Using Behavior Essentials, *Visualized* to Craft Function-Based Interventions

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Marion County Schools
Holly Behavioral Consulting, LLC

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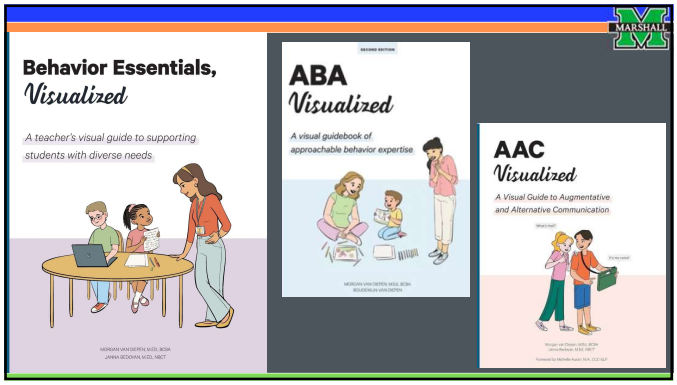

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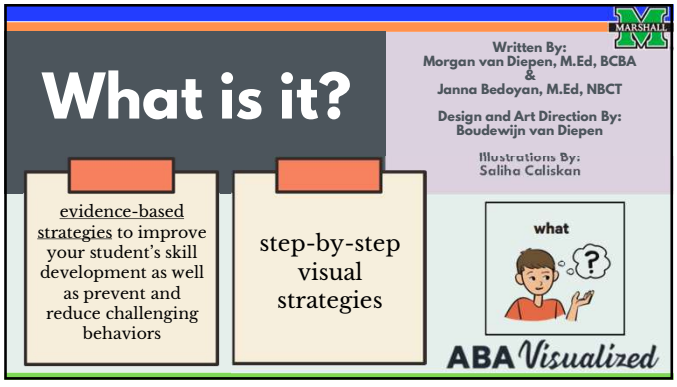

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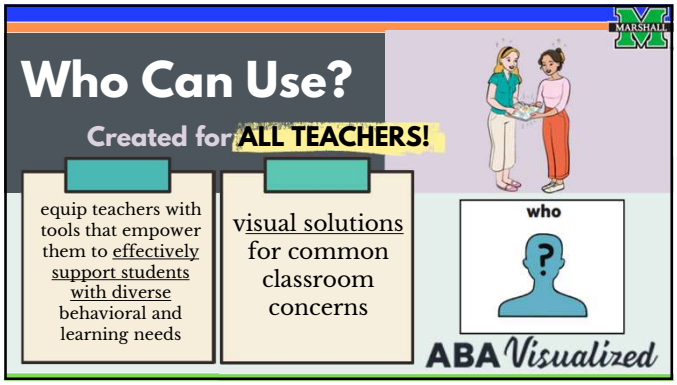
Who Can Use?
Created for ALL TEACHERS!
equip teachers with tools that empower them to effectively support students with diverse behavioral and learning needs
visual solutions for common classroom concerns
who
ABA Visualized

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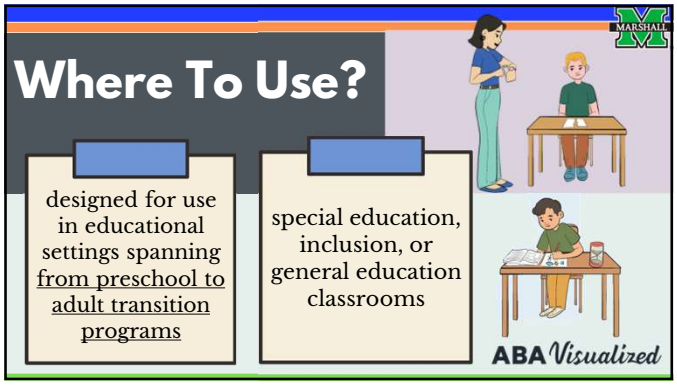
Where To Use?
designed for use in educational settings spanning from preschool to adult transition programs
special education, inclusion, or general education classrooms
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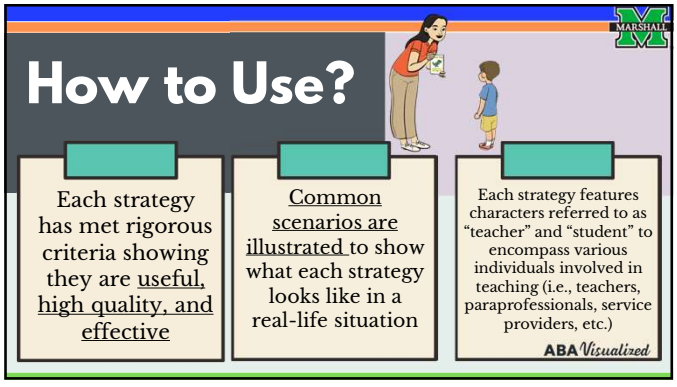
How to Use?
Each strategy has met rigorous criteria showing they are useful, high quality, and effective
Common scenarios are illustrated to show what each strategy looks like in a real-life situation
Each strategy features characters referred to as "teacher" and "student" to encompass various individuals involved in teaching (i.e., teachers, paraprofessionals, service providers, etc.)
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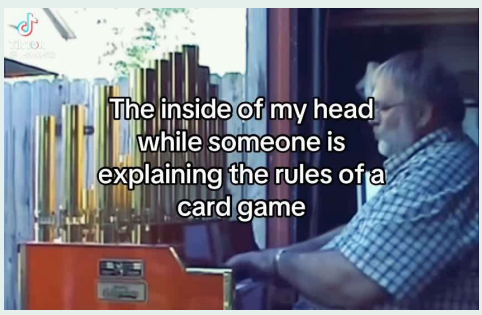

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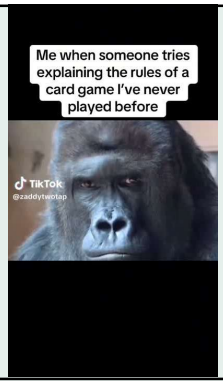

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The Power of *Visuals*

ABA *Visualized*

is the first to take an innovative approach of teaching evidence-based strategies through step-by-step visuals, making complex information more accessible and approachable.

Research reveals that teaching families and educators through text leads to low buy-in, low engagement, low understanding, and low impact on the learner.

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Teaching with Text
The Traditional Way

Low Understanding
Text often leads to low understanding, which hinders parents' ability to advocate for their child's needs and potentially causes misinterpretation of recommended strategies.

(Banks et al., 2018; Critchfield et al., 2017)

Low Engagement
Teaching through complex text can lead to low engagement because the team may struggle to follow behavior recommendations and resist change when the language is overly technical or hard to understand.

(Banks et al., 2018; Critchfield et al., 2017)

Low Acceptance
The use of technical language in behavior recommendations can lead to reduced acceptance of the recommendations, particularly among individuals with little or no training in ABA principles. In fact, researchers found that people rate ABA jargon as "not motivating" and "unpleasant."

(Banks et al., 2018; Critchfield et al., 2017)

Low Accessibility
Text is not always accessible to everyone, as language barriers, especially for families with limited English proficiency, can hinder understanding and communication during behavior intervention discussions, leading to reduced parental engagement, misunderstandings, and increased stress and anxiety related to their child's needs.

(Andrade, Hancock, & Whaley, 2019; Bradshaw & Richey, 2015; Hatcher et al., 2016; Taylor & Landrum, 2016).

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Low Confidence
Complex technical behavior recommendations can lead to low confidence as they often result in confusion, stress, and ineffective implementation, leaving stakeholders feeling unsupported and service providers ineffective.

In our own survey of people responsible for implementing behavior strategies, only 40% reported feeling confident and only 28% reported feeling prepared.

Feeling confident in using strategies
40%

Feeling prepared to support behaviors
28%

(Banks et al., 2018; Holt et al., 2016; Jarmolowicz et al., 2008; McMahon, Foldberg, & Ardoin, 2021).

Low Collaboration
The use of technical language in behavior strategies often creates communication barriers, hindering effective collaboration between behavior specialists and stakeholders like parents and teachers.

In our own survey, only 25% of people responsible for implementing behavior strategies reported being aware of what strategies were being used in other settings.

(Peterson et al., 2018; Sailor & McCarthy, 2015)

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Teaching with Images
Behavior Essentials, Visualized
New Innovative Approach

Better Understanding
Visuals make concepts easier to understand and they help teachers and parents better grasp behavior management strategies, making learning and skill application more effective.

(Albers & Greer, 2010; Eberhard, K., 2021; Hughes & Frederick, 2006; Sung-Hee, K., 2022).

More Preferred
Research has shown that most people overwhelmingly prefer and find instructions with visuals easier to use than traditional written instructions, indicating a clear preference for visuals over text-based content.

(Graff & Karsten, 2012).

More Engagement
Visuals improve engagement by capturing and holding the viewer's attention more effectively, as shown through eye-tracking studies. Visual storytelling makes the content more memorable and viewers engage longer.

(Harsh et al., 2019; HubSpot, 2022; Paradi, D., 1986).

More Accessible for Diverse Needs
Visuals offer greater accessibility, ensuring that those with diverse needs can access and understand the information.

(Abdulrahaman, et al., 2020).

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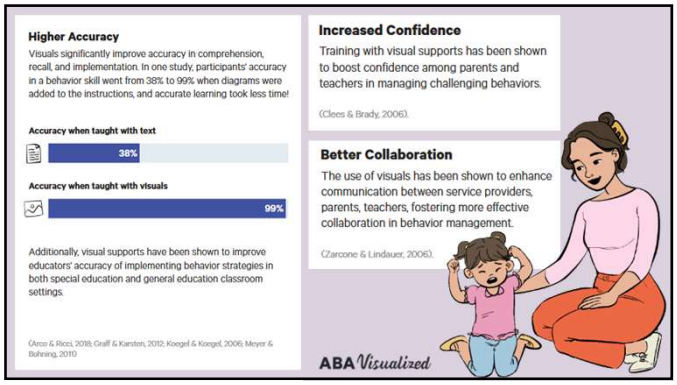
Higher Accuracy
Visuals significantly improve accuracy in comprehension, recall, and implementation. In one study, participants' accuracy in a behavior skill went from 38% to 99% when diagrams were added to the instructions, and accurate learning took less time!
Accuracy when taught with text
38%
Accuracy when taught with visuals
99%
Additionally, visual supports have been shown to improve educators' accuracy of implementing behavior strategies in both special education and general education classroom settings.
(Arco & Ricci, 2018; Graff & Karsten, 2012; Koegel & Koegel, 2006; Meyer & Bohning, 2010
Increased Confidence
Training with visual supports has been shown to boost confidence among parents and teachers in managing challenging behaviors.
(Clees & Brady, 2006).
Better Collaboration
The use of visuals has been shown to enhance communication between service providers, parents, teachers, fostering more effective collaboration in behavior management.
(Zarcone & Lindauer, 2006).
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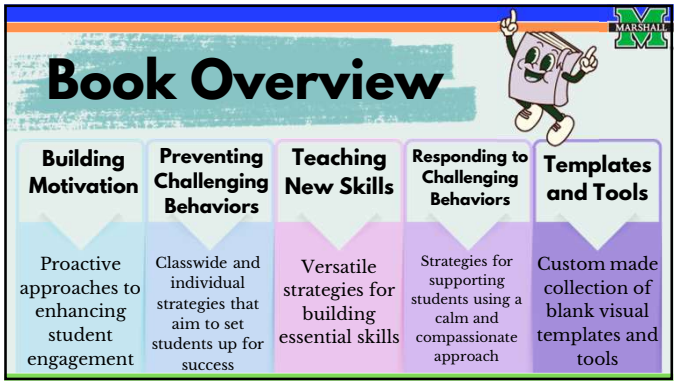
Book Overview
MARSHALL
Building Motivation
Proactive approaches to enhancing student engagement
Preventing Challenging Behaviors
Classwide and individual strategies that aim to set students up for success
Teaching New Skills
Versatile strategies for building essential skills
Responding to Challenging Behaviors
Strategies for supporting students using a calm and compassionate approach
Templates and Tools
Custom made collection of blank visual templates and tools

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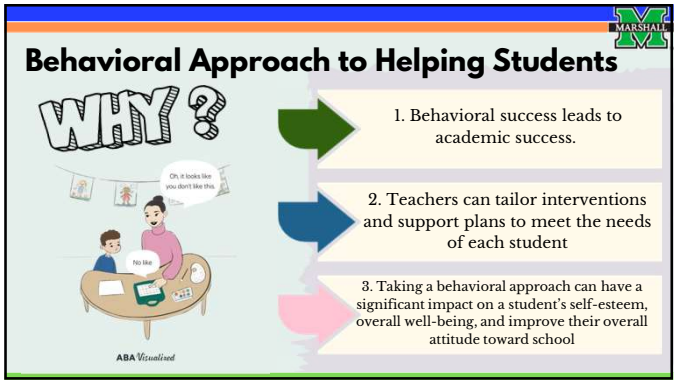
Behavioral Approach to Helping Students
MARSHALL
WHY?
Oh, it looks like you don't like this.
No like
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1. Behavioral success leads to academic success.
2. Teachers can tailor interventions and support plans to meet the needs of each student
3. Taking a behavioral approach can have a significant impact on a student's self-esteem, overall well-being, and improve their overall attitude toward school

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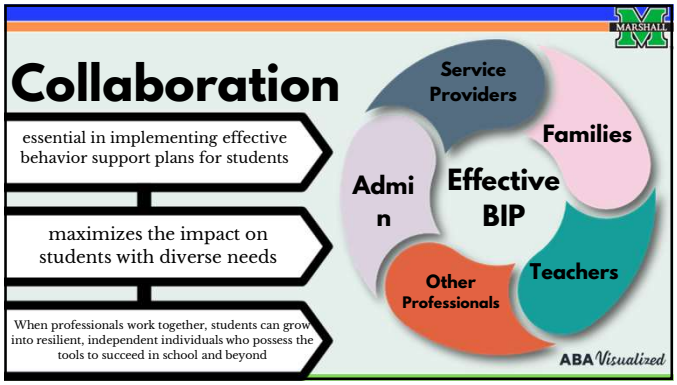
Collaboration
essential in implementing effective behavior support plans for students
maximizes the impact on students with diverse needs
When professionals work together, students can grow into resilient, independent individuals who possess the tools to succeed in school and beyond
Service Providers
Families
Admin
Effective BIP
Teachers
Other Professionals
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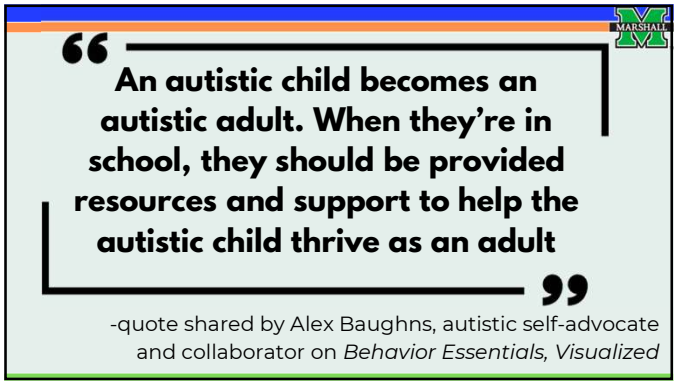
"An autistic child becomes an autistic adult. When they're in school, they should be provided resources and support to help the autistic child thrive as an adult"
-quote shared by Alex Baughns, autistic self-advocate and collaborator on *Behavior Essentials, Visualized*

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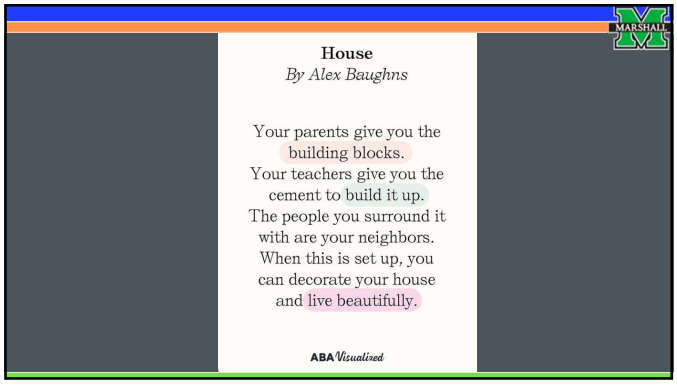
House
By Alex Baughns
Your parents give you the building blocks.
Your teachers give you the cement to build it up.
The people you surround it with are your neighbors.
When this is set up, you can decorate your house and live beautifully.
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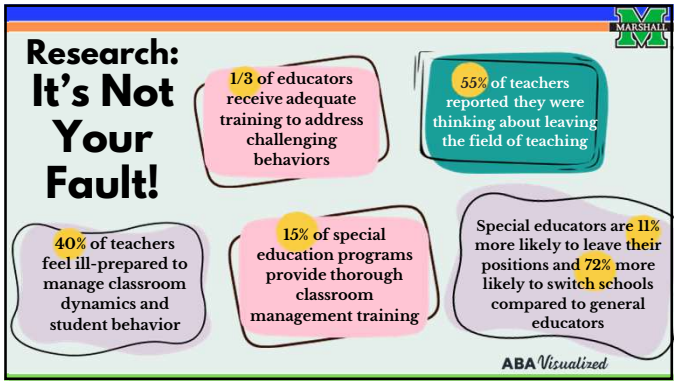
Research:
It's Not Your Fault!
1/3 of educators receive adequate training to address challenging behaviors
55% of teachers reported they were thinking about leaving the field of teaching
40% of teachers feel ill-prepared to manage classroom dynamics and student behavior
15% of special education programs provide thorough classroom management training
Special educators are 11% more likely to leave their positions and 72% more likely to switch schools compared to general educators
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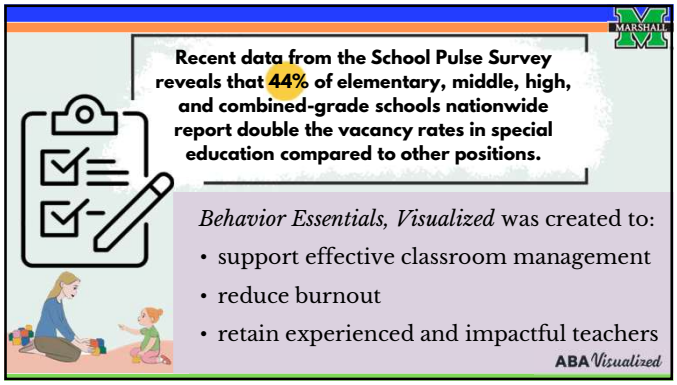
Recent data from the School Pulse Survey reveals that 44% of elementary, middle, high, and combined-grade schools nationwide report double the vacancy rates in special education compared to other positions.
Behavior Essentials, Visualized was created to:
• support effective classroom management
• reduce burnout
• retain experienced and impactful teachers
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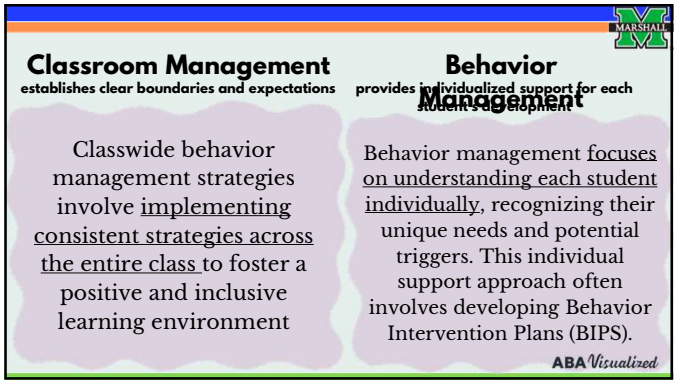
Classroom Management
establishes clear boundaries and expectations
Classwide behavior management strategies involve implementing consistent strategies across the entire class to foster a positive and inclusive learning environment
Behavior Management
provides individualized support for each student's development
Behavior management focuses on understanding each student individually, recognizing their unique needs and potential triggers. This individual support approach often involves developing Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPS).
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Classroom Management
establishes clear boundaries and expectations

- Class wide behavior strategies
- Promotes active engagement
- Considers seating arrangements
- Focuses on overall environment
- Differentiated instructional strategies
- Establishing expectations
- Promotes participation and academic achievement
- Sets the tone and culture for the classroom
- Routines clearly established

Behavior Management
provides individualized support for each student's development

- Focus on reinforcing positive behavior
- Individualized strategies based on student-specific needs
- Targets specific student behaviors
- May include a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP)
- May include service minutes and instruction to support behavior
- Prioritizes preventive and skill-building strategies
- May include a skill-building goal
- May include a goal to reduce behaviors
- Addresses disruptive or challenging behaviors

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Understanding and Celebrating Neurodiversity

The term **neurodiversity** was first introduced by autistic sociologist Judy Singer in 1997.

Neurodiversity is a concept the embraces the differences in the human brain as being natural, normal, and not "less than" those without these differences.

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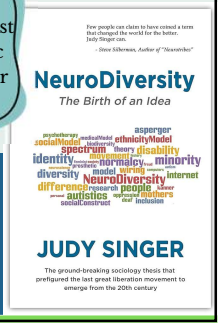

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Autism Spectrum Disorder

notable impacts on social skills, speech, and comunication

language delay is common

recent research suggests that about 25% of individuals with autism are nonvocal or "minimally verbal"

engagement in repetitive behaviors or focal interests

although not communicating vocally, this does not mean that they cannot understand or cannot learn

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Autism Spectrum Disorder

Often thought about as a linear.

Low-Functioning **High-Functioning**

These limitations and labels are often limiting.

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Instead of looking at autism as linear from "less autistic" to "more autistic," Behavior Essentials, Visualized encourages us to look at autism like this…

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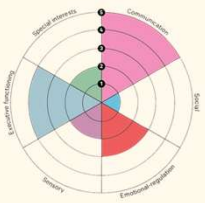
think of it like this

An Autism Spectrum Color Wheel



We all come in all shapes and hues. This is art.

– Alex Baughns, Autistic self-advocate

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ABA Visualized

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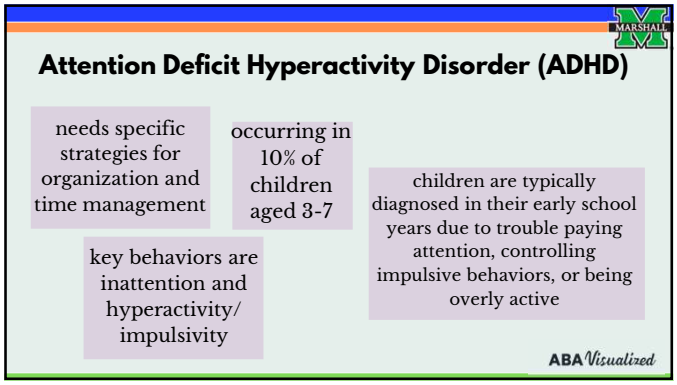
Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
needs specific strategies for organization and time management
occurring in 10% of children aged 3-7
children are typically diagnosed in their early school years due to trouble paying attention, controlling impulsive behaviors, or being overly active
key behaviors are inattention and hyperactivity/ impulsivity
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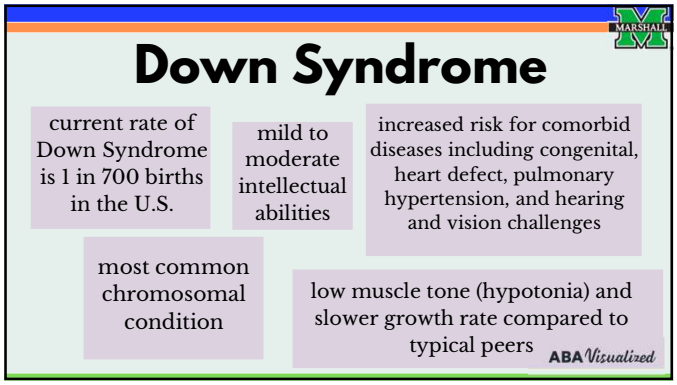
Down Syndrome
current rate of Down Syndrome is 1 in 700 births in the U.S.
mild to moderate intellectual abilities
increased risk for comorbid diseases including congenital, heart defect, pulmonary hypertension, and hearing and vision challenges
most common chromosomal condition
low muscle tone (hypotonia) and slower growth rate compared to typical peers
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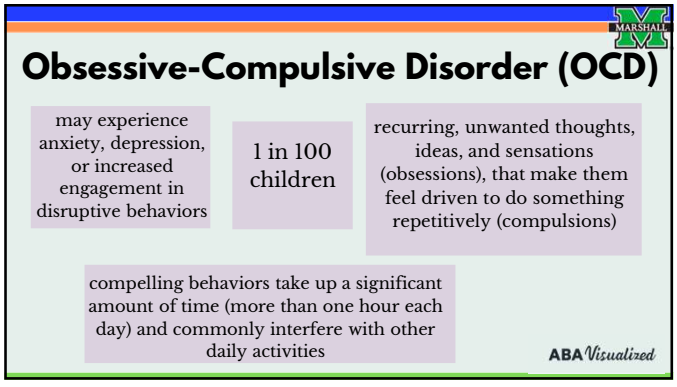
Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD)
may experience anxiety, depression, or increased engagement in disruptive behaviors
1 in 100 children
recurring, unwanted thoughts, ideas, and sensations (obsessions), that make them feel driven to do something repetitively (compulsions)
compelling behaviors take up a significant amount of time (more than one hour each day) and commonly interfere with other daily activities
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7 Neurodiversity-Affirming Practices for Teachers

"Reseach shows that fostering a neurodiverse-affirming environment enhances students' self-esteem, confidence, and academic achievement. Embracing neurodiversity not only promotes diversity and inclusion but also fosters a culture of respect and celebration of individual differences."

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1. UTILIZE A STRENGTH-BASED APPROACH

- Instead of viewing neurodiverse students through a "deficit" lens, it is crucial to highlight their strengths and abilities.
- By focusing on what they **CAN** do rather than what they struggle with, we can empower them to be embraced for their individuality and thrive.

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Instead of saying this	Use this strength-based language
Rigid	Passionate, dedicated, persistent
Restricted interest	Knowledgeable and curious about
Off in their own world or space cadet	Imaginative and creative
Weird or nerdy	Fascinating, eccentric, and individualistic
Stimming or hyperactive	Animated

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2. PRESUME COMPETENCE

- believing in the competence of each student doesn't mean ignoring the existence of their disabilities. Instead, it is about recognizing that learning and growth are always possible.
- also includes validating all forms of communication (speaking, signing, using AAC devices, writing, gestures, or pantomime

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3. ACCOMODATE DIVERSE NEEDS

Small adjustments can significantly impact the educational experience of our neurodiverse students.

"We need to break the idea of what a 'good classroom' looks like with all students sitting still, looking forward toward the teacher, or quietly and calmly working independently. Instead, we need to recognize that attending and engaging looks different across different students, and we need to allow self-regulation."

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Flexible Seating	Sensory-Friendly Classrooms	Visual Supports
various seating options	quiet corners	colored circles for seating arrangements
incorporate textures under desks for sensory input	noise-canceling headphones	visual timers
allow minor behaviors like twirling pens or walking around	dimmed lighting	academic visuals to enhance engagement and comprehension

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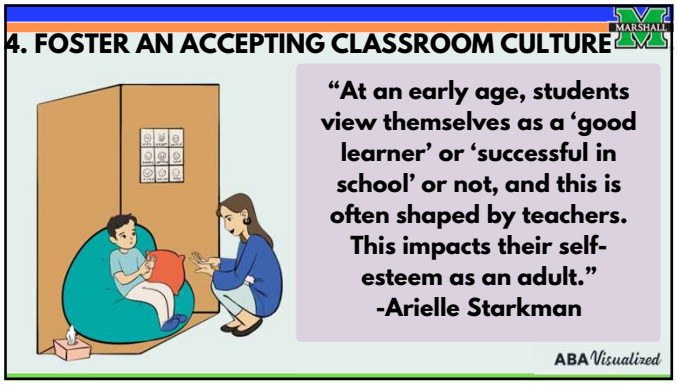
4. FOSTER AN ACCEPTING CLASSROOM CULTURE
"At an early age, students view themselves as a 'good learner' or 'successful in school' or not, and this is often shaped by teachers. This impacts their self-esteem as an adult."
-Arielle Starkman
ABA Visualized

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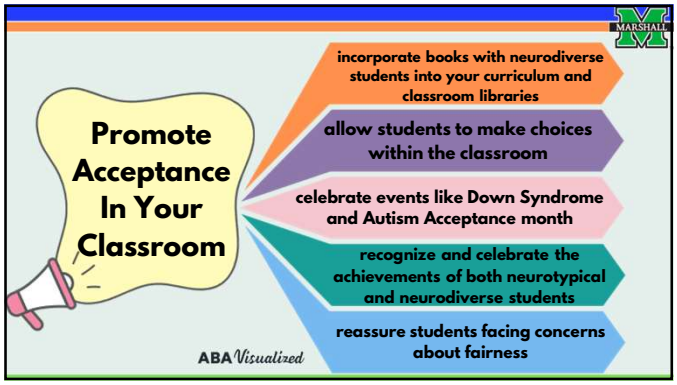
Promote Acceptance In Your Classroom
incorporate books with neurodiverse students into your curriculum and classroom libraries
allow students to make choices within the classroom
celebrate events like Down Syndrome and Autism Acceptance month
recognize and celebrate the achievements of both neurotypical and neurodiverse students
reassure students facing concerns about fairness
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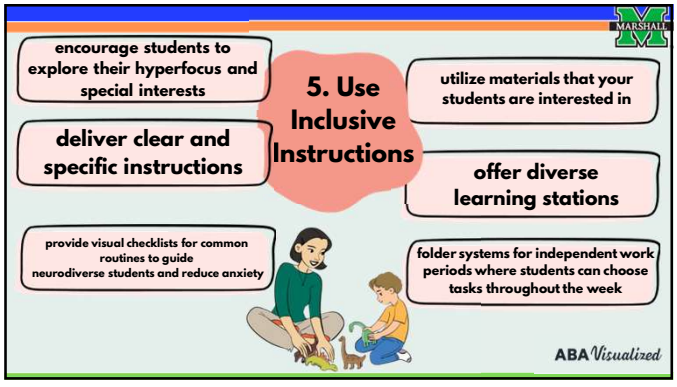
5. Use Inclusive Instructions
encourage students to explore their hyperfocus and special interests
deliver clear and specific instructions
provide visual checklists for common routines to guide neurodiverse students and reduce anxiety
utilize materials that your students are interested in
offer diverse learning stations
folder systems for independent work periods where students can choose tasks throughout the week
ABA Visualized

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6. Embody a Relationship-First Approach

Build relationships with our students where they feel like they can be themselves and not be judged or feel they have to hide who they are.

Masking refers to the conscious or unconscious efforts of individuals to hide or suppress their neurological differences.

Masking requires significant emotional and cognitive toll on the individual

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7. Prioritize Emotional Regulation

> Starting the day by checking in with your students can be incredibly meaningful.
>
> -Michelle Vinokurov, autistic self-advocate

teach self-regulation strategies throughout the day

embed emotional literacy into the curriculum

offer alterantives to emotional expression such as journals, emotion wheels, or "feelings" check-ins

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Amplifying Neurodiverse Voices

The FIRST methodology provides framework for teaching students with ADHD .

Pokribcakova, S., et al. (2015). *Teaching Foreign Languages to Learners with Special Educational Needs: e-textbook for foreign language teachers (pp.83-90).* Nitra: Constantine the Philosopher University.

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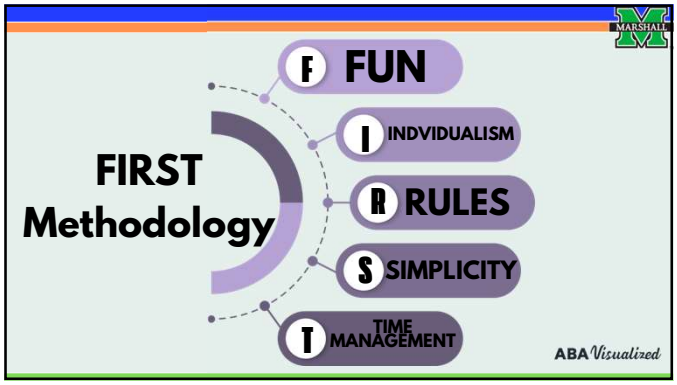
FIRST Methodology
F FUN
I INDVIDUALISM
R RULES
S SIMPLICITY
T TIME MANAGEMENT
ABA Visualized

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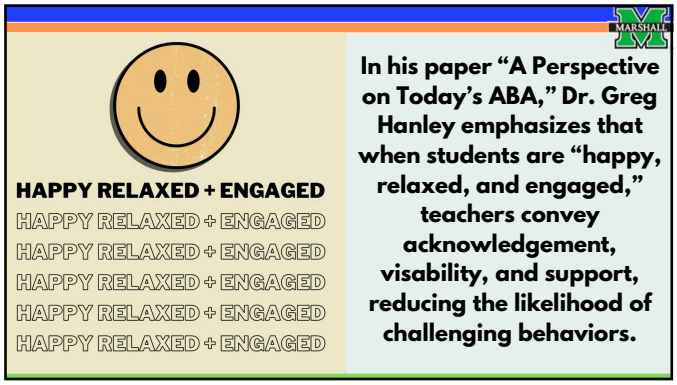
HAPPY RELAXED + ENGAGED
HAPPY RELAXED + ENGAGED
HAPPY RELAXED + ENGAGED
HAPPY RELAXED + ENGAGED
HAPPY RELAXED + ENGAGED
HAPPY RELAXED + ENGAGED
In his paper "A Perspective on Today's ABA," Dr. Greg Hanley emphasizes that when students are "happy, relaxed, and engaged," teachers convey acknowledgement, visability, and support, reducing the likelihood of challenging behaviors.

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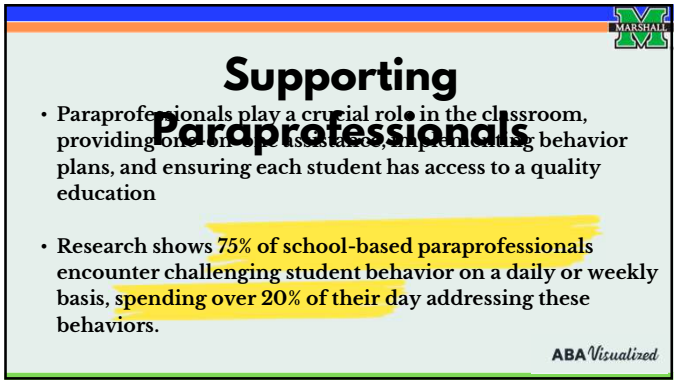
Supporting Paraprofessionals
• Paraprofessionals play a crucial role in the classroom, providing one-on-one assistance, implementing behavior plans, and ensuring each student has access to a quality education
• Research shows 75% of school-based paraprofessionals encounter challenging student behavior on a daily or weekly basis, spending over 20% of their day addressing these behaviors.
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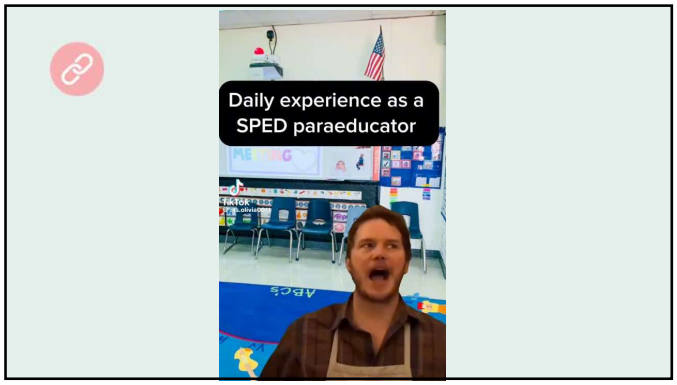

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8 Tips for Finding Time for Paraprofessional Training

1. Schedule Mini-Training Sessions
2. Co-Teach to Demonstrate Best Practices
3. Utilize "Teachable Moments"
4. Empower Through Peer Observations
5. Create a Resource Center
6. Online Professional Development
7. Provide Feedback and Encouragement
8. Promote Communication and Collaboration

ABA Visualized

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Embodying a Trauma-Informed Approach

Acknowledge the potential for trauma: Recent data suggests that 61% of adults and 45% of children have experienced at least one potentially traumatic event. This estimated is higher for those with disabilities.

Ensure safety and trust: consider environment, build rapport, and ensure ongoing safety by honoring moments of withdrawal, promoting coping skills, and training the entire team on strategies for maintaining physical and emotional safety during high-intensity behaviors

Promote choice and autonomy: choices give students a sense of control over their daily lives

Emphasize skill building: pritoritize skills and strategies that promote self-advocacy, communication, and independence

ABA Visualized

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Trauma-Informed Support Plan Brainstorming

Questions to Ask	Support Plan Ideas
What are situations or activities that trigger the student?	How to change the situation or activity to make the student feel more safe and calm?
What are the actions of staff that trigger the student?	How staff can avoid or limit these actions?
What is the student's environment at school that may feel triggering for them?	How can we adjust the classroom environment to make the student feel more safe and calm?
What necessary interactions, situations, or instructions are triggering to the student?	How can we adjust these to be less triggering? How can we support the student with coping strategies during this time?

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Understanding Why Challenging Behaviors Occur

Functions of Behavior

ABCs of Behavior

Approachable Guide to FBAs

ABA Visualized

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Functions of Behavior

Functions of behavior refers to the reason someone is engaging in a behavior. Understanding the 'why' is essential to aim to change that behavior. If an individual disrupts the classroom by frequently getting out of their seat to pace around the room, before we decide how to manage that behavior, we need to know why it is occurring. This initial understanding will lead to more success in the behavior management. In the field of Behavioral Analysis, it is believed that there are four functions, or reasons, that behavior may occur.

1. Attention (from others)
2. Access (to an item or activity)
3. Escape (from a demand)
4. Sensory (a feel-good sensation)

This means that for any behavior that is occurring, it is happening because the individual is either receiving attention, gaining access to an item/activity, escaping a demand or because it makes the individual feel good.

In the previous example about a student who paces around the classroom, we will need to determine: Is he gaining attention from the teacher/peers? Is he walking around the room in order to access some preferred items? Is the walking delaying or preventing him from completing an assigned task? Or is it fulfilling a sensory need for movement?

We can determine the function of the behavior by looking at the ABC's (pg 30). Use the ABC template (pg. 31) to record at least five occurrences of the problem behavior and the ABC's surrounding that behavior. With this information, we can look for patterns to choose which function is the reason for the behavior.

In the next examples, we will examine how one behavior could occur for four different reasons and how to determine the cause. The example behavior shown is a student engaging in self-injurious behavior (SIB) by hitting himself on the head.

Class the behavior is Attention function

- The individual was previously receiving attention from someone then that person stopped giving attention just before the problem behavior occurred.
- Immediately after the problematic behavior, someone gave the individual attention. Remember that reprimands (e.g. "no," "don't do that") are also a form of attention.

The student receives attention after he engages in the behavior.

Here, following the SIB, the teacher is giving attention by comforting the student. Remember, reprimands ("don't do that," "stop," "no") are also forms of giving attention.

Class the behavior is Access function

A preferred item or activity was taken away from the individual just before the problematic behavior occurred.

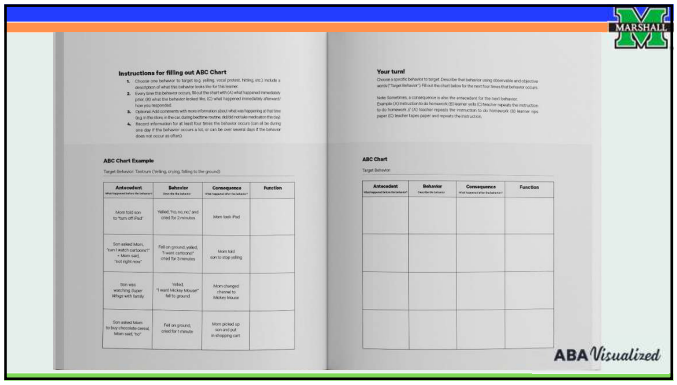
- The individual was told "no," "not right now" or "wait."
- Immediately after the problematic behavior, someone gave the individual a preferred item or activity.

The student engages in problematic behavior after being told "no," "not right now" or "wait."

Here, the student asked for the phone and was told "no" immediately prior to the SIB.

ABA Visualized

51


Instructions for filling out ABC Chart
Your turn!
ABC Chart Example
ABC Chart
Antecedent
Behavior
Consequence
Function
ABA Visualized

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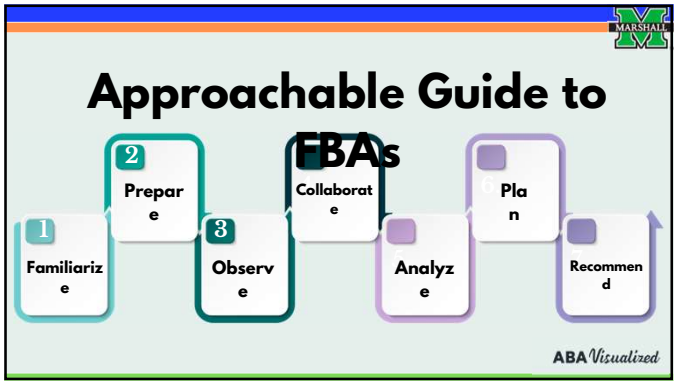
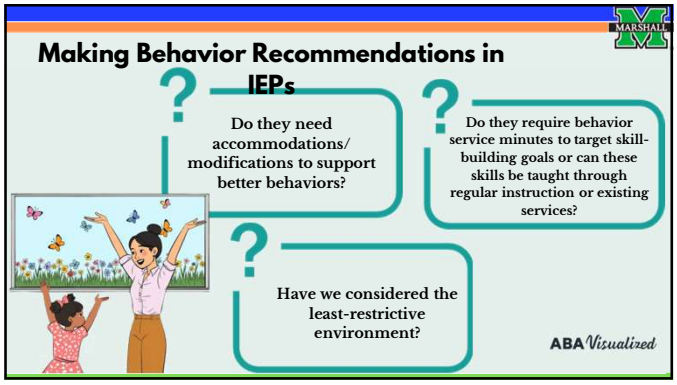

Approachable Guide to FBAs
1
Familiarize
2
Prepare
3
Observe
4
Collaborate
5
Analyze
6
Plan
7
Recommend
ABA Visualized

53


Making Behavior Recommendations in IEPs
Do they need accommodations/ modifications to support better behaviors?
Do they require behavior service minutes to target skill-building goals or can these skills be taught through regular instruction or existing services?
Have we considered the least-restrictive environment?
ABA Visualized

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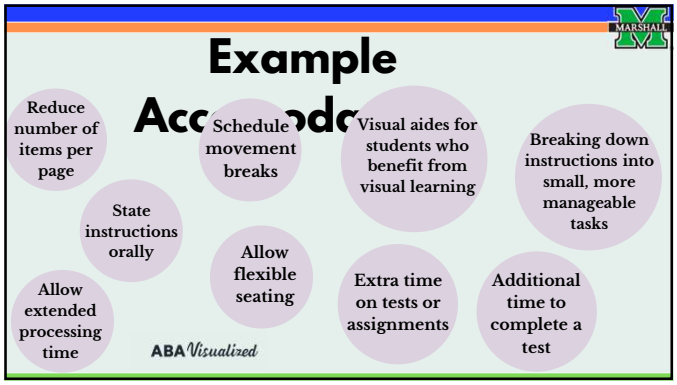
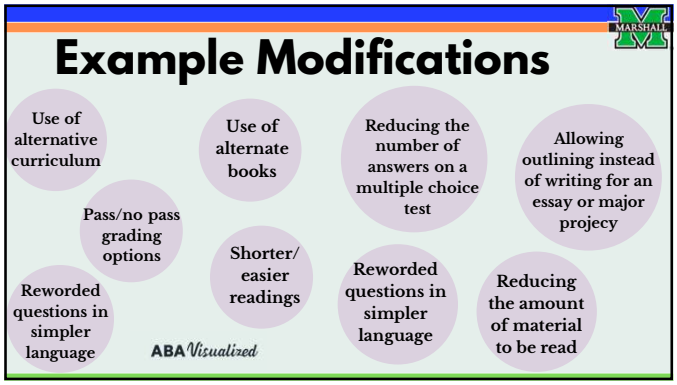

Example
Acc odc
Reduce number of items per page
Schedule movement breaks
Visual aides for students who benefit from visual learning
Breaking down instructions into small, more manageable tasks
State instructions orally
Allow flexible seating
Extra time on tests or assignments
Additional time to complete a test
Allow extended processing time
ABA Visualized

55


Example Modifications
Use of alternative curriculum
Use of alternate books
Reducing the number of answers on a multiple choice test
Allowing outlining instead of writing for an essay or major projecy
Pass/no pass grading options
Shorter/ easier readings
Reworded questions in simpler language
Reducing the amount of material to be read
Reworded questions in simpler language
ABA Visualized

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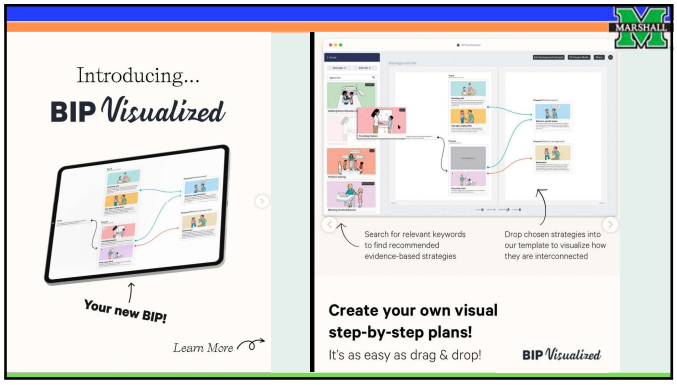
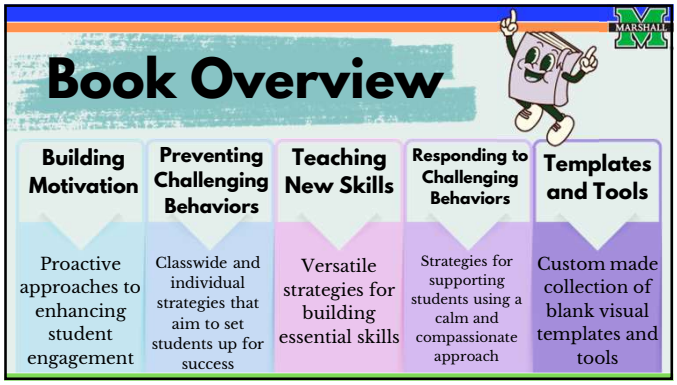

Introducing...
BIP Visualized
Your new BIP!
Learn More
Search for relevant keywords to find recommended evidence-based strategies
Drop chosen strategies into our template to visualize how they are interconnected
Create your own visual step-by-step plans!
It's as easy as drag & drop!
BIP Visualized

57


Book Overview
Building Motivation
Proactive approaches to enhancing student engagement
Preventing Challenging Behaviors
Classwide and individual strategies that aim to set students up for success
Teaching New Skills
Versatile strategies for building essential skills
Responding to Challenging Behaviors
Strategies for supporting students using a calm and compassionate approach
Templates and Tools
Custom made collection of blank visual templates and tools

58

Building Motivation
ABA Visualized

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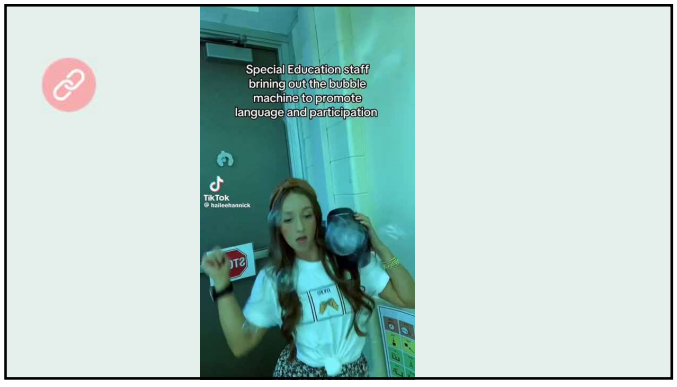
Special Education staff brining out the bubble machine to promote language and participation
TikTok

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Building Motivation

1. Building Rapport
2. First, Then
3. Providing Choices
4. Whole Class Reward System
5. 3 Reward Options
6. Token Boards
7. Range of Rewards
8. Check-in, Check-out
9. Individual Points Plan

ABA Visualized

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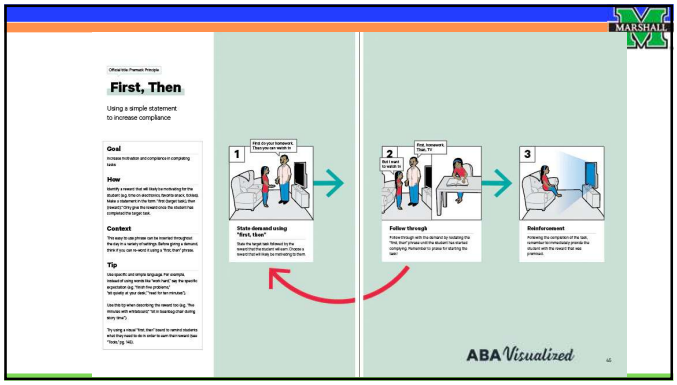

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Preventing Challenging Behaviors

ABA Visualized

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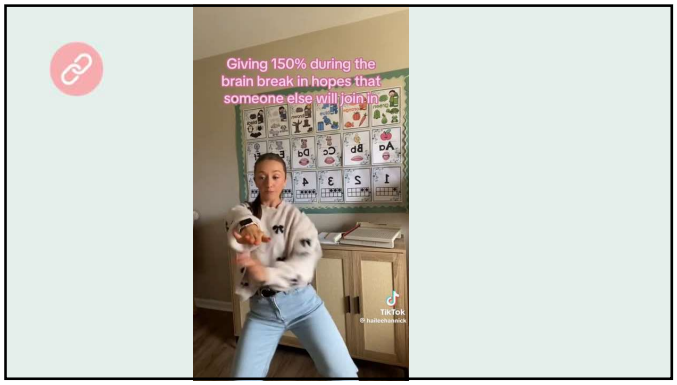

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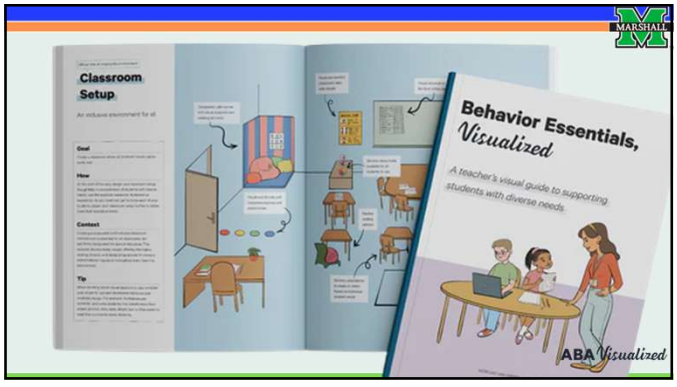
Preventing Challenging Behaviors

1. Classroom Setup
2. Priming
3. Power Card
4. Easy, Easy, Hard
5. A Better Way to Say "No"
6. Visual Schedule
7. Break Tickets
8. Scheduled Breaks/Connections

ABA Visualized

65



66

Teaching New Skills

ABA Visualized

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Teaching New Skills

1. Modeling
2. Shaping
3. Fading
4. Breaking Down Skills
5. Choice Mapping
6. Building Better Behaviors
7. Teaching to Request
8. Problem Solving
9. Self-Advocacy
10. Self-Regulation
11. Introducing Communication

ABA Visualized

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Teaching to Request
Teaching how to ask for wants and needs
Goal
How
Context
Tip
1
Understand the behavior
2
Collaborate
3
Plan
4
Proactively teach
5
Collaboratively teach
6
Reward
ABA Visualized

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Responding to Challenging
ABA Visualized

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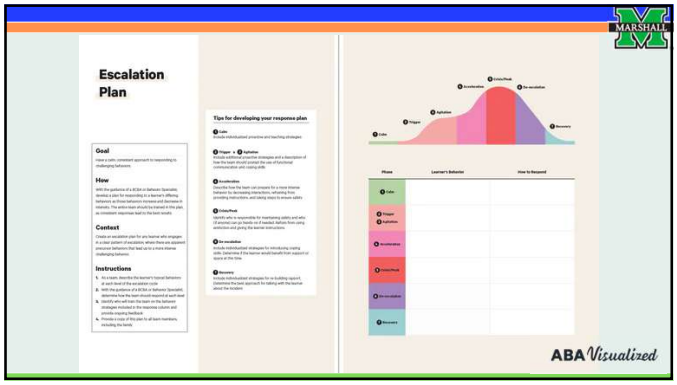
Responding to Challenging Behaviors
1.Tell, Show, Help
2.Firm, but Flexible
3.Pause, Redirect, Reward
4.Blocking Unsafe Behaviors
5.Managing Self-Injurious Behaviors
6.Escalation Plan
7.Rebuilding Rapport
ABA Visualized

72


Escalation Plan
Goal
How
Context
Instructions
Tips for developing your response plan
ABA Visualized

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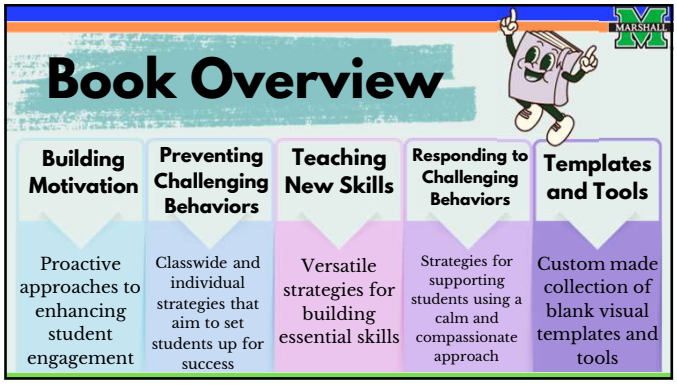
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Example Function: Escape

Building Motivation	Preventing Challenging Behaviors	Teaching New Skills	Responding to Challenging Behaviors	Templates and Tools
First, Then pg. 108	Visual Schedule pg. 138	Self-Regulation pg. 166	Pause, Redirect, Reward pg. 188	Book contains QR code with printable templates and tools

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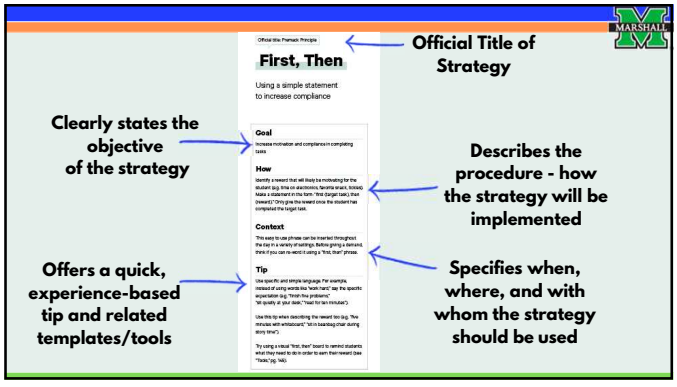

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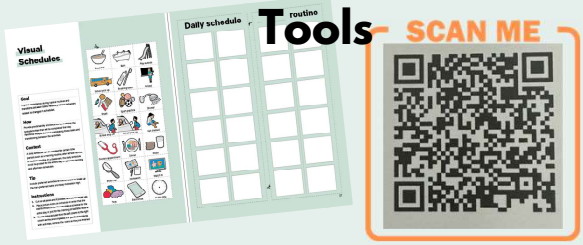
ABA Visualized Templates and Tools



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ABA Visualized How to Use in Your Department

Initial Training

Use for onboarding of new staff (teachers, paraprofessionals, etc) to establish a shared understanding of key behavior concepts

BIP

Incorporate visuals directly into BIP templates to guide the team in crafting function-based, proactive plans

Family Engagement

Use visuals to help families understand behavior plans and how to support consistency at home

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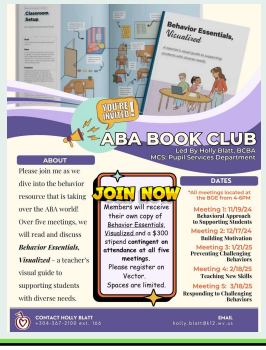
Behavior Essentials, Visualized Book Club



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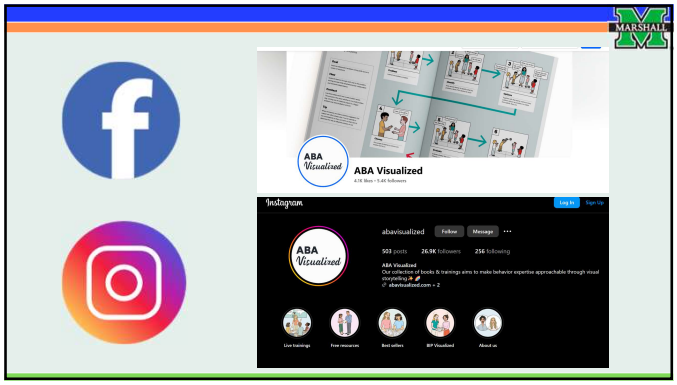

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QUESTIONS

VAN DIEPEN, M. (2024). Behavior essentials, visualized: A teacher's visual guide to supporting students with... diverse needs. STUDIO VAN DIEPEN.

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