

THE LINK BETWEEN COMMUNICATION AND BEHAVIOUR

- 2/3 of our communication is non-verbal
- Our non-verbal communication depends on our gender, personality, culture, experiences and contextual factors (as well as many other influences)
- When our body language does not match our verbal language, the message can be misunderstood

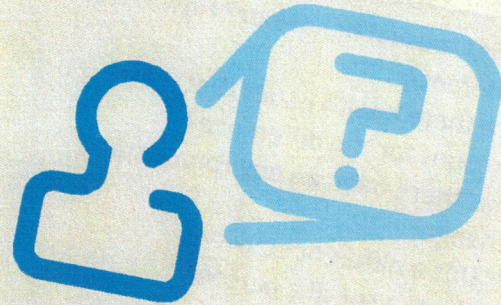
NON-VERBAL LANGUAGE AND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

- People with developmental disabilities often use non-verbal behaviour when they lack the words to use
- Challenging behaviour is often a reaction to challenging environments

Understanding challenging non-verbal behaviour begins with understanding the person and the situation from their perspective.

COMMON TYPES OF CHALLENGING BEHAVIOUR

- Aggression towards people or property
- Self-Injury
- Sexualized behaviour
- Repetitive, stereotypical (E.g., rocking)



IT IS IMPORANT TO ALWAYS
UNDERSTAND WHY THE BEHAVIOUR
IS OCCURRING

UNDERSTANDING CHALLENGING BEHAVIOURS

People with developmental disabilities use non-verbal behaviour to communicate with others. In other words, the function of the behaviour is communication.

- Challenging behaviours may be caused by many factors, including:
 - **Biological** (pain, sensory, medication)
 - **Social** (boredom, need for social interaction, unfamiliar with social norms)
 - **Environmental** (noise, lighting, access to objects/activities)
 - **Psychological** (feeling excluded, lonely, labeled, devalued)

How you react to challenging behaviour will influence whether the person becomes more agitated or if he/she calms down

QUICK OBSERVATION CHECKLIST

- ✓ What is usual behaviour? How is this different?
 - ✓ Are there health issues that may account for the difference?
 - ✓ Has there been an environmental change?
 - ✓ Is this a different activity?
 - ✓ Is there a specific person present/absent?
- Remember, there may be more than one trigger for the behaviour*

THINKING ABOUT WHY...

In order to figure out the function of the behaviour (the why), you will need:

- A good description of the problem behavior and the setting where it occurs
- Identify the events, times and situations that exist before the problem behavior occurs
- Identify the consequences of the behavior
- Identify the motivation for the behavior
- Collect this information from those who have directly witnessed the behaviour
- Identify other behaviours that could replace the problem behaviour

