

## Using Brief Functional Analysis to Identify Automatic Reinforcement for a Child with Self-Injury

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### INTRODUCTION

- Brief and extended functional analyses have often shown social variables maintaining problem behavior.
- Results of Indirect Assessments yielded multiple social functions.
- Results of Brief Functional Analysis (BFA) suggested that the client's self-injury was maintained by automatic positive reinforcement.

### PARTICIPANT - "Zach"

- 18-year-old male
- Diagnosed with
  - Severe Mental Retardation
  - Autism
  - Seizure Disorder
- Referred for the assessment and treatment of self-injury
  - Knee banging was defined as any attempt at dropping to the floor in such a manner as to cause any floor to knee contact during the descent.
  - Head banging was defined as any attempt to cause head to surface contact. This included hitting his head with another hand/arm or with his own hand/arm.
  - "Sticky fingers" was defined as any attempt to put two fingers together on any hard surface or on his lips, and then suddenly retract them as if the surface was sticky in texture. This was described as an antecedent behavior to his SIB.

### METHOD

#### Indirect Assessments

- Many behavioral checklists and interviews were completed by a staff member familiar with the participant of the study.
  - The Motivational Assessment Scale (Durand & Crimmins, 1988)
  - The Functional Analysis Screening Tool (Iwata & DeLeon, 1996)
  - Functional Behavioral Assessment Inventory (Iwata, Wallace, & Lindberg, 1998)

#### Direct Assessment

- Brief Functional Analysis (Brown et al., 2000)
  - All sessions were conducted in a treatment room with a one-way observation mirror for data collection
  - BFA conditions:
    - Free Play, Tangible, Attention, Escape, Alone
- Data Collection
  - All data was collected on laptop computers by the authors.

### RESULTS

The Motivational Assessment Scale (MAS)	Tangible, Escape, Sensory, Attention Functions (in descending order)
The Functional Analysis Screening Tool (FAST)	Social (Escape) Function
Functional Behavioral Assessment Inventory (FBAI)	Tangible Function
Brief Functional Analysis (BFA)	Sensory Function

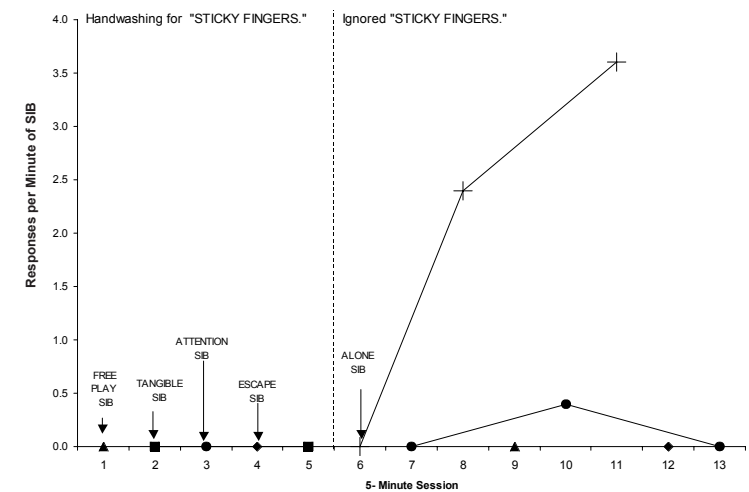


Figure 1. Brief Functional Analysis - SIB

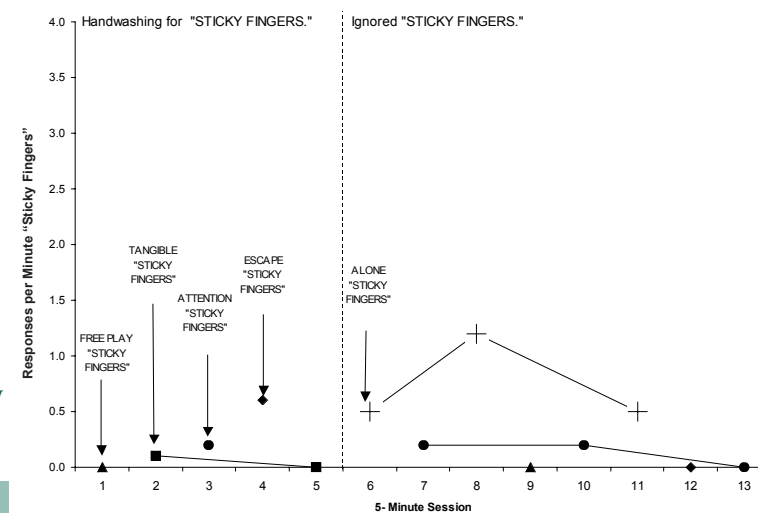


Figure 2. Brief Functional Analysis - "Sticky Fingers"

### DISCUSSION

- Indirect Assessment failed to identify sensory functions even though a variety of instruments were used.
- Few investigations have reported success in identifying automatic reinforcement functions using BFA technology (Derby et al., 1992; Vollmer et al., 1995).