

My Behaviour Is
My Communication

CEC
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Who Do You Know

With an individual in mind:
What do I know?
How do I determine the function of his or her
behaviour?
Where do I begin?

What Do I Know?

Diagnostic Criteria DSM-IV R

Qualitative impairments in communication
Qualitative impairment in social interaction
Restricted, repetitive, and stereotyped patterns of behavior, interests, and activities

Brain Dysfunction: a disturbance of the central nervous system (genetic, immune, and chemical factors)

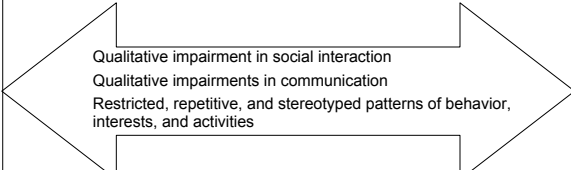
Developmental Disability: begins in infancy or early childhood and lasts for rest of life

Can also occur with other disabilities such as: deafness, epilepsy, learning disabilities, Mental Health Issues, ADD and ADHD; Obsessive Compulsive Disorder; and, Tourette's Syndrome

ASD Spectrum

Autism can and does exist with and without :

Cognitive Challenges



Qualitative impairment in social interaction
Qualitative impairments in communication
Restricted, repetitive, and stereotyped patterns of behavior, interests, and activities

Learning Characteristics

- May not generalize skills to other areas.
- Resists change in learning environment; perseverates.
- Has difficulty with unstructured time and waiting.
- May have difficulty with abstract concepts.
- Exhibits inconsistency and impulsiveness.

Learning Characteristics...2

- Need to be taught to make choices, decisions, plans.
- Often rely on cues and learned routines.
- Usually not competitive.
- May over-select one or more stimuli with failure to understand the whole.

Strengths

- Stamina
- Good long-term memory
- Enjoys routine and repetition
- Gross and fine motor skills -once attained
- Visual Memory
- Accuracy

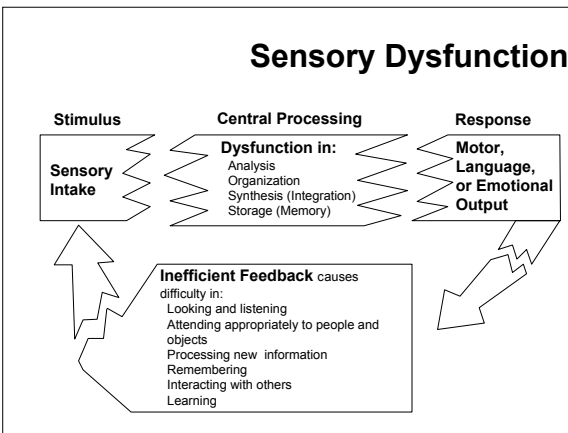
Sensory Processing

The physical self is the bridge
to living, learning
and creating relationships.

Catherine Smith, 2003

Catherine Smith, Provincial Outreach
Program for Autism and Related
Disorders

Sensory Dysfunction



Motor Deficits in ASD

The functional motor system is dependent on an intact sensory system. (Daichman, Cueli-Dutil, Tuchman, 2002)

**Speech is a crucial tool for learning,
self-advocacy, social relationships,
and participation in community.**



**Receptive Communication:
The words we hear.**

What if:

**You could not understand metaphors? Idiomatic
expressions? Teen lingo? Innuendo? Symbols?**

**You could not read body language? Take hints?
Read people's facial expressions?**

**You needed more time to process what people
were saying?**

**“People give each other
messages
with their eyes;
but I don't know what
they are saying.”**

Quote from a student to Lorna Wing

**Communication Impairments:
Defining Features of ASD**

Verbal and non verbal communication deficits

- Current studies of young children with autism suggest that approximately 75% will develop speech during the preschool years (Lord, Risi, & Pickles, 2004) given typical community intervention approaches. This leaves 25% without useful speech.
- Social or pragmatic language and related skills are most challenged

What is Language?

- Language: “symbolic currency for the exchange of meaning.” Dr. Oliver Sacks
- Words are abstract symbols that hold meaning.

**What is Language?
.... 2**

- Language must be comprehended *in context* to be meaningful.
- Language is complex and dynamic. Meaning can change over time and within particular groups.

What is Language? ... 3

Language is the primary method of instruction in typical classrooms.

The student with ASD:

- May have a comprehensive vocabulary. But that does not necessarily reflect an ability to synthesize, evaluate and critically respond.
- May be observing and repeating information. However, we must check to insure he or she really understands the content of the message.

Language Development and ASD

Children with autism generally demonstrate a lack of, or a reduced number of, important referential gestures, such as:

- showing,
- giving,
- pointing,
- and
- using eye gaze to communicate.

(Stone, Ousley, Yoder, Hogan, & Hepburn, 1997)

Spontaneity, Initiations & Functions of Language Challenges

Students with ASD demonstrate:

- Lack of spontaneous verbal and nonverbal initiations.
- Limited number of specific functions of language.
- Apraxia and fine motor skill difficulty common in nonverbal children with autism who have difficulty with ACC systems.

Verbal Children with Autism

- Limited quantity and quality of language. (Wetherby and Prutting, 1984)
- Almost exclusive communication to: request objects, actions and protesting. (Koegel, 2000)

Verbal Children with Autism ... 2

- Emit fewer utterances and fail to use language as a means of social initiation. (Calloway, Myles, & Earles, 1999)
- Verbal ASD children who experienced the most positive outcomes in therapy exhibited the greatest numbers of social initiations prior to intervention. (Koegel, 2000)

What is really understood

- What a child may be responding to when he appears to be understanding language:
 - Familiar routines
 - Environmental cues
 - High priority events
 - Specific elements or words
 - Intonation, gesture, and/or nonverbal cues

Why determine a child's level of linguistic comprehension

- Turn-off / tune-out factor
- Confusion, anxiety and behaviour problems
- Child cannot learn from language which is too complex
- We can adjust our language accordingly

Qualitative Impairment in Social Interaction

“The learning of language and social skills is vital for successful adult life.”

*Asperger Syndrome Employment Workbook,
Roger N. Meyer*

Communication and Social Skills: “The Link”

Successful Social Skills Requirements:

- Quickly interpret communication partner's information.
- Comprehend social rules as applied to variety of similar contexts – generalization.
- Rapidly process transient information.
- Be an able communicator.

Communication and Social Skills

- By age 4, neurotypical children have the majority of basic social skills in place.
- The learning of language involves the integration of multisensory experience (reception), effective mental processing, and appropriate expression.

Social/Pragmatic Use of Language Challenges

Individuals with autism who are able to formulate syntactically correct sentences often display difficulties in areas of pragmatics: eye gaze, expression of affect, prosody, topic shifting and maintenance, and nonverbal mannerisms. (Frea, 1995)

Relationship Between Symbolic Play and Language Acquisition

- Functional and symbolic play skills have been found to be significantly correlated with receptive and expressive language. (Munda, Sigman, Ungerer, & Sherman, 1987)
- Successful social skill ability involves an individual's ability to effectively communicate with other individuals. (Prizant & Schuler, 1987)
- Social interaction plays a fundamental role in the process of cognitive development. (Vygotsky, 1978). <http://www.learning-theories.com/vygotskys-social-learning-theory.html>

Early Diagnostic Features of Children with ASD that Reflect the Missing Links to Play

- Fail to engage in reciprocal play and functional play
- Copy others' motor movements far less than typical peers
- Don't often use pointing or other techniques to direct another person's attention (joint attention)

Stone, Wendy. Vanderbilt University School of Medicine

Social Skills

Capacity for joint attention
Capacity for symbol use

Joint Attention

- Behaviour regulation, then



- Attention to self, then



- Joint attention

**How Much Are Restricted, Repetitive,
and Stereotyped Patterns of Behavior,
Interests, and Activities**

Influenced by Communication and Social
Competence Deficits?

Frequent Cognitive *Strengths*

- visual/spatial processing and discrimination
- quantitative concepts and calculation
- memory, rote learning
- music
- art
- word naming/decoding

Frequent Cognitive *Challenges*

- comprehension
- social cognition
- flexibility
- abstraction
- assigning meaning; cause and effect,
relationships between events

Frequent Cognitive Challenges

... 2

- problem solving
- verbal reasoning
- generalization
- imagination & creativity

So, when you don't have words...

Self injurious behaviours
Aggressive behaviours
Tantrums
Idiosyncratic speech,
Gestures

Add it all up and what do you have?

Behaviour which reflects:
Communication difficulties :
– understanding verbal and non-verbal messages
– expressing one's self
Limited social competence
Limited behaviours that confound communication
and social interactions.
Sensory Processing difficulties

How Do I Determine the Function of His or Her Behaviour?






Positive Behaviour Support

What is Positive Behaviour Support?

“Process for understanding the purpose of challenging behaviours and developing a plan that promotes the development of new skills while reducing the individual’s need to engage in challenging behaviour.”

Dunlap, Vaughn, & O'Neill, 1998

Ten Steps in the Positive Behaviour Support Process

-  Assemble a Team
-  Develop an Emergency Safety Plan
-  Create a Shared Vision
-  Decide on One Challenging Behaviour
-  Complete a Functional Behavioural Assessment

Ten Steps in the Positive Behaviour Support Process

- 2. Brainstorm for Strategies
- 3. Build a PBS Plan with “Goodness-of-Fit”
- 4. Write an Implementation Plan
- 5. Evaluate the Plan
- 6. Meet Regularly to Revise

Positive Behaviour Support

Principles:

- Looks at the relationship between behaviour and the environment.
- Objective is to understand the structure and *function* of behaviour (what the person is getting out of the behaviour).

Positive Behaviour Support ... 2

- Proactively manipulates the environment so that the problem behaviors become irrelevant, ineffective, and inefficient.
- Is the basis for developing a Positive Behaviour Support Plan

Philosophy of Functional Behavioural Assessment.

“All Behaviour is meaningful and functional from the perspective of the individual engaging in the behaviour. The cornerstone of successful positive behaviour support is identifying the function of the challenging behaviour and assisting the individual in utilizing more socially acceptable strategies to serve the same purpose.”

Carr and Homer, et al (1999)

Goal: To Teach a Replacement or Desired Behaviour

- So what can we give him to do that **will prevent** the inappropriate behaviour?
- What can we teach him so he does **not have to do** the inappropriate behaviour again? (Make the behaviour ineffective, inefficient or irrelevant)
- What skill or behaviour can we replace that is:
 - **EASIER TO DO**
 - **MEETS THE SAME FUNCTION**
 - **CONTEXTUALLY APPROPRIATE**

Functions of Behavior “WHY?”

- All behavior serves a purpose (function)
- This behavior has worked in the past, or is currently working to achieve a desired outcome by the student.
- One behavior can serve more than one function.

Get something	Reject Something
•An object	•Avoid/escape
•Attention	•Protest
•A tangible	•Tangible
•Sensory	•Sensory

Are You Focusing on Behavior That Needs to Be Changed?

- Does the behavior result in physical harm or substantial threat to the individual or others?
- Does the Behavior result in substantial damage to property or materials?
- Impedes learning (disruptive)
- Irritating

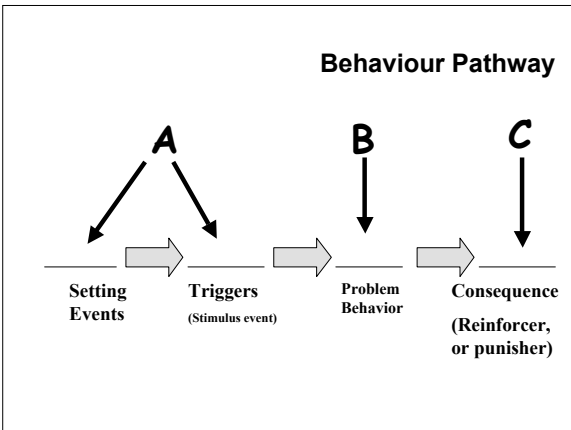
Think about:

- Intensity
- Frequency

- Does the behavior interfere with the educational progress of other students?
- Will the behavior become more serious if there is no intervention?

Principles of Behaviour

Theories of learning and conditioning indicate that behaviours will increase in frequency if they are reinforced by consequences.



**Understanding the Chain:
ABC Model of Behaviour**

Antecedents

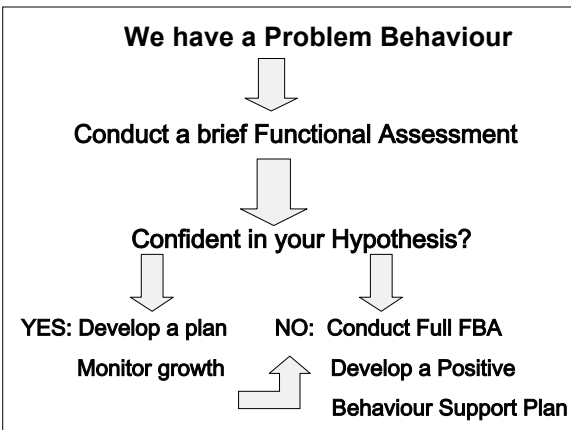
- What happens prior to the behaviour (planned or unplanned).

Behaviour

- The actual behaviour.

Consequences

- What happens immediately after the behaviour. Can be a reinforcer, a punishment or nothing.

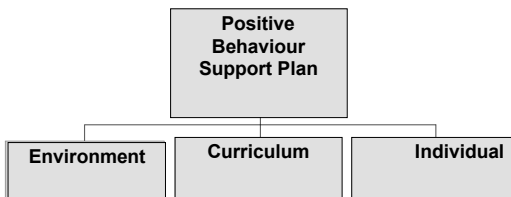


We Teach New Behaviours Because...

When children acquire new and appropriate behaviors, they have a repertoire of constructive behaviors.

Consequently...
 problem behaviors
 tend to occur less frequently.

Where Do I Begin ?



Preference Profile

Likes	Dislikes	Comments
>Water >Power Lines >Drawing >High – 5's >Lego >Potato Chips >Music >Juice >Chocolate	>Printing >Physical Activity >Rain >Loud noises >Wearing Shoes >Dogs >Buses	>Nut allergies >A diabetic > Will pursue water without recognizing danger

Accommodate and Assimilate

Student Support Plan Environment

Environment

Changes to the classroom environment must take into consideration:

- Sensory challenges
- Need for visual supports
- Level of social skills
- Personnel and Peer Education

Student Support Plan Curriculum

Curriculum

Must take into consideration the student's:
cognitive abilities, sensory challenges, communication skills,
social skills

Should foster:

- Self awareness & self management,
- Independence
- Participation in the community

Student Support Plan Behaviour Change Strategies

Change Behaviour

Effect positive change by:

- Teaching new behaviours
- Reinforcing replacement behaviours
- Reducing or eliminating problem behaviours

The Ten Laws of Success

- 📖 Autism is a reason, never an excuse.
- 📖 Success builds success.
- 📖 "Nobody ever rose to a low expectation"
- 📖 Fear is not an option.
- 📖 Small steps grow into giant steps.

An Interview with Kathie Harrington (2000)

The Ten Laws of Success

- 6. Interaction across and within environments is essential.
- 7. Visual Learners need to see.
- 8. Blended therapies mix well.
- 9. "Laughter is no detriment to learning".
- 10. The top line is independence.

An Interview with Kathie Harrington (2000)

Never Assume

Remember individuals with ASD think in black and white.

We assume that students with Autism Spectrum Disorders know and understand our expectations.

Most often, what we interpret as *misbehaviour* is due to the individual's lack of skills or abilities.
