

# Autism Education Series: Making Sense of Behaviour & Positive Behaviour Support

## Behaviour - what is it?

- Anything we do!
- Anything we can see, observe, or measure (e.g., talking, sitting, hitting, eating, reading, crying)

## Be a detective - all behaviour is communication!



Consider the **A-B-C Framework**: Antecedent - Behavior - Consequence

- **A** - What happened right before the behaviour? (ex: adult asks the child to turn off TV)
- **B** - What did the behaviour look like? (ex: the child continues to watch the TV)
- **C** - What happened after the behaviour? (ex: adult leaves the room, child continues watching)

## By looking at behaviour from an A-B-C framework, we can learn more about the behaviour:

- What is the child gaining or avoiding by engaging in this behaviour?
- What other skills does the child have that they could do in that moment that would be better?

## What is the 'function' of the behaviour? Why is the behaviour happening?

- **To get something:**
  - social interaction
  - activity or toy
  - sensory stimulation / feeling
- **To avoid something:**
  - social interaction
  - activity or task
  - sensory stimulation / feeling

Reminder!


Remember, there may be more than one 'function' (ex: avoid the walk to stay home *and* watch TV).

## Challenging behaviour is an opportunity to build new skills!

What behaviour would you like to see your child do?

### What motivates your child?

Learning to use an alternative behaviour (and not the behaviour of concern) needs positive reinforcement. Your child will learn the replacement behaviour that WORKS for them! How will you reinforce your child while learning a new skill?



Changing behaviour  
takes time, practice and  
consistency (with help at  
times)!

### Common Concerns from Caregivers

- Frustration with why the behaviour keeps happening.
- Family stress due to feelings of frustration, exhaustion, confusion and embarrassment.
- Feelings of hopelessness due to many unsuccessful attempts to reduce the behaviour.
- Temporary solutions may help in the short-term, but the behaviour continues when the 'why' isn't addressed.
- Worry that behaviour is not being addressed in the right way.

### Positive Behaviour Support (PBS)

- Evidence -based approach (research demonstrates it works).
- All caregivers are involved - family goals are prioritized.
- Focus on the child's motivation and teaching new, adaptive skills individualized to the child and their routines.
- Determines the 'function' of the behaviour or why the behaviour is happening.
- Creates a plan that is do-able.
- Consistency across caregivers and settings.
- Long-term goals are broken down into shorter term goals.

### Remember!

- Behaviour change can take a long time.
- Understanding that your child's behaviour happens for a reason is a great starting point!
- Positive Behaviour Support strategies will be supported by trained clinicians within the Provincial Preschool Autism Service.