

# Supporting Young Students with Challenging Behavior

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# Today we will...

- Principles of behavior/ functions of behavior
- Preventive strategies
- Consequences strategies



# What behaviors do you see?



# Behaviors and why we define them:

- Aggression
  - Pinching
  - Biting
  - Hitting
- Self- injury
- Non- compliance
- Elopement
- Property destruction



# Autism Spectrum Disorders: Characteristics

- According to the DSM-V, Autism Spectrum Disorder is classified as a neurodevelopmental disorder.
- Neurodevelopmental disorders have an onset that occurs during an individual's developmental period.
- This means that the disorder typically occurs early in development, usually before the child begins grade school
- The three main diagnostic criteria for autism spectrum disorder are *marked developmental impairments* in the following areas:
  1. Social communication (verbal and non-verbal)
  2. Social interaction
  3. Restricted repertoire of activities and interests

# Learning Barriers

- Impaired Social Communication
- Non-verbal or limited verbal communication
- Unusual speech patterns (echolalia, volume/pitch impairments)
- Difficulty with conversations and expressing needs and desires
- Receptive language / auditory processing difficulties

# Learning Barriers Continued:

- Impaired Social Interaction
- Lack of joint attention
- May seem unaware of others' existence
- Theory of mind deficits
- Lack of peer relationships
- Lack of play skills (i.e., cooperative play, imitation, pretending)
- Difficulty reading overt and subtle social cues
- Lack of eye contact, facial expressions, and gestures

# Learning Barriers: Behavioral Excesses and Deficits

- Sensory and motor challenges that affect behavior (hand-flapping, rocking, slouching in seat, inattentiveness, etc.)
- Restricted interests and repetition (preoccupation with objects, themes, TV shows, etc.)
- Adherence to specific non-functional routines
- Tantrums (kicking, screaming, crying)
- Physical aggression (hitting, biting, self-injury)

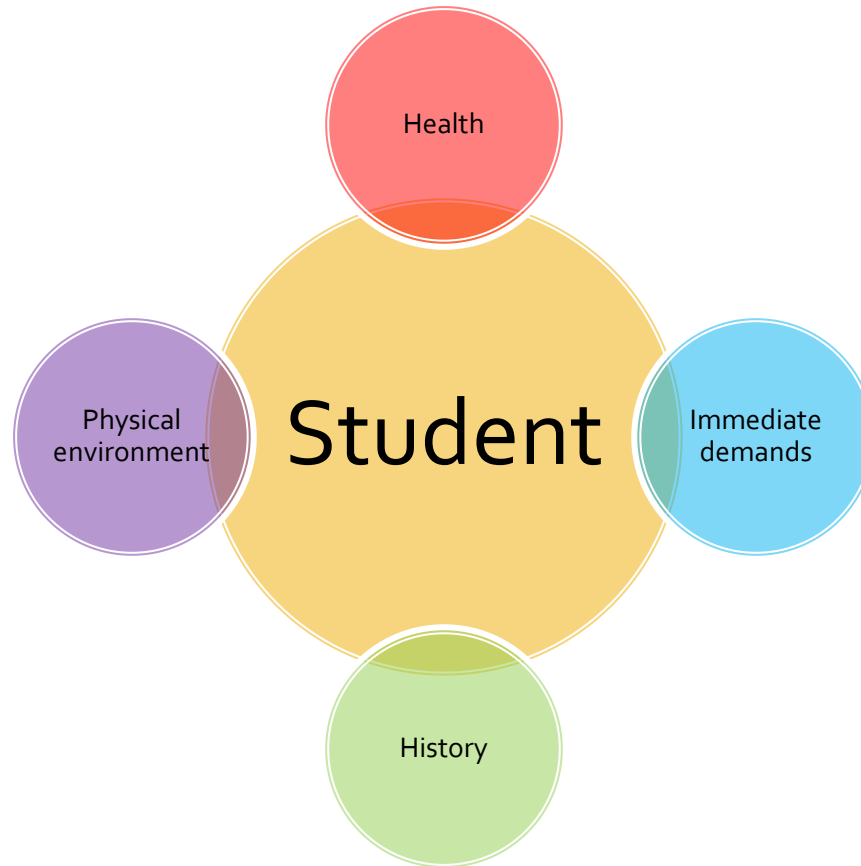


# Real Quick....

- I slept at least 8 hours last night
- I had a well- rounded breakfast this morning that included fruit and whole grains
- I did not rush to get here
- I had no conflicts with other people this morning
- I have no other obligations that I need to attend to right now



# Behavior does not occur in a vacuum...



# Behavior Assumptions: Can we agree...

- ❖ People do not engage in self- injury, aggression, property destruction or seriously disruptive behaviors solely because they have a disability
- ❖ Challenging behavior has a message- I am bored, I am sad, I am frustrated, I need some attention. It **communicates a want or need**.
- ❖ Behavior serves a *specific function*
- ❖ Behavior is **related** to events preceding or following it
- ❖ One behavior can serve multiple functions\*\*

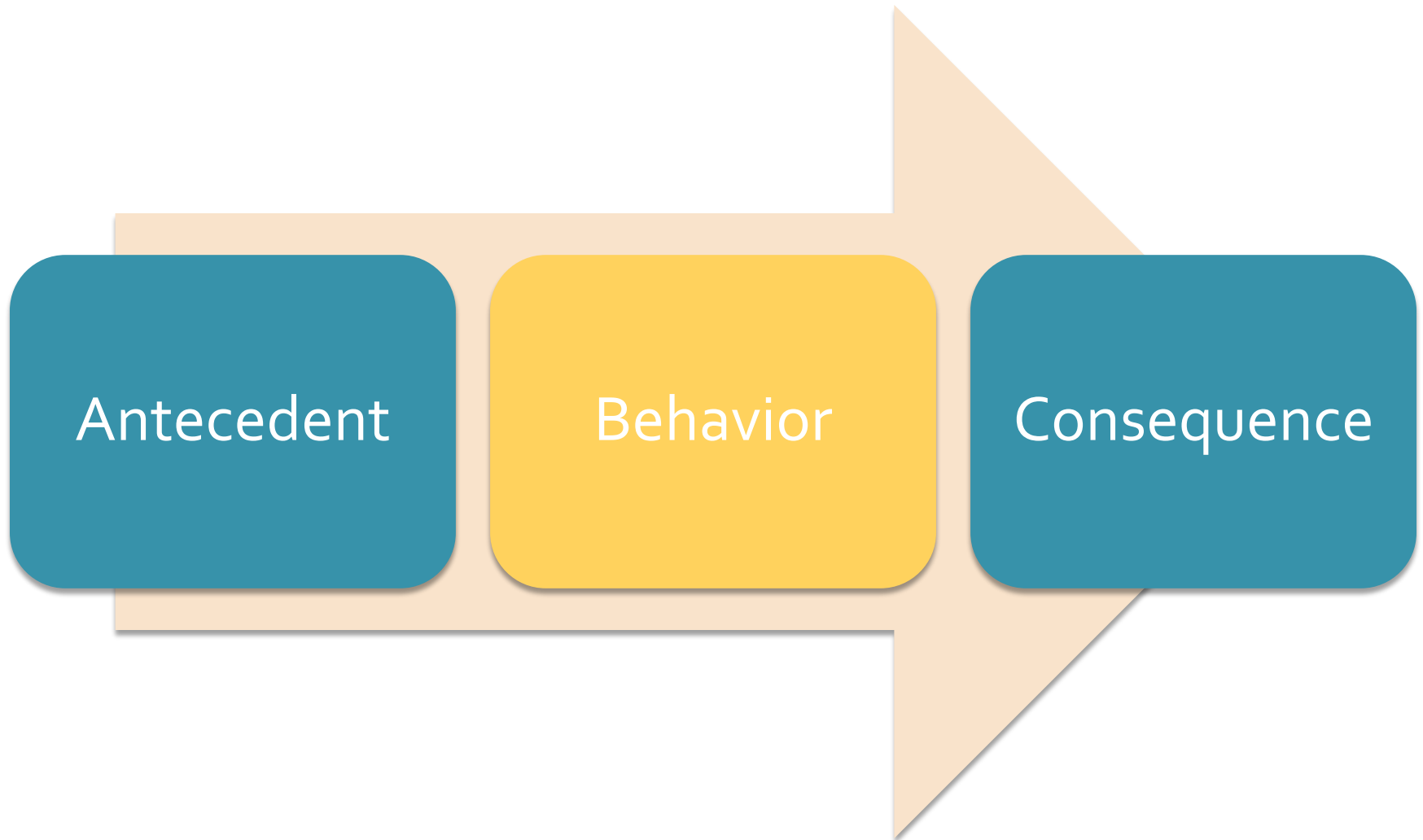
# And we can agree...

- ❖ CHILDREN USE CHALLENGING BEHAVIOR WHEN THEY DON'T HAVE THE SOCIAL/ COMMUNICATION SKILLS THEY NEED TO ENGAGE IN MORE APPROPRIATE INTERACTIONS.
- ❖ WE NEED TO FOCUS ON TEACHING CHILDREN WHAT TO DO IN PLACE OF THE CHALLENGING BEHAVIOR.
- ❖ BEHAVIOR THAT PERSISTS OVER TIME IS WORKING FOR THE CHILD

# Then we find this to be true...

- Important to place CB in a context rather than people “having” behaviors
- If we consider challenging behavior occurring in people, it is logical to try to change the people- when CB occurs in a context, let's change the context
- Behavior change occurs by changing environments

# A-B-C model: The Three-Term Contingency



# A-B-C

- **Antecedent**: Situation or event that cues the behavior
- **Behavior**: The response
- **Consequence**: What happens after the behavior (The consequence will determine the likelihood of the behavior occurring again)

# A-B-C

- Looking at behaviors this way:
  - It allows us to analyze behavior occurring in any environment
  - By understanding the events that occurred immediately before and immediately after a behavior, we are able to evaluate the cause (antecedent) and the effect (consequence) of a behavior
- Examples of Antecedents:
  - Demand (come to circle, write your name, line up...)
  - No engagement
  - No attention
- Examples of Consequences:
  - Escape
  - Attention
  - Obtain an object



Antecedent

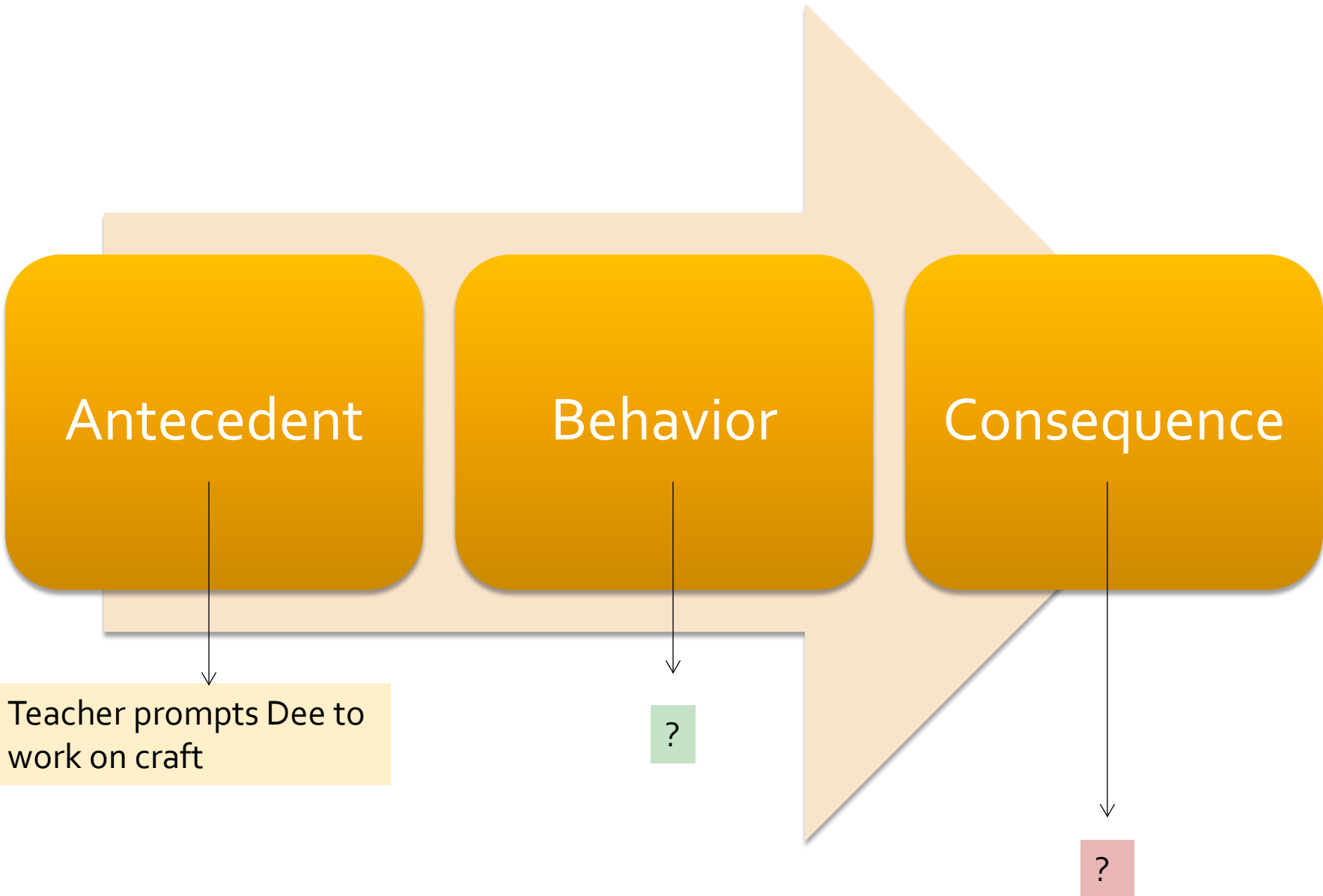
Behavior

Consequence

Dee is sitting at table with peers during craft making

Dee bites self

Teacher says "no, don't do that", pulls hand away from mouth, *redirects to activity*



Antecedent

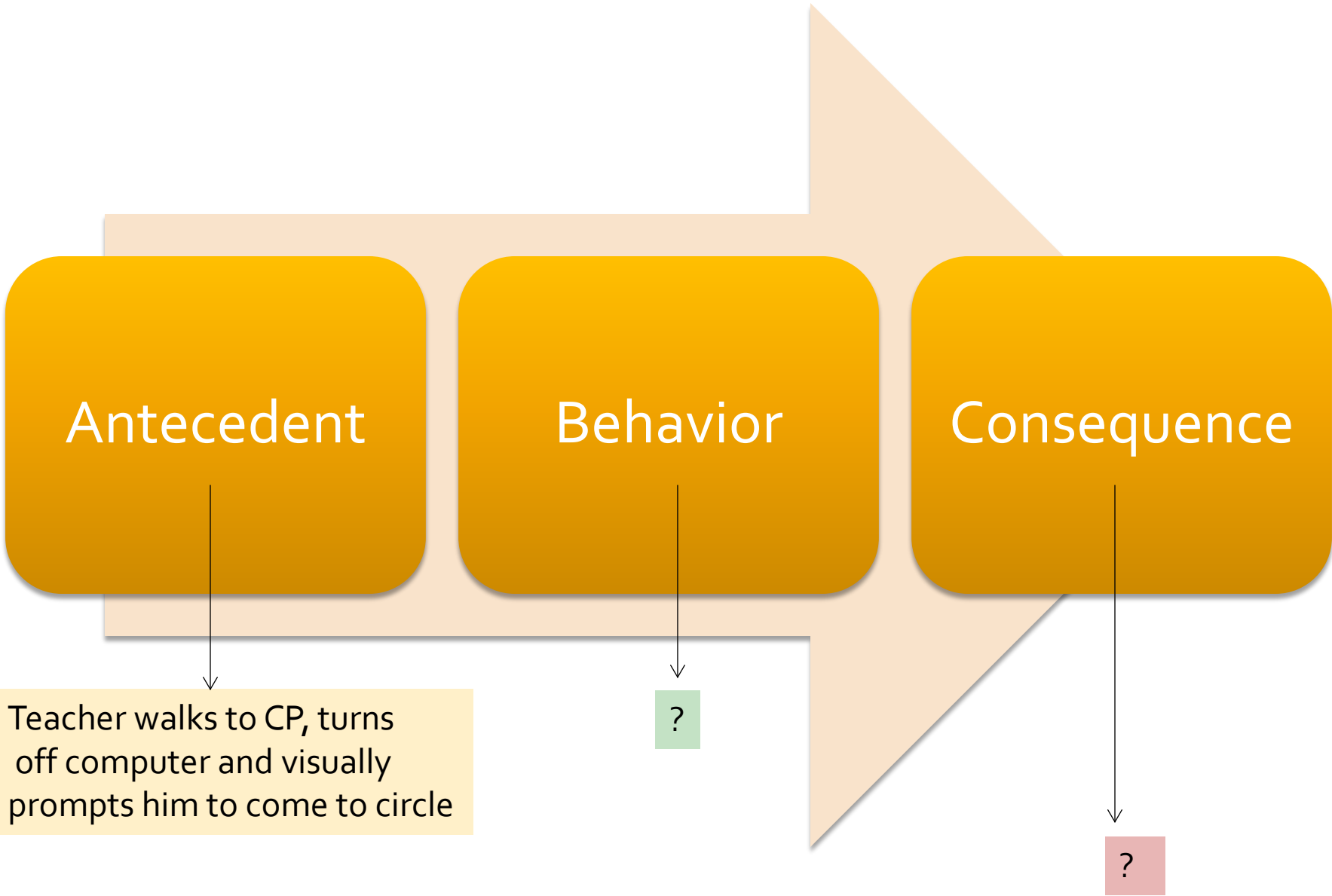
Teacher verbally prompts class to come to circle

Behavior


CP remains at computer

Consequence

Teacher continues to transition class and CP remains at computer, *teacher prompts CP again with visual*



# Looking at the function

A	B	C
		

# Function?

Obtain something/get something



Escape/ Get away from something



# Functions of Behavior

Obtain

attention

tangibles

activities

Escape

attention

tangibles

activities

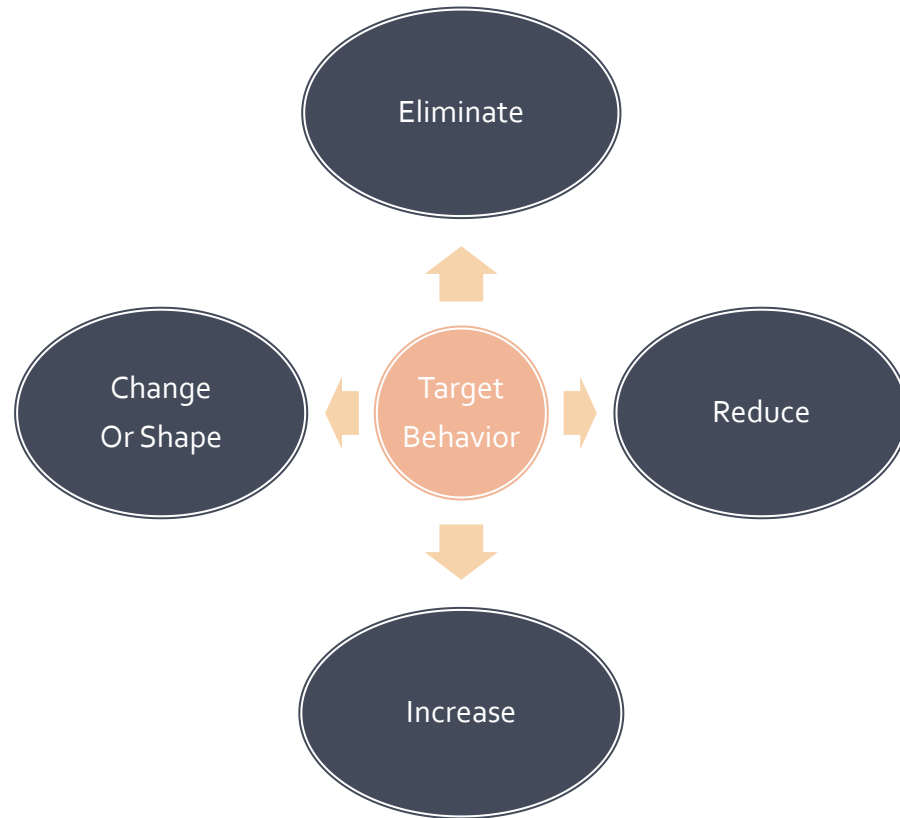
Sensory

visual

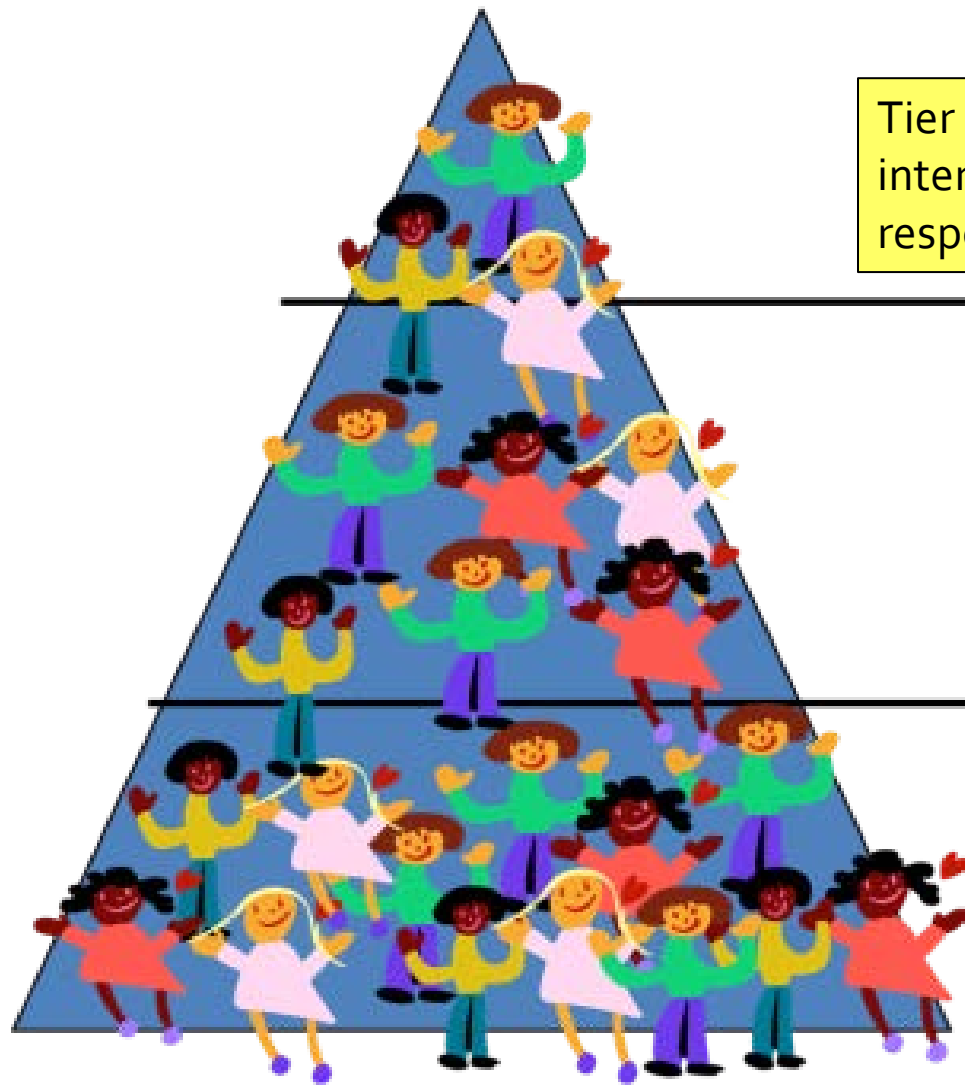
vestibular

auditory

# Behavior Change







Tier 3: individual, intensive supports/  
interventions for students who do not  
respond to Tier 1+ Tier 2 supports

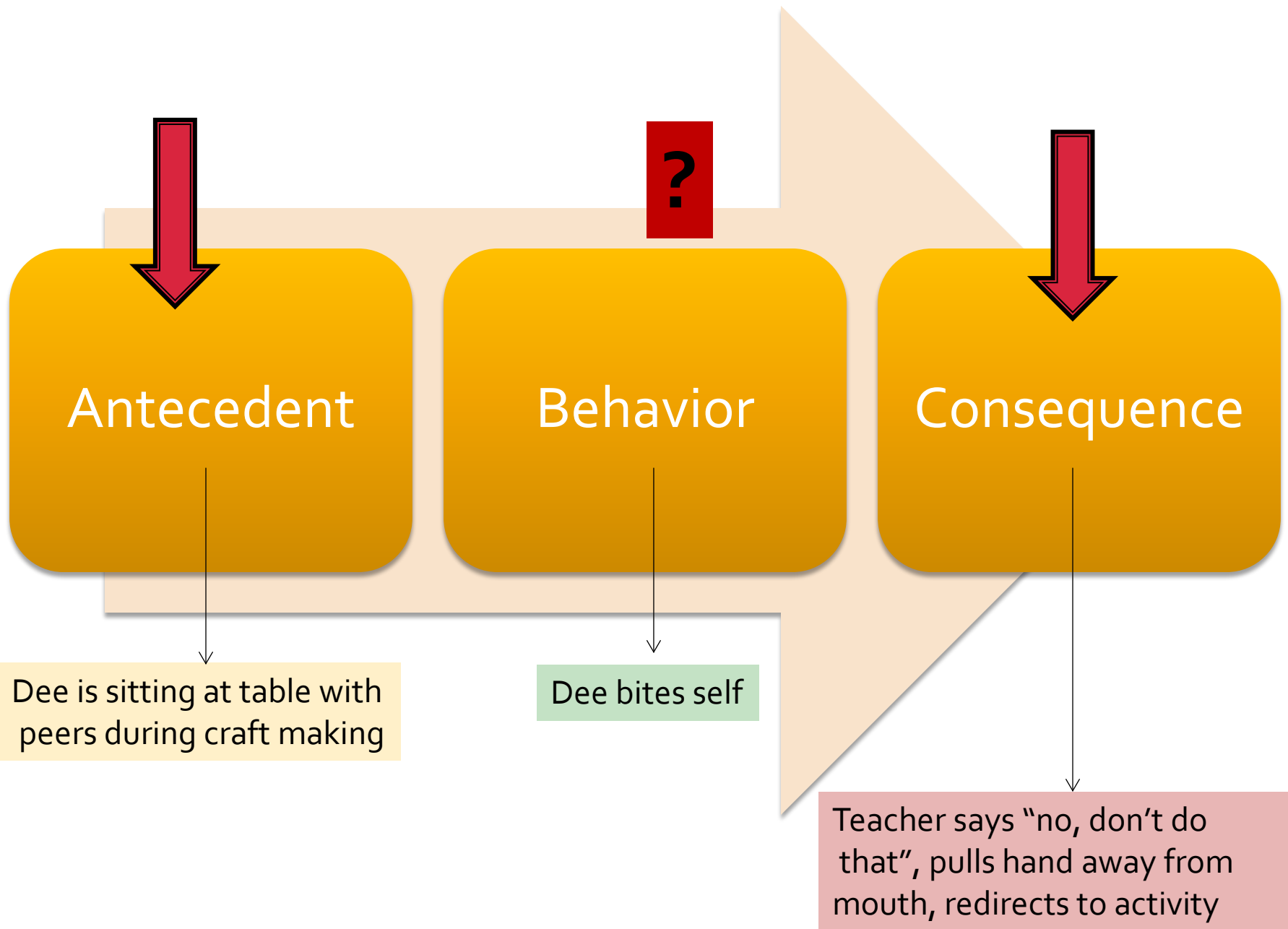
Tier 2 supports: small group of  
similar students that are not  
responding to universal supports

Universal Supports: will  
address the needs for most  
students...

# Universal Supports:

- Preventing challenging behaviors from occurring (we want to teach, yes?)
- They are proactive and address the antecedent part of the chain
- Gives control back to the teacher





# Universal Supports: *Primary Prevention*

Effective for 80% to 90% of students

- Establish school/class wide expectations
- Teach expectations
- Address antecedent contributors to problem behaviors
- Use acknowledgement systems
- Ensure effective instruction
- Ensure consistent consequences for misbehavior
- Use data to guide decision-making

# Classroom Arrangement and Environmental Supports

- Physical Design
- Environmental Cues
- Schedules and Routines
- Transitions
- Promoting Engagement During Large and Small Group Activities
- Simple Rules/Expectations
- Ongoing Monitoring and Positive Attention

# Setting up the environment

- Physical classroom set up (how can it be set up to prevent CB?)
  - Thoughtful?
  - Convenient for who?
  - Organization
- Visual Schedules
  - Form of representation (object, picture, word)
  - Helps with independence
- Visual Supports
  - Video modeling\*
  - Helps with prompting
- Visual Boundaries
  - Leave location (escape)
  - Expectations for work clear?
  - Minimize large open spaces







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# Schedules and Routines

- Class Schedules
  - Where are they posted?
  - What do they look like?
  - How do you get your students to use them?
- Individual schedules ★
  - When is this needed?
  - What does it look like?
  - Transitioning to a typical schedule
- Changes to the schedule
  - Special events
  - Fire drills
  - Absences



# Transitions

- How many?
- Most of the time: Preferred to non- preferred
- Warnings
- Too many during the day...
- Let' s all go together?
- It takes too long...
- Where are we going?
- Preferred item as distractor

# Preferred item as distractor

- Evidence based
- Make it as natural as possible
- Keeps hands busy
- Helps with children who prefer “objects”
- All ages!

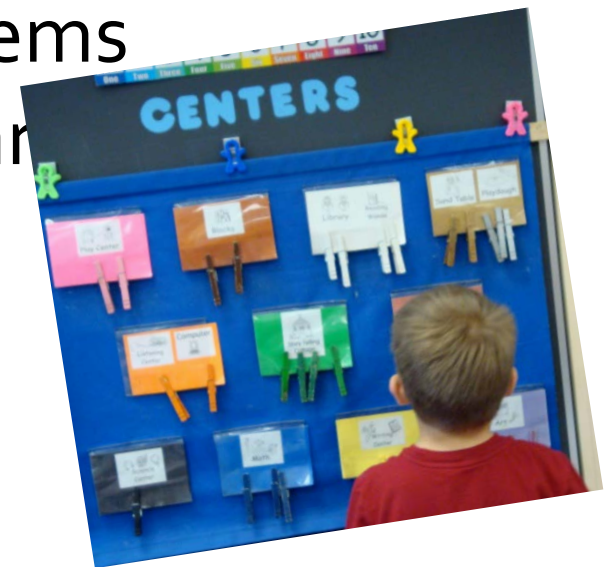


# Pre-correction

- Designed to prevent or interrupt predictable problem behavior from occurring
- Increase the likelihood of expected behavior taking place.
- Teacher **anticipates** problem behavior based on the student(s) previous behavior patterns or knowledge of student behavior in general.
- Given this information, the teacher takes measures to disrupt this behavior pattern or chain

# Choice

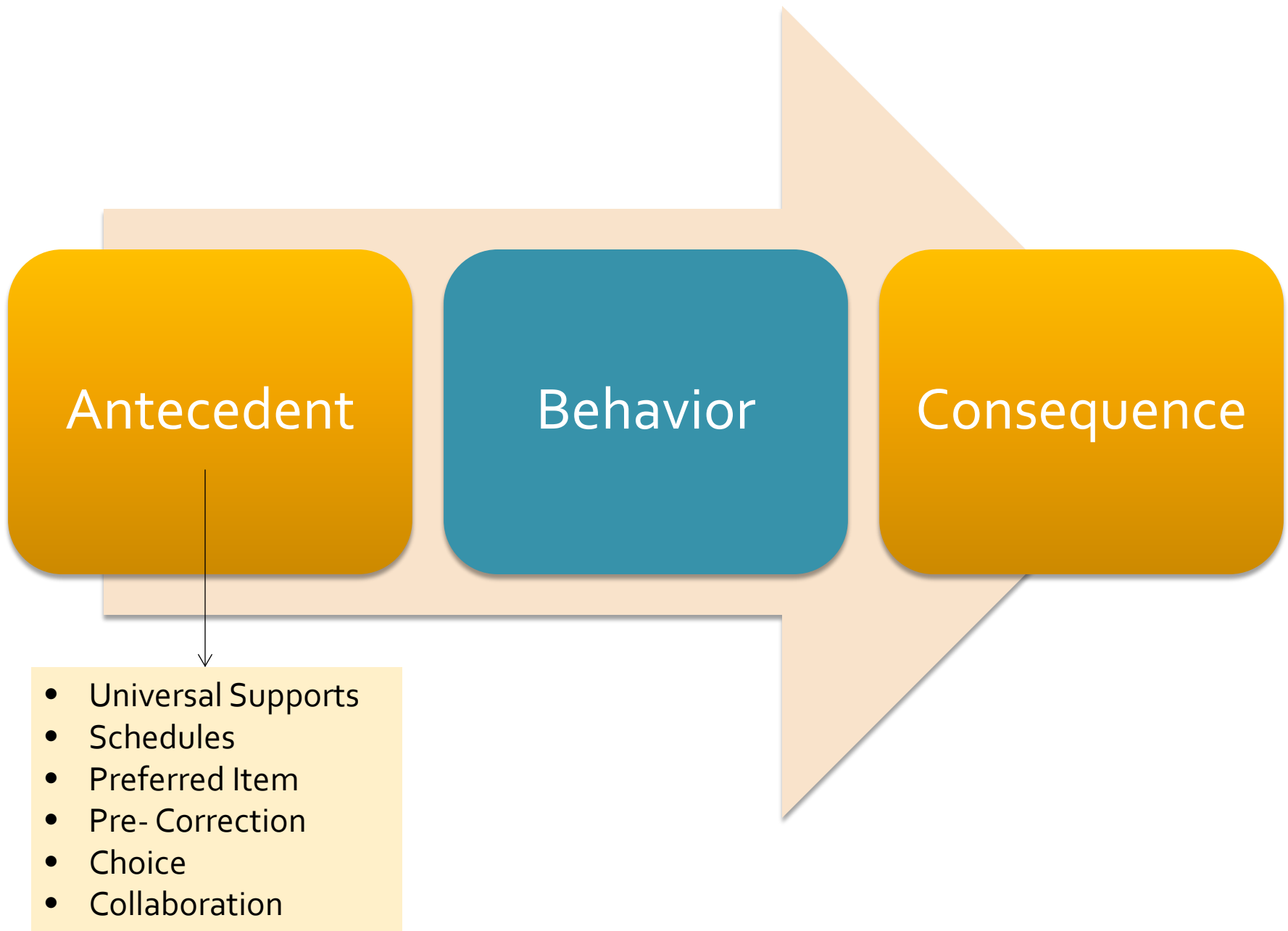
- Intervention for escape maintained behaviors
- Must be used **prior** to challenging behavior
- Teacher control/ only 2 items
  - Not open ended
- Start with 2 highly preferred items
- Gradually move to items that are less preferred



# Collaboration

- Can be combined with other interventions
- Allows for escape, student must be ok with attention as well
- Working together...
- Task: **clean up** "I'll pick up the trucks you pick up the blocks"
- Task: assignment "I'll do #1 you do #2"





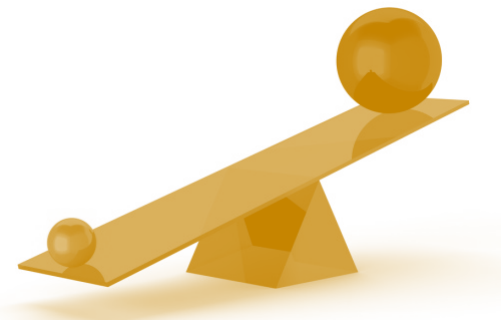
# Behaviors

## DECREASE

- Aggression
- Spitting
- Vocalizations
- Noncompliance
- Elopement
- Pica

## INCREASE

- Requesting
- Responding
- Compliance





# When considering new/ replacement behaviors

- Is the new skill:
  - Developmentally appropriate
  - In their repertoire?
  - Functional Equivalent?
- Can we use chaining to teach this new skill?
  - Forward Chaining
  - Backward Chaining
- Approximations?
  - Sometimes close is better than nothing...

# Functional Communication

- Intervention that addresses all functions of behavior
- Replaces behavior with functional alternative to obtain same outcome



# Functional Communication Training

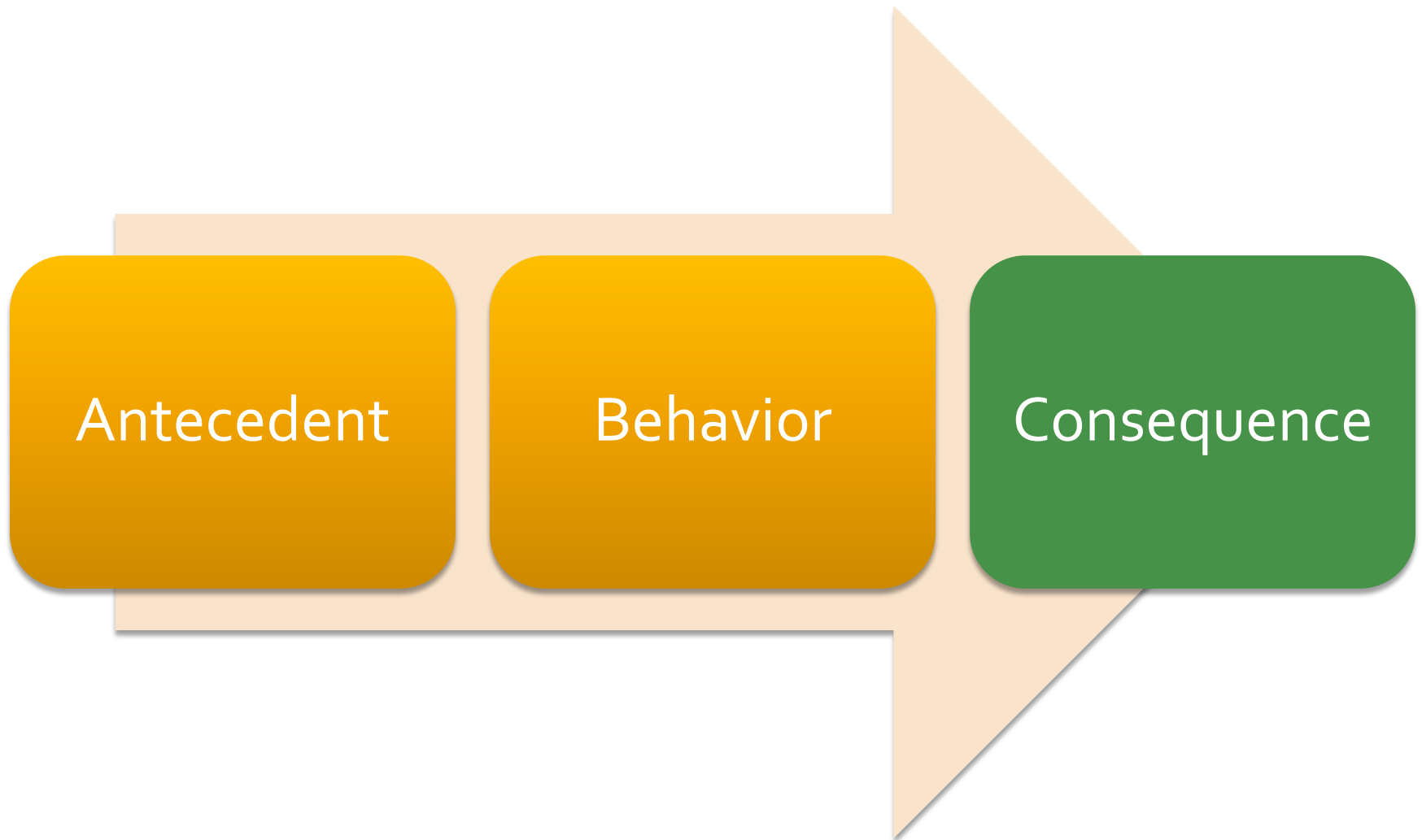
- Does the student have the skill already?
  - Look at motivation
  - Why are they not using that skill?
  - Schedules of reinforcement
- Does the student need to learn the skill?
  - First, we teach the new skill
  - Interventions that increase behaviors
  - High reinforcement
  - Shaping the behavior

# Social Stories

According to Gray (2010) 'a **Social Story** describes a situation, skill, or concept in terms of relevant **social** cues, perspectives, and common responses in a specifically defined style and format.



# A-B-C model: The Three-Term Contingency



# Reinforcement

- Definition of Reinforcement
- Frequency/ Intensity
- Quality
- Immediacy
- Negative vs. Positive Reinforcement
- A bit about Punishment



# Differential Reinforcement

- Differential Reinforcement of Other Behavior (DRO)
  - Absence of the behavior for period of time
- Differential Reinforcement of Incompatible Behavior (DRI)
  - Behavior that is incompatible with CB
- Differential Reinforcement of Low Rates of Behavior (DRL)
  - Lower rate during a period of time
- Differential Reinforcement of Alternative Behavior (DRA)
  - A new behavior that was taught

# “Time-Out” from Reinforcement

- What was reinforcing?
- Typically toys, activity...
- Be mindful of reinforcing “escape” maintained behaviors
- Set time (age appropriate 1 minute per year of life)
- Why this often fails...



# Planned Ignoring

- Only if the function of the challenging behavior is **attention** maintained
- It's called PLANNED for a reason... do you have a plan?
- Can you actually implement it? (peer/ other adults)
- Behaviors are often strengthened with interval reinforcement, so this is a very real consideration

Data Collection...

How do we know if what we  
are doing is working?

# Data Collection

- Why do we collect data?
- I don't have the time...
- How can I make it easy, but still work for me?

# Simple Scatter Plot

Time	M	T	W	TH	F
8					
9	X	X	X	X	X
10					
11		X			X
12					
1	X		X	X	X
2					X
3					
4					X





*Remember!*  
*Children engage in*  
*challenging behavior*  
*because it works for*  
*them!*

# You did it! Any questions?



Thank you!  
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