



Behaviour

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Aims of workshop:

- Help participants consider what behaviours need to be addressed and why
- Provide an overview of how to monitor and evaluate behaviour
- Highlight some general practices for managing behaviours in those with ASD that can cause distress to themselves or others and/or difficulty in their everyday lives
- Give examples of the use of positive alternatives to some common behaviours

How behaviour can be displayed

- Absconding
- Avoidance
- Biting
- Climbing
- Damaging objects/property
- Dropping to the ground
- Grabbing
- Hitting, slapping or punching
- Inappropriate Touching
- Kicking
- Non co-operation
- Physical aggression
- Pinching
- Provocation
- Pulling hair
- Scratching
- Screaming
- Self injury
- Shouting
- Smearing
- Spitting
- Stripping off clothes
- Swearing
- 'Tantrums'
- Throwing things
- Verbal aggression

‘Challenging’ behaviour is...

‘Behaviour of such an intensity, frequency or duration that the physical safety of the person or others is placed in serious jeopardy, or behaviour which is likely to seriously limit or delay access to and use of ordinary community facilities.’


Emerson et al, 1987


Reasons for Behaviour

- Attention
- Avoidance
- Boredom
- Being easily led
- Being left alone
- Calming effects
- Change
- Creating predictability
- Difficulty coping with everyday life
- Difficulty in generalisation
- Expression of feelings
- Environment
- Frustration
- Habit
- Inflexibility
- Information processing
- Lack of understanding
- Lack of structure after school
- Lacks sense of danger
- Mimicry
- Need to Communicate
- New situations
- Wanting something
- Removal from a situation
- Sensory overload
- Sensory deprivation
- Want/need something

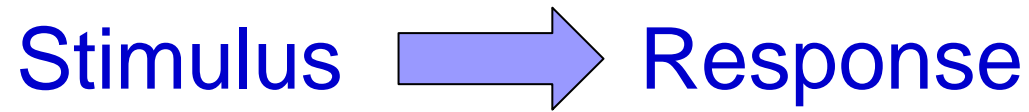
Does the behaviour need to be addressed?

- Is it a natural / functional behaviour?
- Is there an appropriate time/place they can carry out the behaviour?
- Does it cause health problems/pain/injury to the individual?
- Is it dangerous or harmful to the individual?
- Does it increase or decrease the individuals anxiety levels?
- Does it cause harm, pain or injury to another?
- Does it cause particular stress to those living and/or working with the individual?

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- Is it appropriate to the individual's age and stage of development?
 - Does it stop the individual developing?
 - Does it interfere with the individual learning new skills?
 - Will removal of the behaviour assist communication and/or interaction?

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- Does it impair the quality of the individual's life?
 - Does it stop the individual living as part of a family/community?
 - Will it cause the possible breakdown of family/placement?
 - Does it provide the individual with positive experiences?
 - Does it stop the individual living everyday life?
 - Is the individual happy/contented?
 - Consider the individual's personal choice and rights

Remember that most behaviour is reactive:



Analysing Behaviour - key points

- All behaviour has a purpose
- Can be used to identify possible causes
- Can be used to help predict behaviour
- Stimulus – Response
- Can't just remove a behaviour (need to replace or remove stimulus)
- Provide alternatives / let the individual know what to do instead
- Antecedent Behaviour Consequence (ABC analysis)

ABC analysis

A - antecedent

- Occurrences and context prior to the behaviour

B - behaviour

- The specifics of the behaviour (type, duration, who involved, where etc)

C - consequences

- What occurs after the behaviour

What to look for when observing/recording behaviour

- Frequency and duration
- What environment/specific place is the individual in?
- Time of day or specific session/class
- What people were present
- What was the individual doing when/before the behaviour occurred?
- Is the behaviour being unintentionally reinforced (eg, removal from a situation)?
- What reactions/actions are given to the behaviour?
- Is the person trying to communicate something?
- Has the behaviour become a habit?
- Possible triggers
- Any possible sensory influences
- What is being achieved from the behaviour?



Strategies



Remember that individuals will respond to your actions, so:

- Be calm
- Don't shout
- Create a relaxed environment
- Don't try to use force or dominance
- Divert their attention from the behaviour
- Don't react – remain neutral
- Act confidently
- Be non-confrontational
- Use motivators

Provide Guidance

- Provide guidelines on appropriate behaviour & how to act in different situations (including visual)
- Give guidance on when/where they can carry out the behaviour (set times aside)
- Focus on what they should do - not what they shouldn't
- Teach consequences of actions (personalise)
- Use Scenario's, Scripting and/or Social Stories (Carol Gray)
- Teach what to do in new situations
- Provide guidelines for generalisation
- Help the individual learn to develop their own strategies
- Reinforcement of positive behaviour & interaction

*Ensure all strategies are shared with other workers, family & carers and there is a uniform approach



Consider the environment

- Remove overt sensory stimuli
- Information processing overload – limit information given
- Tailor / avoid environments
- Remove distractions

Address Anxiety

- Look at what makes them anxious? (ABC / 'what makes me...' sheet)
- Coping strategies (breathing exercises, stress toys, plan 'time out', briefed person to go to for help)
- Give written instructions to carry if lost or unsure what to do
- Ensure all information is clear about activity/place (public transport, school, layout of buildings, environments, town maps etc)

Provide Structure

- **Provide order and routine**
- **Help with self-organisation**
- **Structure and plan time**
- **Show clear beginnings and endings**
- **Have consistent routines**
- **Structure tasks**
- **Structure the environment**
- **Plan for change / give prior warning**
- **Provide consistency**

Communication

- **Be explicit**
- **Provide clarity**
- **Indicate if communication is inappropriate or not**
- **Teach alternative communication**
- **Give time to respond/get their thoughts together**
- **Always give very clear, precise instructions**
- **Check their understanding of information/tasks**
- **Use visual materials (or written)**
- **Use written guidelines**
- **Use 'first....then...' reminders**
- **Avoid 'half sentences' such as "Your teas ready" (Wendy Lawson)**



Teach how to seek help / ask for clarification

Methods for asking / indicating things:

- When angry/upset/confused
- When want to be left alone
- When need to leave situation
- When need help
- When don't understand
- To give their views
- When they are unhappy or feeling low

Aims...

- **Reduction of anxiety**
- **Increase motivation (use motivators)**
- **Understanding**
- **Maximise using strengths**
- **Provide other ways of getting what it is they need**
- **Give positive tasks**
- **Don't just focus on the negative**



Resources

Behaviour symbols

http://www.dotolearn.com/picturecards/printcards/social_behavior.htm

Emotions


http://www.dotolearn.com/picturecards/printcards/social_emotionshealthpeople.htm

Behaviour datasheets & information

<http://www.polyxo.com/documents/>

Summary

- Consider whether the behaviour needs to be addressed
 - Behaviour analysis
- Provision of alternatives or removal of stimuli
 - Strategies
 - Guidelines
 - Structure



“ Reality to an autistic person is a confusing mass of events, people, places, sounds and sights. There seem to be no clear boundaries, order or meaning to anything. A large part of my life is spent just trying to work out the pattern behind everything. Set routines, times, particular routes and rituals all help to get order into an unbearably chaotic life. ”

(Therese Jolliffe 1992)