

## Behaviour that challenges

1. **Behaviour that challenges** may take many different forms. For example, aggression, self-injury, property destruction, inappropriate sexual behaviour. Negative consequences for the individual can follow (physical harm, abusive treatment) and for those supporting them (physical harm, stress, reduced opportunities). The *challenge* is in the *impact* that the behaviour has.
2. **Why does challenging behaviour happen?** It's often about communicating a message. To understand the 'message', we need to understand the events around it (what are my brother/sister's preferences? How is their physical and mental health? What is the physical environment like? How are others interacting with them?)

### Common functions of behaviour that challenges

Understanding what happens before and after the behaviour allows us to highlight functional relationships

**Demand Avoidance:** Behaviour results in request/demand being removed/delayed/altered

I don't want to do this now, I don't understand

**Attention Maintained:** Behaviour results in attention being provided/maintained

I need you, need interaction

**Avoidance of Attention:** Behaviour results in attention being withdrawn

I don't want you here

**Tangible:** Behaviour results in access/continued access to desired item/activity

I want this now – want to keep doing this

**Sensory:** Behaviour directly modifies sensory experience/stimulation

I am bored / I am over stimulated

**Pain:** Behaviour directly modifies pain or discomfort

This hurts / I am uncomfortable



3. **How can I help my disabled brother or sister who is displaying behaviour that challenges?** Ask their GP to refer them to a behavioural specialist for a functional assessment. A functional assessment is an evidence based, systematic way of exploring the events that happen around the behaviour. From this, a Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) plan can be made, to help give your brother/sister other ways of communicating their messages.

Useful websites: <http://pbsacademy.org.uk/> [www.positiveapproachestosupport.co.uk](http://www.positiveapproachestosupport.co.uk)

Sibs is the UK charity for brothers and sisters of disabled children and adults.