



## 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 do we know about the individual's communication, sensory, social and/or learning differences that may play a role?
- What do we know about the individual's medical/physiological/psycho-social background that might play a role?
- Is there a known or suspected trauma history that we must be responsive to?

### How are rapport and relationships?

- Is the team working to build a strong, positive connection with the individual?
- Are we seeing beyond the behavior? Are we focused on all aspects of the person including their strengths, preferences, goals and needs?
- What does this person enjoy? When are they content and relaxed?
- Is the professional team targeting goals and outcomes that matter most to the individual and their caregivers?

### 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?
- Do we need to proactively modify activities or tasks (e.g., shorten them, change how they are presented, simplify)?
- Does the individual need more opportunities to assert their preferences and make choices?
- Are individualized sensory support routines and tools in place?

### Are the activities/tasks/assignments and related materials a good match for the individual?

- Is there a mismatch between the academic content and the student's instructional level? Is the material too challenging? Too easy? Too repetitive?
- Are there long periods of unstructured downtime?



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### What will we teach the individual to do instead?

- What is a better way(s) for the individual to get their needs met?
- Does the individual have effective ways to communicate and self-advocate?
- What social skills and concepts do we need to teach?
- What coping and self-regulation skills must be prioritized?
- What sensory routines do we need to teach?

### How can we strengthen the behaviors we want to see?

- What motivates the individual? What are their preferences?
- Are we honoring their communication whenever feasible?
- Are we providing meaningful and frequent positive feedback?
- Does the individual need an individualized reinforcement system? *Note: Reinforcement systems come in a wide variety of forms and they vary in complexity. Broad examples include but are not limited to "First work, then \_\_\_ boards;" token systems; sticker charts; and behavior contracts.*
- If the team is using an individualized reinforcement system, are the procedures clearly defined so everyone is on the same page about how the system will work?
- Is the team focused on reinforcement instead of punishment?

### How do we respond when challenging behavior occurs?

- Are we sensitive to the individual's early signs of frustration /stress? In these moments, are we making adjustments to support them?
- Is everyone reacting in a calm, supportive manner when behavior escalates?
- What helps to calm the individual?
- Is it clear what the team will do when behavior escalates? Are procedures clearly defined in a step-by-step manner?