Patterns of Behavior Worksheet

Name: _____

Date	Time	Duration	Setting	Sensory Notes	Activity	Antecedent	Description Of Behavior	Consequences

Patterns of Behavior Worksheet

Why is it important for educators and caregivers to track dysregulated behaviors in those they support?
Tracking dysregulated behaviors allows educators and caregivers to identify the underlying causes of negative actions, which is essential for providing effective accommodations. Persistent negative behaviors often signal unmet needs, such as sensory issues, challenges with social interactions or relationships, or physical and emotional concerns. By uncovering these root causes, you can create interventions that help restore balance to the nervous system and foster lasting positive behavioral changes, rather than simply managing symptoms.

Record at least seven entries in the *Patterns of Behavior Worksheet* before beginning to analyze for patterns.

Tips for Recording Data

Time: If challenging behaviors tend to occur at specific times each day, the individual may have unmet physical needs. Consider whether the individual might be tired, hungry, or thirsty, or if the effects of medication are wearing off.

Duration: The length of a dysregulated episode offers valuable insight into an individual's nervous system, coping strategies, and the ability to process emotions. It reflects how efficiently a person can return to a stable baseline after encountering a stressor. Extended episodes often indicate more profound levels of dysregulation, suggesting the need for additional support or intervention.

Setting/Sensory Notes: Where and with whom did the dysregulated behavior take place? Was the environment noisy, crowded, brightly lit, disorganized, or lacking structure? Consider whether the temperature was uncomfortable or if any noticeable odors were present. Was the individual interacting with the same person during numerous dysregulated events?

Activity: Does dysregulation occur when the individual participates in a certain or similar activities? Fast-paced activities can overwhelm the nervous system. Engaging in too many tasks back-to-back or participating in activities that are overly challenging may result in mental fatigue and decreased tolerance for frustration.

Antecedent: What occurred before the individual began to show signs of dysregulation? The antecedent, or trigger, may be a specific event, action, or circumstance. The antecedent may occur immediately prior to the behavior, or the antecedents may have been a series of events that overwhelmed the nervous system.

Description of Behavior: What specific words and actions did the individual exhibit during moments of dysregulation?

Consequences: When documenting consequences in the chart, include only those that occur immediately following the behavior rather than consequences imposed after the individual has returned to his/her baseline emotional state. Immediate consequences can inadvertently reinforce the behavior by providing attention or avoidance.

Provide Interventions to Decrease Dysregulation

Once patterns become evident, it's time to intervene to discourage negative behaviors and increase desirable behaviors. Consider the following:

- Can the environment be modified or can an alternative space be provided for the individual if sensory sensitivities are present?
- Can the schedule be modified? Incorporate additional breaks, preferred activities, opportunities for physical movement, or moments for rest as needed. Offer snacks to support well-being.
- Can the task be modified to reduce stress? If a task is overly challenging, contains too many steps, or takes an excessive amount of time, dysregulation may occur. Break the task into small steps and provide assistance.
- Can staff adjust their actions to prevent escalating the individual's dysregulation, or can alternative staff members be assigned as needed? Staff may require training in de-escalation techniques and the development of positive relationships with the individual.
- Should the individual be separated from certain people? Sometimes, specific individuals in the environment can contribute to an increase in dysregulation through their actions or interactions. Consider whether removing or limiting exposure to these individuals may help reduce the dysregulated state and support the individual's well-being.
- Are the individual's basic needs being met? When someone is tired, hungry, or thirsty, dysregulation can become more likely. Additionally, pay attention to times when medication is scheduled. Offer opportunities for rest as needed.
- Can the individual learn and use replacement behaviors? (Teach and Role-Play) Collaborate with the individual to identify and practice appropriate methods for addressing his/her needs. Encourage and reinforce these new strategies to help the individual adopt positive alternatives for meeting his/her needs and managing emotions.