Understanding Behavior

All children have difficult moments. Tantrums, arguing, frustration, or testing limits can occur as children grow and learn to manage emotions.

Behavior may deserve closer attention when it is frequent, intense, lasts longer than expected, occurs across settings, or significantly affects learning, relationships, safety, or family functioning.

A helpful reminder

The goal is not simply to stop a behavior. Understanding what happens before, during, and after it can provide important clues about what the child is communicating or needing.

Connect With Enspire

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Behavioral Concerns

When Should I Be Concerned?



Behavior communicates something. Looking at patterns, triggers, and impact can help families understand what a child may need.

A guide to distinguishing occasional challenging behavior from patterns that may warrant additional support or evaluation.

EDUCATION • EVALUATION • SUPPORT

What Should I Pay Attention To?

When deciding whether a behavior is concerning, consider:

- **Frequency**
- **Intensity**
- **Duration**
- **Triggers**
- **Settings**
- **Impact on daily life**

Important

A single behavior rarely tells the whole story. Development, communication, learning, stress, attention, sensory needs, and emotional health can all influence behavior.



Patterns That May Need Support

- Frequent or intense emotional outbursts
- Aggression or unsafe behavior
- Significant difficulty following routines
- Behavior that disrupts learning
- Strong reactions to transitions or changes
- Ongoing conflict with peers or adults
- Sudden or major changes in behavior
- Behavior that continues despite consistent support

Look for patterns over time rather than judging a child by one difficult moment.

When Should I Seek Help?

Consider additional support when behavior is persistent, worsening, difficult to manage safely, or interfering with school, relationships, family routines, or the child's ability to participate in everyday activities.

An evaluation may include:

- Behavior patterns & triggers
- Developmental history
- School observations
- Emotional & learning needs

What Can Parents Do?

- Track when and where behaviors happen.
- Note what happens immediately before and after.
- Ask teachers or caregivers what they observe.
- Use clear, consistent expectations and routines.
- Seek professional guidance when concerns persist.

How Enspire Can Help

Enspire provides psychological evaluations and behavioral health services to help identify factors contributing to behavioral concerns and guide appropriate supports.

Questions? Call (215) 948-3171