

## Using an ABC Chart to Identify Triggers of Challenging Behaviours in Children with Autism

In order to identify triggers or purpose of a behaviour, you will need to record behaviours and what happens before and after them over a period of 1 – 2 weeks.

You will need to use an ABC chart to record the behaviours, charts can be downloaded from [www.ASDinfoWales.co.uk/advice-sheets](http://www.ASDinfoWales.co.uk/advice-sheets), or you can make your own using these headings:

Date and time	Antecedent	Behaviour	Consequence

**Antecedent (what happens before)** — This is often the trigger for the behaviour. This can sometimes be clear-cut such as somebody saying ‘no’ to a request but in individuals with ASD it can be more difficult to identify because the cause may be related to sensory issues such as loud noises or specific sounds or related to the need for predictable routines. **It is therefore important that you record all relevant information including time, environment, what was said, who was present etc....**

**Behaviour** — In this section you will need to record details of the behaviour, without judgement or assumptions. Describe the behaviour rather than jumping to conclusions as many individuals with ASD have difficulties in expressing their feelings in an appropriate way. For example, anxiety may present as worry but could also present in repetitive behaviours or aggression.

**Consequence (what happens after)** — Often the consequence or outcome of the behaviour can provide clues as to what the child is feeling, by showing what the child is trying to achieve. Consequences can sometimes be reinforcing the behaviour. Record exactly what happens including what the child does and what any other children or adults do.