Function of Behaviour and How to use it.
When you think about a student with difficult behaviour, what’s the first word that comes to mind? (BE HONEST!!!)
How would you triage to help this child?
Now imagine that child is 9...would you handle it differently?
The question we should ask is not "What's wrong with you?"

but rather "What happened to you?"

Remember: everyone in the classroom has a story that leads to misbehavior or defiance. 9 times out of 10, the story behind the misbehavior won’t make you angry. It will break your heart.

– Annette Breaux

TheCornerstoneForTeachers.com
* All behaviour is communication
* Behaviour serves a function/purpose
* We need to determine what is driving the behaviour!
* Change your teaching lens: Can’t vs Won’t
A child's behavior is not always what it seems

Behavior is communication

What we see: Behavior

What we don't see: What's under the surface

- Social Skills
- Security
- Basic Needs
- Physical Safety
- Need to Belong
- Executive Functioning
- Environmental Stressors
- Hunger
- Thoughts
- Attachment
- Need for Connection
- Attention
- Sleep
- Sensory Needs
- Need for Support
- Developmental Level
- Emotions
- Self-Esteem
- Anger
- Need for Attention
- Sadness
- Fear
The Escalation Cycle of Behavior

Emphasis on teaching and prevention techniques

Emphasis on safety, crisis management, re-entry, and follow up procedures
Attention/Obtain
Serves to draw attention away from others onto oneself or to obtain something of value

Escape/Avoid
Serves to end an activity or event the student does not want, like, or think he or she can do easily

Power/Control
Serves the need to be in control of events, activities and/or other people

Self-regulation
Serves the need to regulate feelings, sensory input or energy levels
Problem Behaviour

Obtain/Get
- Tangible/Activity
- Adult

Escape/Avoid
- Attention
- Peer
- Power/Control
- Sensory
Most Common Functions of Behaviour:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To OBTAIN / GET:</th>
<th>To AVOID / ESCAPE:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Peer attention</td>
<td>- Too difficult</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Adult attention</td>
<td>- Boring task / not engaging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Desired activity</td>
<td>- Too easy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Desired object/items</td>
<td>- Physical demand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Power and/or control</td>
<td>- Non-preferred activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Sensory stimulation (auditory, tactile, etc)</td>
<td>- Peer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Staff member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Reprimands</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How Do I Find the Function of Behaviour?

- Always start with defining the problem behaviour (what does it look like in a clear, specific, observable way).

- A-B-C data taking

- Functional Behaviour Assessment (often done by a district behavior team)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>A - Antecedent</strong></th>
<th><strong>B - Behavior</strong></th>
<th><strong>C - Consequence</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. L (EA) says “ok Sophie, let's start our Math work. Can you draw me a picture of 5 apples”</td>
<td>Sophie starts yelling no no no no (one of her verbal words)</td>
<td>Mrs. L - “Sophie, that behavior is not nice. You put your head down till you calm down”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher “Sophie are you ready to restart your math work? Please draw 5 apples like Mrs. L said before”</td>
<td>Sophie gets up and runs out of the room</td>
<td>Teacher and EA run out of the room to stop Sophie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. L “Sophie we are going to answer questions about a story now. Can you point to who the main character is?”</td>
<td>Sophie hits Mrs. L on the arm</td>
<td>“Sophie that is not nice! I will not work with you when you hit” I will be back in 5 min to see if you are going to have gentle hands”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher “Sophie I heard you were hitting. So I will work with you. Can you point to who the main character is”</td>
<td>Sophie hits Mrs. L on the arm</td>
<td>“Sophie that is not nice you need to stop that. You will be on a 5 min time out and I will come back”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/23</td>
<td>Karen</td>
<td>10:16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/22</td>
<td>Karen</td>
<td>10:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/16</td>
<td>Ray</td>
<td>12:15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/14</td>
<td>Karen</td>
<td>10:24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/8</td>
<td>Karen</td>
<td>10:08</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Function Discovered

Now What?
choice
Content vs. Task
Behaviours Usually Happen in a Chain

Teacher assigns task.

Student says, “I hate this!”

Teacher says, “You have to do it before you go to recess.”

Student rips up assignment.

Teacher says, “You’ll have to go to the office.”

Student crawls under the desk.
Altering the Behavior Chain

- Mrs. L has a student who is quite defiant all the time and refused to work and started to yell because he hates writing and setting up to fail. What are some ideas to keep the student working and not escape the work?
- Mr. Jones has a student who says the class is too loud all the time and spends a lot of time running the hallways. Other staff says the student is just trying to get out of work. Ideas??
Create a Trauma Informed Classroom

- **Relationships**: Students are able to establish relationships with teachers and peers.
- **Self-Regulation**: Students develop an ability to self-regulate behaviors, emotions, and attention.
- **Success**: See themselves as successful both in academic and non-academic areas.
- **Well-Being**: Students' physical and emotional health and well-being are cared for.
Zones of Regulation

- Self Regulation can be described as “keeping the accelerator and the brakes of emotion in balance” (Dr. Dan Siegel).
- Before a student can start self regulating their actions, they need to be able to identify them and how they feel.
- Zones of Regulation is a great program to help start this process.
Know your own triggers...

Ask yourself:
* Are you the best person to be dealing with the student at this time?
* Does your non-verbal communication connect with your verbal communication?
Co-Regulation

- Simplify your language
- Movement- slow down your actions
- Affect- match the child’s affect
- Reflect the child’s emotional intent
- Tone of voice- modulate for the situation
- Eyes and ears- listen with both
- Stop- wait for the child to initiate
- Together- join the child in their intent
The Escalation Cycle of Behavior

Emphasis on teaching and prevention techniques

Emphasis on safety, crisis management, re-entry, and follow up procedures
THE POWER OF RELATIONSHIPS WILL ALWAYS Dwarf All Other Pedagogical Strategies.
“I've come to the frightening conclusion that I am the decisive element in the classroom. It's my daily mood that makes the weather. As a teacher, I possess a tremendous power to make a child's life miserable or joyous. I can be a tool of torture or an instrument of inspiration. I can humiliate or humor, hurt or heal. In all situations, it is my response that decides whether a crisis will be escalated or de-escalated and a child humanized or de-humanized.”

- Dr. Haim Ginott
Low Arousal Approach
Key Elements

● Developed by Dr. Andrew McDonnell in the UK and Ireland

● **Reflective Practices**- Staff can inadvertently cause challenging behavior due to things such as co-regulation problems etc. Low Arousal aims to have caregivers (teachers) reflect on how they may be part of the problem and therefore THEY are also the solution.

● **Demand Reduction in a Crisis**- Short term reduction of demands by staff. This allows for a “cooling off” period.

● Putting Power back into the Professional. “I am the Professional so I will adapt”