



EXTINCTION PRE-IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST

From the CEU "The Forbidden E-Word: Extinction, Its Side Effects, and Compassionate Implementation" ·
Instructors: Sean Yocum, MA, BCBA, LBA; Michael Carrero, BCBA, LBA

NO FLUFF. NO SUGAR-COATING. JUST RESULTS. · PRESENTED BY **HICKORY LEARNING GROUP**

RAD N BAD RULE

Extinction means withholding reinforcement, not compassion. Screen for safety, prepare the team, and use DR without extinction when it isn't safe.

HOW TO USE THIS: Complete every section before you add extinction to a behavior plan. If you can't check a safety item, use differential reinforcement without extinction instead.

FUNCTION AND REPLACEMENT

- ☐ Function identified through assessment (FBA or FA)
- ☐ Reinforcer to be withheld is identified and controllable by every implementer
- ☐ A functional replacement behavior is taught and reinforced on a dense schedule
- ☐ Reinforcement is available for the replacement before extinction starts

SAFETY SCREEN

- ☐ Risk of injury to the learner or others during a burst?
- ☐ Severe aggression, self-injury, elopement, or dangerous escape? Consider DR without extinction
- ☐ Crisis and protective procedures written and trained
- ☐ Staffing is enough to keep everyone safe

PREPARE CAREGIVERS AND STAFF

- ☐ Explain extinction bursts, variability, and emotional responding in plain language
- ☐ Explain resurgence: the behavior may reappear in other settings or with other people
- ☐ All implementers trained with BST; integrity checked
- ☐ Commit to consistency across settings; inconsistent extinction becomes intermittent reinforcement

COMPASSIONATE IMPLEMENTATION

- ☐ Extinction ≠ ignoring the person: stay warm, stay available
- ☐ Prompt the replacement behavior early
- ☐ Acknowledge frustration without reinforcing the target behavior

MONITOR

- ☐ Graph rate and intensity daily for the first weeks
- ☐ Track integrity: one inconsistent reinforcer can strengthen the behavior
- ☐ Set a decision rule (e.g., no reduction after X sessions: review the function)

THE RECEIPTS · REFERENCES

- Goh, H., & Iwata, B. A. (1994). Behavioral persistence and variability during extinction of self-injury maintained by escape. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, 27(1), 173–174. <https://doi.org/10.1901/jaba.1994.27-173>
- Iwata, B. A., Pace, G. M., Kalsher, M. J., Cowdery, G. E., & Cataldo, M. F. (1990). Experimental analysis and extinction of self-injurious escape behavior. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, 23(1), 11–27. <https://doi.org/10.1901/jaba.1990.23-11>
- Lerman, D. C., & Iwata, B. A. (1995). Prevalence of the extinction burst and its attenuation during treatment. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, 28(1), 93–94. <https://doi.org/10.1901/jaba.1995.28-93>
- Lerman, D. C., & Iwata, B. A. (1996). Developing a technology for the use of operant extinction in clinical settings: An examination of basic and applied research. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, 29(3), 345–382. <https://doi.org/10.1901/jaba.1996.29-345>
- Lerman, D. C., Iwata, B. A., & Wallace, M. D. (1999). Side effects of extinction: Prevalence of bursting and aggression during the treatment of self-injurious behavior. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, 32(1), 1–8. <https://doi.org/10.1901/jaba.1999.32-1>
- St. Peter Pipkin, C., Vollmer, T. R., & Sloman, K. N. (2010). Effects of treatment integrity failures during differential reinforcement of alternative behavior: A translational model. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, 43(1), 47–70. <https://doi.org/10.1901/jaba.2010.43-47>

This handout supports the asynchronous CE event and does not replace clinical judgment, the BACB Ethics Code for Behavior Analysts, or applicable laws and funder requirements. It contains no client-identifying information.