Behaviour And Communication
And Its Impact On Relationships And Inclusion

Problematic behaviour often impedes social relationships and learning opportunities both for the student and classmates. Challenging behaviours often result in a student being excluded, rather than included in classroom activities. Sometimes we tend to focus on dealing with consequences rather than addressing the function or purpose of the behaviour for the child. When we focus on consequential interventions, the behaviour usually is replaced by an alternate behaviour (often equally as inappropriate). We need to take a "Functional Communication" approach.

Communication and behaviour are inseparable. In other words, behaviour provides a function (or means of communication) (Pat Mirenda, 1997).

If behaviour is problematic, we need to remember that it involves the "interaction between two people". It is often the interaction between the two people from which a problem arises. We also need to remember that some children have no other means to communicate except through the particular challenging behaviour. On the other hand, other children do have other ways to communicate, but no one may be listening to them unless they engage in the escalating behaviour. <u>We will always select a method to communicate that is the most efficient and effective.</u>

It is important that the communicative replacement behaviour be <u>at least as effective </u>as the behaviour you wish to extinguish. Otherwise, the individual will not expend the energy to engage in that new behavior. Augmentative communication (picture communication symbols, BIGmack, signs, gestures, etc.) can provide a more appropriate means of addressing the function of the undesired behaviour for the individual.

4 Probable Functions of Behaviour	Communicative Replacements
• to get <u>tangibles</u> (e.g., "I want...")	• "want", "please", "more"
• to get <u>attention</u> or social interaction (e.g., "Pay attention to me")	• "pay attention to me", "come here", "more", use of conversation book
• to <u>escape</u> or avoid (e.g., "I don't want...")	"break", "go", "no", "stop", "help", "please", provide a choice
• to decrease sensory <u>boredom</u> or stress (e.g., "This makes me feel better")	• "I'm bored", "give me something to do", "something else"
	Note: message should be specific to the function & context of the behaviour

 (Pat Mirenda, 1997)

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