

Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPs): What Parents Should Know

(Bison Bridge Behavioral Insights Parent Resource — K–12 Edition)

What is a Behavior Intervention Plan?

A **Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP)** is a written plan that helps prevent challenging behaviors and teaches positive replacement skills. It is based on a **Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA)** — a process that looks at why a behavior is happening.

BIPs are often part of an IEP or 504 Plan and are especially helpful when behavior is getting in the way of learning.

What a BIP Should Include

A strong Behavior Intervention Plan is specific, proactive, and practical. It should include:

- **Description of the behavior** (what it looks like in observable terms)
 - **When and where the behavior happens most** (patterns or triggers)
 - **What the child may be trying to get or avoid** (function of behavior)
 - **Positive supports to prevent the behavior** (environmental changes)
 - **Replacement skills** (what the student will be taught to do instead)
 - **Response strategies** (how staff will respond if the behavior happens)
 - **Ways to monitor progress** (data collection or review timeline)
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Why Behavior Happens: The FBA

Before a BIP is written, schools should complete a **Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA)** to understand:

- **What happens before the behavior?** (triggers)

- **What is the exact behavior?** (observable actions)
- **What happens after the behavior?** (consequences or outcomes)

This helps the team identify the **function** of the behavior — not just to gain or avoid something, but also to understand what the student might be missing:

- **Do they have the skills to complete the task?**
- **Are they emotionally or physically dysregulated?**
- **Is the demand too high without the right supports?**

Behavior is communication. It often points to a **need the child cannot yet express in a safe or regulated way**. These behaviors may reflect gaps in emotional regulation, communication, executive functioning, or coping strategies.

When we ask “what is the student trying to say with this behavior?” we shift from punishment to understanding and support.

Example Behaviors and Supports

Behavior	Possible Reason or Barrier	Supports in the BIP
Calling out in class	Seeking adult feedback or attention	Teach hand-raising, give regular positive attention
Refusing to do work	Avoiding tasks that feel too hard	Modify assignments, offer breaks, build academic confidence
Aggression during transitions	Overwhelmed by unexpected changes	Use visual schedule, countdowns, practice transitions
Verbal outbursts when upset	Difficulty managing emotions or expressing needs	Teach coping strategies, offer calm-down space

What Parents Say

- “Once we had a BIP, the whole classroom felt more predictable.”
- “It helped to know what the school was doing instead of punishing him.”
- “The plan finally focused on what my child *needed*, not just what they were doing wrong.”

A small icon of a pencil and a sheet of paper with a red checkmark.

Parent Reflection Space

- What behaviors concern me most — and when do they happen?
- What helps my child stay regulated or feel safe at home?
- What strategies are working (or not working) at school?
- Has the school done an FBA — and was I part of the process?

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Important Reminder

A BIP should not be a list of punishments. It is a **support plan**. Behavior often signals a skill that is not yet developed or a need that has not yet been met. You have the right to be involved in creating the plan and to request an FBA if you believe behavior is getting in the way of learning.

For more information, visit www.ksde.org or talk with your child's IEP or 504 team.