

Behavior Plan Red Flags

Not all behavior plans are bad. But some look supportive on paper and fail students in practice. This one-page checklist highlights common warning signs that a behavior plan may need revision, additional data, or a more thoughtful approach.

Red Flags to Watch For

- The plan focuses on punishment or compliance rather than skill-building.
- Behavior goals are vague, subjective, or impossible to measure.
- There is no clear connection between the behavior plan and the student's identified needs.
- Interventions are reactive instead of preventative.
- The same consequence is used regardless of why the behavior occurs.
- Staff are expected to use professional judgment without clear guidance.
- Data collection is inconsistent, minimal, or based only on discipline referrals.
- The plan relies on removal from instruction instead of increasing access to supports.
- Executive function or sensory needs are ignored.
- The plan has not been reviewed or adjusted despite limited progress.

What This Does Not Mean

Seeing one or more of these red flags does not mean anyone has failed or acted in bad faith. It means the plan may need more information, better alignment, or a shift toward teaching skills instead of managing behavior.

A strong behavior plan is proactive, individualized, data-informed, and grounded in understanding why a behavior happens—not just how to stop it.