

Gather information and problem solve

A suggestion for implementing the strategy 'Understanding how to respond to problem behaviour' from the Guide: [Behaviour and learning](#)

Includes:

- Why gather information?
- Functional Behaviour Assessment
- Questions to support collaborative problem solving
- Useful resources

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From

Guide: [Behaviour and learning](#)

Strategy: [Understanding how to respond to problem behaviour](#)

Suggestion: [Gather information and problem solve](#)

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Why gather information?

Knowing why students behave in certain ways will help you predict and prevent problem behaviours.

It provides a basis for planning how to teach alternative ways of behaving, so that students can get their needs met in socially acceptable ways.

Gather information to:

- better understand what a student is communicating through their behaviour about the difficulties they are having with particular tasks, situations, or expectations
- identify activities, expectations, and teacher or peer actions that might be triggering the behaviour
- think about how the learning environment, including responses from teachers and peers, might be reinforcing the behaviour
- think about the function of the behaviour (that is, what purpose it is serving)
- think about how the wider learning or social environment might be providing the conditions for disengaged or antisocial behaviour.

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Functional Behaviour Assessment

A Functional Behavioural Assessment can help identify the relationship between a behaviour and the context in which that behaviour occurs.

A simple Functional Behavioural Assessment is a systematic, evidence-based process.

1. Describe the behaviour.
2. Identify the antecedent.
3. Identify the consequence.
4. Identify the function of the behaviour.
5. Check for setting events (other things going on in the student's life) and write a hypothesis.

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Questions to support collaborative problem solving

COLLABORATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING

The questions on the next page reflect the kinds of information typically gathered as part of a simple Functional Behaviour Assessment.

The questions will help you to:

- better understand what a student is communicating through their behaviour about the difficulties they are having with particular tasks, situations, or expectations
- identify activities, expectations, and teacher or peer actions that might be triggering the behaviour
- think about how the learning environment, including responses from teachers and peers, might be reinforcing the behaviour
- think about the function of the behaviour (i.e., what purpose it is serving)
- think about how the wider learning or social environment might be providing the conditions for disengaged or antisocial behaviour.

Question	Possible answers
What is the problem behaviour? How often does it happen?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Non-compliance with teacher instructions, daily, particularly during literacy time ...• Calling out and attention seeking, several times a day, when teacher is working with others ...
What is the typical setting or context for the behaviour?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mondays ...• A recess in the learning space ...• Inside lunchtimes ...• A long time sitting on the mat ...• Break times ...• Transitions ...
What typically happens before the behaviour occurs?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• An instruction to complete a written task ...• A competitive activity ...• An expectation of silent, independent work ...• Teasing or name calling by peers ...• Conflict with peers over space or resources ...
If I wanted to make the behaviour happen, what would I do?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Give many instructions at once ...• Demand silent work ...• Require written responses only ...• Make the student work in a self-selected pair or group ...• Make the student work with a particular peer ...

Leave the student working independently for long periods of time ...

The student is reprimanded ...

The student is asked to 'step out' ...

The student is asked to work at a separate desk ...

If the student understands what is being asked of them ...

The student has choices about where they work, how they present their work, the order for ...

The student is working cooperatively rather than competitively ...

There is a mix of ways of gaining information (some teacher talk, some video, some ...)

ask that is too difficult ...

on one attention from the teacher or a peer ...

... don't have the social skills needed to work with other students on this task ...

- The task has too many components to it ...
- I don't have the materials needed for the task ...
- I need help ...
- I need the option to work in a low-distraction area ...
- I need you to slow down ...
- I need another way to know you what I have learned ...
- I'm bored, anxious, stressed ...
- I expect to fail at this task ...
- I lack the skills needed to plan, organise, self-assess, and provide positive self-talk ...

What currently works best to calm, refocus, or re-engage the student?

How could we build on this to provide a sustainable solution?

Acknowledging that the student is experiencing stress ...

- Providing alternatives to writing ...
- Working with an older buddy ...

Behan, T. 2017. *Strategy for Positive Behaviour: Support Engagement, Motivation, and Success*. New Zealand Ministry of Education, pp. 58-59.

Source:

PB4L: Teaching for positive behaviour

<https://pb4l.tki.org.nz/PB4L-School-Wide/Support-material>

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Useful resources



Teaching for positive behaviour: Supporting engagement, participation, and learning

Read time: 111 min

This resource supports teachers in all New Zealand primary and secondary schools to understand and draw on effective strategies that enhance students' behaviour, engagement, participation, and learning.

Publisher: Positive Behaviour for Learning

[Visit website](#)



Collaborative problem solving

Questions that reflect the kinds of information typically gathered as part of a simple Functional Behaviour Assessment.

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