Lunch and Learn, June 11, 2020, Why on earth does my child do that? Understanding your Child’s Behavior
Carol Schall and Cyndi Pitonyak

We don’t always use words to communicate.

- Most communication is actually non-verbal.
- Subtle ways of communicating are socially out of reach for some individuals.

What does “behavior” mean?

When a person does this...
- While doing an activity a person falls to the floor kicking, screaming, and crying

Maybe they are saying...
- “I don’t like to do this.”
- “I need help doing this activity.”
- “Please slow down, you are moving too fast.”
- “Please give me a break from this activity.”

What does “behavior” mean?

When a person does this...
- During a “fun activity” a person throws the activities they are doing

Maybe they are saying...
- “I need you to be with me.”
- “I don’t know what to do when you give me so many things.”
- “I need help organizing my area.”
- “I like noise when I am playing.”

Housekeeping
- For educational and quality control, we will be recording this zoom session.
- By participating, you are consenting to being recorded.
- Before this session is shared, we will edit to remove identifying information to protect your privacy.
- The Q&A section will be removed and only be shared as an anonymous transcript.

Please use this citation when referencing content:
What does “behavior” mean?

When a person does this...
- When in a car, the person rocks rapidly and hits the windows and themselves

Maybe they are saying...
- "I feel sick."
- "I don't want to go where we are going."
- "I don't know where we are going."
- "I don't like sitting here."

To serve a person who uses their behavior to communicate with you...

- Try to observe the behavior and think about what it might mean
- Stop and think about what was happening immediately before that behavior occurred.
- Observe what helps the person calm down after the behavior occurred.
- Share and discuss your observations with others.

When you have an idea of what the behavior may mean, you can...

- change the environment
- teach the person another way to communicate that...
- respond to them by...

When the person does this...
- When asked to do work, the person hits other people or cries

Maybe they are saying this...
- "I don't want to do this activity."
- "This is too hard. I need help."
- "Please tell me when I will be finished."
- "I am worried I will get this wrong."
- "I don't understand what you want me to do."

Therefore we should...
- Change the environment:
  - Teach them to...
  - Respond to them by...

Upcoming Topics

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Registration Link: https://vcuautismcenter.org/te/lunchandlearn.cfm
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For questions or more information

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