# Case Study: Oliver’s Functional Assessment Interview

## Hypothetical Student Information

**Name:** Oliver  
**Age:** 5 years  
**Sex**: Male  
**Educational Setting:** Preschool program  
**Interview Conducted By**: Josephine Blogs  
**Respondents:** Mother, Preschool Teacher

## Reasons for Referral

Oliver has been referred for a functional assessment due to behaviors that are significantly impacting his quality of life at home and in preschool. His parents and teachers report that his frequent escalations, refusal to move, and elopement interfere with his participation in structured activities, social interactions, and learning opportunities.

### Impact on Quality of Life:

**At home:** Struggles with transitions, becomes highly distressed when denied preferred items, and resists daily routines (e.g., dressing, brushing teeth). Parents avoid certain public outings due to elopement concerns.

**At preschool:** Difficulty engaging in group activities, often refuses to follow classroom instructions, and frequently attempts to leave structured settings. Staff must frequently intervene, leading to disruptions for other children.   
  
Oliver has no known medical conditions but experiences irregular sleep patterns, which seem to increase behaviors that challenge. He has strong preferences for specific activities and objects and finds unexpected changes in routine difficult to manage.

## Definition of Behaviors That Challenge

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Behavior That Challenges | How It Presents | Frequency | Duration | Intensity |
| Escalation with aggression | Screaming, crying, flailing arms, kicking objects, hitting adults, grabbing items forcefully. | 3–5× per day | 5–10 min | High |
| Refusal to move (Dropping to the floor) | Refuses to stand, drops to the floor, remains silent or says 'no' when caregivers ask him to move | 2–3× per day | 3–10 min | Moderate |
| Elopement (Running away) | Leaves group suddenly, runs toward preferred areas or out of designated spaces. | 1–2× per day | 10–30 sec before caught | High |

## Results of Indirect Assessments

### 1. Functional Assessment Interview (FAI) with Parents & Teachers

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Behavior That Challenges** | **Most Likely to Occur When…** | **Least Likely to Occur When…** |
| Escalation with aggression | - When denied access to a preferred item (tablet, toy, snack). - When asked to stop a preferred activity (e.g., leaving playground). | - Engaged in preferred activities. - Given choices in transitions. - Playing alone. |
| Refusal to move (Dropping to the floor) | - When given a non-preferred demand (e.g., cleaning up, switching from free play to work). - When transitioning to a structured task. | - Participating in low-demand activities. - Transitions are predictable and structured. |
| Elopement (Running away) | - During waiting periods (e.g., before an activity starts, lining up). - In crowded, overstimulating environments. | - During active, engaging play. - When given immediate access to preferred spaces. |

### 2. Questionnaire Results (FAST-R, MAS, Setting Events Checklist)

• Escalation with aggression was rated high for access-maintained behavior (attempting to obtain items or attention).  
• Refusal to move was rated high for escape-maintained behavior (attempting to avoid non-preferred tasks or transitions).  
• Elopement was rated high for escape from social situations and waiting (attempting to gain access to a preferred space).  
• Setting events checklist: Days with poor sleep, unpredictable routines, or hunger increased all behaviors.

## Results of Direct Assessments

### 1. ABC Data Collection (Across Two Weeks, 10 Recorded Incidents Per Behavior)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Behavior That Challenges** | **Common Antecedents (Triggers)** | **Common Consequences** |
| Escalation with aggression | - Denied access to a preferred item. - Asked to stop a preferred activity. | - Receives adult attention. - Sometimes regains access to item/activity. |
| Refusal to move (Dropping to the floor) | - Given a non-preferred demand (e.g., clean up, transition to work). | - Task is delayed or modified. - Offered choices or additional prompting. |
| Elopement (Running away) | - Told to wait or stay in line. - Entering a crowded/unfamiliar space. | - Adult chases and redirects. - Sometimes moved to a quieter/preferred space. |

### 2. Scatterplot Analysis

• Escalation with aggression: Most frequent mid-morning and late afternoon (before snack and before going home).  
• Refusal to move: Most frequent before transitions into structured activities (e.g., after free play).  
• Elopement: Most frequent during recess and lining up for activities.

## Summary Statement (To Be Completed by Students)

**Instructions:** Using the information from the interview responses, questionnaires, ABC data, and scatterplot analysis, complete the table below by summarizing the setting events, antecedents, behaviors, and consequences for each of Oliver’s behaviors.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Behavior That Challenges | Setting Events | Antecedents | Behavior | Consequences |
| Escalation with Aggression |  |  |  |  |
| Refusal to Move (Dropping to Floor) |  |  |  |  |
| Elopement (Running Away) |  |  |  |  |

## Final Hypothesis Statement (Student Task)

Now, based on your table, write a functional hypothesis statement for **each behavior**.

"When [setting event] and [antecedent] occur, Oliver is likely to [behaviour] in order to [function of behavior, e.g., escape demand, gain attention, access item/attention, etc.].”