






Noah's Inclusion Services

Understanding Behaviour

All behaviour occurs for a reason, so to change it we need to know why it is occurring. Are there triggers? Or payoffs? Or triggers and payoffs? Reasons may be subtle and kids may miscue us by presenting with an apparent need (I need a chocolate) but the real reason is different (what I actually need is connection). Good detective skills can be needed to uncover what the hidden needs are but once reasons for the behaviour have been identified, we can decide what changes need to be made so the behaviour reduces. The way parents/carers respond to their child will be the key to changing the child's behaviour. Parents/carers may not be the cause of the problem, but with young children, parents/carers are always the solution, because kids are too little to change themselves without help.

What?		
Common Triggers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temperamental triggers (e.g. quick tempered, very active) • Developmental triggers (e.g. don't have the skills yet) • Sensory triggers (e.g. upset by loud noises, seek fast moving play) • Medical triggers (e.g. unwell, allergies, hospitalization etc) • Brain triggers (e.g. using 'reactive' brain instead of 'thinking' brain) • Traumatic experiences • Sleep issues (e.g. tired, snores, sleep apnoea, lack of bedtime routine etc) • Connection triggers (e.g. attention seeking behaviour because seeking more connection) • Needs not being meet (e.g. being bored or hungry) • Change (e.g. moving house, change of seasons, new teacher etc.) • Lack of consistency (e.g. changeable routines, rules or expectations) • How instructions are given (e.g. using question instructions, see tip sheet on giving effective instructions) • Emotional messages (e.g. you are a naughty child) • Parent/Carer beliefs and expectations (e.g. unrealistic for child or self) • How parents/carers are feeling (e.g. tired, depressed, stressed) • Desirable behaviours ignored (why behave well if misbehaviour gets you a bigger reaction?) • Watching others (children automatically copy the role models around them) • Influences from media (e.g. too much TV, playing inappropriate games) • Parent's media use (parents on phone, face book, social media a lot) 	    
Common Payoffs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accidental rewards (e.g. laughing when kids swear, reactions from friends) • Attention for misbehaving (e.g. long lecture about why they shouldn't do something) • Getting an angry or out of control response from a parent (like a moth is instinctively drawn to a candle, kids are instinctively drawn to big emotions) • Getting out of something that you don't like or more off something that you want/like 	