

Identifying Precursor Behaviors

What are Precursor Behaviors?

Precursor Behaviors are something that an individual does that signals that more severe behaviors of concern may occur soon afterward.

Why understand Precursor Behaviors?

- Recent research findings suggest that the functions of a precursor behavior are directly linked to the functions of more severe and dangerous behaviors of concern that an individual may engage in.
- This implies that a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) written for an individual can focus on responding to precursor behaviors to help to reduce the likelihood of more severe and dangerous behaviors of concern to occur in the future.

Why Respond to Precursor Behaviors?

- Helps to minimize re-traumatization for a student who has experienced ACEs in the past.
- Gives the student more agency over their environment.
- Allows opportunity to prompt a replacement behavior before a student is escalated.

Examples of Precursor Behaviors:

- Increased stereotypy (stimming) behaviors
- Threatening to engage in severe behaviors of concern
- Showing signs of agitation (tightening of posture, clenched fists, etc.)
- Turning their body away, minimal participation in a social interaction
- Cursing or making offensive gestures at teachers or peers
- Increased vocalizations