

## The ABC of Behaviour

This is a useful way of thinking about why a child is behaving in a certain way. It starts with the premise that the majority of behaviour is rational. It is optimistic – if a behaviour has been learned, it can be unlearned. The ABC model suggests that behaviour can be understood in terms of:

### **A Antecedents:**

- What happened immediately before the misbehaviour, the events that led up to it?
- What was the provocation, who did or said, or did not say, what?
- What was the setting for the behaviour? Is it always at the same activity, with the same child, or children?
- Does it always happen at certain times of the day or on the same day of the week? (Does it happen regularly on a Monday after weekend visits with an estranged parent?)

### **B Behaviour:**

- What precisely did the child do?

### **C Consequences:**

- What happened as a result of the behaviour?
- How was the problem dealt with?
- What did the others do?
- How did they react?

Remember that the consequences might be reinforcing the undesirable behaviour, for example, gaining adults' attention, peer approval, avoiding disliked activity.

The main question to ask is 'what is the child getting out of behaving like this?'

### **Teaching incompatible skills**

This should be the first strategy to consider when attempting to manage challenging behaviour. The most effective, and least restrictive, way of dealing with any kind of disruptive behaviour is attempting to increase the frequency of any kind of activity that is in opposition to the problem behaviour.

#### Problem behaviour

Snatching things  
Pushing other children  
Slamming doors

#### New skills to be taught and rewarded

Making appropriate requests  
Playing a game with one of two children  
Shutting doors quietly

**REMEMBER** – Whatever strategies you use to manage inappropriate behaviour you must be consistent in your approach.

### A B C Observation

Name:				Date of Birth:		
Setting:						
Date & Time	Where did it happen?	What happened just before? (A)	What did ..... do? (B)	What did you do? (C)	What happened as a result of YOUR ACTION?	Staff Initial

**Staff response:**

**Parent's response:**

**Notes for feedback:**



# Behaviour Observation Sheet

Name:						
Behaviour to be observed:						
Areas of concern:						
Date & Time	What did the child do?	What provoked the child?	Where did it happen and with whom?	What action did you take?	What was the result of your action?	Staff Initial