

# Everyday ABA

Using behavioral principles to  
effectively support people with ASD.

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# We've Got a Crisis on Our Hands!

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# How Did We Get Here?

- My son spends all day on his computer and has a meltdown when I try to get him to come out with our family.
- My daughter hasn't been to the dentist in several years. I'm afraid to take her.
- Last week, my son fell down and hurt his ankle. I didn't realize he was injured until two days later.
- My whole family goes to church on Sunday and I can't take my daughter.
- I know my son really wants to have friends, but he just doesn't.



# How Did We Get Here? (2)

- My daughter spends all day following me around the house. She just doesn't know what to do with herself.
- My son has a new teacher and he has been sent home 6 times this month.
- I can't take my daughter shopping, because if she doesn't get what she wants, she runs out into the parking lot.
- When I ask my son to tell me about school, he runs to his room and won't come out.



# Why Behavior Analysis?

- Your child has a fever. You take him to the doctor.
- Your child is delayed in speech and communication. You find an excellent SLP.
- You find a good school placement and your child's classmates are interested in playing with him.

**BUT**

- Your child won't go to the doctor.
- Your child is struggling to attend and not meeting her goals.
- They give up when he ignores them.



# Why Do People Do What They Do?



# Does the Answer Lead to an Effective Solution?

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- He always does that when he watches TV.
- He did it because he was angry.
- She hates that class, those kids, that teacher.
- It's seasonal.
- He does it to push my buttons.
- She's just a bully.
- He's controlling.
- He's having a nervous breakdown.
- Sometimes she just has a bad day.



# So Why Do People Do What They Do?

## The Behavioral Lens:

- To avoid aversive situations and events.
- To access the “good” stuff (things we all want and need).
- Because it “works” (or has “worked” in the past).
- Because they have done it before (habit).
- Because it “feels good.”
- Because they got the “signal.”

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# Understanding Your Behaviour Analyst

## What is Behavior?

- Everything we do.
- Every instance of that thing, past, present, and future.

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**Behaviour is measurable.**



# A Behavioural Perspective

- Behaviour serves a function, even when it appears to be maladaptive.
- Behaviour is a process extended in time.
- Behaviour is (usually) orderly. Finding patterns helps us create effective plans.

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# Behaviour Analysts Care About . . .

- **Form:** Does everybody recognize and agree about what the behaviour looks like?
- **Function:** What holds this behaviour in place?
- **Frequency:** How do we know if our interventions are successfully increasing or decreasing the behaviour in question?
- **Time:** When does the behaviour occur and how long does it last?



# **“Problem” Behaviour (Excesses)**

**“Problem” behaviours are usually normal behaviors that are more intense, occur at the wrong time or place, or at the wrong frequency.**

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# But “Problem” Behaviour Can Also Be . . .

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**Things we don't do or can't do when we should.**



# Behavior Calling!

**Most of the time, behavior is communicative. It is a language that can tell you about a child's needs.**



# Your Child's Behavior May Signal . . .



# But Also . . .

**I don't know how to:**





... play in a satisfying way



**. . . tolerate change, delay to gratification, or mild frustration.**



. . . predict the future.



**. . . interact positively with siblings and friends.**



. . . comfort myself.



. . . solve problems effectively.





... affect my environment.



. . . get praise and attention.





# So What Do We Do?



# Behavioural Basics

- **Antecedents:** What happened before the behavior occurred?
- **Function:** What's holding the behavior in place?
- **Deficits:** What is a better alternative?
- **Motivation:** How can we teach the better alternative?



# Antecedents: What happened before the behavior occurred?

- Triggers
- Deficits
- Environmental Factors
- Biological Factors
- Learning History

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# Function: What 's holding the behaviour in place?



- Escaping from difficult, boring or unpleasant situations.
- Reducing demands.
- Getting attention.
- Getting or keeping stuff.
- Changing or controlling the level of arousal/stimulation.



# Deficits: What is a better alternative?



- What are other children doing to cope with similar situations?
- What coping skills/behaviours can serve the same function as the problem behaviour?
- What component skills might my child lack?
- What is a reasonable step size?



# Motivation: How can we teach the better alternative?

- Do we have control of motivating variables?
- Are people using reinforcement at all?
- Have we identified powerful reinforcers?
- Do the reinforcers fit the situation and match the skills we are trying to teach?
- Is anxiety diminishing the effectiveness of reinforcers?
- Have we introduced variety and choice?



# Scenario:



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