

SOUTHWEST WEST CENTRAL SERVICE COOPERATIVE

**SWWC**

*Education & Administrative Resources*

# Alternatives to Punishment: Strategic Ways to Listen and Support *Connor's Story*

# Background Information

- School setting: Federal Setting IV
- 2:1 Staffing
- History of abuse
- Severe self injurious behavior and physical aggression in history

Skills that needed to be taught:

- Communicating wants and needs
- Having to wait
- Being told no
- Ending preferred activities
- Transitioning
- Tolerating error correction
- Tolerating undesirable work tasks and instructions
- Cooperating with adult led instruction

# Treatment Considerations

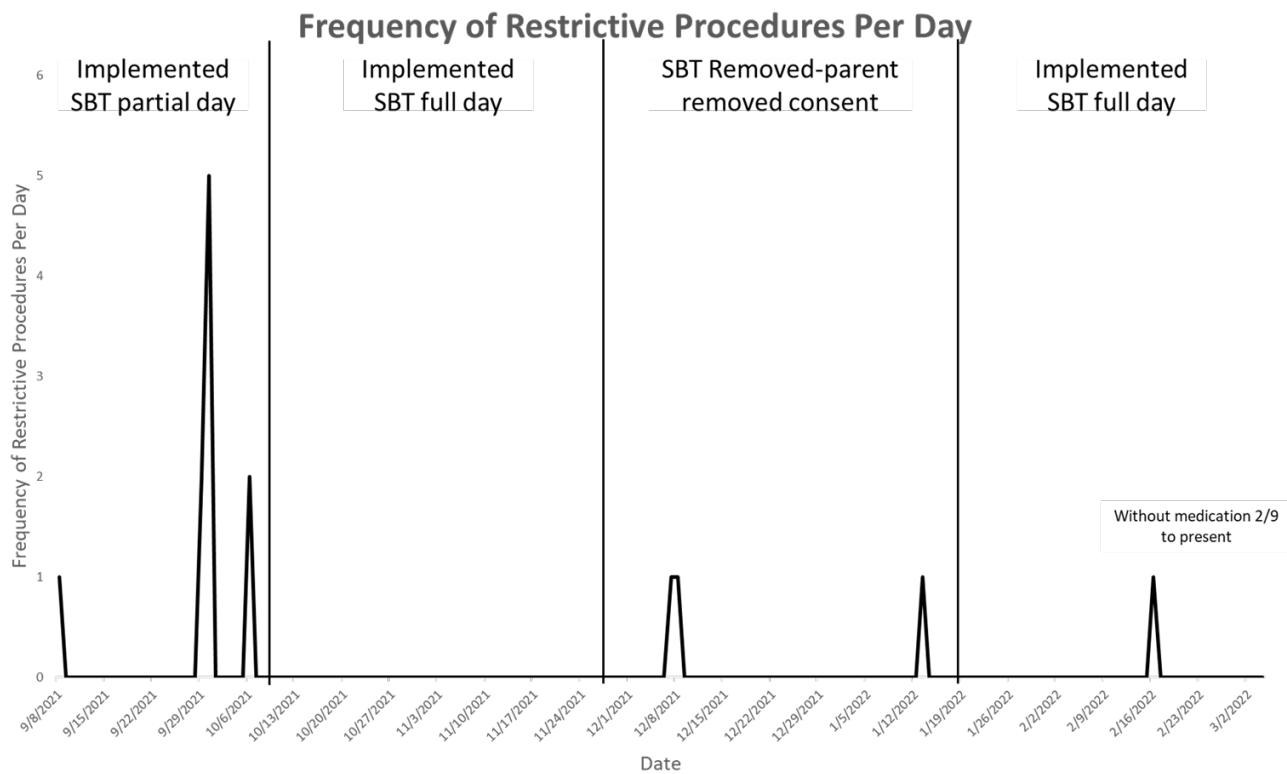
- Trauma informed
- Teach essential skills
  - Communication
  - Toleration
  - Cooperation
- Implemented with integrity
- Implemented throughout the day
  - Moved to full implementation this fall
- Treatment that incorporates and involves all members of his team (Connor, Speech, OT, Administration, Social Worker, Paraprofessionals, BCaBA, parents, and county workers)
- Moving away from removing privileges as a consequence

# Skill Based Treatment

1. Verify what leads to problem behavior
  - a. Informed Interview
2. Identify Connor's **Happy, Relaxed, and Engaged**
  - a. Goal is to always return to Happy, Relaxed, and Engaged

When work was then presented, we taught Connor to...

1. Shift communication from problem behavior to a functional form of communication
  - a. "My Way" and hand to chest
2. Prepare for disappointment
  - a. Deny "my way"
  - b. Taught a way to respond to disappointment: "Ok" and a thumbs up
3. Transition to work
4. Systematically increase work trials



# Results

# Responding to Problem Behavior

## When responding to pre-crisis behaviors:

- Provide an Empathetic Response
  - “I am sorry this is tough/frustrating”
- Encourage Connor to keep going
  - Provide an encouraging statement to continue through the task/aversive situation
- Reinforce when he keeps going by allowing him to be done with the task and go back to choice time
- Allow extra time until next instruction to ensure we see that Connor is Happy, Relaxed and Engaged

## When responding to crisis behaviors:

- Provide an Empathetic Response
- Prompt Connor to tell us what he wants/needs
- Provide access to what he wants/needs
- Allow extra time until Happy, Relaxed, and Engaged

Then, the team is made aware of the occurrence and considers any adjustments needed to programming that need to be made.

# Social Validity Survey

"I was very skeptical of this program when it was first implemented. But now after seeing the progress the student has made with this programming. ***I support this programming and I think this worked very well for this student.***"

"I was amazed that the student I work with has had such a decrease in problem behavior when he had many occurrences of problem behavior prior to this program. This program is very flexible, easy to implement, and teaches a variety of skills and replacement behaviors in a smooth, controlled way. My student is tolerating waiting and denials appropriately and ***we are able to de-escalate issues when that occur in an empathetic way*** and not ending in restrictive procedures. My student has been able to generalize this program across various environments , which is so neat to see!"

"It is important to have an understanding of the entire process from start to finish (prior to implementation). The program starts at the lowest level to build up to increased "work time", accepting no, tolerating waiting, and being independent. ***I feel the program also decreases anxiety and helps the student know and predict what is next.*** Having knowing there are options is good for students."

"A significant reduction in interfering behavior has been seen during this programming. More importantly, requesting and collaboration skills have greatly increased."

# Additional Resources:

<https://practicalfunctionalassessment.com/>

[PFA and SBT Community Support Youtube Channel](#)