

## Positive Behaviour Management

In order to support your child's learning and performance, and that of others, it is important to address challenging behaviours when they first arise.

**Challenging behaviours** may include prolonged tantrums, property destruction, self-injury, physical and verbal aggression disruptive vocal or motor behaviour.

**It is important to remember that every behaviour has a purpose and occurs for a reason.**

## Taking a Positive Behaviour Management Approach

Step 1: Identify a challenging behaviour that you would like to focus on.

Step 2: Once you have identified a behaviour, gather information surrounding that behaviour, such as:

- What sets off the behaviour (what happens before it occurs)
- Consider the environment, particular sounds, objects, people present etc
- What happens after the behaviour occurred?
- How do others react? Is there always the same response?
- Does the child have difficulty with communication? (expressing needs, expressing emotions or interacting socially?)

Step 3: Using the information you have gathered try and understand the function of the behaviour.

- What motivates the behaviour?

Reasons for challenging behaviour can be related to a number of things, such as:

- Trying to communicate needs or wants.
- Trying to get to or away from something (or an experience)
- Attention seeking (both positive and/or negative attention)
- Lack of skills/knowledge of appropriate behaviour.
- Difficulty identifying and dealing with emotions.
- Difficulty identifying and dealing with sensory needs.
- Trying to cope and function in their environment.



Step 4: Once you think you have understood the reasoning behind the behaviour, take a proactive approach.

*Proactive prevention strategies, including the use of replacement behaviours and remediate skills are the most effective way to combat disruptive behaviours.*

## **Some strategies to put into place can include:**

### **1. Changing the environment (e.g. texture, physical layout, lighting, background noise)**

Provide external supports to directly support the child's performance and learning, such as:

- Visual cues/photo schedule/stop signs
- Social stories for routines
- First/Then boards
- Use a choice chart
- Fiddle item or toy
- Remove distractions
- Add breaks
  
- Developing knowledge and skills of the parent / teacher, support staff etc.
- Developing a sensory program with your therapy team.

### **2. Replacement behaviour and remediate skills:**

Teach a more appropriate behaviour to replace the challenging behaviour by teaching the child how to develop awareness, learn the impact of activities on their arousal levels and learn to self monitor and regulate.

#### **Some tactics you can try include:**

- Verbally initiate/terminate interactions.
- Initiate appropriate physical affection.
- Appropriately ask for "break" or "help".
- Respond to loud or overstimulating situations.
- Make and express choice.

**Focus on teaching one skill at a time. Remember it takes time to learn new skills.**



3. Another strategy you can try, can be to provide a new response to the child's behaviour, through:

- Specific positive feedback.
- Clear instructions.
- Provide a choice.
- Provide consistent verbal "All done" countdowns.
- Promote active participation with modelling.
- Encourage communication (verbal or use any means appropriate to the child).
- Monitor and anticipate difficult play activities & provide options to leave the area.

**If you would like to find out more, speak to your therapy team.**

