

PSA Bulletin

This week let's talk about 'What 'that' behaviour might mean'



What do we know about behaviour?

Raising children is no easy feat and every parent at one stage or another will encounter some challenging moments. As a rule of thumb, we must remember that **ALL BEHAVIOUR IS COMMUNICATING 'SOMETHING'**. It is our job, to play 'detective' and suss out what our child 'needs'.

If we take the stance that all behaviour is communicating a **NEED**, it is helpful to begin with to try and assess and categorise those needs by understanding that behaviours have a **FUNCTION**. Very often, we can break things down into 4 simple categories.

4 Functions of Behaviour		What It Does For Me	When Does it Happen
S Sensory		Provides preferred sensory experiences; behaviour feels good to do	Anytime, even when alone. Especially if I'm anxious
E Escape		Removes undesired activities or interactions	When task is too: hard, easy, boring, or scary
A Attention		Provides access to people or interactions	When I want social interaction
T Tangibles		Provides preferred items or activities	When I want a preferred item or activity

Is your child's behaviour letting you know that they need some sensory input?

Perhaps they are attempting to avoid something?

Maybe they are needing some of your focus?

Sometimes a behaviour is very much about 'wanting something'.

Once we understand that children will continue behaviours that 'work for them' (i.e. the behaviour gets their need met) then we can begin to think about how we can positively manage any unwanted behaviours.

ABC Behaviour chart

ABC charts can be used to record behavioural concerns.

Day, date and time	Antecedent	Behaviour	Consequence	Notes

- 'A' stands for antecedents, that is, what happens immediately before the behavioural outburst and can include any triggers, signs of distress or environmental information.

- 'B' refers to the behaviour itself and is a description of what actually happened during the outburst or what the behaviour 'looked' like.

- 'C' refers to the consequences of the behaviour, or what happened immediately after the behaviour and can include information about other people's responses to the behaviour and the eventual outcome for the person.

It can also be a good idea to keep track of where and when the behaviour occurred to help in identifying any patterns.

Reflect after any incident and see if you can determine whether the behaviour's function was to either:

- a) Attend to a **sensory** issue
- b) **Avoid** or withdraw from something
- c) Gain **attention** or was needing attention
- d) To gain something **tangible** - wanting something

All families supporting children would benefit from viewing this [short video](#) which helps us understand how our brains work and why we sometimes 'flip our lids'

Top Tips For Positive Behaviour Management



- Routines
- **Appropriate and consistent rules (remember keep them brief clear and positive!)**
- Reward behaviour you want to see more of
- **Ignore behaviour you want to see less of (unless it will hurt others, themselves or property)**
- Give clear instructions using words the child will understand and allow take up time
- **Identify triggers for behaviours**
- Keep calm

Remember all behaviour has a purpose.
There is always a reason for the behaviour.
This is crucial to being able to manage it!

Seeing your child struggle is emotionally draining. It is important to look after ourselves. We will be better positioned to help our children if we attend to our own well-being. We are not machines; be kind to yourself!

Have faith in your ability to make the changes required. If you want things to stay the same, keep doing what you are doing. If you want things to be different you have to consciously choose to believe that it is possible.

Consistency is important. You may feel like you have 'tried everything'. Go back to the drawing board and then work on one small step at a time.

Setting clear boundaries and expectations is comforting to children. Resistant though they might seem, firm boundaries actually offer lots of reassurance to children. Children will often 'push' to see if the adults will actually do as they say...they are testing your trustworthiness; giving in sets you up to be perceived by them as unreliable.

Ask for help and advice. Knowledge is power and two heads are better than one. Tackling a challenge on your own can be isolating and detrimental to yours and your child's well-being in the long run.

Collaboration and communication are key! Talking is a powerful tool, but talking to yourself can be fruitless! Talk with your child, your family, your friends, the class staff or anyone in your support network, find out their perspective on the issue. Ideas about things to try are born from first talking through the problem. Work out what each individual can contribute to the solution. Children are often very good at coming up with suggestions.

Remember that behaviours can be triggered and influenced by lots of factors such as how much sleep, exercise or 'down-time' a child has had. We also need to remember that children experience 'stressors' too. Examples could be, worries, changes to routines, demands, hectic schedules, transitions, sensory stimuli or even exciting / stimulating things! To refresh your memory, re-visit our [previous bulletin](#) (No.8) which covered tips on effective discipline but also explained the child's 'emotional cup', which helps us understand why we sometimes 'blow'.

How to contact me: It's never too soon to make contact if you have any concerns. You can reach me via text on the PSA mobile **07903 613074** or via email, terri-anne.old@celticcross.education Normal working days are Tuesday and Wednesday 8.00-16.00 and Thursday 8.00-13:00