

Six Critical Questions of the Big Picture

Use your responses to these questions to understand the big picture of a child's challenging behavior. Answer these questions for each adult involved in the incident.

1. What was the child doing before the behavior?
2. How did the adult respond?
 - Did the adult talk too fast or too slowly?
 - Were there interruptions?
 - Did the adult give too much information at once?
 - Did the adult give too little information?
 - Did the adult have the child's attention?
 - Were any visual supports used?
3. What was the activity?
 - Is the activity boring or too simple?
 - Is the activity meaningless?
 - Is the activity frustrating, too difficult, or confusing?
 - Has the child tried and failed at this task before?
4. Who was involved?
 - How was the child addressed by the adult involved?
 - Was the child treated with respect? Did the child feel valued and welcomed?
 - Could the child feel a sense of worth and importance from the interaction?
 - Were the adult and child at eye level, or did the adult stand over the child?
 - Did the adult speak in a condescending or threatening tone?
 - Did the adult intimidate the child?
 - Was the adult seeking positive outcomes or merely describing the negative?
 - Did the adult simply react or try to get the message of the behavior?
 - What did the adult communicate to the child?
 - Was the child informed about changes, requirements, and expectations?

- Was the adult explicit and exact in giving instructions and asking questions?
- Did the adult rephrase or repeat as needed to clarify instructions?
- Has a schedule been reviewed with the child?
- Have the rules been reviewed with the child?
- Are the rules always the same and reinforced in the same manner?
- How did the adult ensure that the child understood the rules?
- Was the adult consistent in his or her approach to teaching or dealing with behavior?

5. Where did it happen?

- Did the child know all of the rules and expectations in each situation?
- Was the child prepared for each location involved?
- Has the child been to those locations before?
 - If so, was it a positive or negative experience? Why?
- Did the child know the day would return to the usual routine later?
- Did the child know what would happen upon arrival?
- Did others involved behave “appropriately,” or did they cause challenges as well?

6. When did it happen?

- Upon arrival
- During the day
- At departure time