e.g., whole day, routine specific, time specific, activity specific, etc.):

Frequency metric questions

* 1. Think back over the last month. What would you consider to be a typical bad day? How many times would you estimate that (the student) (specific behavior) during the (day or specific routine)?
     1. The response provided can be set at Rating 4.
  2. Then a terrible day would be more than X times (put in the top number team suggested in “a.”.
     1. The response can be set at Anchor 5.
  3. What would be a fantastic day for (the student)? How many times would you like to see the behavior occur to consider it a fantastic day?
     1. The response can be set at Anchor 1
  4. What would be a good day?
     1. The response would be set at Anchor 2
  5. What would be a so-so day (not good but not really bad)?
     1. The response would be set at Anchor 3.

Duration, intensity, latency metrics

To set the anchors for other metrics, you repeat the same procedures above and substitute the appropriate metric word (e.g., duration—how long the behavior lasts, the amount of time the child does the behavior in one episode; intensity—how hard, loud, far, etc. does the child do the behavior).

Appropriate behavior

Your team has a choice. Because the behavior rating scale allows a team to graph the data points, it makes the most sense for problem behaviors to decrease (line trend goes down) and appropriate behaviors to increase (line goes up). If your team prefers this traditional method of graphing behavior, you would use the same guiding questions for appropriate behavior anchors and “flip” the order of the anchors. That is, the typical bad day for an appropriate behavior would be set at anchor ‘2’ rather than 4, the terrible day would be ‘1’ rather than ‘5’, the fantastic day would be ‘5’ rather than ‘1’, and the good day would be a ‘4’ rather than a ‘2’. The constant would be the ‘3’ (a so-so day).

The other option would be to keep the scales consistent. That is, the 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1 ratings would indicate the same types of day. For example, a 5 would be a terrible day for both problem and appropriate behavior.

Other tips:

1. The anchors do not have to be even (same # of data points within each anchor). For example, you can have a team say that on a typical or average day, the behavior occurs about 8 or 9 times (anchor 4), a really bad day is more than 10 times (anchor 5), a really good day (goal-anchor 1) is 0-1 times, an okay day (anchor 3) is 5-6 times, and an almost good day (anchor 2) is about 3 or 4 times. Your goal here is to set up the scale in a format that will allow the teacher to use the entire scale in recording the occurrence and nonoccurrence of behavior. If you prefer to have every possible number included, you can use ranges (e.g., in the above example, 2 times isn’t represented. You can increase the range for anchor 1 to 0-2 times or you could increase the range for anchor 2 to 2-4 times. If you will be doing this, always ask the team what would be most accurate for them when recording the behaviors.
2. Each behavior can have a different metric. That is, your team may have 2 or 3 behaviors they are targeting. One could be frequency, one could be duration, and another could be percentage of time or some other metric. This is determined by the behavior and the responses to the guiding questions.
3. Occasionally, you may have a team who is concerned about 2 different metrics for the same behavior. For example, a team may be concerned by both how often a child hits and its intensity. If the team would like to track both metrics, you would have one row of the Behavior Rating Scale be *Hitting-frequency* and one row *Hitting-duration.*

Training the teacher

The easiest and best way to train the teacher to use the IBRST is to ask them to use it immediately after development. If your meeting is at the beginning of the school day, once the IBRST is developed, say, “Let’s test this out. Think about the student’s behavior yesterday. What would you rate (problem behavior #1) for yesterday?” After the teacher gives the response, ask them “why did you select that rating?” If it appears that the teacher is comfortable with how to rate the behavior and they seem to understand how to use the tool, repeat the practice for all other behaviors on the IBRST.