

# Promoting Positive Behaviour

A Workshop for Parents, Carers and Professionals

#### **Aims**



- Understand what behaviour is
- Understand how all behaviour is reinforced
- Establish what the common causes for heightened reactions for children with SEN
- 4. How to understand what the behaviour is telling us
- 5. Create a plan for how we and others can help

#### What we will cover

- What are behaviour and behaviours of concern?
- 2. Common causes
- 3. Behaviour as a form of communication & how to establish what they are saying
- 4. High levels of anxiety and behaviours of concern
- 5. Putting a plan in place and how to help



# What are Behaviours and Behaviours of Concern?



### **Understanding Behaviour**

• What is behaviour?

- •Everything we do (getting out of bed, saying hello, making a cup of tea and even breathing and blinking)
- •Is in response to a stimulus
- •Is learned (apart from reflexes)
- •Is measurable
- •Behaviour is a form of communication!



#### What are behaviours of concern?

'Culturally abnormal behaviour (s) of such intensity, frequency or duration that the physical safety of the person or others is likely to be placed in serious jeopardy.......

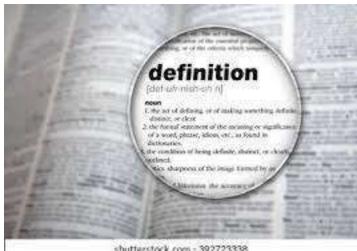
....or behaviour which is likely to seriously limit use of or result in the person being denied access to ordinary community facilities'



#### Types of Behaviours of Concern

Discussion – what type of behaviours do you experience that could be behaviours of concern?

- Self harm/injurious behavior
- Targeting others hitting, spitting, pulling hair, biting etc
- Shouting, swearing, loud noises
- Breaking/ throwing things
- Isolation/ withdrawal
- Self-neglect
- Running away (no sense of danger!!)



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Common causes of Behaviours of Concern

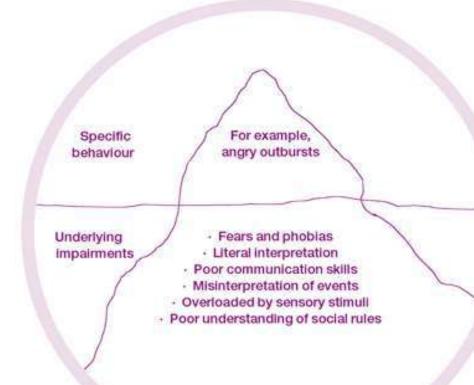


#### **Iceberg Model of Behaviour**

All too often focus is put on the behaviour. We ignore what is happening to the child/ young person. What the behaviour is telling us! i.e. are their any skill deficits? i.e. communication

- Sensory processing difficulties?
- Predictability?
- Life stresses?
- Health issues?
- Meaningful activities?
- Choices
- Cognitive ability

What impact can this have on behaviours of concern?



#### **Common Causes**

Demand avoidance profile

Cognitive ability (learning disabilities)

High levels of anxiety

Unpredictable, ambiguous or

Health reasons & Pain

Social anxiety due to lack of understanding

MASKING/ CAMOFLAGING!!!

and regulation
skills
Sensitivities

Negative thinking/low self-esteme

Impoverished social networks

Previous negative life events & Trauma Difficulties
associated with
a diagnosis
(ASC, TS, ADHD
ETC.)

Communication difficulties (2/3 of children excluded have communication difficulties) Royal college of Speech &Language

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# Masking

- People can mask from a very young age
- Due to build up of trauma
- Being told "to not be dramatic", "stop fidgeting", "stop interrupting" Etc
- Feel different don't want to stand out
- Starts off as a strategy to fit in a NT world
- Individuals end up constantly masking without knowing
- Others that are not aware of masking or the subtle signs do not realise the struggles

#### Impact!!

The impact of masking can be extremely significant and cause some extreme difficulties.

- Low self esteem
- Exhaustion
- Burnout
- Mental health crisis

## **Activity**

In pairs take turns talking about yourself, what you have done this week or your likes and dislikes as an example.

- However you are not allowed to use any words include with the letter R!
- How difficult was it?
- How did it make you feel?
- If communicating was this much effort, how tired would it make you feel?







# Behaviour as a Form of Communication

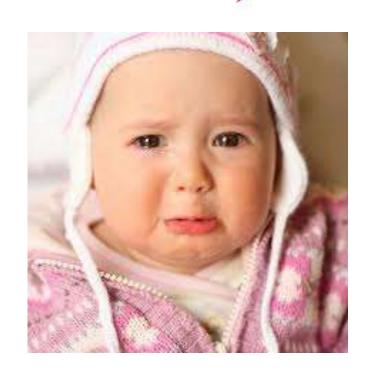


#### Behaviour as a form of communication

Think of a baby or toddler crying.

- 1. What is this behaviour telling us?
- 2. Why do they present in this way?

- There is a need (attention/ help)
- They have yet to develop the verbal skills to communicate
- When they cry people respond
- This reinforces the behaviour of initiating interaction



#### What do Behaviours of Concern Tell Us?

there is a need!!!.

That there is a need!!!.



### Finding out the Cause

- Observe the behaviour.
- Keep a record: days, times, what was the setting (where they were at the time, who else was there, how many people) what was happening (what were they and others doing), what was the behaviour, what happened as a result of the behaviour
- Talk to the child, use tools that can help (mapping, emotion cards, use art, spider graphs, grading activities etc.)
- Talk to others such as teachers and support workers. Can they carry out observations?
- Another way is to carry out a functional assessment in order to establish the function behind it



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# Establishing its function (what it is telling us)

**Functions of Behaviour** What It Does For Me When Does it Happen Provides Anytime, even when preferred sensory alone. Especially if experiences; behaviour I'm anxious Sensory feels good to do When task is too: Removes undesired hard, easy, boring, activities or Escape interactions or scary Provides access When I want to people or social interaction Attention interactions When I want a Provides preferred preferred item items or activities **Tangibles** or activity Andrew Davis B.Sc.HIM.ADS Damldavis Geneva Centre for Autism - www.autism.net

#### **ABC Charts**

ABC Data Sheet – Version 2

Record each instance of one behavior, as well as the antecedent (what happened right before the behavior), the consequence (what happened right after the behavior), and what the possible function of that behavior was (what outcome did it achieve for the child/student?).

Describe the target behavior: \_

Date/ Time	Setting Events (what's going on at that day/time? Tired/didn't sleep well. substitute teacher, etc.)	Antecedent	Behavior	Consequence	Function (Attention, Access to flems/ activities, Escape, Sensory)
					1
			3		

# ABC Charts – what is the trigger, behaviour, consequence & function?



#### A-B-C DATA SHEET

NAME:	OBSERVER:

Date/Time	Antecedent: Setting/Situation – What was happening before the behaviour? (Include setting events such as illness)	Behavior: What did the child do? (Include frequency, intensity & duration)	Consequence: How did you respond? (Include reactions of others, such as peers)
3/3/15	The class were asked to complete their maths worksheets.	Susie began throwing pieces of paper at Ben.	The teacher put Susie outside of the room until the others had finished because she was distracting Ben and others.
5/3/15	The teacher was at the front of the room instructing students on spellings.	Susie pulled Becca's ponytail and Becca started to cry.	The teacher sent Susie to the principal's office.
5/3/15	Students were asked to fill in a page in their maths workbooks.	Susie threw her books off her desk onto the floor.	The teacher reprimanded Susie and put Susie sitting outside the door to think about what she had done.

### Cycle of behaviour



#### Antecedent

Susie or class were asked to do piece of work



Function met
Escape function is met
through behaviour



#### <u>Consequence</u>

Susie is removed from class and does not have to do the work



(hurting others or being disruptive)

Behaviour

Susie engages in behaviour

Why is it likely that such behaviour keeps on happening?

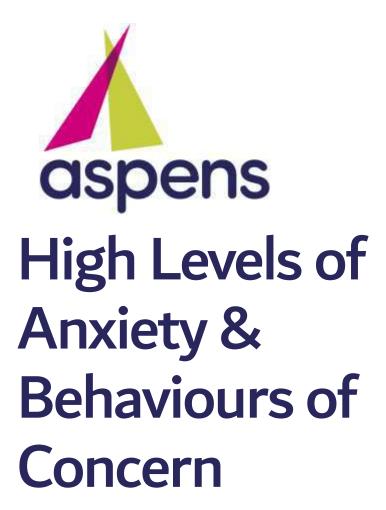
# Reinforcing behaviour

Our behaviour is reinforced - If a need is met from the behaviour itself (i.e. Susie escaping the class), then this will make it more likely to happen again and increase the frequency. Some examples of how you can ensure you are not reinforcing:

- Removing/ supporting with trigger
- Extinction (fur
- Replacing the
- Focus on/ give

What could we do to help Susie and make sure we are not reinforcing a negative response?

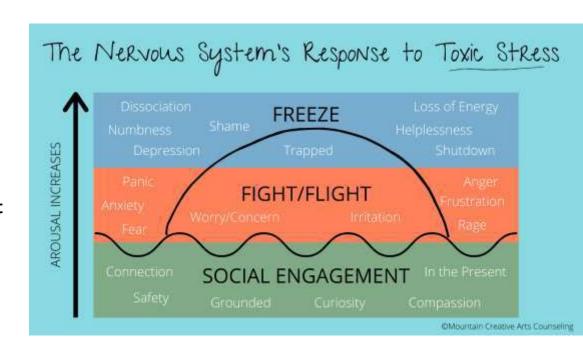
- Teaching new skills (i.e. time out card, waiting skills etc)
- Think about communication (how task is presented, is it predictable?)
- Finding other ways the need can be met through support and adjustments (i.e. visuals, clear communication, help with what is difficult, do part of difficult activity and build)





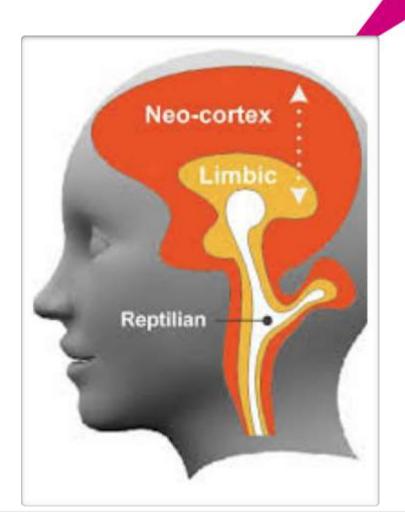
# **Anxiety & Behaviour**

- 3 types of behaviour fight, flight and freeze
- Also important are masking and fawning
- All have the same function to avoid, escape or protect the perceived danger
- They are NOT "naughty" or "bad", it is the brains reaction to a perceived danger. It cannot, at that moment be controlled!
- Remember behaviour is a form of communication and behaviours that challenge are telling us that there is a need!



# What happens to the brain in crisis

- Message of danger is sent from senses
- Amygdala and brain stem (action brain) respond
- Neo-cortex (thinking brain) and Limbic (emotions brain) shut off
- Stress hormones are released into the body which goes into fight, flight or freeze
- Behaviours of concern happens!

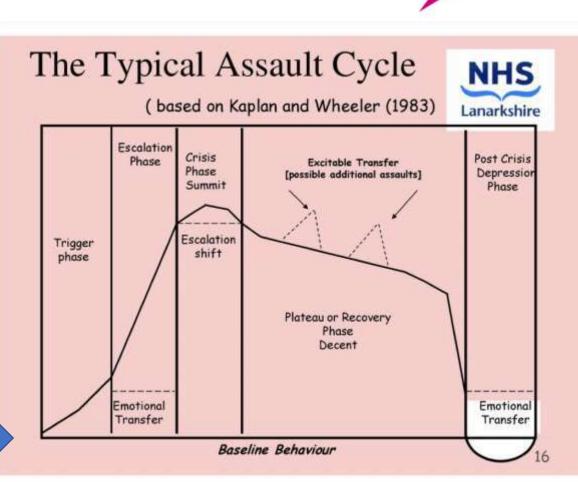


<sup>\*</sup>Photo from researchgate.net

# Be aware of spikes in anxiety

- As the trigger happens, anxiety rises
- If nothing is done to reduce anxiety, it continues to rise
- It reaches the crisis faze (fight, flight or freeze)
- The body begins to calm and anxiety reduces
- Stress hormones remain, the individual is at risk of spikes when faced with other triggers

Important part of support should happen here!!





# Putting a Plan in Place & How to Help



# 2 types of plan

- Reactive what to do at point of crisis
- Proactive/ Preventative how the behaviours can be reduced
- Both of these types of plan are important

However proactive support is key to reducing behaviours!!!



# **Proactive Strategies**

- 1. Complete observation/ recording to better understand triggers, what your child finds difficult and any skill deficit.
  - Think about the causes we have discussed. For example:
  - Health and Diagnosis
  - Previous experiences
  - Any skills need to be taught (i.e. waiting)
  - Adaptions to your and others approach
  - Adaptions to the environment
  - Are they trying to gain or avoid something? What they find difficult
- 2. Provide a safe space for moments of crisis
- Put a plan in place to help with what they are finding difficult





# **Proactive Strategies - Plan**

# Help them to understand their triggers and anxiety and put a plan in place to follow

- What it feels like (the signs for them)
- How to communicate when anxious
- What to do (step by step plan, including calming strategies)
- What others can do to help







# **Proactive Strategies - Plan**

#### Make adaptations and put in support

- Identify priorities/ reduce some demands/ build slowly brick by brick
- Support with difficulties/ teach skills (communication, social interaction and communication, understanding and regulating emotions, demand avoidance, etc)
- Adapting the environment/ activities (sensory tool kit, time out and movement breaks, break activities down into manageable steps)
- Providing a predictable environment (visual schedules, task lists, timers, prepare for new experiences, Social Stories, sensory stories, support with emotional understanding/ regulation)
- Support with worries/ negative outlook
- Graded exposure/ remove unnecessary demands
- Try to think about how you may be reinforcing the behaviour
- Psycho education
- Help others (teachers etc) to understand (causes, signs, how to help, adaptations required including recovery period)



# Help in a Crisis (Reactive plan)

- Observe for any early warning signs of increased anxiety, or change that might be a trigger
- Reassure them that you care about how are feeling and that you are here to help and keep them safe
- Keep calm and neutral in how you are presenting (do not show that you are scared, angry or anxious)
- Speak clearly and use limited language (tell them what you are doing, avoid demands/ suggestions, offer choices rather than telling them what to do)
- Offer comfort and support, redirect them to a calming activity (e.g. 'I'm sorry you're feeling this way. I can see it's so hard for you right now. Shall we go for a walk together?").
- Do not use confrontational language (reprimands, sanctions), remember crisis is not the time to learn or reflect. Reinforce the positive i.e. going to safe space/ using calming strategies. Listen to them and respond to positive/ appropriate language/ requests
- Acknowledge and try to empathise with how they are feeling. You might say something like 'I can see that things are really hard for you right now'. Focus on the emotion rather than behaviour!
- Encourage them to a safe/ quiet space, give space whilst being present and give them time to calm and reassure once they have regulated (be aware of how long it may take due to stress hormones)

# Other Tips for Reactive Strategies

Have something

Try to help them to recognise how they are feeling by naming

Ask the child the that you/ an help

they can u

energy

fr

Destr

Have appro

teac

Breathing exercises

- Loud gargling of water
- Massage Foot or shoulders
- Exposure to something cold (cold shower, cold compress on back or shoulders, splashing face, drinking cold water, sucking on ice cubes)
  - Dots and squeeze
  - Sensory tool box
    - Exercise
  - Music (humming and singing)
    - 54321

Use distractions if helpful

elements of the conversation to try and steer the incident towards something positive.

clear step by step plan for them to follow in

high levels of stress

plan for n other

ents/ new

ences





# Some Examples of Proactive Strategies

## Window of Tolerance

#### (Fligh+/Fight) During extreme stress you move out of your window of tolerance and into fight or flight mode. Anxiety | Panic | Fear | Anger | Aggression Window of Tolerance Where you can handle and process your feelings in a healthy way while being able to function and thrive. You increase your tolerance with coping skills. Safe | Capable | Grounded | Self-Aware Mindful | Engaged | Self-Soothing | Connected Freeze hu+ During extreme stress you just completely shut down and withdrawal physically/emotionally. Depression | Fatigue | Numb | Disconnected Disassociated Checked Out Unfocused

@Blessing Manifesting

# Understanding triggers, Anxiety & Emotions

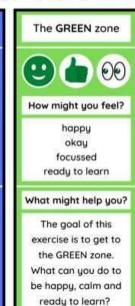


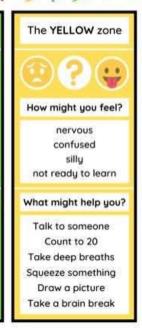
#### How can you help yourself?

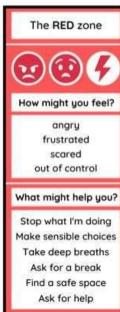


Take a walk

Close mu eues







Scared?
What has
happened? what
is going on with
your body?

#### Thoughts? What are you thinking?

Other helpful thoughts? What is something else that you can think?

Plan!
What can you do
when this
happens to help?

A sudden loud noise has shocked me and hurt my ears. I feel anxious

That shocked me and hurt my ears. I do not feel safe

The noise will stop. I am safe

Move away from the noise and go somewhere quiet. Put my headphones on or do something that helps me to calm down



Understanding triggers, Anxiety &

**Emotions** 

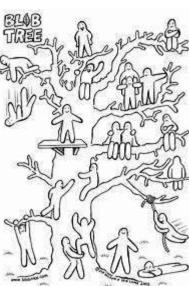








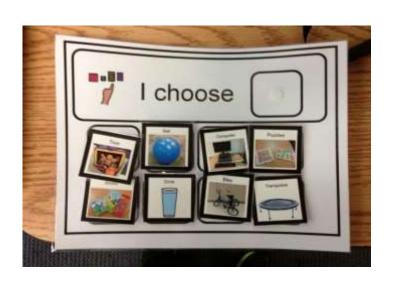




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## Aiding communication

Visuals are a great way of helping someone who is non-verbal to communicate. A SALT assessment may be required.



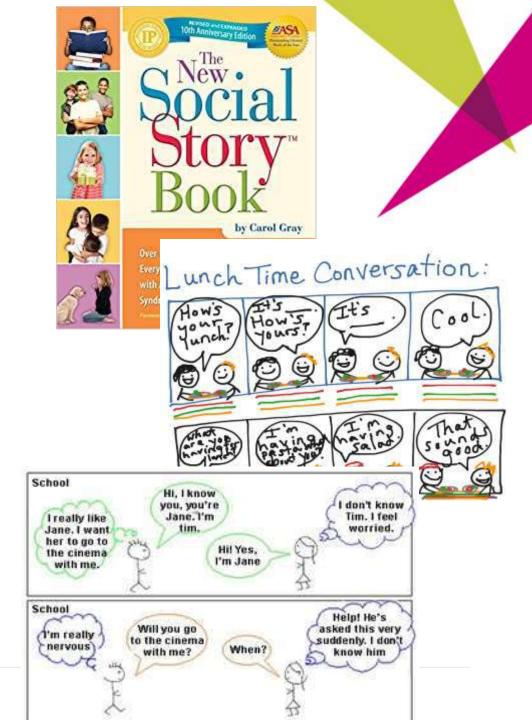


## **Aiding Receptive Communication**

- Use key words and reduce filler words (you may need to use 1-2 at a time)
- Give them time to process what has been said, speak clearly and say it slower
- Give one instruction at a time
- Use visuals to back up what you are saying (pictures, symbols, Makaton, gestures, objects of reference, task lists, timetables etc.)
- Say their name before you provide them with any further information
- Think environment (background or distracting stimuli)
- Avoid using sarcasm, idioms, and irony etc.
- When providing instruction, demonstrate first and display visually (i.e. when cooking)
- Use closed question (display choice visually)

#### Social Skills

- Social Stories
- Comic Strip Conversation
- Reflection
- Opportunity to practice (start small)



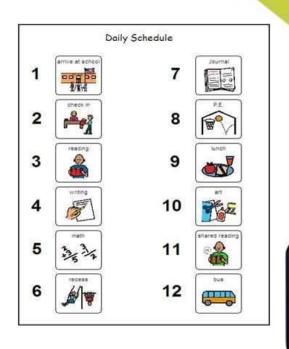
## **Sensory - Think Environment**

- Keep environments low arousal when working with someone who has hypersensitivities
- Think about background noise (TV, radio, talking)
- Have a quiet area that can used if required, movement breaks at school
- Be aware of any changes in the environment that may trigger who you are support (has it become busier, noisier etc. are their any new smells i.e lunch being served)
- Think about sensitivities, make the environment predictable
- Have equipment to hand for those that seek sensory input. Sensory rooms, swings, trampoline, gym ball
- Help prepare for new or difficult environments

#### **Creating Predictability**

# THE very VISUAL SCHEDULE









#### Demand avoidance

- Rather than use direct instruction or questions, be indirect
- Use post it notes as prompts to depersonalise demands
- Pick your battles- prioritise what is currently most important – tackling too many things at once will be overwhelming for everyone

#### Avoid using phrases such as:

You need to...

You cannot...

You must/must not....

#### **Useful Phrases-indirect speech**

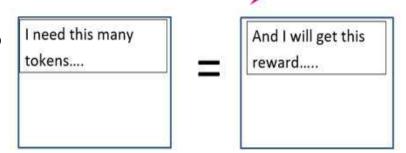
"I wonder if anyone can help me with this?"

"I wish I knew someone who could help me with x task".

"I wonder how we can get this done?"

#### **Positive Reinforcement**

- Focus on desirable behaviour, rather than negative
- Points systems work well to reinforce positive behaviours or rewarding the behaviours we want to see more of and therefore can work to reduce the amount of undesirable behaviours. Consistently vary the reinforcement and work with the children to decide which rewards to work towards. Use a variety of reinforcers for different target behaviours.
- Use a highly motivating reward
- You may need to reinforce regularly to begin with then slowly fade the pace at which points/tokens are given
- Do not take tokens/points away







Thank you for listening any questions?

familysupport@aspens.org