Applied Behavior Analysis and PWS

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Agenda

- Introduction to ABA as a science
- Behavior & the Environment
- Behaviors of Concern in PWS from an ABA perspective
What is ABA?

Applied Behavior (iour) Analysis

- The science of human behavior
- Interested in how behavior is shaped and maintained
- Interested in how organisms learn
- Best known for therapeutic interventions for ASD
  - However, has widespread applications (OBM, health sciences, RFT and ACT)
Foundational Concepts

Two types of conditioning:

Classical and Operant

Biological predispositions interact with environmental variables to shape behavior:

Behavior “function”

If we know why behavior occurs, we can change it:

Function-based interventions and teaching skills
Four Functions of Behavior

**Sensory**
Behaviors that are performed to gain sensory input or stimulation, such as rocking back and forth, tapping or clicking, or repeatedly touching objects. These behaviors can be a form of self-stimulation or self-soothing.

**Escape**
Behaviors that are performed to escape or avoid a situation or activity that is perceived as unpleasant, uncomfortable, or undesirable. It's important to remember that this can include escaping a task that you are unable to do, such as schoolwork.

**Attention**
These behaviors are performed in order to receive social interaction or attention from others, and can be either positive or negative attention.

**Tangibles**
Behaviors that are performed to gain access to tangible items or preferred activities.

Source: https://adayinourshoes.com/4-functions-of-behavior/
Behavioral Considerations for PWS

- **Executive Functioning Deficits**
  
  Deficits in executive functioning can predispose challenges with emotional regulation, transitions, flexibility, planning, and problem solving. This can be further complicated by auditory processing delays.

- **Lack of Motivation**
  
  Low muscle tone / fatigue / daytime sleepiness increases response effort for many tasks. “Intrinsic” or existing environmental motivation may be insufficient.

- **Skill Deficits**
  
  Sometimes necessary skills are slow to develop or need to be explicitly taught.

- **Reduced Pain Sensation**
  
  No feedback from the body on body-focused repetitive behaviors such as skin picking.
Types of Interventions

Teach Skills

Functionally equivalent alternative, incompatible behavior. Etc.

Reinforcement

Create motivation to work on difficult skills and tasks

Change Environmental Contingencies

Avoid reinforcing behaviors of concern while creating motivation to learn and engage in adaptive behavior.
More Resources

https://www aba international.org/about-us/behavior-analysis.aspx

https://www.bacb.com/about-behavior-analysis/

https://www.autismspeaks.org/applied-behavior-analysis

https://theibao.com/
Questions?