

Choosing a Data Collection Method

Type of Behavior	Data Collection Method
The behavior does not occur that often	Frequency, Rate, ABC
We need to know exactly how many times the behavior occurs per day	Frequency, Rate, ABC
The behavior is easy to count and the length of observation time is consistent day to day	Frequency, ABC
The behavior is easy to count and the length of observation time varies from day to day	Rate
The behavior occurs for long periods of time and the beginning and end of the behavior is observable	Duration
The behavior does not occur often, but when it does, it occurs at long durations	Duration
We need to know the length of time the behavior occurs	Duration
We need to know how often or specific times that a behavior occurs	Interval, Scatterplot
The behavior occurs at a high frequency	Interval, Scatterplot, Time Sampling
The behavior occurs frequently and the duration of the behavior is really short	Interval, Scatterplot, Time Sampling
The behavior occurs constantly	Interval, Scatterplot, Time Sampling
The student is presented with opportunities to engage in an appropriate behavior	Opportunities
We need to know how long it takes for a student to start engaging in a behavior when presented with the opportunity	Latency
The observer needs to record multiple behaviors of multiple students at one time	Time Sampling
We need documentation of a specific intervention (e.g., token economy)	Permanent Product
We need extra data to support our primary method of data collection (e.g., referrals)	Permanent Product

References:

Alberto, P.A., & Troutman, A.C. (2009). *Applied behavior analysis for teachers* (8th edition). Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Pearson. *Data Collection Guide* (n.d.) *Addressing student behaviour: a positive approach*.

Miltenberger, R.G. (2008). *Behaviour modification: principles and procedures* (4th edition). Belmont, CA.: Thomson Wadsworth.