

# Direct Behavior Rating:

## Definition, Procedures, & Applications in School-Based Behavior Assessment

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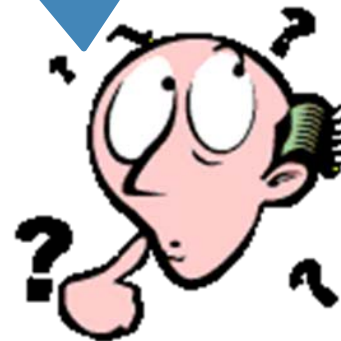
# Purpose

- ◆ Define Direct Behavior Rating (DBR) through review of strengths and limitations of different school-based behavior methods within a multi-tiered model of assessment

# Why should we care about **social behavior** outcomes?

Educators indicate spending a disproportionate amount of time responding to significant behavior challenges presented by a small number of students (U.S. Dept. of Ed., 2000)

1 in 5 children has School discipline is a top concern by the American public (Rose & Gallup, 2005)  
J.S. Surgeon  
eral, 1999)

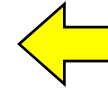


# Examples of Positive **OUTCOMES** across Tiers within Domains of Social Behavior

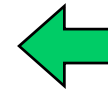
- IEP or other student-specific behavior **goal related to acquisition** of appropriate social skills
- Student-specific behavior **goal related to decrease** in problem behavior
- **Decreases in inappropriate behavior** of student body
- **Decreases in number of students referred for an evaluation** for behavior related disorders



Individual



Targeted



Universal

# Great... So why can't we just implement good practices?

How will you know what you are doing is working?

- ◆ To make effective decisions about which practices are needed and then to evaluate the outcomes of those practices, you need **DATA!**

# REVIEW: How can data be used?

## Purposes of Assessment

- Screening
- Progress Monitoring
- Diagnosis
- Evaluation



Emphasized by  
the National  
Center on  
Response to  
Intervention

# Examples of School-Based DATA Sources on Social Behavior

**ALL BELOW** plus functional assessment data

**ALL BELOW** plus...

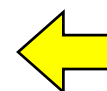
- Norm-referenced comparison data
- More detailed profiles of students' strengths/weaknesses
- Formative data sources sensitive to incremental change

**EFFICIENT, EXTANT SOURCES** such as...

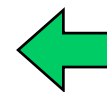
- Total number of office discipline referrals
- Number of students who are suspended or expelled
- Number students referred or found eligible for special education, particularly in the area of emotional disturbance



**Individual**



**Targeted**



**Universal**

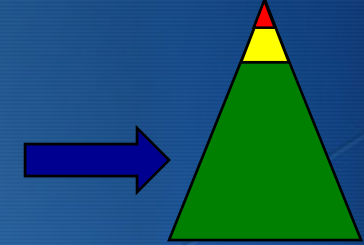
# Sources of School-Based Data on Social Behavior

- ◆ Extant data
- ◆ Standardized behavior rating scales
- ◆ Systematic direct observation
- ◆ Direct Behavior Rating

Currently dominate in clinic and research



# Extant Data



## 💧 Definition:

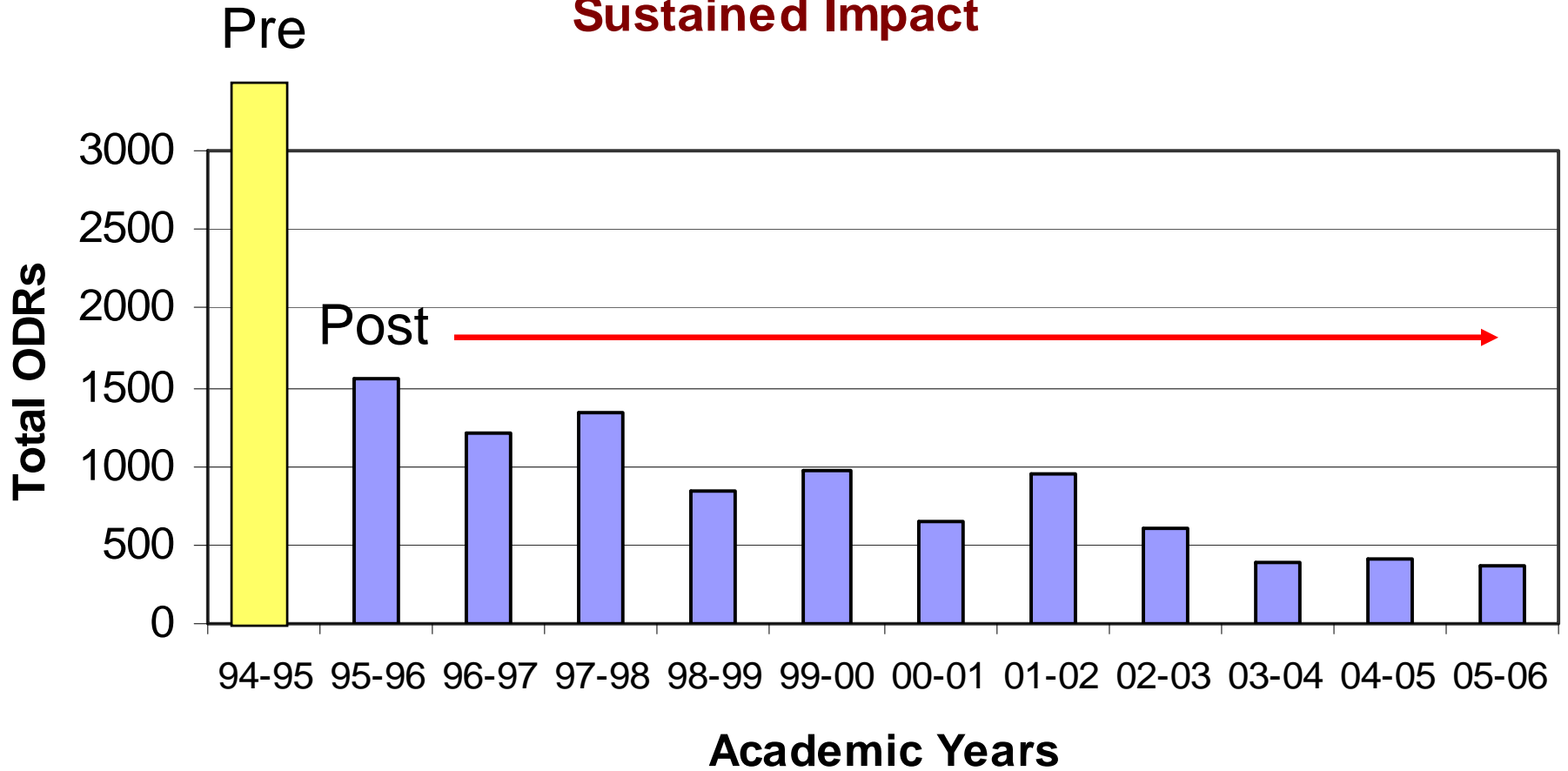
Data sources that already exist within the setting

## 💧 Examples:

- 💧 Office discipline referrals (ODRs)
- 💧 Attendance and tardy records
- 💧 Suspension/expulsion data
- 💧 Special education data (e.g. referrals for emotional disturbance)
- 💧 Data from existing behavior management plans (e.g. token economy)

# FRMS Total Office Discipline Referrals

## Sustained Impact



# Benefits & Limitations of Extant Data

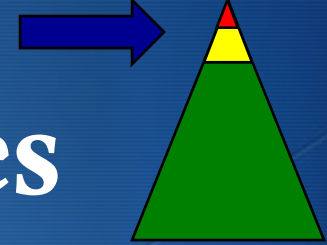
- Complements other sources in providing contextually relevant information
- Source of progress monitoring information
- Less resource-intensive (data readily available!)

- Limited application within prevention
- Tough to establish and maintain consistent/accurate use.
- Unknown psychometric adequacy
- Challenging to create a system for efficient organization and interpretation

# Extant data – summary:

- *Screening* – yes, but may be limited in prevention/early intervention roles
- *Progress monitoring* – yes, but creating usable system for interpretation/presentation can be challenging
- *Diagnosis* – maybe, with regard to adding contextual relevance
- *Evaluation* – yes, relevance within the specific setting but limited with regard to norm comparisons

# Behavior Rating Scales



## Definition:

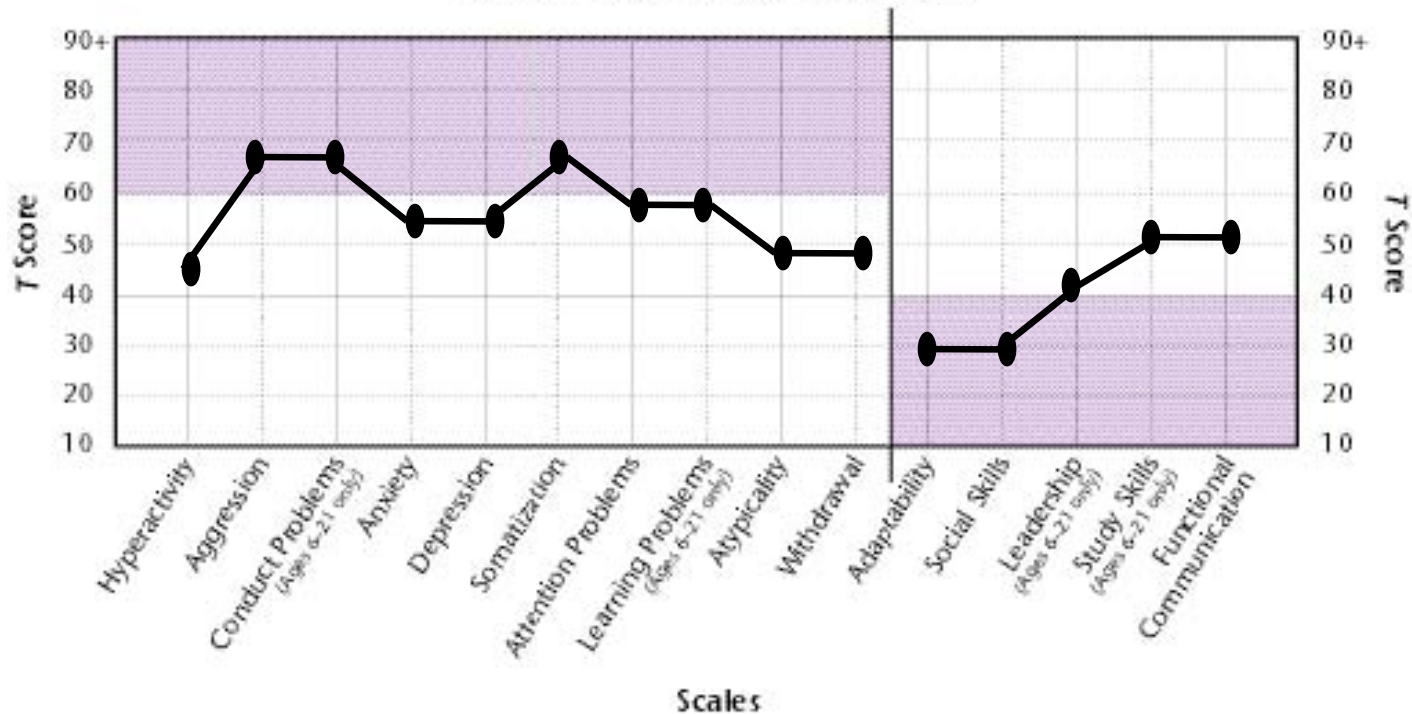
Tools that require an individual to rate the behavior of another based on past observation of that person's behaviors (Kratochwill, Sheridan, Carlson, & Lasecki, 1999).

## Examples:

- Behavior Assessment System for Children – 2 (BASC-2)
- Achenbach System of Empirically-Based Assessment (e.g. CBCL)
- Conner's Rating Scales – 3
- Social Skills Rating System (SSRS)

# Example BASC-2 Score Profile

**Summary Chart of TRS Scale Scores**  
Possible Problem Areas (Shaded Areas)



# Typical Characteristics of Scales

- ◆ Ratings follow actual behavior occurrence, and typically involve **estimation** of behavior over an extended period (e.g., 1 month).
- ◆ Scale comprised of a series of items that **cluster** together under one or more scales.
- ◆ Standardized, norm-referenced behavior rating scales provide a picture of student behavior in **comparison** to a standard.
  - ◆ Comparison across individuals can be useful to understand student behavior in relation to what is typically expected
  - ◆ Comparison within an individual may not be as useful

# Benefits & Limitations of Behavior Rating Scales

- May be most helpful in diagnostic assessment.
- Provide a common understanding of the specific behaviors that are indicative of a given cluster term.
- May also be suited for use in screening and evaluative assessment practices.

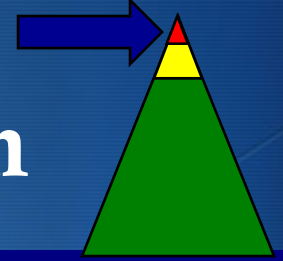
- May not be sensitive to incremental change.
- May be feasible only for occasional use given time/cost.
- Many are clinically-focused (i.e., focus on problem rather than pro-social behavior).
- Do not directly assess behavior –rater bias may be present.



# Behavior Rating Scales – summary:

- ◆ *Screening* – yes, but perhaps not in universal assessment
- ◆ *Progress monitoring* – not likely
- ◆ *Diagnosis* – yes, most common use within clinical settings
- ◆ *Evaluation* – maybe, if the period of time is sufficient and constructs measured are relevant

# Systematic Direct Observation



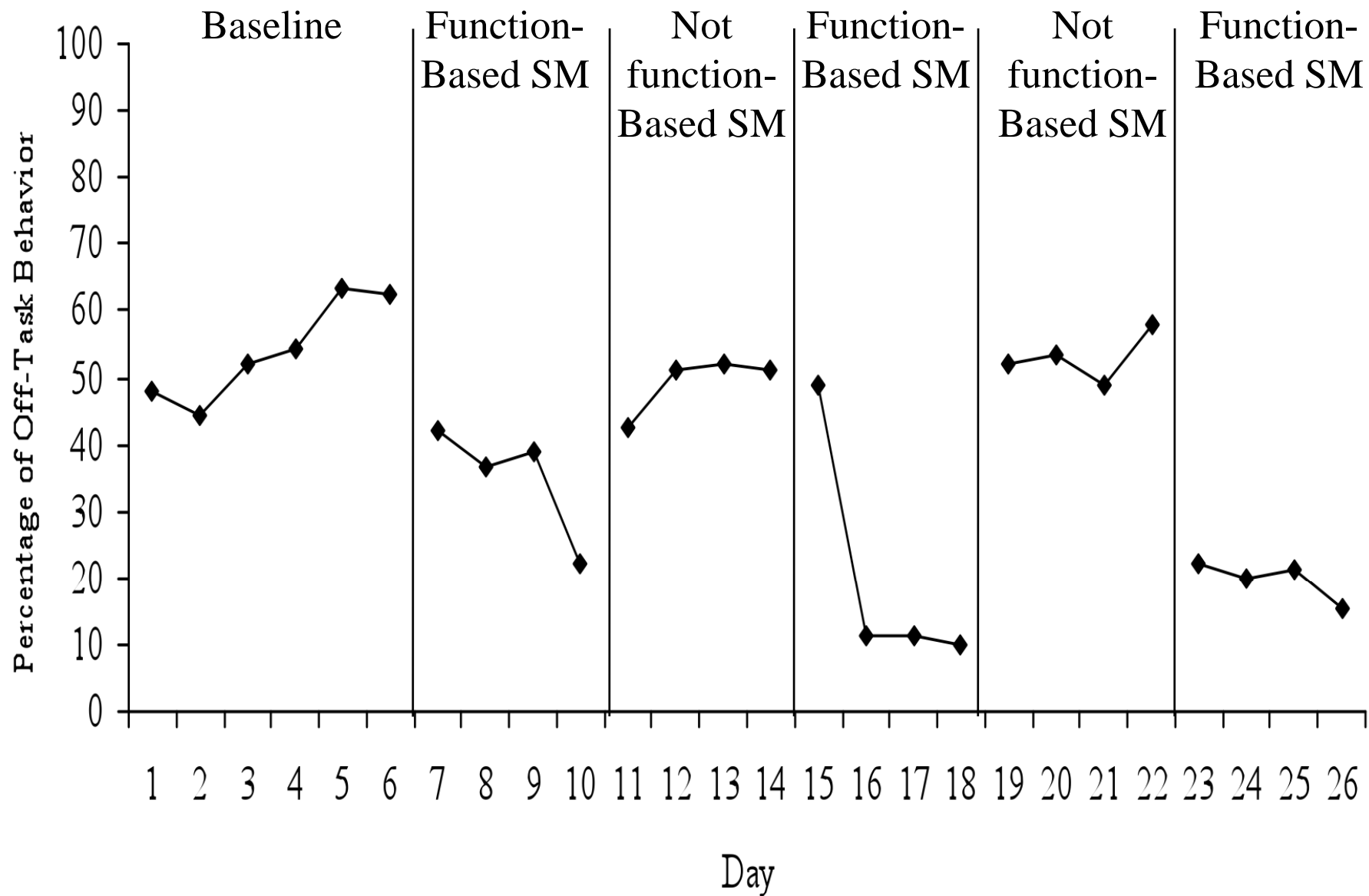
## 💧 Definition:

Data collected by an observer watching an environment/person for some period of time

## 💧 Examples:

- 💧 Percentage of intervals observed to be off-task
- 💧 Frequency of positive peer initiations throughout the day
- 💧 Recording how long it takes to transition in the hallway (duration)

# *Dawn's Percentage of Off-Task Behavior in History Class*



# Benefits & Limitations of SDO

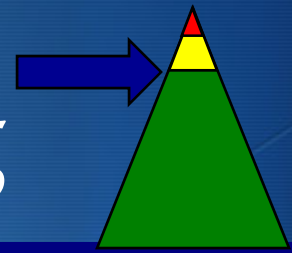
- Highly flexible
- Useful in progress monitoring
- Directness
- Standardized procedures
- Minimal cost for materials

- Potential reactivity
- Observer error/drift
- Limited feasibility re: training and intrusiveness
- Difficult to monitor low frequency behaviors
- Generalizability

# Systematic Direct Observation— summary:

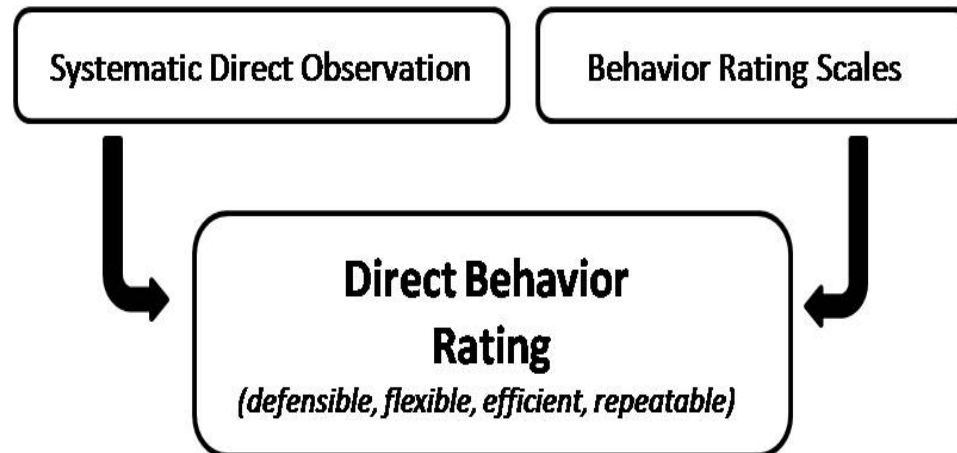
- ◆ *Screening* – not likely in universal assessment
- ◆ *Progress monitoring* – yes!
- ◆ *Diagnosis* – maybe, particularly if within FBA
- ◆ *Evaluation* – not likely

# Direct Behavior Rating



## 💧 Definition:

A tool that involves a brief rating of a target behavior following a specified observation period (e.g. class activity)



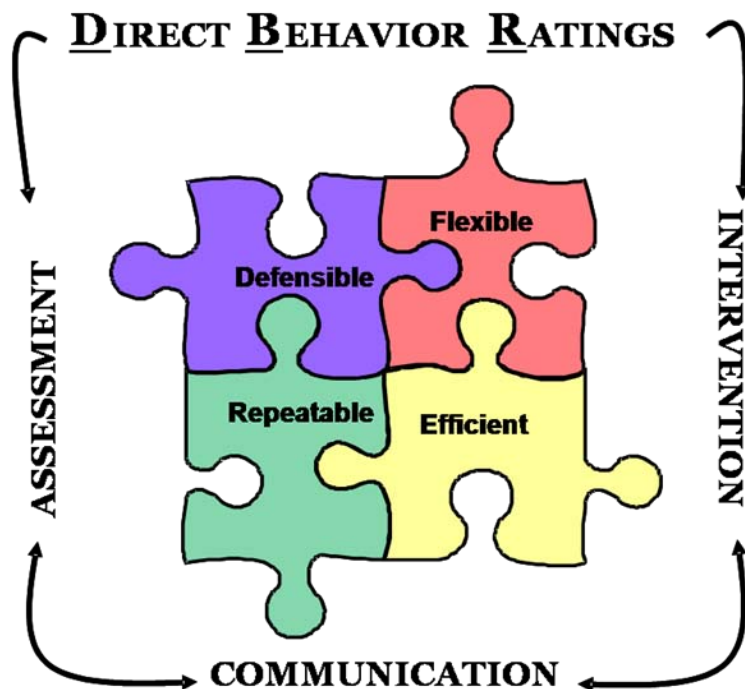
# Other Names for the DBR

(Riley-Tillman, Chafouleas, & Briesch, 2007)

- ◆ Daily Behavior Report Card (DBRC)
- ◆ Home-School Note
- ◆ Behavior Report Card
- ◆ Daily Progress Report
- ◆ Good Behavior Note
- ◆ Check-In Check-Out Card
- ◆ Performance-based behavioral recording
- ◆ Also
  - ◆ Self Management/Monitoring Card
  - ◆ Point Card
  - ◆ Teacher Rating Form



# Direct Behavior Rating

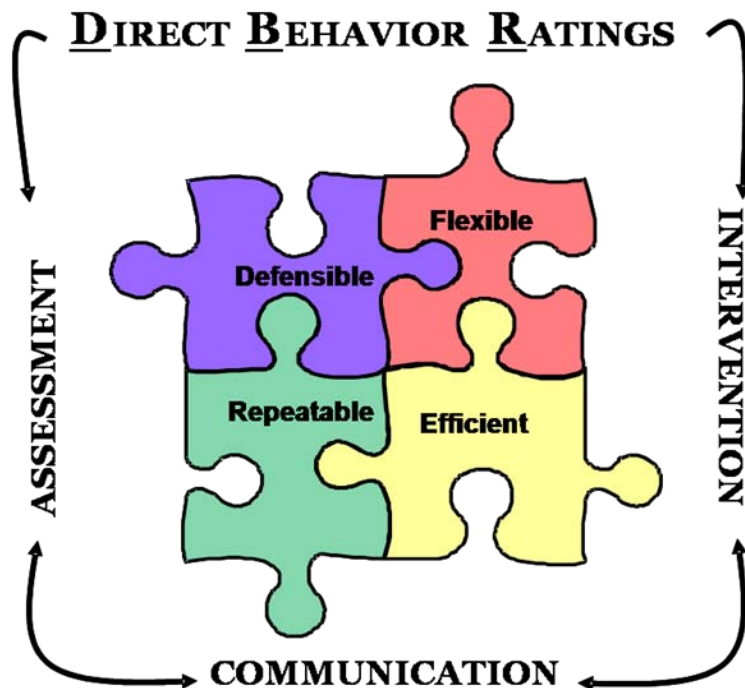


## Direct

- Establishes that the observation and rating **occur at the time and place** that behavior occurs.
- This minimizes
  - inference &
  - retrospective judgments



# Direct Behavior Ratings

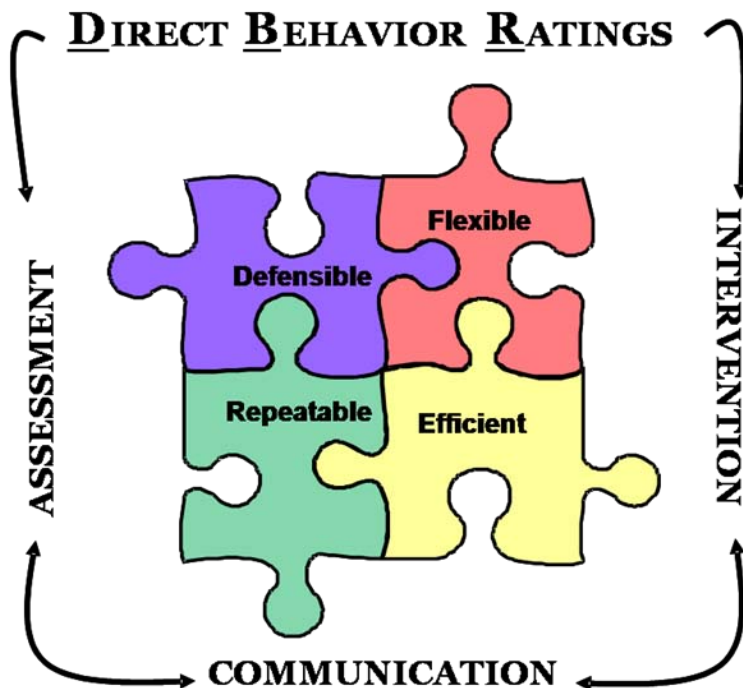


## Behavior

- The target of assessment must be **accessible for observation** and evaluation by the intended rater.
- The preference is to observe behavior within the **naturalistic setting**.
- Contents/modalities for behavioral assessment are **motor, physiological, and cognitive** (Cone, 1978).

# Direct Behavior Rating

## Rating



- Quantify a person's **perception** or attitude toward something.
- DBR can be compared to any of a variety of other problem solving and behavioral assessments
  - SDO
  - Interviews
  - Behavioral rating scales

# Example: DBR-like Tool



The Behavior  
Reporter

On-Line Behavior Report  
Card Generator  
A service of [www.interventioncentral.org](http://www.interventioncentral.org)

## Behavior Report Card

Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_ Classroom: \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** Review each of the Behavior Report Card items below. For each item, rate the degree to which the student showed the behavior or met the behavior goal.

***The student focused his or her attention on teacher instructions, classroom lessons and assigned work.***

Circle the degree to which the student met the behavioral goal:

1.....2.....3.....| 4.....5.....6.....| 7.....8.....9  
Never/Seldom                      Sometimes                      Usually/Always

***The student sat in class without fidgeting or squirming more than most peers.***

Circle the degree to which the student met the behavioral goal:













1.....2.....3.....| 4.....5.....6.....| 7.....8.....9  
Never/Seldom                      Sometimes                      Usually/Always

***The student remembered academic instructions and directions without needing extra reminders.***

Circle the degree to which the student met the behavioral goal:

1.....2.....3.....| 4.....5.....6.....| 7.....8.....9  
Never/Seldom                      Sometimes                      Usually/Always

# Example: DBR-like Tool

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Student _____ (specify behavior here)   					
Student _____ (specify behavior here)   					
Student _____ (specify behavior here)   					
Student _____ (specify behavior here)   					

## DBR Form

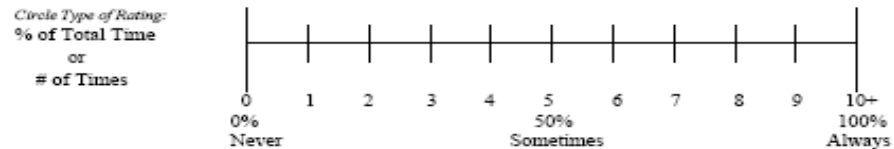
Date: M T W Th F	Student: Rater:	Activity Description:
Observation Time: Start: _____ End: _____  <input type="checkbox"/> Check if no observation today	Behavior Descriptions: <b>Academically engaged</b> is actively or passively participating in the classroom activity. For example: writing, raising his/her hand, answering a question, talking about a lesson, listening to the teacher, reading silently, or looking at instructional materials.  <b>Disruptive Behavior</b> is student action that interrupts regular school or classroom activity. For example: out of his/her seat, fidgeting, playing with objects, acting aggressively, talking/yelling about things that are unrelated to classroom instruction.  (If desired) <b>Optional Behavior</b> is	

Directions: Place a slash (/) along the line that best reflects (a) % of total time student was academically engaged and (b) % of total time or total # of times student exhibited disruptive behavior during the observation period. If desired, an additional behavior may be included by providing a definition above and then rating on the "optional behavior" line.

### Academically Engaged



### Disruptive Behavior



### Optional Behavior

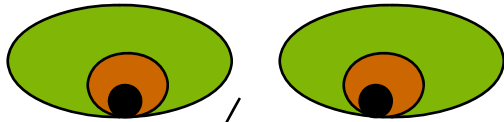


**Example:**  
**Standard**  
**Form for**  
**Single-item**  
**DBR scales**

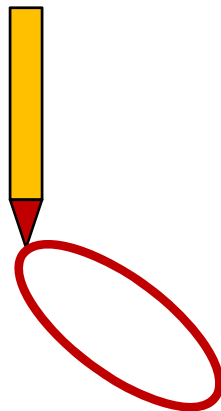
**Download:**

[www.directbehaviorratings.com](http://www.directbehaviorratings.com)

# DBR Key Features



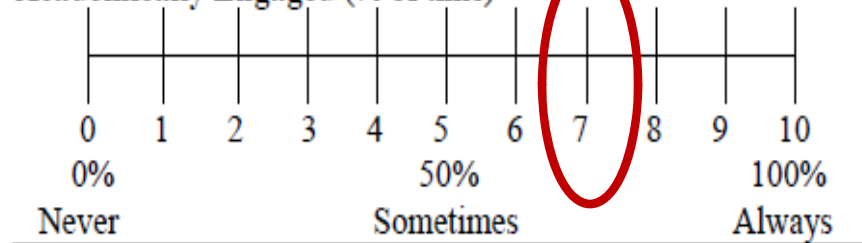
**Observe  
then  
Record**



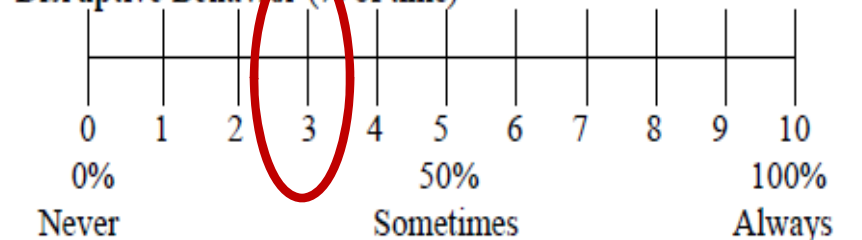
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_

Academically Engaged (% of time)



Disruptive Behavior (% of time)



# How do I create a DBR form?

- 1) Define the target behavior.
- 2) Select the type of rating scale and rating frequency.
  - ✓ e.g., % of total time target behavior is observed daily during large group Math instruction
- 3) Design the DBR.
- 4) For intervention purposes, determine if consequence will be used, and if so, define the criteria.
- 5) Generate a list of potential consequences.
- 6) Determine the responsibilities of all parties involved.

# How do I use the DBR form?

- 1) Complete top portion of the form
  - ✓ Student's name, Date, Rating period(s)
  - ✓ Review behavior definitions and rating directions
- 2) Have the form ready for completion following each pre-identified activity period
  - ✓ e.g., Reading block, Independent seat work
- 3) Immediately following the activity period, complete the ratings
  - ✓ Do not complete the rating if you aren't confident you directly observed the student for a sufficient amount of time

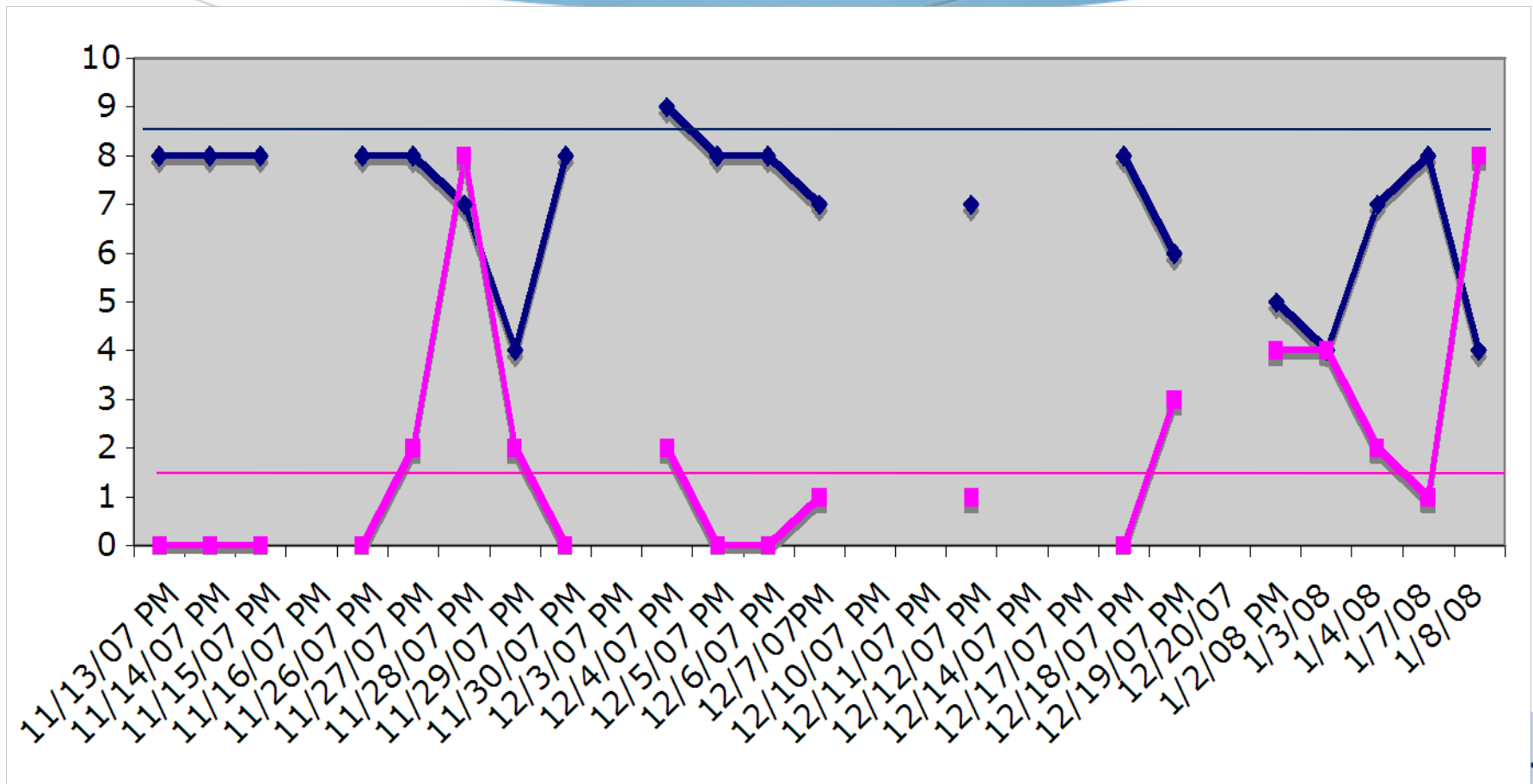


# When rating, remember...

- ◆ Ratings should correspond to the proportion of time that you actually observed the student display the target behavior.
  - ◆ Complete immediately following the activity period.
  - ◆ Do not complete if you did not observe for a sufficient amount of time.
- ◆ When rating, each behavior should be considered independently of the other targets. **That is, total ratings across behaviors do not have to equal 100%.**
  - ◆ For example, a student may be engaged 50% of the time, and disruptive 20%. A student may also be engaged for 100% of the time, and disruptive for 10%.

# Example DBR Data Profile

DBR Afternoon (11/13 to 1/8)



# Project VIABLE:

## Validation of Instruments for Assessing Behavior Longitudinally and Efficiently

### Purpose:

To develop and  
evaluate DBR as a  
General Outcome  
Measure (GOM)  
for Behavior

**Sandra M. Chafouleas, Ph.D.**

**T. Chris Riley-Tillman, Ph.D.**

**Theodore J. Christ, Ph.D.**



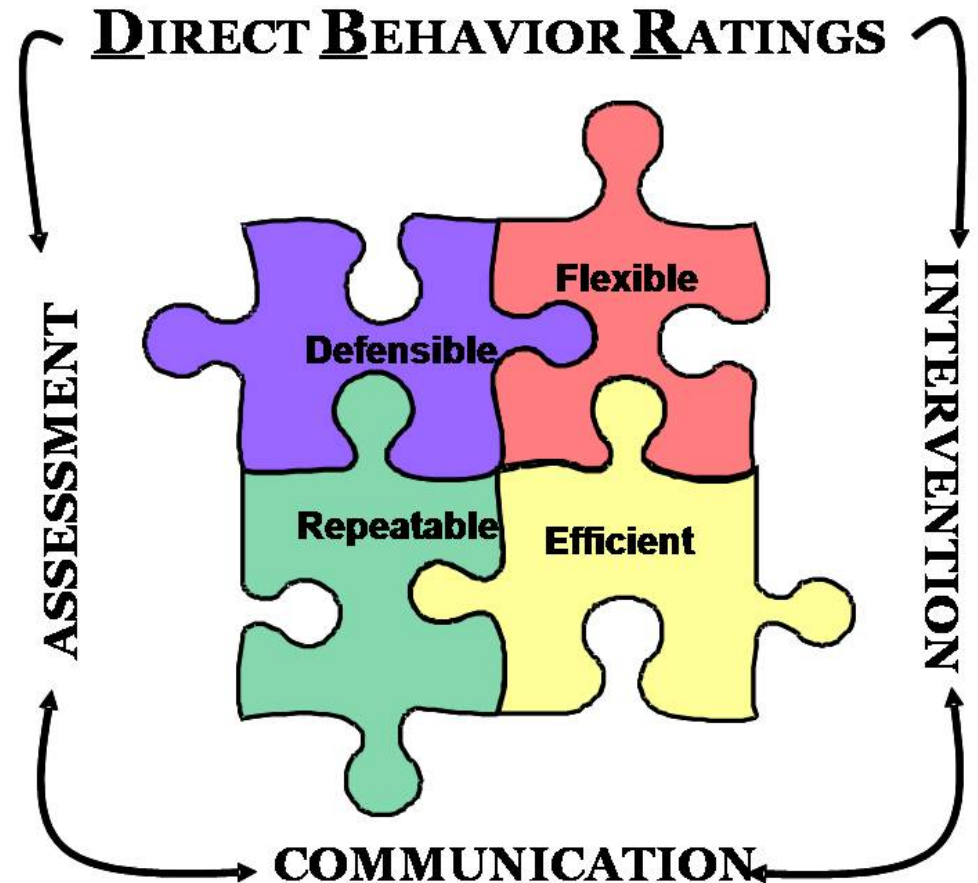
Research was supported in part by a grant from the **Institute for Education Sciences**, U.S. Department of Education (R324B060014).



# DBR Research Directions

## Past:

- Establish recommended instrumentation and procedures



## DBR Form

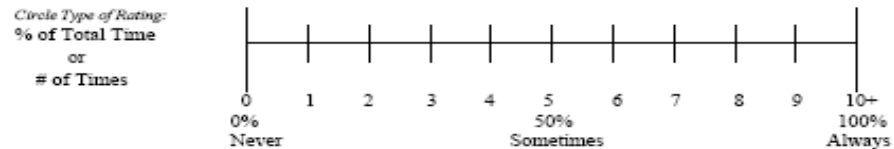
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Directions: Place a slash (/) along the line that best reflects (a) % of total time student was academically engaged and (b) % of total time or total # of times student exhibited disruptive behavior during the observation period. If desired, an additional behavior may be included by providing a definition above and then rating on the "optional behavior" line.

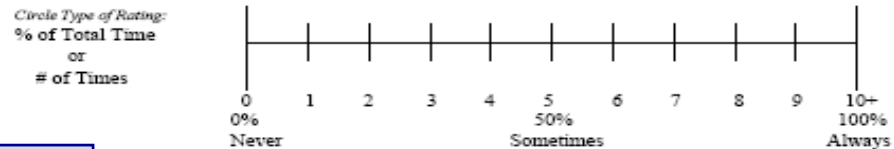
### Academically Engaged



### Disruptive Behavior



### Optional Behavior



**Example:**  
**Standard**  
**Form for**  
**Single-item**  
**DBR scales**

**Download:**

[www.directbehaviorratings.com](http://www.directbehaviorratings.com)

# Which “GOM” behaviors are we investigating?

**Academic  
Engagement**

Actively or passively participating in the classroom activity.

**Compliance**

To initiate/complete a response to an adult request in a timely and socially acceptable manner.

**Disruptive  
Behavior**

A student action that interrupts regular school or classroom activity.

# DBR Research Directions

## Past:

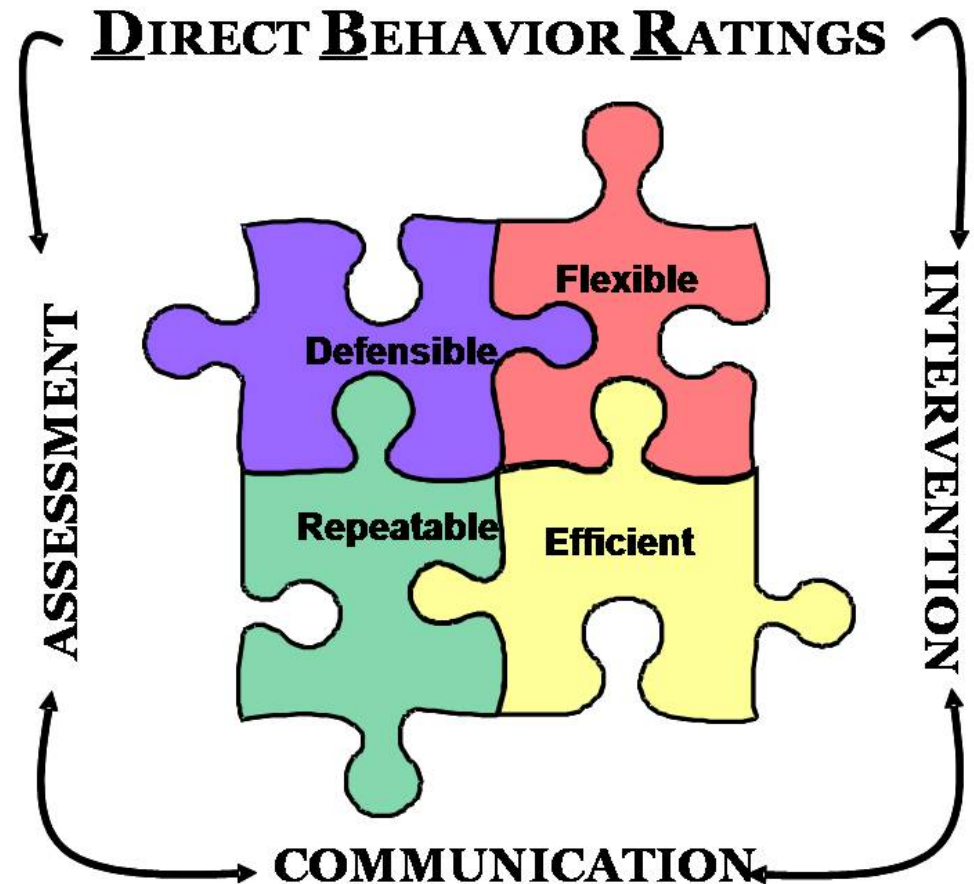
- Establish recommended instrumentation and procedures

## Present:

- Establish “training”
- Build web-based application
- Continue technical adequacy

## Future:

- Investigate application in screening
- Examine utility in schools and beyond...
- Return to the assessment-intervention link



# Initial Studies and Findings

- ◆ *What do Daily Behavior Report Cards (DBRCs) measure? An initial comparison of DBRCs with direct observation for off-task behavior*
  - ◆ (Chafouleas, McDougal, Riley-Tillman, Panahon, & Hilt, 2005)
  - ◆ Conclusion: a **moderate association** between teacher perceptions of behavior as measured by DBRC ratings and direct observation conducted by an external observer.



# Initial Studies and Findings

- ◆ *An analysis of the similarity of Direct Behavior Ratings and Systematic Direct Observation for off-task and disruptive behaviors*
  - ◆ (Riley-Tillman, Chafouleas, Sassu, Chanese, & Glazer, 2008)
  - ◆ Conclusion: **replicated moderate association** between teacher perceptions of behavior as measured by DBRC ratings and direct observation conducted by an external observer.

# Initial Studies and Findings

- ◆ *The consistency of Daily Behavior Report Cards in monitoring interventions*
  - ◆ (Chafouleas, Riley-Tillman, Sassu, LaFrance, & Patwa, 2007)
  - ◆ Conclusion: suggested **similar conclusions** might be drawn when visually examining data collected by an external observer using either systematic direct observation or a DBRC

# Initial Studies and Findings

- ◆ *Acceptability and reported use of Daily Behavior Report Cards among teachers*
  - ◆ (Chafouleas, Riley-Tillman, & Sassu, 2006)
- ◆ Conclusion: provide support to previous claims that the **DBRC is both a used and accepted** tool in practice

# Who already uses Daily Behavior Report Cards (DBRC)?

(Chafouleas, Riley-Tillman, & Sassu, 2006)

## Teacher Survey about DBRC:

- ◆ Purpose
  - ◆ 60% use to **change student behavior** (Intervention)
  - ◆ 32% use to **monitor** (Assessment)
  - ◆ 32% use “routinely” for **classroom management** (Intervention)
- ◆ Types of Behaviors
  - ◆ 81% to identify positive behaviors
  - ◆ 77% to identify negative behaviors
- ◆ For Whom?
  - ◆ 86% use with **individual students**
  - ◆ 19% with whole class
  - ◆ 9% with small groups



# Direct Behavior Ratings

Assessment • Communication • Intervention

[www.directbehaviorratings.com/index.html](http://www.directbehaviorratings.com/index.html)

The screenshot shows the homepage of the Direct Behavior Ratings website. At the top is the logo and the title "Direct Behavior Ratings" with the tagline "Assessment • Communication • Intervention". Below this is a navigation menu with links for Assessment, Communication, Intervention, People, DBR News, Projects, Library, and DBR-BASIS Login. The main content area is divided into three sections: "News", "About Us", and a featured article. The "News" section contains several bullet points about upcoming special issues and presentations. The "About Us" section lists three faculty members with their titles and affiliations. The featured article, titled "Allows for feasible and effective assessment of behavior", includes a photo of a young boy writing at a desk and a quote from a kindergarten teacher.

## Direct Behavior Ratings

Assessment • Communication • Intervention

Assessment Communication Intervention People DBR News Projects Library DBR-BASIS Login

### News

Upcoming Special Issue of the Journal Assessment for Effective Interventions:

- Direct Behavior Rating (DBR): An Emerging Method for Assessing Social Behaviors within a Targeted Intervention System


Upcoming DBR Presentations


Current/Recent Research Studies:


- Preschool intervention study that use Direct Behavior Ratings as a communication tool
- Direct Behavior Ratings direct training study looking at the effects of direct training with corrective feedback on raters.

[click for more](#)

### About Us

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Associate Professor,  
School Psychology  
343 Education Sciences  
Building

[click for more](#)

## Allows for feasible and effective assessment of behavior

"I was surprised at how easy it was to complete the Direct Behavior Rating forms. This information is really valuable in helping me understand what's happening in my classroom." Sue, Kindergarten teacher

**What is Direct Behavior Rating (DBR) ?**

DBR involves rating of behavior following a specified observation period, and then sharing of that information to inform decisions. As an example, a teacher might use DBR to rate how well Johnny paid attention in math class. Then, that teacher might share that rating with Johnny and, as part of an intervention, link a consequence (e.g. sticker) to that rating. DBR tools have a long history of use as a component of a behavior support plan (e.g. self-management, behavior contract), as well as the method for collecting information about behavior change over time (e.g. monitoring effects of medication for ADHD). Other common terms for DBR tools have included home-school note, good behavior note, behavior report card, etc...

**Why use Direct Behavior Rating?**

DBR can facilitate communication among students, parents, and teachers because ratings can provide a simple, inexpensive, and flexible way to provide frequent feedback about behavior. DBR is also appealing given a connection between data collection and intervention – DBR may serve both purposes! For example, DBR can be used to monitor behavior in response to an intervention while at the same time serving as an intervention tool to teach and reinforce expectations regarding behavior.

The screenshot shows a page titled "DBR for Intervention" on the Direct Behavior Ratings website. It features the same logo and navigation menu as the homepage. The main content includes a definition of an intervention, a section on how to use a DBR for intervention, a list of additional resources, and a section on who can use a DBR for intervention. A photo of a young girl holding a "BEHAVIOR CARD" with an "A+" grade is featured on the right side of the page.

## Direct Behavior Ratings

Assessment • Communication • Intervention

Assessment Communication Intervention People DBR News Projects Library DBR-BASIS Login

### DBR for Intervention

An intervention is a planned set of activities designed to improve desired behavior. A substantial body of research exists to demonstrate the effectiveness of interventions that include DBR as one component.

**How can I use a DBR for intervention?**

In addition to use in communication and assessment as an important part of providing comprehensive behavior supports, DBR is frequently used as one part of an intervention package, such as in an incentive program or self-management.

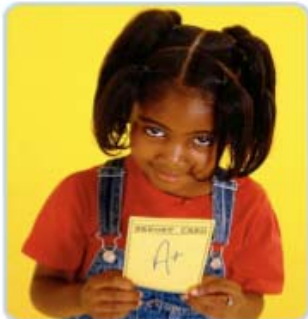
- **Incentive programs** (point cards) establish behavior contracts and systematic feedback between the child and adult. The frequent feedback provided by DBR, combined with short term goals and incentives, function to promote positive behavior and reduce undesirable behavior.
- **Self-management** components are often used as part of a behavior intervention given the opportunity to teach children skills needed to independently monitor and evaluate behavior. In self-monitoring, children use DBR to rate their own behavior, perhaps at the same time the adults rates the same behavior.

**Who can use a DBR for intervention?**

DBR should be used by parents, teachers, children, administrators, and intervention teams to facilitate interventions designed to improve behavior. It is likely that many intervention applications will be paired with effective assessment and communication components using DBR.

### Additional Resources

- PowerPoint: DBR for Intervention
- DBR Standard Form
- DBR Standard Form Instructions
- DBR Intervention Protocols:
  - Incentive program
  - Self Management
- Other Resources



# Current - Future Directions

## DBR – BASIS

- A web-based application will serve to increase utility of the DBR in behavioral assessment given ease of data entry, analysis, and presentation.



# Benefits & Limitations of DBR

- Highly flexible

- Useful in progress monitoring

- Directness

- Potential for standardized procedures

- Minimal cost for materials

- Generalizability

- Rater bias is likely present

- Training requirements unknown

- Limited psychometric knowledge beyond DBR-SIS

# Direct Behavior Rating – summary:

- ◆ *Screening* - maybe
- ◆ *Progress monitoring* - yes
- ◆ *Diagnosis* – maybe, particularly if within FBA
- ◆ *Evaluation* – not likely



# REVIEW: Methods of Social Behavior Assessment

- Extant data
- Standardized behavior rating scales
- Systematic direct observation
- Direct Behavior Rating

**WHICH TO USE?** Consider...

**Psychometric adequacy**

**Usability**

**Contextual relevance**

# Why do I need data?

At what level should the problem be solved?  
(Primary, Secondary, Tertiary)

What is the purpose of assessment?  
(Screening, Progress Monitoring, Evaluation, Diagnosis)

## Which data do I need?

Which tools are best matched to assess the behavior of interest?

*Contextual relevance*

What decisions will be made using these data?

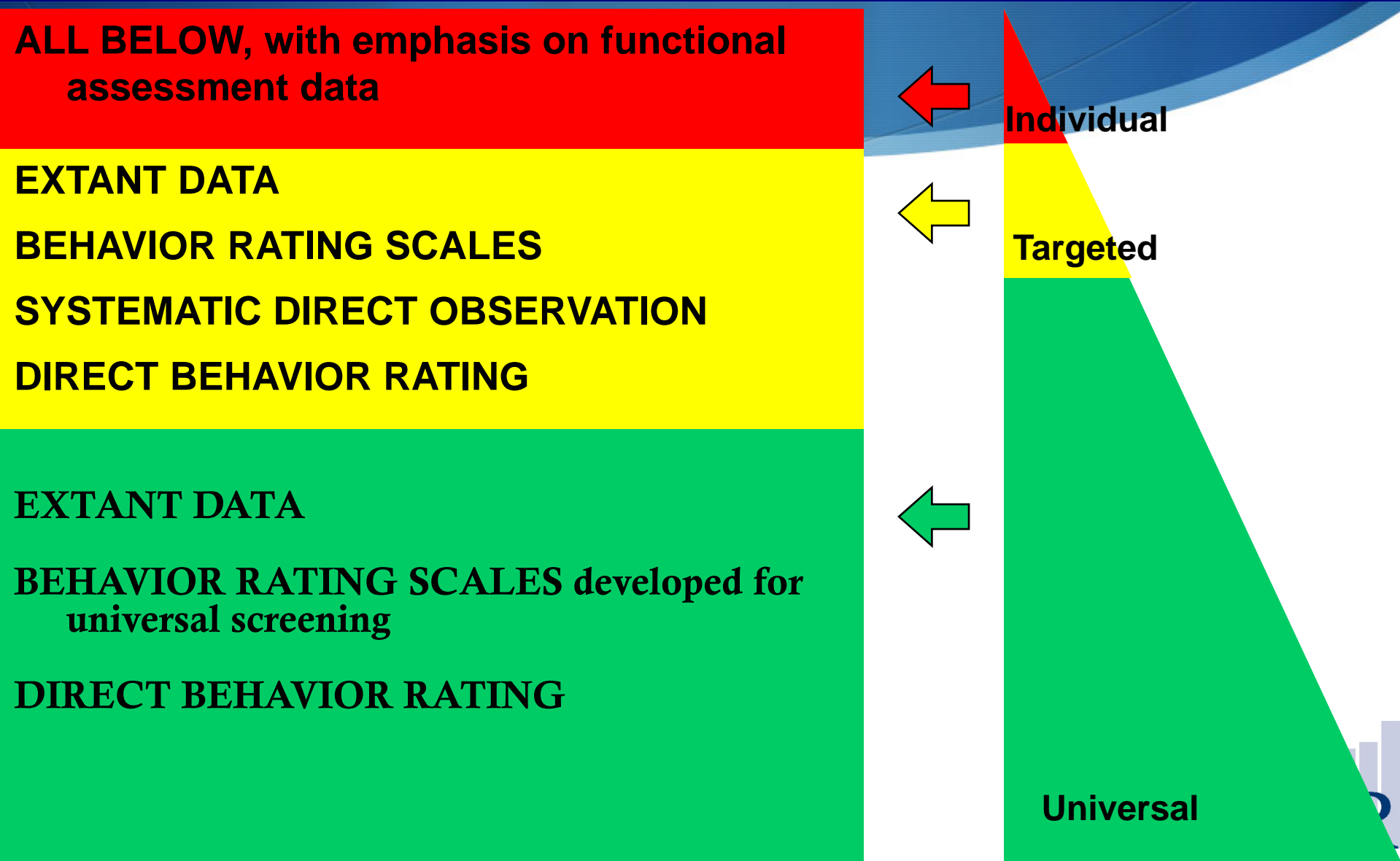
*Psychometric Adequacy*

What resources are available to collect data?

*Usability*

## Which tools can answer these questions?

# SUMMARY: Behavior Assessment Methods within RTI



# For Additional Information...

## Contact:

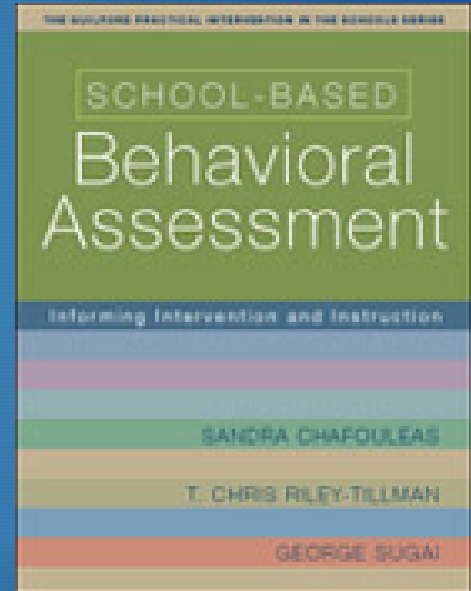
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## Further information:

Chafouleas, S.M., Riley-Tillman, T.C., & Sugai, G. (2007). *School-Based Behavioral Assessment: Informing Instruction and Intervention*. New York: Guilford.



Note. This presentation can be downloaded from [www.directbehaviorratings.com](http://www.directbehaviorratings.com)