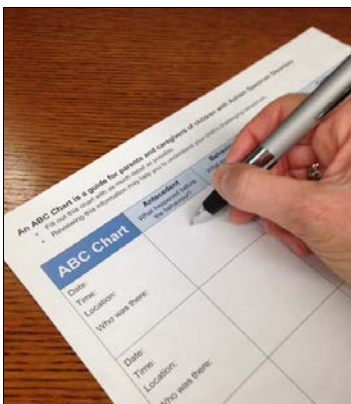


# Using an ABC chart to understand challenging behaviours

A guide for parents and caregivers of children with Autism Spectrum Disorders



## What is an ABC chart?

This is a form you can fill out to describe your child's behaviour along with what happened before and after.

Analyzing this information can help you learn why your child engages in challenging behaviours.

<b>A</b>	<b>Antecedent</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What happened immediately before the behaviour? For example: Was your child asked to do something, was there a change in schedule, or was the environment loud?</li><li>• This could include situations that are not apparent at the moment. For example, your child did not sleep well or is feeling sick.</li></ul>
<b>B</b>	<b>Behaviour</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What did you see? What did the behaviour look like?</li><li>• This description should be clear enough that anyone could watch your child and know what they are looking for.</li></ul>
<b>C</b>	<b>Consequences</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What happened right after the behaviour?</li><li>• This could be changes in the environment, or the actions or reactions of others.</li></ul>

## How do I use the ABC chart?

1. Collect data on one behaviour at a time. For example: hitting only, not hitting and spitting.
2. Fill out the chart as soon as you have dealt with the behaviour, while your memory is still fresh.
3. Think about the purpose of the behaviour:

<b>Escape</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To get away from or avoid undesirable situations or activities.</li></ul>
<b>Attention</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To obtain attention from others. Any reaction, pleasant or unpleasant is considered attention.</li></ul>
<b>Tangible</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To get an object or event that fulfills a need, such as a toy or food.</li></ul>
<b>Sensory</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To fill a sensory need. For example, spinning objects or scratching a rash may make your child feel good.</li></ul>

Some behaviours serve more than one purpose. For example: your child may hit and then get a snack (tangible) or hit and then a caregiver talks with them about it (attention).

4. Try to see if there is a pattern to the behaviour. For example: hitting always happens when your child is asked to do something.

For more information and support, contact the children's services in your community

