



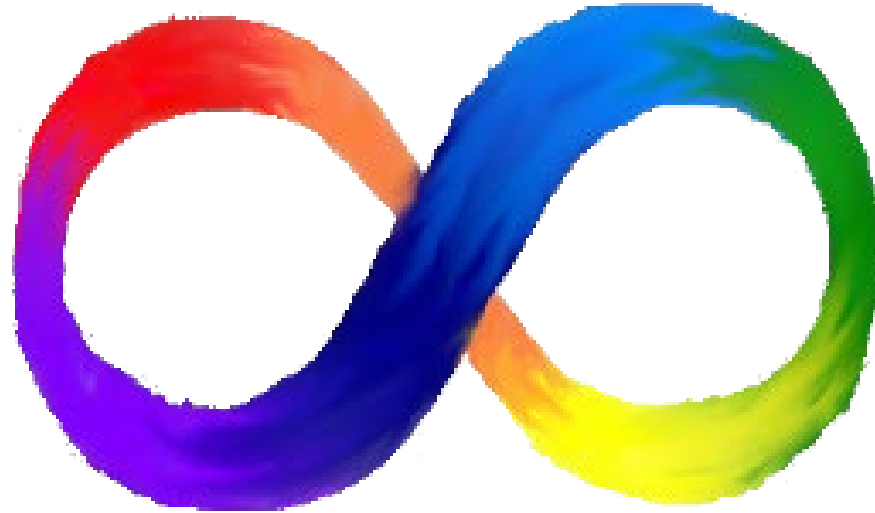
Autism Society
of North Carolina

Behavior: Challenging Our Assumptions

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Difference does not necessitate behavior change...



Safety

Security

Health

Autonomy



Whose behavior has to change first?

It starts with our beliefs and assumptions...



Common traps...

- *If they are able to have "good days," this proves that their behavior on the "bad days" is **within their control**.*
- *If they can clearly articulate their thoughts and feelings most of the time, their challenging behavior is **planned**. **They know what they are doing and are making a choice**.*
- *There is **nothing** that motivates this individual.*
- *Sometimes, behaviors happen out of the blue and **without reason**.*

Unsafe or disruptive behavior:

- Serves a purpose
- Expresses an unmet need
- Is a form of communication
- Signals the need to *teach*

***"Beneath every behavior, there is a feeling.
And beneath each feeling is a need.
And when we meet that need rather than
focus on the behavior, we begin to deal
with the cause, not the symptom."
(A. Warner)***

- If an individual cannot communicate, we ...
- If a student is struggling to read, we ...
- If an individual does not know how to complete a task, we ...
- If a student is struggling to solve the math problem, we ...
- If a student does not behave, we...



Defiant

Disrespectful

Manipulative

Intentional

Planned

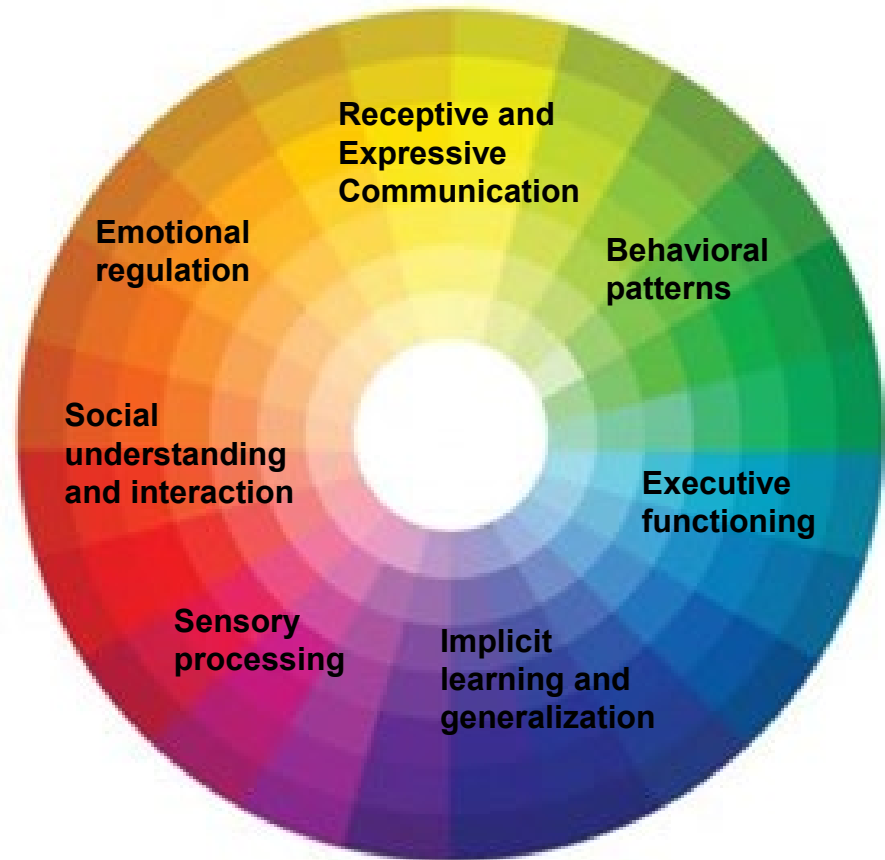
w o r d s

h a v e

p o w e r

**Autism is not a behavior disorder.
But sometimes, unsafe behavior can co-occur with autism.**

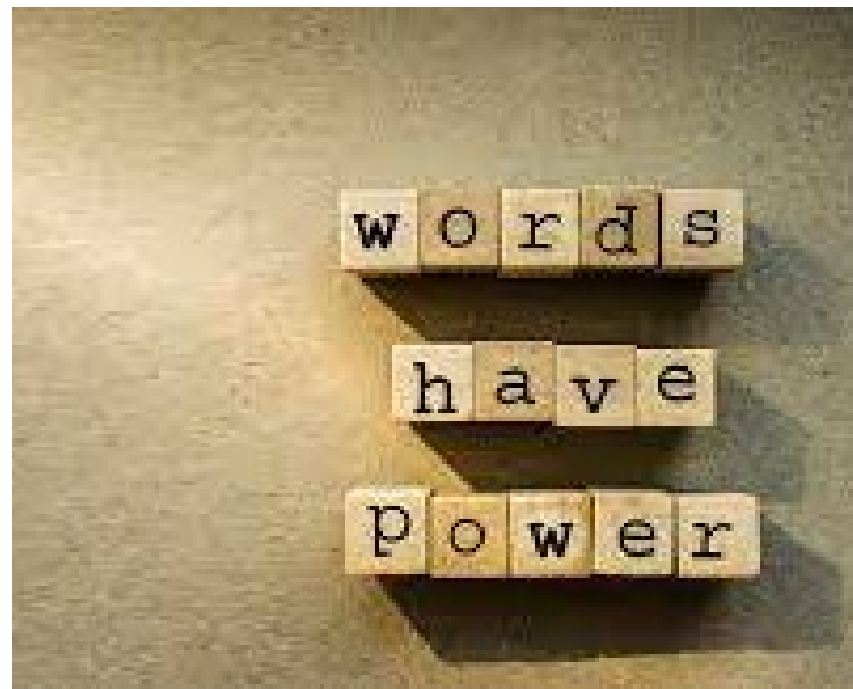




Are we looking at unsafe or disruptive behavior through the right lens(es)?

She has limited ways to communicate her wants, needs and feelings.

She struggles to understand what we are communicating.





He does not understand the social rules in this situation.

He experiences difficulty with perspective-taking and anticipating what others might think and feel in the situation.

He is struggling to foresee the outcomes of different behaviors.

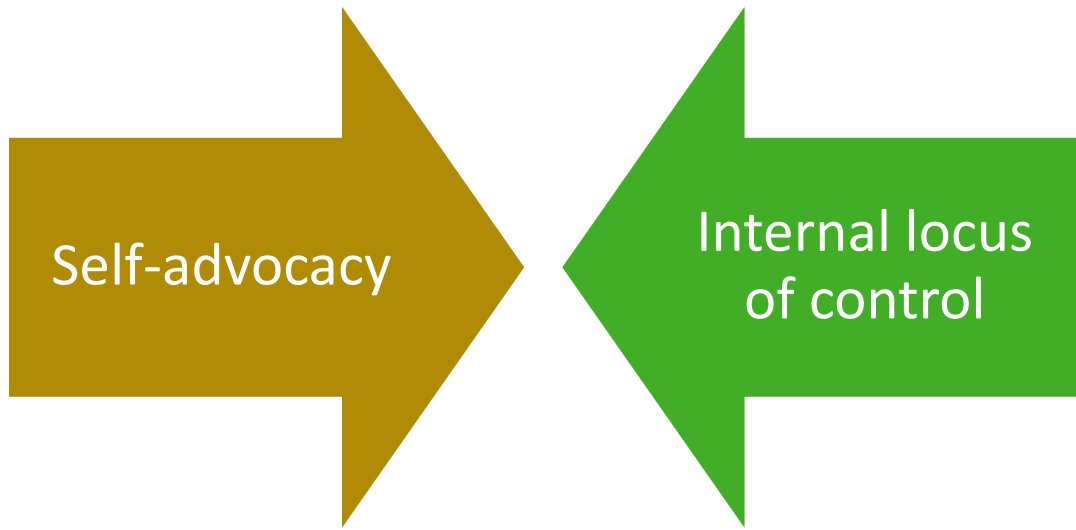
This task is too challenging; this task is not at the individual's instructional level.

There is something about this activity that they do not understand.

They do not see “the light at the end of the tunnel” on this task.



Giving the "power" back



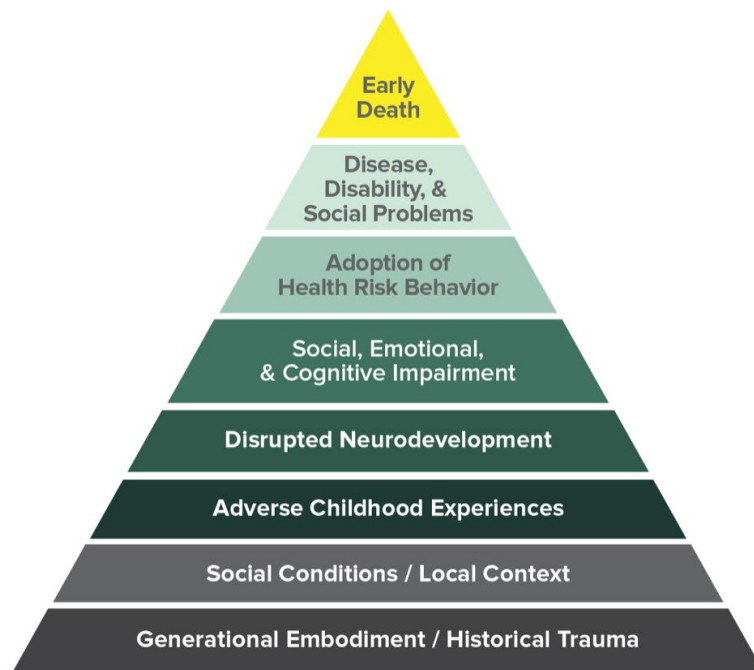


Behavior is the outcome of circumstances:



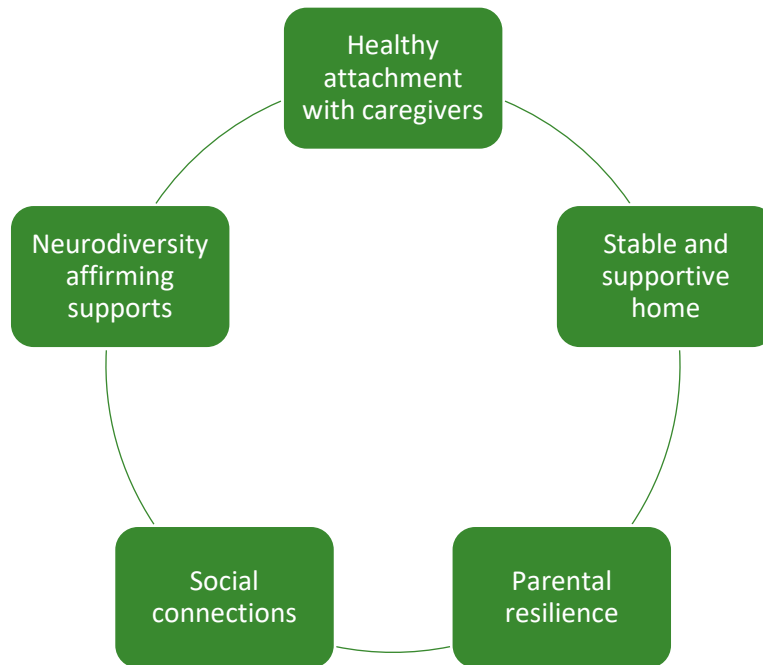
- What do I know about **their autism** that may influence the behaviors we see?
- What can we observe in the **immediate environment, interactions, and/or activities** that occurs just before the behavior, that might trigger the behavior?
- What **underlying factors and events** might play a role in making them less resilient to certain triggers?
- What **outcomes** have strengthened these behaviors over time? How does this behavior meet the need?

Adverse Childhood Experiences and Autism



Mechanism by which Adverse Childhood Experiences (CDC)
Influence Health and Well-being Throughout the Lifespan

Protective Factors

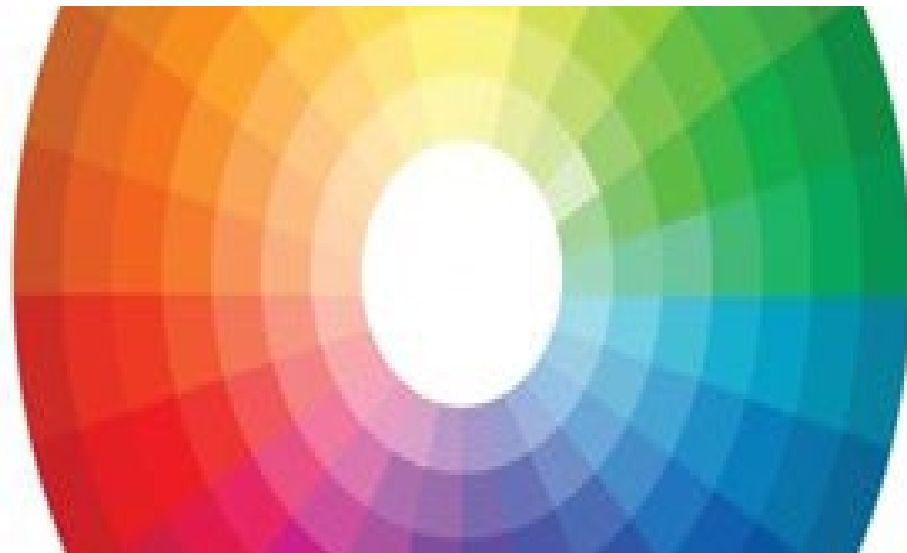


What is the function of the function?



What is the why beneath the why?

- Difference does not demand change
- It starts with our beliefs and assumptions
- Words matter and words have power
- Reframe and look through the right lense(s)
- Context matters



Printable resource from ASNC :



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Guiding Questions for Caregivers & Behavior Support Teams

Specifically, what behaviors are you concerned about?

- What do they look like?
- Are we all describing these behaviors in objective, measurable ways? Based on the way the behavior is defined, would everyone know it when they see it?

What do the data tell us? What patterns do we see?

- When is the behavior more likely to occur (when, where, with whom, what activities)? What are common triggers?
- When is the behavior less likely to occur? (when, where, with whom, what activities)?

What do we know about the individual that helps to understand why this is happening?

What proactive supports and accommodations do we have in place?

- Are we using individualized visual supports to promote clarity, independence and predictability? *Note: Visual supports come in a wide variety of forms and they vary in complexity. These can include visual schedules, calendars, to-do lists, visual instructions, visual reminders, graphic organizers for social-emotional concepts, pictures, objects, signage, activity and work systems, and more.*
- Are we teaching the individual to use these tools?
- Does the individual need proactive, strategically timed breaks? Does the frequency of these breaks need to be adjusted?
- Do activities and tasks need to be better structured to define how much, how long and when finished?

Printable resource from ASNC :



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Preguntas para Cuidadores y Equipos de Apoyo Conductual

Específicamente, ¿qué comportamientos le preocupan?

- ¿Cómo lucen los comportamientos?
- ¿Estamos describiendo estos comportamientos de manera objetiva y medible? Según la definición del comportamiento, ¿el comportamiento es fácilmente identificado por otras personas?

¿Qué nos dicen los datos?

¿Qué patrones vemos?

- ¿Cuándo es más probable que ocurra el comportamiento (cuándo, dónde, con quién, qué actividades)? ¿Qué provoca el comportamiento?
- ¿Cuándo es menos probable que ocurra el comportamiento? (¿cuándo, dónde, con quién, qué actividades)?

en todos los aspectos de la persona, incluyendo sus fortalezas, preferencias, metas y necesidades?

- ¿Qué le gusta a esta persona? ¿Cuándo están contentos y relajados?
- ¿El equipo profesional se enfoca en los objetivos y resultados que son más importantes a la persona y a sus cuidadores?

¿Qué apoyos y adaptaciones proactivas tenemos?

- ¿Estamos utilizando apoyos visuales individualizados para promover la claridad, la independencia y la previsibilidad? *Nota: Los soportes visuales vienen en una variedad de formas y varían en complejidad. Estos pueden incluir horarios visuales, calendarios, listas de tareas pendientes, instrucciones visuales, recordatorios visuales, organizadores*

ASNC's Webinars and Resources

- **Meltdowns – What You Need to Know**
- **ABA – The Good, the Bad, & the Progress**
- **ABA in Schools – Understanding the Issues**



Behavior & the IEP

This toolkit reviews the school disciplinary process, suspension and removal, and how inappropriate behaviors may be addressed through a Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) and a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP).

[Read Online](#) | [Download](#)

Clinical Services:

- Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA)
- Behavior consultation for caregivers and professionals
- Workshops and on-site coaching for professional groups

Contact us: clinical@autismsociety-nc.org

