Competencies

K4  Understanding of the possible communicative functions of behavior and the value of interventions designed to develop more positive communicative behaviors and social skills.

S1  Demonstrates the ability to provide structure and predictability for the student through consistent implementation of direct teaching methods that support prior learning and ongoing development of social, communication, and adaptive behavioral skills, etc. under the direction of licensed staff.

S5  Demonstrate the ability to consistently utilize proactive strategies, positive behavioral supports including; structured teaching methods, ABA methods including discrete trial and generalization approaches, and sensory interventions to enhance learning and prevent behavior problems, as directed by the teacher or related service staff.

Proactive Behavior Supports and Strategies

Read the scenario and then answer the questions that follow.

Scenario
Daniel is a 15 year old student with ASD at Central High school. He participates in a program for students with severe disabilities for most of his school day, but is mainstreamed for both lunch and physical education. Daniel is verbal, however, he tends only to echo back language he hears in his environment. He is able to use a symbol board and about a half-dozen hand signs to communicate.

Daniel’s social problems are of concern to both his teachers and his parents. When frustrated, Daniel is often physically aggressive toward others in his environment. Daniel’s special education teacher, Mr. Parkes, believes that such physical aggressions result from Daniel’s frustration with communication. Many times, Daniel becomes so frustrated that he forgets to use the appropriate methods of communicating to which he has access. Aggressions are long standing problems with Daniel, but they have worsened as his size has increased. When he was younger, his teachers and parents could easily handle his outbursts. Now, Daniel is the size of a grown man, and his behaviors are far more difficult to manage. A paraprofessional, Mr. Beck, is assigned to Daniel full-time. Mr. Beck’s main responsibility is to assist Daniel with communication and socialization. Often, Mr. Beck must block or physically restrain Daniel from aggressing toward other students.

When in class, Daniel becomes upset if a fellow student alters the environment in some way. This includes opening or closing windows, moving objects or furniture, and other such changes. Daniel seems to require a very structured and predictable environment. To help him with this need, his teachers have designated a corner of the classroom as “Daniel’s space.” This area provides Daniel with partial isolation and allows for one-on-one instruction. When he is having a good day, Daniel joins the other students in the class to promote socialization.
Though Daniel’s current situation seems to work fairly well for him (considering his behaviors) two recent incidents have led to reconsideration of his placement. During gym class last week, Daniel aggressed toward another student who ran in front of him during warm-up exercises. It was clear that the other student had scared Daniel, who reacted by grabbing the student’s arm and refusing to let go. It took Mr. Beck and another teacher to pry Daniel off of the other boy. Yesterday, at lunch, another student in line behind Daniel tapped him on the shoulder. This startled Daniel, who reacted by throwing his lunch tray at the student. Again, Daniel had to be restrained.

As a result of Daniel’s recent aggressions, the school’s principle has received two complaints from angry parents. Believing he requires a more restrictive placement, the principle has asked Daniel’s IEP to review Daniel’s placement. The principle has suggested that Daniel be moved to a special school for students with severe behavioral needs. Daniel’s parents are upset by this, believing that the school is giving up on Daniel.

**Questions**

Considering what you have learned in this and other lessons, describe your answers to the following questions about this case study.

1. Do you think Daniel should be placed in a more restrictive environment? Why or why not? Explain your reasoning.

2. If you were the school’s principle, how can you imagine responding to the complaints about Daniel? What would you say/do?
3. Do you believe that Paul should be excluded from physical education and the lunch room? Why or why not? What accommodations do you think could be developed that might help Daniel in P.E. and in the lunch room?

4. Can you think of any strategies that might diminish Daniel’s aggressive behavior? For each, explain your reasoning. (Consider communication aids, systematic instruction, anticipating problems, relaxation, applied behavior analysis, and other strategies described in the lessons.)