CONSULTANT'S SCRIPT FOR PATHWAY CHARTING

Opening: *"Let's begin by graphically illustrating why we think this problem is occurring, and once we have a working hypothesis diagrammed, we will move on to designing interventions to address the problem.* **(Place Pathway diagram on chart paper, overhead, or projected computer screen to focus team on the analysis, not the consultant.)** *Those interventions will be in three areas: what we can do to help this student perform well in school, the upper pathway, how we can prevent and safely handle the problem if it occurs again, the middle pathway, and then an acceptable alternative when our efforts to achieve the upper pathway are not entirely effective, the lower pathway. Our behavior plan will be built on this three pathway analysis we are about to begin. The science of behavior is built on core beliefs that behavior is learned, and that lasting change occurs when we approach behavior change from a positive behavioral intervention perceptive. Thus, our plan will be built on developing student skills, reinforcing desired behavior, and altering environments to remove variables that lead to problem behavior or adding variables that would support the desired behaviors. This pathway process will help us focus our thinking of how we can accomplish this."*

Point to each box on your blank Three Pathway Summary as you complete this sequence.

First Step: *"Let's describe the behavior in such a way that anyone would know what we are talking about. So, we can't just say he/she is defiant; we need to describe what it looks and sounds like when a behavior we call defiant is occurring. How shall we describe this problem behavior?"*

Second Step: *"What exactly would we want this student to be doing at the time the problem occurs? What are all the students doing that we consider positive behavior, e.g., are the students working on tasks we have assigned? This is the general positive behavior that supports academic and social success."* **(Turn to the teacher(s) present for your lead on steps two and three.)**

Third Step: *"If the student engaged in the step two general positive behaviors, what would be the typical consequence or educational outcome be for the students?"*

Fourth Step: *"Ok, exactly what are the variables present, the antecedents, to this problem behavior? Looking at the environmental analysis we conducted, let's discuss these observations."* **Review your observations of what is present that you hypothesize is the trigger for the problem behavior. Remember to use "not yet" if a variable is not present that therefore results in the student engaging in the problem, e.g., "*Johnny has not yet been taught an individual schedule to anticipate what is coming next in his day.*"**

Fifth Step: *"Let's consider this now from the student's perspective. Something happens after this behavior that supports the student choosing this behavior. It has worked in the past, and is working now to produce something the student desires. The science of behavior analysis says al behavior is learned, and that behavior is reinforced and occurs again and again because of*

an outcome. That outcome is either 1) getting something or 2) rejecting something (avoiding, protesting or escaping something). Let's examine our data and experience with this student and generate a hypothesis that summarizes this chain of events."

Sixth Step: *"Ok, I think we now have a pretty clear picture of what we want the student to be doing, and a pretty clear picture of the triggers for our problem. Now, has anyone noticed any periodically occurring events that make it even more likely that when confronted by the antecedents we have identified that XXX will use the problem behavior? For example, when he doesn't sit in the usual spot, when someone has said something unpleasant to him, when he is late for school, etc. We call these "setting events" and we want to be sure to have an intervention to use in our plan if a setting event is present."*

Seventh Step: *"Now we come to the hardest part of a function-based analysis. We are going to design a plan that helps XXX do the desired alternative positive behavior. And, our plan will block XXX from using the problem behavior to get or reject what we have identified. But to achieve that, we will want to consider acceptable alternative behavior that allows him to either get or reject, but through using a different behavior. The* function *will be the same, but the* form *of the behavior will be different. For some students this will be a tolerable, temporary behavior, and we can expect that it will be chosen less and less by the student as the supports we put in place for the upper pathway become more effective. For other students with greater behavioral challenges, and often greater general skill deficits or intellectual disability, we may wish to encourage this behavior for a longer period of time."*

Summarize: *"So, we have outlined three distinct pathways.* **(Point and describe the graphed content you have just charted.)** *The upper pathway we will support through interventions, environmental changes and increasing reinforcement for the desired behavior.* **(Gesture the upper pathway.)** *The middle pathway we will block through ways we prompt replacement behaviors, and how we react to the problem if it occurs.* **(Gesture the middle pathway.)** *The lower pathway is the tolerable path we will teach, reinforce and prompt the student to use."* **(Gesture the lower pathway.)**

Moving Functional Assessment to Behavior Planning: *"We are now ready to design the interventions that match the analysis we have just completed. Our plan will include environmental changes that support XXX in achieving the desired positive behaviors we want.* **(Gesture the upper pathway and read the content of the dotted arrows.)** *Our plan will specify how to prompt the student to either the upper pathway or lower pathway when triggering antecedents are present.* **(Gesture the dotted arrows between triggering antecedents and problem behavior.)** *Our plan will describe how staff should respond after the problem behavior is present, either allowing the student to switch to the acceptable alternative or the desired alternative."* **(Gesture the two reactive strategies up and down.)**

"We will also describe how to handle the problem safely if our intervention did not divert the behavior, **(Gesture to arrow between problem behavior and maintaining consequence)** *and how we will debrief with the student or apply school based consequences if required*

following the students return to acceptable behavior." **(Gesture to the straight arrow reactive strategies to the right of the maintaining consequences box.)**

Preview the Behavior Plan Sequence: *"We are now ready to develop a function based behavior intervention plan based on our analysis. As we complete this process, let's keep referring to our analysis we just charted to be sure our interventions directly address the problem. Here is a preview of how other teams have found they can address this process efficiently:*

- *Let's begin by addressing the environmental changes we need to put in place and how we can reinforce this student more effectively for either pathway.* **(Gesture to the line 7 arrows-environmental changes, and line 11-reinforcement.)**

- *After we finish the upper pathway interventions, we will be ready to address the lower pathway, functional equivalent behavior, how we will teach, reinforce and prompt this behavior and going back and adding any environmental changes we will need to facilitate this pathway, line 9.*

- *Finally, we will address the middle pathway, the reactive strategies we will use to prevent the expression of the problem behavior, line 12, section 1,2,3,4)"*