

Supporting Paraprofessionals to Implement FCT to Address Challenging Behavior

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Agenda

- Evidence-based practices for challenging behavior
- Evidence-based practices implementation
- Our research
- Implications
- Q&A

Poll #1



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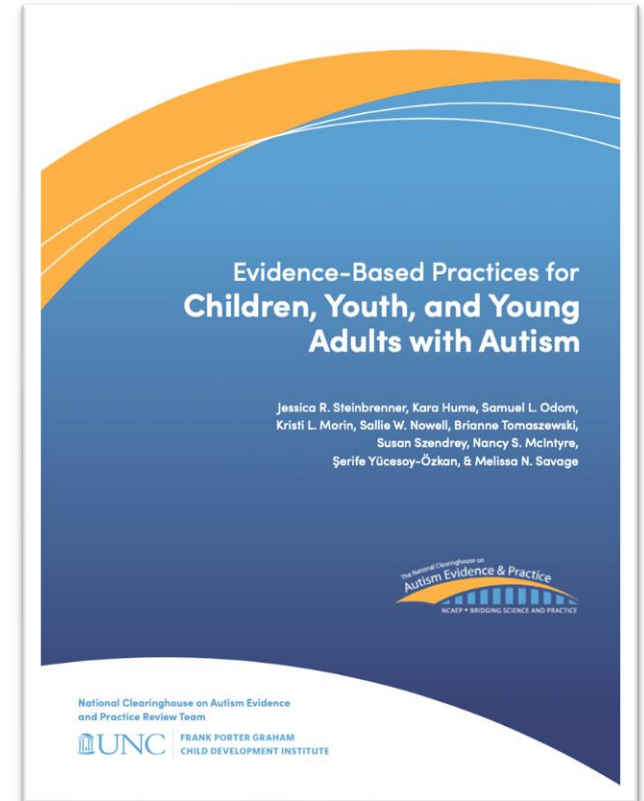
Challenging Behavior

- Percentage of students eligible for special education services under ASD category has continued to **increase** (U.S. Dept. of Education, 2020)
- Many students with ASD engage in **challenging behavior** (Mason et al., 2008)



Evidence-Based Practices (EBPs)

- The National Clearinghouse on Autism Evidence & Practice:
<https://ncaep.fpg.unc.edu/>
- 26 EBPs for **challenging behavior**



Evidence-Based Practices (EBPs)

- Functional Behavior Assessment

A systematic way of determining the underlying **function or purpose** of a behavior so that an effective intervention plan can be developed –
National Clearinghouse on Autism Evidence & Practice



Functional Behavior Assessment

- **Functional behavior assessment** (FBA) information is used to develop the behavior intervention plan
- The primary objective of conducting an FBA is to understand the function(s) of challenging behavior



Challenging Behavior and Communication

- Challenging behavior is a form of **communication**
- Challenging behavior has a **function** (i.e., “purpose”)

Escape

Attention

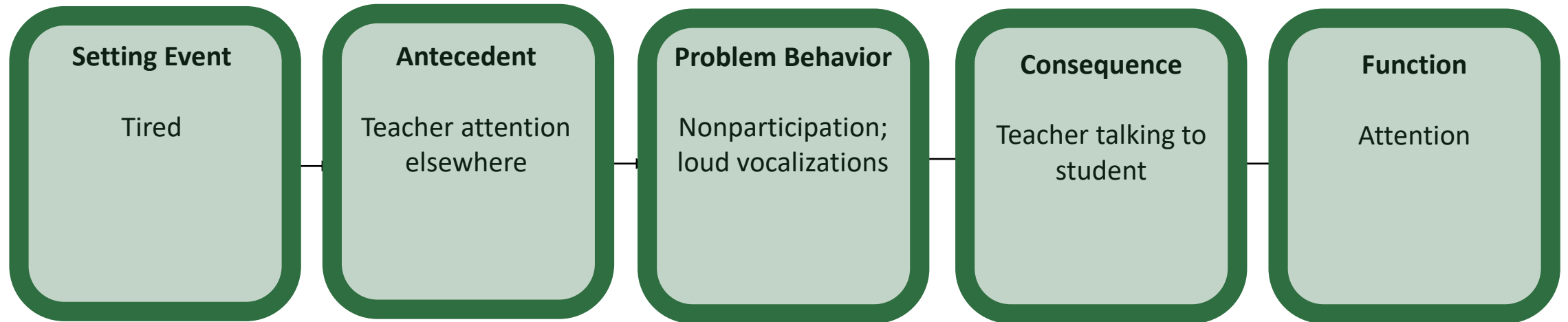
Tangible

Sensory



Functional Behavior Assessment

- FBA results:



How can we address challenging behavior once we understand the function?



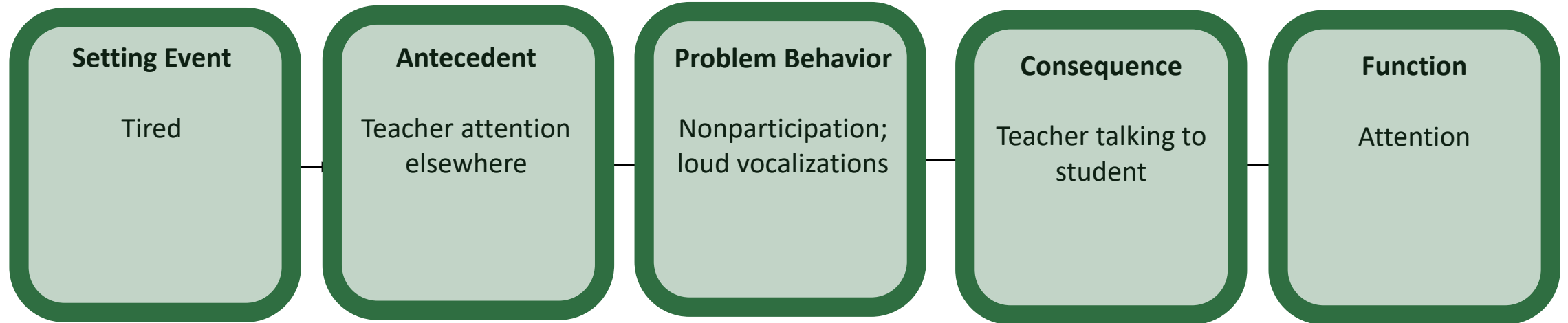
Evidence-Based Practices (EBPs)

- Behavior Intervention Plan
- Includes one or more category of strategies
 - Preventing
 - Teaching
 - Responding



Evidence-Based Practices (EBPs)

- FBA results:



Evidence-Based Practices (EBPs)

- Functional Communication Training (Carr & Durand, 1985)

A set of practices that **replace a challenging behavior** that has a communication function with more appropriate and effective communication behaviors or skills – National Clearinghouse on Autism Evidence & Practice

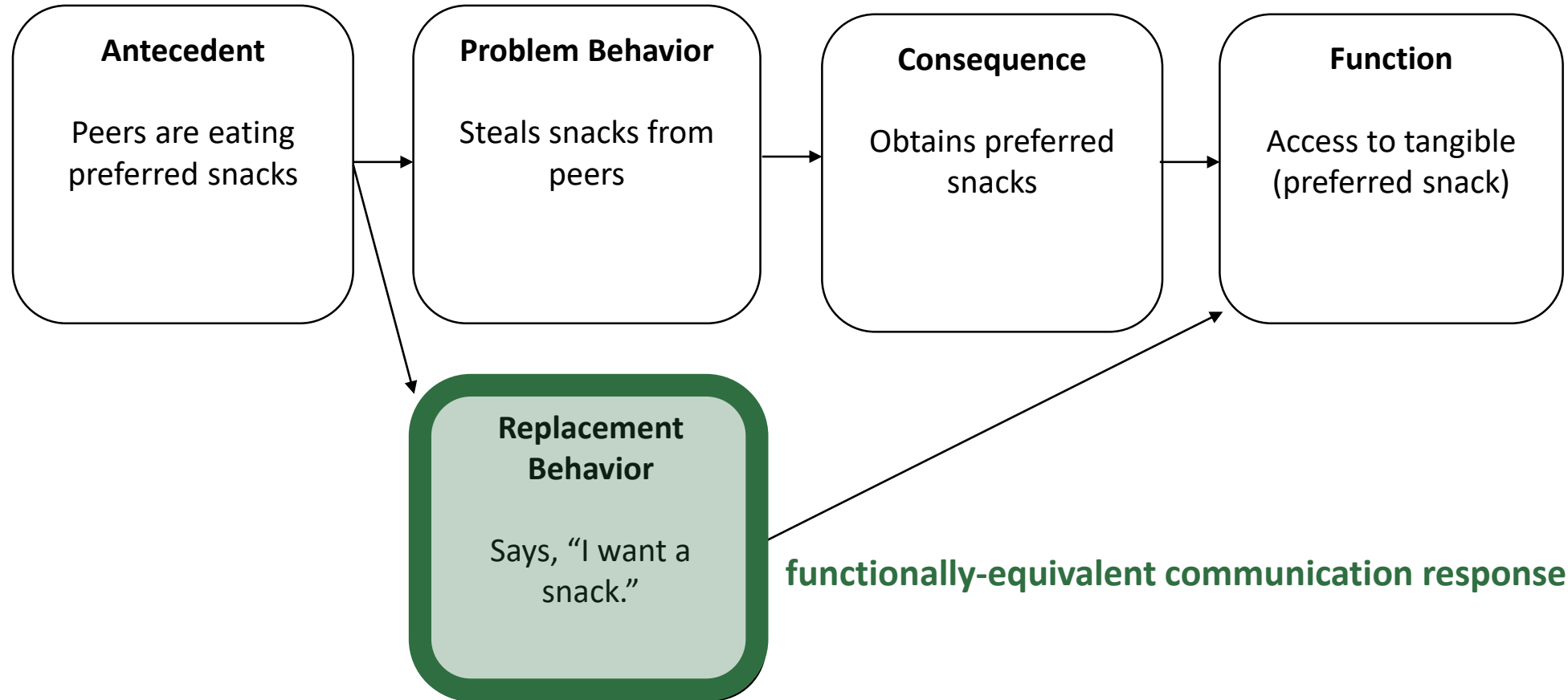


Functional Communication Training

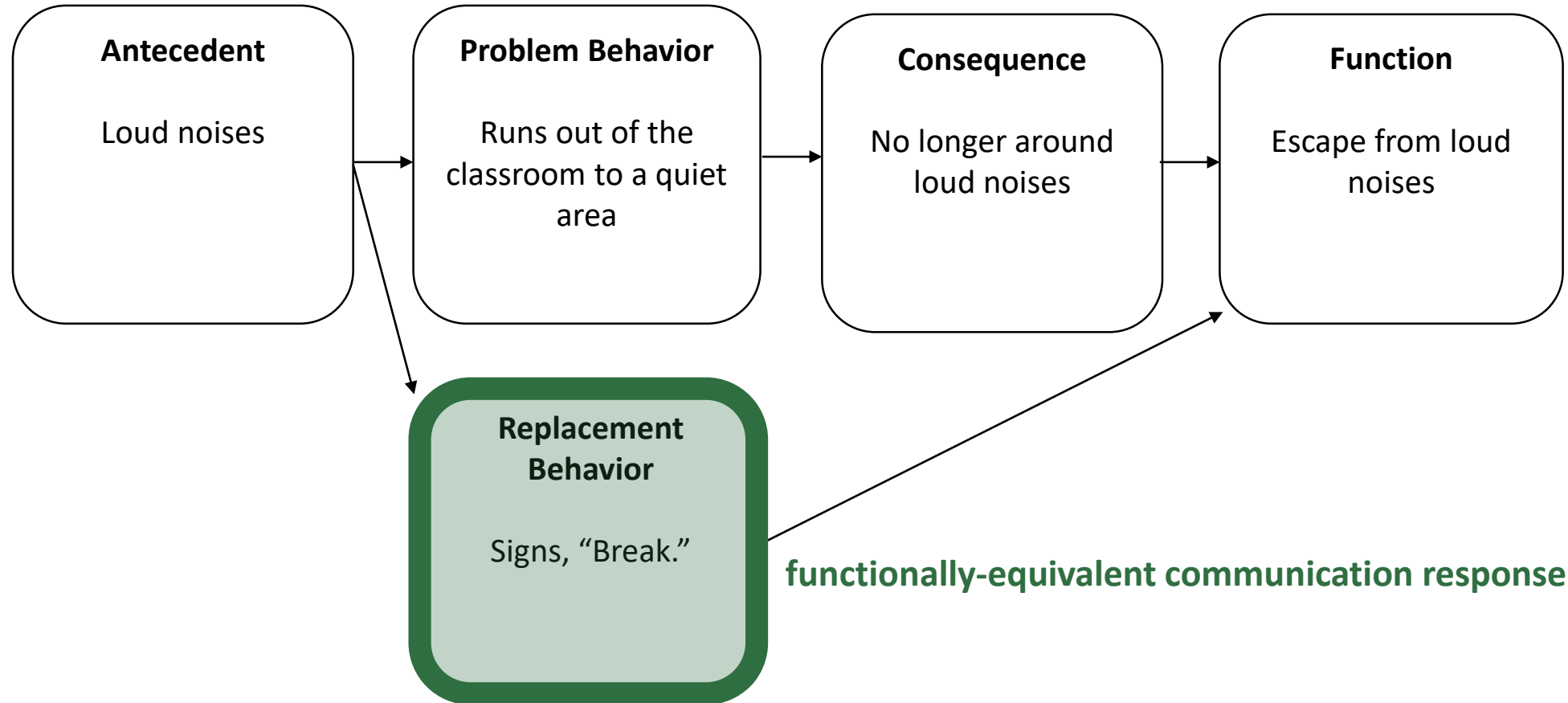
- **Functional communication training** (FCT) is an evidence-based practice
- The purpose of FCT is to teach a communication response that replaces challenging behavior
- This communication response is called a **functionally-equivalent communication response**



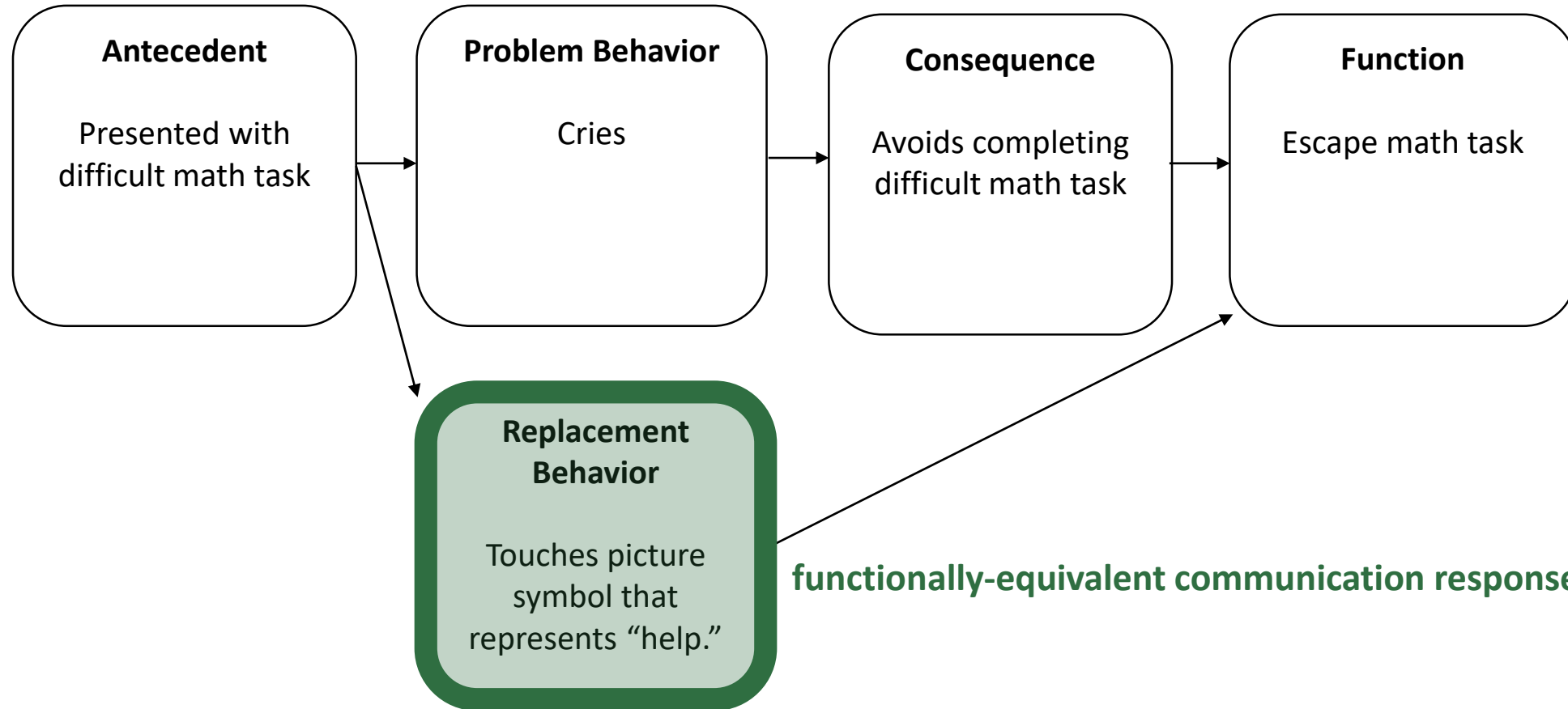
Functional Communication Training



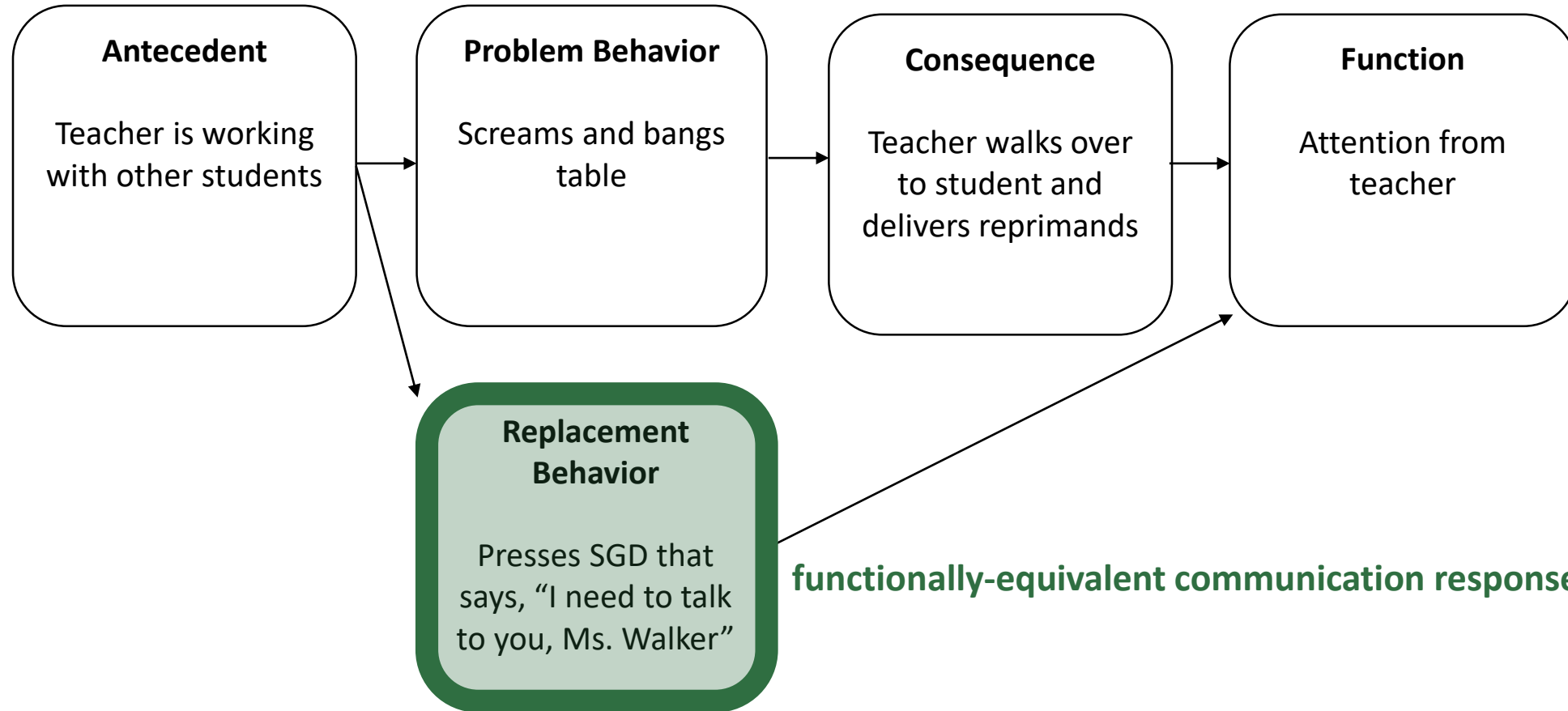
Functional Communication Training



Functional Communication Training



Functional Communication Training



EBP Implementation In Schools

- EBPs can be **implemented with fidelity in schools** to address the social, academic, and behavioral needs of students with ASD (deBruin et al., 2013; Lory et al., 2020; Martinez et al., 2016).



Barriers to EBP Implementation in Schools

- **Training is often cited as a barrier** to effective EBP implementation
(Knight et al., 2019; Robertson et al., 2020)



Paraprofessionals

- **Assist educators and other professionals** in the provision of special education and other related services for students with ASD (Carter et al., 2009; Rispoli et al., 2011)
- Often **address challenging behavior** (Carter et al., 2009)
- Identify training in behavioral intervention as a **high-priority area** (e.g., Mason et al., 2020; Sobeck & Robertson, 2019)

Poll #2

Poll #3

Research Study #1

Walker, V. L., Carpenter, M. E., Lyon, K. J., Garcia, M., & Johnson, H. (2021). Coaching paraeducators to implement functional communication training involving augmentative and alternative communication for students with autism spectrum disorder. *Augmentative and Alternative Communication*, 37(2), 129-140.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/07434618.2021.1909650>



Research Questions

1. Are paraprofessionals able to implement FCT with high levels of **fidelity** after receiving training?
2. Do paraprofessionals and special educators find the initial training and follow-up coaching sessions to be **practical and effective**?
3. Do paraprofessionals and special educators find training based on behavioral skills training to be **socially valid**?



Participants

| Paraprofessionals | Students |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide support to the student participant within the identified setting in which challenging behavior occurred• Have no prior training in FCT• Consent to participate in the study | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have an autism diagnosis• Have complex communication needs that necessitated AAC• Engage in persistent challenging behavior that caused harm to the student or others, interfered with learning and/or socially isolated the student• Receive guardian permission to participate in the study |



Outcomes

- Paraprofessional implementation fidelity
 - Accuracy with which the paraprofessional implemented FCT
- Student behavior
 - Occurrence of challenging behavior
 - Replacement behavior



Procedures

FBA

FCT intervention
development

Baseline

Paraprofessional training
intervention



Procedures

FBA

FCT intervention
development

Baseline

Paraprofessional training
intervention



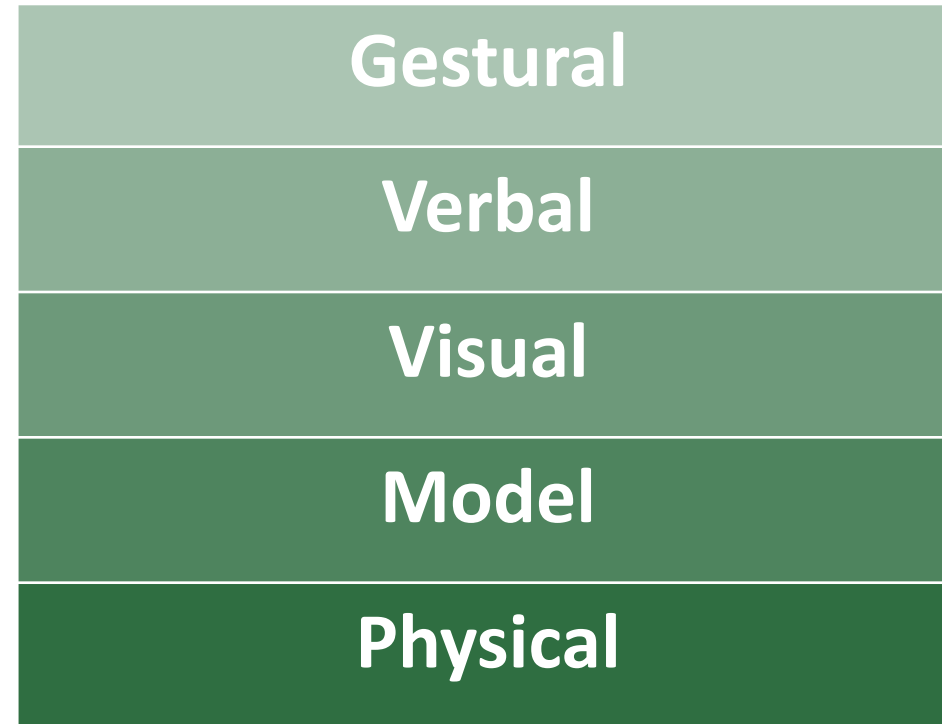
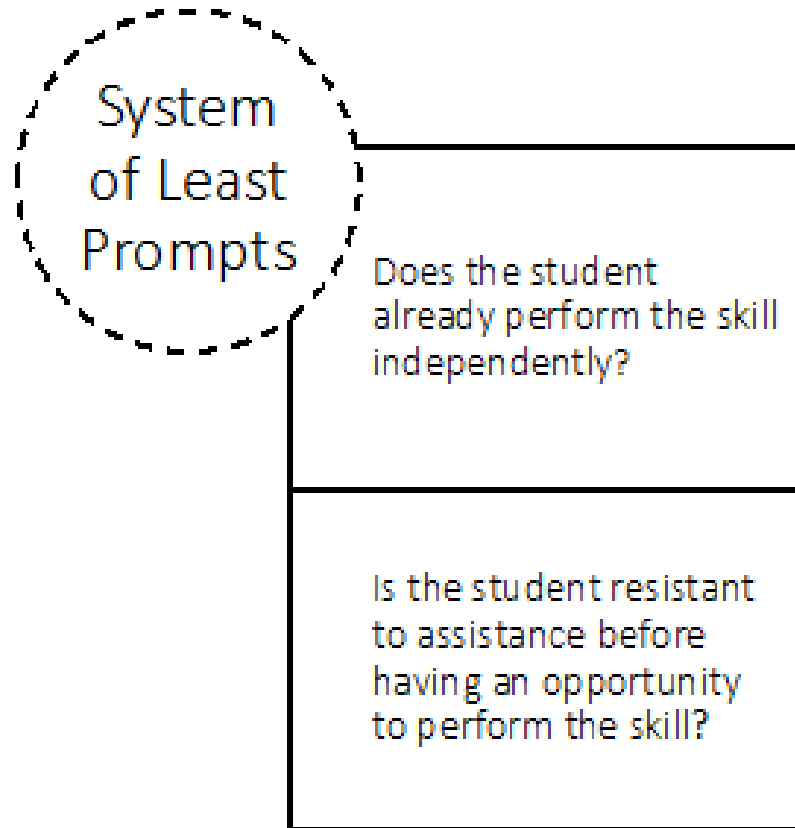
Planning

- FCT Planning Guide

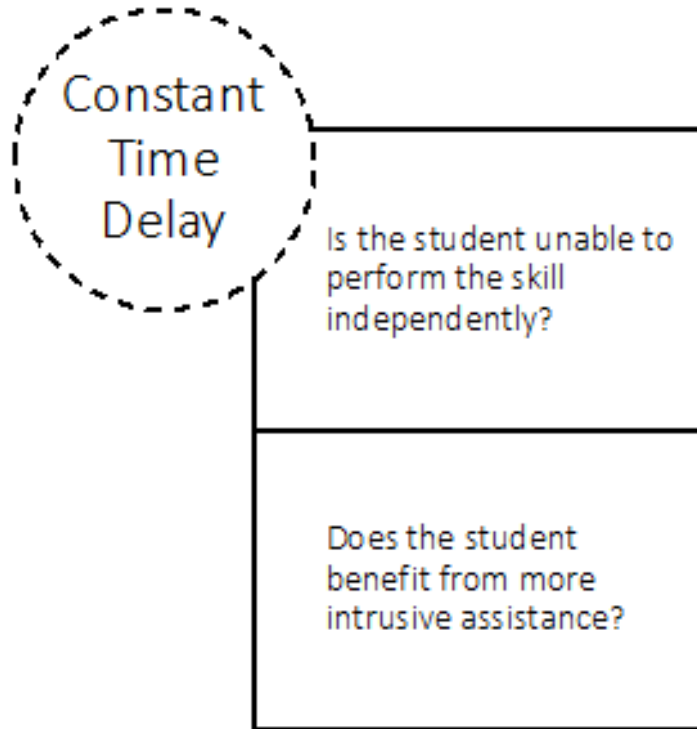


System of Least Prompts

Prompt Hierarchy



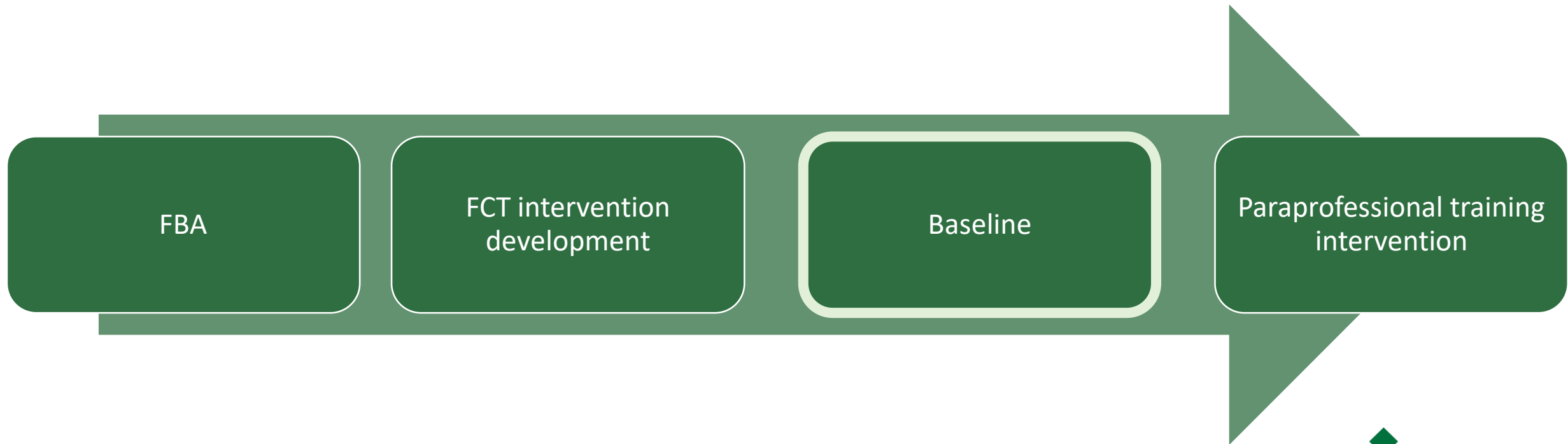
Constant Time Delay



- 1 prompt delivered at a set interval



Baseline



Baseline

Video 1



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Intervention

FBA

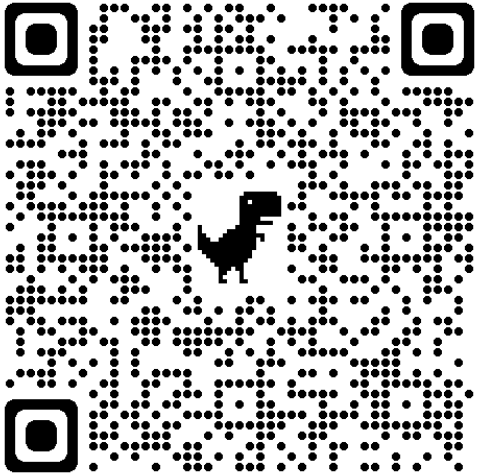
FCT intervention
development

Baseline

Paraprofessional training
intervention



Intervention



FCT COACHING GUIDE

Directions: Follow the coaching procedures for each coaching session. Be sure to audio record the entire session. At the end of the session, complete the coaching fidelity checklist by indicating whether you implemented the coaching procedure (yes), did not implement the coaching procedure (no), or had no opportunity to implement the coaching procedure (no opportunity).

Student: _____ Paraprofessional: _____ Coach: _____
 Date: _____ Coaching session #: _____ Start/end time: _____

| Coaching procedures: | Yes | No | No opportunity |
|--|-----|----|----------------|
| Video review | | | |
| ◆ Coach shares a video clip(s) of instructional elements implemented correctly | | | |
| ◆ Coach shares a video clip(s) of instructional elements implemented incorrectly | | | |
| ◆ Coach identifies focus of coaching session (i.e., instructional elements not implemented correctly) | | | |
| Instruction | | | |
| ◆ Coach provides a description of the instructional procedure(s). | | | |
| ◆ Coach provides a description of why the instructional procedure(s) is important. | | | |
| ◆ Coach provides a description of when and when not to use the instructional procedure(s). | | | |
| Modeling | | | |
| ◆ Coach demonstrates how to perform the instructional procedure(s). | | | |
| Rehearsal | | | |
| ◆ Coach facilitates a role-play in which the paraprofessional practices performing the instructional procedure(s). | | | |
| Feedback | | | |
| ◆ During or after rehearsal, coach provides positive praise for correct implementation and corrective feedback for incorrect implementation. | | | |

Notes from coaching session:



Behavior skills training

Instructions

Modeling

Rehearsal

Feedback



Intervention

Video 2



Results

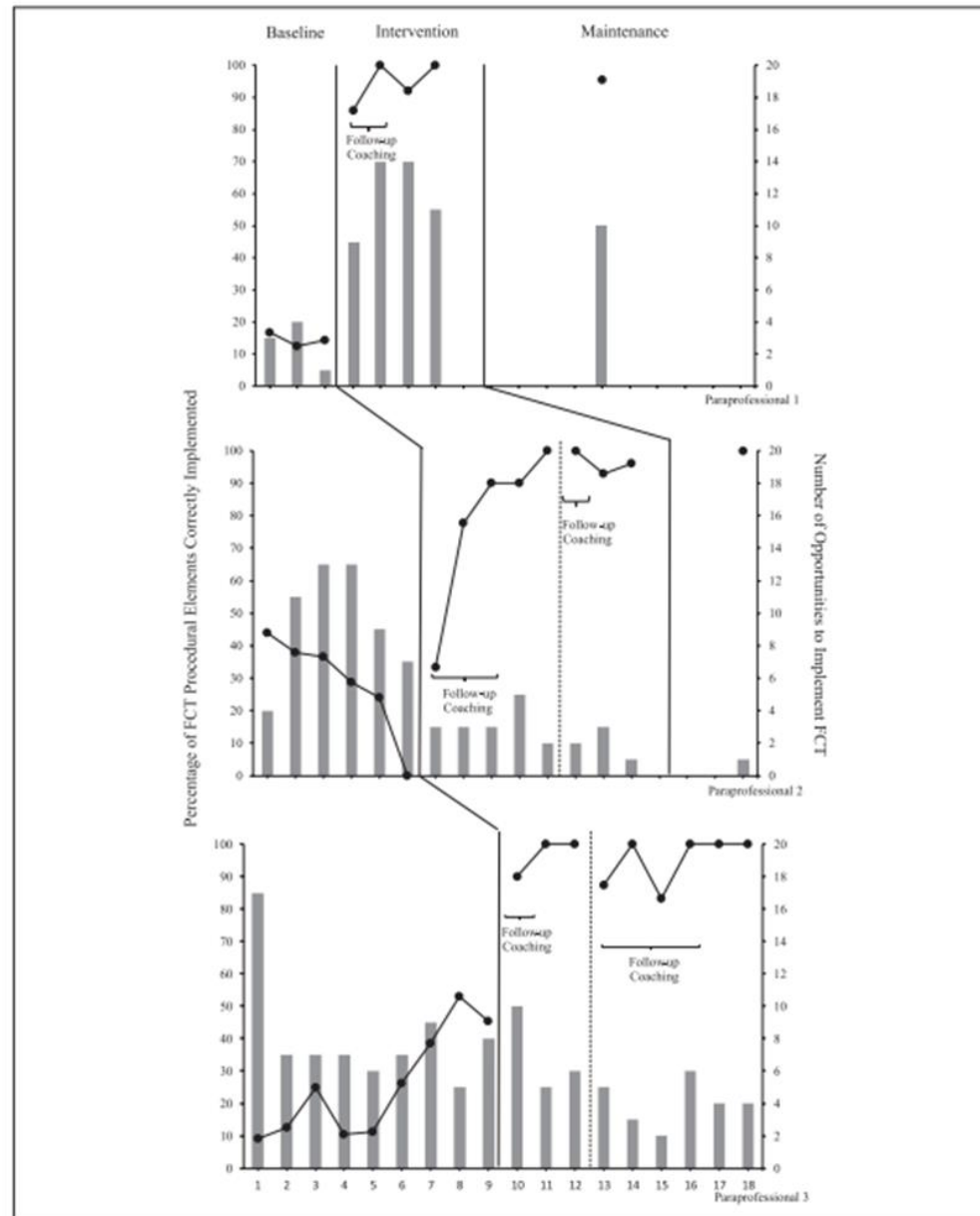


Figure 1. Paraprofessional implementation and opportunities to implement.
 Note. Closed circles represent paraprofessional implementation. Bars represent number of opportunities to implement FCT.



Social Validity

| | Strongly Disagree | Moderately Disagree | Slightly Disagree | Slightly Agree | Moderately Agree | Strongly Agree |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| General Acceptability: This approach to training teaching assistants would be appropriate for a variety of staff. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Effectiveness: The initial training and follow-up coaching sessions will probably not result in FCT implementation that leads to harm to students. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| No Negative Side Effects: The initial training and follow-up coaching sessions provided an appropriate approach to FCT implementation. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |



Research Study #2

Walker, V. L., Carpenter, M. E., Clausen, A., Ealer, K., & Lyon, K. J. (2021). Special educators as coaches to support paraprofessional implementation of functional communication training. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions*, 23(3), 174-184. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1098300720957995>



Research Questions

1. What are the effects of **special educator-delivered** training consisting of an initial training session and follow-up coaching on **paraprofessional implementation of FCT**?
2. Do special educators and paraprofessionals find the paraprofessional training intervention to be **effective and feasible**?



Behavior skills training

Instructions

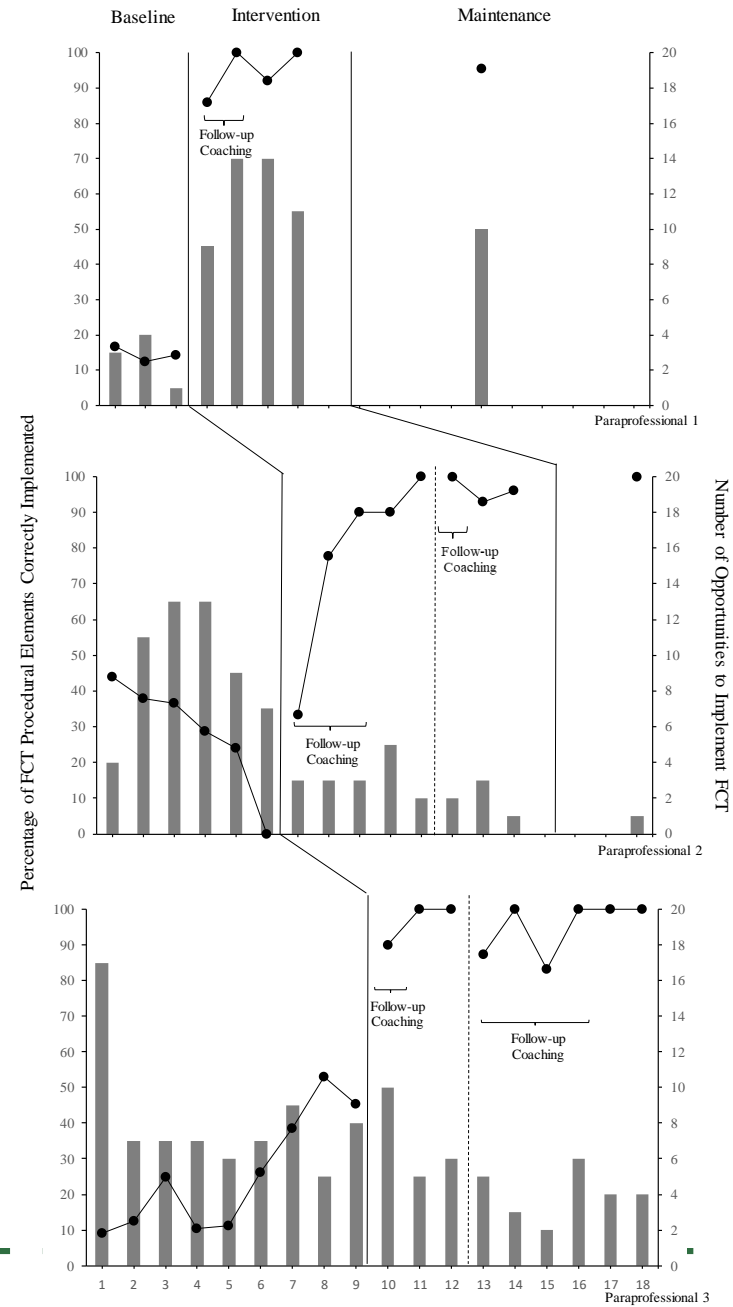
Modeling

Rehearsal

Feedback



Results



Implications

- **Behavioral skills training** as an approach for paraprofessional training
- **Special education teachers**, as opposed to external experts, can be effective trainers
- A need for more **research** to explore effectiveness and feasibility across different students, teachers, paraprofessionals, and school settings



Q&A

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