Social Behavior Mapping © www.socialthinking.com

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Social Behavior Map Instructions : More information on this strategy is provided in our books:
Thinking About You Thinking About Me , 2nd Edition

Samples of the many different Social Behavior Maps are available in:
Social Behavior Mapping (the book)

Social-Behavioral Mapping: Students with Social Learning challenges or related disabilities who have difficulty seeing the "gestalt", thus any behavioral system built for them needs to provide extra information about what we are trying to teach them. It cannot be assumed that a student understands how his behavior is linked to the consequences that follow, or that he understands how his behavior affects the perspective of fellow students or educators. In short this system also teaches social responsibility.

Expected Versus Unexpected Behaviors:

I believe it is also important to teach students about sets of behaviors rather than simply point out each singular behavior that is inappropriate. For example, students in classrooms who have difficulty staying on task and learning as part of a group need to actively learn about "behaviors for learning". Depending on the student, these might include:
   a. Staying in your chair
   b. Sitting up straight in your chair
   c. Keeping your feet on the floor
   d. Looking at the teacher while she is talking.
   e. Keeping your voice quiet except to speak when the teacher has called on you.
   f. Raising your hand when you need help.

   These are the behavioral sets we expect students to perform in order to be ready to learn as part of a group.

To further break this down, we need to explore with a student what behaviors are "expected" versus "unexpected". It is generally accepted that the expected behaviors are the ones that help a child to learn and be seen in a positive light by his peers and educators. It is the unexpected behaviors then that cause a child to be perceived as "weird" by peers and may cause frustration to those trying to support him. In contrast to the above example of " Expected Behaviors For learning", the list of unexpected behaviors may look like:
   a. Falling out of your chair.
   b. Wandering around the class.
   c. Making noises or talking to classmates.
   d. Saying things that are not related to what the teacher is talking about.
   e. Looking in a direction other than at what the teacher wants.
   f. Yelling out answers in class or never raising your hand to give answers.

In school we have can have a number of different behavioral sets:
   a. Expected/Unexpected Behaviors for learning
   b. Expected/Unexpected Behaviors for friendship
   c. Expected/Unexpected Behaviors on the playground
   d. Expected/Unexpected Behaviors when using humor
   e. Expected/Unexpected Behaviors for eating food in the company of others
   f. Expected/Unexpected Behaviors for the home we can also discuss, such as behaviors for being part of a family.

   It is up to the team to determine which behavioral sets are most relevant to work on with any given student.

Perspective Taking and How It Links To Behavior:

Once we have determined what behaviors are expected or unexpected, we then need to explain to students how these behaviors affect people's perspectives. Students with Asperger Syndrome or related disabilities often fail to fully account for the emotional context that surrounds them. First they don't realize that their behavior is inappropriate and additionally, they don't understand that the inappropriateness of the behavior impacts how others feel about them. The next step then, is to map out how people feel when they observe students doing what is expected, versus how they feel when the unexpected happens. Please see the template "Social-Behavioral Mapping" attached.

For example: When a student is sitting up in his desk and watching the teacher, she feels proud of him and happy that he is learning. Other students may also notice that he is doing a good job. However, if a student falls out of his chair or makes "monkey" sounds, the teacher may feel frustrated and worried that he is not learning; other students may notice the distraction too.

Educators have commented that it does not feel comfortable to tell a student that a particular behavior that he is engaging in affects the feeling of the adult or a peer. The important point to consider is that our reluctance to verbally acknowledge our feelings to others is based on the assumption that typical people can "read" them intuitively and thus they can regulate their behavior accordingly. The reality for many of our kids is that they have true social-cognitive deficits impacting their ability to "read" how emotional states are connected to behavioral actions. Of course, this is not to say that there aren't times when one of our students engages in a malicious behavior with full awareness of how he is impacting other people. I have observed students purposely misbehaving, but subsequently I have observed those same students doing an unexpected behavior with no awareness of how it was impacting others in their environment.

Connecting Expectations and Perspective to Consequences:

The final step is to then map out the related consequences. I work with students on improving their understanding that the consequences are often tied to the emotional states of the people around them. If they are doing what is expected, people feel good and they will get some type of acknowledgement (verbal praise) and perhaps even a reward (a star on a chart that eventually earns a break for the student). If the student is doing unexpected behaviors, others in the environment may notice and react to it by giving a less desirable consequence. For example, if a student is being highly distracting to himself and others, he may get three opportunities to collect himself before he is removed from the classroom to calm down. There may also be a decision to remove points from a chart rather than earn them.

While I realize that we try to be extremely positive when working out behavioral teaching plans, it is my opinion that these students have a difficult time knowing when they have done an "unexpected" behavior. By only attending to their positive behavior we may not be giving them all the information they need to see the bigger picture of what they are doing.

To Review:
When using the Social-Behavioral Map, start by completing the "expected" behaviors map (this has the smiley face on it)
   a. List at the top what behavioral set you are describing, e.g. "behaviors for learning"
   b. List the "expected" set of behaviors.
   c. List how his behaviors make other people feel (their perspective). Use emotional words or phrases such as "pleased", "proud", or "happy Paul is working as part of the group"
   d. List what consequences (these are generally the more positive ones) evolved from making people feel good about what he is doing.
   e. Do the same process now on the "unexpected" page but this time after listing the unexpected behaviors to match with the behavioral set you are defining, you then want to:

> a. List how these unexpected behaviors affect someone else's perspective by listing emotional words such as "frustrated", "annoyed", or "worried that Paul is not learning"
>
> b. Then list the related consequences, e.g. "Paul's teacher has a strict tone of voice when she tells him what he needs to do"; "Paul may need to leave the group or the room"; "Paul loses a point on his earning chart", "Paul feels frustrated"

1. Review the maps as a team before they are introduced to the student, it is really important that the parents see these ahead of time and accept the language and consequences.
2. Once approved, copy a bunch of these to use throughout the day in the class or in whatever setting they are needed.
3. These maps are then used to explain to the student what is happening with the people around him when he shows different behaviors. The team then sets a schedule for how often the aide should fill out a map for him. Filling out a map means observing his behaviors and then circling which behavior he was doing, how it made others feel and what the consequence is. The schedule of filling these out should be based on how often you need to do it to generally catch the student in the act of doing what is "expected' so that he gets a lot of positive strokes for seeing what he is supposed to be doing rather than just cueing him when he is not doing something appropriately.
4. Keep a simple graph in the ME Binder (Please refer to the book, Thinking About You Thinking About Me to learn more about this method for teaching students about their own treatment plans) of how many times each day he was "caught in the act of doing something expected" vs. "caught in the act of doing something unexpected". Encourage the student to monitor his own behavior by looking at the graph and set goals to decrease the number of "unexpected" behaviors or increase the number of "expected" behaviors. When he can get his unexpected behaviors down to a specific level, he then earns a larger predetermined reward.

The purpose of the above system is to give more information to the student and his team of educators about his behavior along with providing the vocabulary to describe it with him. I discourage a lot of talk as the maps are being filled out since I don't want to encourage him to be argumentative or thrown way off task. However, the behavioral system is one element of what the student needs in his day. Another element is making sure he has suitable accommodations in his classroom experiences to foster success, which in turn will encourage him to stay behaviorally on track.

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Page 1   Behaviors That Are Expected

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*Behaviors/feeling/consequences are listed in categories in arbitrary order. There is not a 1:1 correlation between the information listed in each column. For example: what ever behavior is listed first does not have to match to the first emotional reaction or the first consequence, etc...

*Expected Behaviors	Feelings of Other People	Consequences	How you feel about the consequences
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			

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Page 2 Behaviors That Are UNEXPECTED

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*Behaviors/feeling/consequences are listed in categories in arbitrary order. There is not a 1:1 correlation between the information listed in each column. For example: what ever behavior is listed first does not have to match to the first emotional reaction or the first consequence, etc...

*UNEXPECTED Behaviors	Feelings of Other People	Consequences	How you feel about the consequences
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			