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Out-of-character behaviour

Out-of-character behaviour is usually short term; it subsides once the situation is resolved. There are many situations that occur in a child's daily life that can cause this type of behaviour. For example, the child might be:

- ▶ unwell
- ▶ tired
- ▶ stressed
- ▶ afraid
- ▶ frustrated
- ▶ angry.



Disruptive behaviour

Disruptive behaviour is when a child is uncooperative and prevents themselves and/or others from focusing on what they are doing. A disruptive child might also grab the educator's attention, distracting them from the other children and the task at hand.

It is normal for children to exhibit disruptive behaviour as they struggle to learn self-control. Not all disruptive behaviour is of concern, but it should be addressed as part of your regular support to help children develop their social and emotional skills.

Disruptive behaviour could take the form of:

- ▶ not following instructions
- ▶ talking loudly or making inappropriate noises
- ▶ leaving the area or wandering around
- ▶ throwing objects
- ▶ crying; tantrums
- ▶ isolation from peers.

Behaviours of concern

Behaviours of concern, previously called 'challenging behaviour', are when a child does something that hurts themselves and/or other people.

These types of behaviours can prevent children from participating in activities. They can harm others and are stressful and upsetting for all involved.

Note the following:

- ▶ It is the behaviour that is the problem, not the person.
- ▶ These behaviours are not uncommon. Many children behave this way at times.
- ▶ Behaviours are only considered 'of concern' when they cause a problem to the child or those around them.

<p>Emotional and social problems</p>	<p>Many behaviours of concern are linked with mental health in some way. Emotional and social problems can be the cause or the outcome of a mental health condition.</p> <p>The feelings that children express must be taken seriously. Like all of us, children have good and bad days; sometimes they will need extra support to deal with problems and enjoy their learning and play.</p> <p>Mental health issues can affect a child's capacity to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ form friendships ▶ resolve conflict ▶ make decisions ▶ learn about other people ▶ develop life skills ▶ separate from parents and/or educators ▶ play freely ▶ develop confidence ▶ deal with anger ▶ accept behaviour guidance. <p>To read more about mental health issues in childhood, go to the KidsMatter website at: http://aspirelr.link/kids-matter-early-childhood</p>
<p>Trauma</p>	<p>The word 'trauma' describes a deeply distressing or disturbing event and the emotional shock that follows it. Trauma can seriously affect a child's mental health and behaviour. The severity of trauma is defined by the effect it has on an individual.</p> <p>Trauma may relate to various events, such as grief, loss, war or being held in custody.</p> <p>A child who has experienced trauma may show behaviours such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ difficulty sleeping or disrupted sleep patterns ▶ loss of appetite or refusal to eat ▶ regression in development ▶ anxious responses to separations or unfamiliar events, situations or people ▶ social withdrawal or restricted play ▶ re-enacting an event in play, sometimes repeatedly ▶ aggressive behaviour with others ▶ fantasising about an event ▶ expressing intense emotions inappropriately ▶ flashbacks ▶ hyperarousal – the child is continually alert and looking for danger or threats.

Seeking advice

If you identify behaviour of concern, or feel that you need advice in guiding behaviour, there are plenty of people that can help you. Making decisions about a behavioural situation is not your responsibility alone. You can seek the support of your supervisor, colleagues and service management, as well as professional organisations. Consult with these people, particularly if the behavioural issue is concerning.

If you need to seek advice from outside your service, it is recommended that you contact the Inclusion Support Programme (ISP). This program is available to all government-approved suppliers, including long day care, occasional care, family day care, in-home care, school-age care and vacation care. Remember that before you involve an outside body you must gain parental permission. You should make it clear that you are not only seeking support or assessment for the child. Your main objective is to obtain support and advice so that you can meet the child's needs.

Consulting other sources

Consultation is another way to gather information about a child. Good sources include parents, educators, specialists that have been involved with the child, and even other children at the service. If you decide to use this strategy, make sure you have parental permission before you start.

Who	What they can tell you about	How to gather this information
Parents or guardians	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Home life, including values, cultural practices, expectations and beliefs ▶ How the child behaves in various environments ▶ Who the child responds to ▶ Triggers ▶ What strategies they use ▶ What strategies work and don't work ▶ What strategies they would not like you to use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Discussions ▶ Meetings ▶ Surveys ▶ Forms
Other educators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Their observations ▶ Their experiences with the family and child ▶ Out-of-character behaviour, expected behaviour and behaviour of concern ▶ Triggers ▶ What strategies they have used – successfully or unsuccessfully ▶ Their specialist training or experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Observation records ▶ Portfolios ▶ Notes from past information-gathering ▶ Behaviour plans ▶ Discussions
Specialists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Diagnosis ▶ Triggers ▶ Key features ▶ Links to other developmental areas ▶ Situations to avoid 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Discussions ▶ Assessments ▶ Reports ▶ Meetings

Developmental considerations

If you want your instructions to be understood, you must also keep in mind the children’s age and stage of development. Try to consider the guidelines in the following table.

Age/stage	Guidelines
Children under three	<p>Give simple one-step instructions. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ ‘Put your bag away.’ ▶ ‘Wash your hands.’ ▶ ‘Take your socks off.’
Preschool children	<p>Give simple two-step instructions. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ ‘Put your bag away and then come to the mat.’ ▶ ‘Wash your hands and then sit at the table.’
School-age children	<p>Give multi-step instructions. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ ‘Clear up the bench, then set the table for lunch. After that, go outside and see what Joe has for us from the garden.’ ▶ ‘First set out your design, then glue it. Once that is done, paint the surface and let it dry.’

Practice task 5

1. What is an instruction you might give to children during a mealtime? Ensure your instructions are clear, easy to follow and positive. Include one instruction for each of the following age groups:

a. Two years old

b. Five years old

c. 12 years old

2. If the room is noisy, how would you change the way you communicate these instructions?

Encouragement

Encouragement shows children that you value them and their efforts, and is a great way to acknowledge responsible behaviour. Encouragement:

- ▶ motivates the child to do things for intrinsic reasons
- ▶ focuses on the child’s efforts in or process of doing something, not the results
- ▶ helps the child feel good about what they have done, which develops their self-esteem.

You should encourage each child’s efforts, whether they succeed or fail. Make sure you are honest and consistent, and that what you say is sensitive to each child’s needs and matches their level of understanding.

Watch this video about encouraging and engaging with children.



Example

Using encouragement to respond to a child

Kiara, two years old, is trying to help pack up by carrying a big basket of soft toys. Every few steps a toy falls out of the basket. She stops, puts the basket down, puts the toy back in the basket and sets off again. She does this four times. The fifth time a toy falls out, she stops, looks at it, then carries the basket to the shelf where it belongs. She then goes back to the toy on the floor, picks it up and takes it to the basket.

The educators says to Kiara, ‘Kiara, I can see you are trying very hard. Thank you for your help.’

This type of encouragement acknowledges Kiara’s efforts, but does not require her to follow a particular process as long as the job gets done.

Positive language

If you want a child to demonstrate positive behaviour, use positive language. Consider the following two examples. One uses positive language and one does not.

Situation	What the educator says
An educator sees a child running in from outside.	‘Sean, no running in the room. You know that’s not allowed!’
An educator sees a child running in the hall at the end of the day.	‘Hello, Daisy! You seem in a hurry, remember to walk safely in the hall.’

Positive language shows your belief in the child’s abilities and intentions. You acknowledge that they are capable of doing the right thing, which encourages the child to develop more awareness and self-control.

Use your words, tone of voice, facial expressions and body language to communicate calmness and respect. Try not to make judgments. Keep the focus on the positive behaviour you want to see, rather than highlighting any negative or inappropriate behaviour that may be noticeable at the time.

2D Guiding and redirecting behaviour

Guiding and redirecting the behaviour of children is an approach you will use countless times each day. Unlike punishment, guidance provides children with an appropriate model for behaviour and the necessary information to behave appropriately the next time.

This approach is particularly effective with young children who, lacking words, often communicate through their behaviour. Positive support strategies can be used to guide and redirect this type of behaviour and defuse a situation before it gets out of control.



The communicative function of behaviour

Children often communicate through their behaviour. These may be positive messages, but often they take the form of challenging behaviours. When children use challenging behaviours to communicate, they often do not start off with the purpose of communicating negatively. Their behaviour is usually a reaction, with the child using the method they might think of at the time to communicate their needs. This is a perfect example of how children make mistakes as they learn.

To identify the message that a child is trying to send, you need to look for the reason behind their behaviour – that is, its ‘communicative function’.

Communicative functions are commonly divided into two categories. These are outlined in the following table, which includes examples focused on challenging behaviours you might notice.

Category	Description	Example
Regulation	<p>Actions used to gain, refuse or avoid something. The result of the behavior is that the environment changes.</p> <p>The child is saying: ‘I don’t want that.’</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ A child pushes another child away. ▶ A child throws a cup of milk when they want water. ▶ A child screams when they are overwhelmed by too many people in their space.
Interaction	<p>Actions used to interact with another person.</p> <p>The result is that the other person takes notice.</p> <p>The child is saying: ‘I want you to listen to or notice me.’</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ A child pinches another child when they ignore them. ▶ A child bites when they don’t know how to enter the play. ▶ A child tells another child to pack up, then pushes the child’s block tower over to communicate that it is pack-up time.

Controlled strategy	Description
Making a direct suggestion	This helps a hesitant child to make a choice. Some children find it difficult to make decisions. Others have little experience in making decisions. These children might feel overwhelmed by being expected to choose for themselves. You can work through the options with them, give them some ideas to think about, and in some cases, even suggest the option you feel is best at the time.
Limiting choice	This helps young children make selections. Young children (especially toddlers) are unable to make big decisions. You should provide them with simple options. For example, you might offer a two-year-old a choice of two options, but a four-year-old four or five options.

Example **Making a direct suggestion**

Sam, four years, has just arrived for the day. His mother has left and Dean, the educator, asks him what he would like to do today. Sam seems unsure and is looking around the room, without making a decision. Dean makes a direct suggestion by saying, ‘Sam, I know you like building in the block corner, and you like painting too – would you like to do one of those?’ Sam nods and, after a moment’s thought, he moves off to the block area and settles down to play.

Consequences

Consequences are one of the most effective strategies for helping children to respond appropriately and to change inappropriate behaviour. Consequences help children to identify and understand the result of their actions. They also give children an opportunity to make a better decision or choice the next time.

There are two types of consequences that are commonly used: natural consequences and logical consequences.

Type of consequence	Description	Example
Natural consequence	<p>A natural consequence is when an action happens and the natural outcome is what guides the child. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ If a child is left to throw sand, it may hurt other children. ▶ If a child continues to hurt other children, there may be injuries and complaints. ▶ If a child doesn’t wear a hat outside, they may be sunburnt. <p>Natural consequences are not always safe, especially when other children are involved. However, if the natural consequences of an action are safe, it can be an excellent way for children to learn.</p>	<p>Athalia, four years, says that she does not need to put her coat on to go outside. When she does go out, she becomes cold and asks to get her coat.</p> <p>Getting cold is the natural consequence of Athalia’s decision. By allowing her to decide on her clothing needs, she has learnt that sometimes she will need her coat.</p>

Learning checkpoint 2

Using positive support techniques

Part A

Access a copy of a behaviour guidance policy, behaviour management policy or responsible behaviour policy.

1. List any specific behaviour guidance strategies identified as inappropriate or unacceptable practice.

2. Choose one of the points in the policy that supports your positive guidance of behaviour. What does this point say and how does it help you know how to guide behaviour?

Part B

Read the case study, then answer the questions that follow.

Case study

Simon, five years old, is at the bathroom sink. He has been washing his hands for a few minutes. He accidentally drips some water on the floor. He then uses his cupped hands to add more water and make a puddle, which he spreads across the floor with his foot.

The educator asks him to stop playing with the water inside. Simon says, 'No!' and continues to pour water onto the floor.

1. Is the communicative function of Simon's behaviour aimed at regulation or interaction?

2. What is the desirable result?

3A Observing and collecting data about behaviour

The information you gather from observational data will clarify concerns, help you gain a greater understanding of the behavioural situation, and identify any connected issues. The perspective of other children is also valuable.



Providing evidence

When a child is identified as having behaviour of concern, it means that you have observed their behaviour over a period of time, and it has been identified that you and the child need support.

Before any action can be taken, the behaviour of concern must be assessed. Collect accurate and unbiased data about the child's behaviour that has been gathered over a period of time. This evidence ensures that an appropriate decision can be made about the type of support required.

Collecting observational data

Observational data can be collected in a variety of ways. Some methods you use may focus only on the observations that are relevant to the situation. Other methods may be more suited to capturing the overall contextual picture of a child's performance and development. The reason for the data being collected will influence the collection method you use. For instance, if you are focusing on the child's communication and social skills, anecdotal recording may be suitable; however, if you are looking for specific information for monitoring a behaviour of concern, a tailored checklist may provide more reliable data.



Watch this video about collecting observational data.

The following table describes common methods used in education and care services. Many workplaces encourage a combination of these methods to build a holistic view of the child's performance and development.

Method	Description
Anecdotal records	Anecdotal data is information not based on formal evidence. Records based on anecdotal evidence are usually based on observations. As an educator, you must ensure that the observations you document are objective, factual and accurate.
Diary entries	Diary entries are regular records of activities and experiences. They are useful for providing contextual information leading up to an occurrence. As an educator, when looking at diarised data, you may be able to isolate or identify recurring factors that contribute to behaviour or an incident. Diaries, journals, logs and communication books are commonly used to pass on information between people.

Practice task 8

Read the case study, then answer the questions that follow.

Case study								
Child: Otto Age: 5 years Date: 26.1.18 Setting: Indoor play					Recorded by: Harriet Event: Otto's behaviour			
Number	Time	Setting	What is happening just before the behaviour	Who else is involved	Intensity of behaviour *			Duration of behaviour
					Low	Med	High	
1	9.35 am	Sandpit	Building a castle but sand is not wet enough	No one	X			10 minutes
2	10.15 am	Train set	All children want to play with Thomas the Tank Engine	Jim, Celina and Gordon			X	20 minutes
3	11.13 am	Collage	Gordon takes the scissors that are near Otto and Celina takes the last paste brush	Celina and Gordon		X		15 minutes

* Low = no aggression to others, Med = aggressive with environment, High = aggressive with other children

- Otto threw a handful of sand, then fell onto the sand. He cried and would not respond to any of the educators who asked him if he needed help. Otto recovered when Gordon entered the sandpit and began to work with the sand.
- Otto bit Jim and threw train carriages at Celina, hitting her in the face. He then threw the train track into the book corner at other children. Educators Margaret and Harriet tried to calm Otto, but he ran away from them and spat on Margaret. Otto calmed down when Fiona, another educator, asked if he would like a drink of water. He was red-faced and crying.
- Otto grabbed the paste pot and tipped it upside down onto his work. The paste splattered onto the table and chair, as well as his clothing. Otto reacted to this by jumping up and down and trying to wipe the glue off his top. He then swept the chair away, knocking it over. Then he fell to the floor and cried. Educators attempted to console him, but he would not respond. When Gordon approached the table and started to paste, Otto stopped crying and watched what he was doing.



Topic 4

In this topic you will learn about:

4A Implementing support strategies

4B Identifying areas of concern

4C Contributing to behaviour support plans

Implementing strategies to support children

Children with additional needs, including those who exhibit behaviours of concern, often require support strategies. Developing these strategies requires reference to information and data that has been collected by educators, and open and honest consultation with parents, supervisors and other professionals.

A support plan is often developed to help all those working with the child to use consistent responses, techniques and methods.

The following table maps this topic to the National Quality Standard and both national learning frameworks.

National Quality Standard		
	Quality Area 1: Educational program and practice	
	Quality Area 2: Children’s health and safety	
	Quality Area 3: Physical environment	
	Quality Area 4: Staffing arrangements	
✓	Quality Area 5: Relationships with children	
	Quality Area 6: Collaborative partnerships with families and communities	
	Quality Area 7: Governance and leadership	
Early Years Learning Framework	My Time, Our Place	
Principles		
✓	Secure, respectful and reciprocal relationships	
✓	Partnerships	
	High expectations and equity	
	Respect for diversity	
✓	Ongoing learning and reflective practice	
Practice		
✓	Holistic approaches	Holistic approaches
✓	Responsiveness to children	Collaboration with children
	Learning through play	Learning through play
	Intentional teaching	Intentionality
	Learning environments	Environments
	Cultural competence	Cultural competence
	Continuity of learning and transitions	Continuity and transitions
✓	Assessment for learning	Evaluation for wellbeing and learning
Outcomes		
	Children have a strong sense of identity	
	Children are connected to and contribute to their world	
✓	Children have a strong sense of wellbeing	
	Children are confident and involved learners	
✓	Children are effective communicators	

4B Identifying areas of concern

Even the best-laid plans can result in unexpected outcomes. When unexpected issues are identified, respond immediately and seek advice to resolve the issue and reduce the risk to the child.

Issues of concern may include:

- ▶ unexpected changes in the response of the child or young person
- ▶ signs of distress or illness
- ▶ incidents not addressed by planned strategies
- ▶ lack of progress.



Discuss these issues with your supervisor as soon as they are identified.

Unexpected changes of response

Children’s behaviour is generally predictable. For instance, if you smile at an infant, they will usually smile back. If you clap loudly, a child will usually look in your direction.

However, you can never be sure how a child will respond to a new strategy as part of their behaviour support plan. The child’s response may be positive or negative, or the strategy may have no discernible effect.

The following are examples of positive and negative responses to change.

<p>Positive change response</p>	<p>You are implementing a strategy for Wilbur, four years, who spits food out at mealtimes.</p> <p>Your strategy is to provide him with a platter of foods that he usually likes to eat. You will sit next to Wilbur and ask him which food he would like to eat first. You guide him to think before choosing. You expect this strategy to take at least a week to show results, but by the second day Wilbur is selecting food items and eating them happily.</p> <p>This positive change response means that you can provide Wilbur with encouragement and positive reinforcement. You can also review his behaviour support plan and introduce new strategies.</p>
<p>Negative change response</p>	<p>You are implementing a strategy for Iman, three years, who has poor social and verbal communication skills. At the snack table, she pushes other children out of the way and climbs on the table to reach food when she has an empty plate.</p> <p>Your prescribed strategy is to sit next to Iman at snack time and model how to ask other children to pass the fruit platter. When Iman’s plate is empty, you ask another child if they could pass the platter to Iman. Iman drops her head into her hands and starts to cry. Wailing loudly, she falls to the floor.</p> <p>This is a negative change response and you must support Iman to express her feelings. It also means that you must gather more information about Iman’s behaviour and try to understand what is happening, and how you can implement a suitable strategy to support her to interact at mealtimes.</p>

Practice task 11

Read the case study, then answer the questions that follow.

Case study

Jake, three years, reacts with a tantrum when other children take toys from him. He bangs his head on the floor, holds his breath and screams intermittently. Sometimes the tantrum lasts for up to 30 minutes.

1. Choose one practice from the EYLF or MTOP that relates to this case. Explain why you think it is important to consider when supporting Jake.

2. What training might you need to be able to manage this situation properly?

Summary

- ▶ Developing a support strategy requires knowledge of the child, the conditions of their care and the goals you are aiming to achieve by implementing the strategy.
- ▶ The support strategy must be developed and implemented in consultation with your supervisor, other educators, specialists (if required) and parents. It is usually documented in a behaviour support plan.
- ▶ A consistent approach offers security and predictability. It also allows children to react in predictable ways.
- ▶ Children with special needs often have the support and guidance of professionals in child psychology, paediatrics, and access and equity.
- ▶ Common strategies to guide behaviour include role-modelling, choices and consequences. Other support strategies include tangible rewards, incentive charts and time out.
- ▶ When unexpected issues are identified, it is important to respond immediately and seek advice to resolve the issue and reduce the risk to the child.
- ▶ If you are asked to contribute to a behaviour support plan, it is important to meet with your supervisor to ask questions and clarify your role. To achieve the goals of any plan you must be provided with clear directions.
- ▶ You may find that some support strategies require complex or specific skills or knowledge. In this case it is appropriate for you to request training.



Topic 5

In this topic you will learn about:

5A Monitoring new strategies and adapting levels of support

5B Providing feedback

Monitoring and reviewing strategies

The success of a behaviour support plan is affected by advice from specialists, unexpected responses from the child, parent requests, and changes in external policies and guidelines. Monitor the plan for effectiveness, reviewing areas that require adjustment and consulting with your supervisor to establish new goals as necessary.

Recording responses

You can record children's ideas (or allow them to record the ideas themselves) using:

- ▶ graffiti sheets, noticeboards or comments books
- ▶ profile sheets
- ▶ questionnaires
- ▶ interviews
- ▶ suggestion boxes
- ▶ surveys
- ▶ enrolment forms
- ▶ videos
- ▶ photos.

All of these methods provide children with the opportunity to give you valuable information about their needs, and to comment about how they feel about their own behaviour and the behaviour of those around them.

The success of these methods depends on what you are trying to find out – whether the methods appeal to children and how the methods are used. All methods have advantages and disadvantages, and individuals will prefer one over another.

From time to time, a behaviour support plan may need to be adapted. Changes may be due to:

- ▶ an unexpected response from the child
- ▶ new influences in the play environment
- ▶ new information provided by a parent, specialist or supervisor
- ▶ the child's changing needs (due to normal development or outside factors such as circumstances at home).



In any of these situations, you should consult with your supervisor to determine the options available and what changes might need to be made to the existing support plan.

Levels of support

Different support techniques are required at different times. A behaviour support plan should allow for this flexibility throughout the observation period. Sometimes the most difficult part of developing a plan is identifying:

- ▶ which strategy to prescribe for which behaviour
- ▶ what level of support is required.

The following table outlines some of the recommended techniques and strategies, and when you might implement them. Each child with behaviours of concern requires an individual approach. Therefore, these are just the basic guidelines.

Details about each of these strategies can be found in Topic 2.

Strategy	Level of support when prescribed in a support plan	When is it most suitable?
Redirection and defusing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ High level ▶ When used in day-to-day interactions, redirection is a simple and general practice (low level) ▶ When used as a prescribed technique, it often helps to avert dangerous situations, or stop learned behaviour before it is out of control ▶ If the triggers of the child's behaviour are known, redirection can defuse this if used in a timely manner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ When a situation is not productive. ▶ When control is an issue. ▶ When you need to move from one situation to another. ▶ When discussion or other strategies are not important. ▶ When you need to stop what is occurring and you still have enough control to divert attention away from a negative behaviour.

Further to these strategies are some techniques for acknowledging responsible behaviour. These should be included in all behaviour support plans as they show the child when they are on the right track. The most successful techniques are:

- ▶ positive reinforcement
- ▶ encouragement
- ▶ positive language
- ▶ nonverbal strategies.

Check your behaviour support plan to make sure it includes techniques that suit the child. If one technique is not successful, try another.

Needs of the child

You must understand and follow the guidelines contained in the regulations, policies and procedures. You must also be aware of the changing needs of the child. As discussed previously, these can vary enormously.

The following table outlines some of the areas of additional needs and provides a brief description of how support might be adapted.

Area of need	How support might be adapted
Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Simple strategies might need to be used as the child may not have the ability to understand problem-solving, instructions or consequences. ▶ Redirection and modelling may become basic low-level strategies that are used to encourage the child to respond positively. ▶ Children with a high level of intelligence may wish to have more control over what strategies are used. Other children may have strategies that are well thought out, based on how they will sabotage your plans.

Consulting and collaboration

The process of gathering and exchanging information will involve a range of people, such as other educators, others caring for the child, and staff from resource and referral bodies.

Consultation is an essential part of the plan review. It is better to consult too many people than too few.

Collaboration is also important. Collaboration describes the process in which two or more people work together toward a common goal by sharing knowledge and learning. To ensure your collaboration is successful, you must:

- ▶ be non-judgmental
- ▶ be open to different perspectives
- ▶ build consensus through mutual respect
- ▶ apply empathy
- ▶ demonstrate active listening
- ▶ check understanding
- ▶ follow organisational standards, philosophies, policies and procedures.

Support plan issues

Sometimes, the support plan does not work, but the reason is not obvious. In this case, you need to consider the possibilities outlined in the following table.

Possible reason	Concerns/suggestions
You are intimidated by the child's behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ You may need extra help from a support service or specialist. ▶ You may need to use strategies to help you become more confident in dealing with the child's behaviour. ▶ There may be greater success if you delegate to another educator who is not intimidated. ▶ Try to implement some stress-relieving strategies prior to dealing with the behaviour of concern; for example, taking a few breaths or speaking quietly.
You are too patient	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ You may be ignoring situations that are leading up to the behaviour occurring. ▶ You may feel that you need to repeat requests a number of times before expecting the child to respond. ▶ Assertiveness is an important skill for all educators to model. ▶ Nagging (asking over and over again) presents a negative model to children; it teaches them that they don't have to listen to you or take you seriously.
You are worried that the child will not like you	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ The child may already have other feelings toward you, such as frustration or anger. ▶ Children need to know their boundaries; children who know that limits are enforced feel more secure. ▶ Children usually understand that educators have concern for them, care about them and want them to be safe.

Learning checkpoint 5

Monitoring and reviewing strategies

Part A

Read the case study, then answer the questions that follow.

Case study

Libby, the educator, is caring for Carrie, who has been kicking other children if they do not do what she asks them to. Carrie has been observed and consultation has taken place with her mother and the Inclusion Support Programme (ISP).

Libby has identified that:

- ▶ Carrie only ever kicks girls.
- ▶ Kicking only occurs if the children do not respond immediately to Carrie's request.
- ▶ The aim of the kicking is to make the other children leave the play area.

Libby sets a goal for Carrie to share her ideas and listen to the ideas of others.

Libby sets the following objectives:

- ▶ For an educator to move to any group Carrie enters and help her to communicate with the other children.
- ▶ For an educator to ask Carrie for one idea that can help solve the problem.
- ▶ For an educator to remove Carrie to an individual activity if she kicks others by taking her hand firmly and saying in a friendly way, 'Let's go to [an alternative activity]'. The educator must stay with Carrie at the new activity and interact normally.

1. What would you monitor while the objectives are being put into place?

2. What method would you use to record your observations?

Part B

The following is an observation of Carrie's behavior one week after the objectives were put into place and followed through. Read this account, then answer the questions that follow.

Case study

Observation

Carrie moves to the sandpit where three girls are playing. Carrie approaches and asks to play. The girls say 'yes', but they tell Carrie that there are only three shovels. You hear her saying, 'That's okay, I will use the bucket to dig'.