Time 10:30-12:00	**November 6th** - Discussion about dealing with Autism, or other learning challenges. **Monica Meyer**
	Here is a link from Monica's previous presentation. https://drive.google.com/file/d/14H5GvPxo62q7IVxB_o6Yuii7h-UIE7cN/view?usp=drive_link
1	I am working with a student with Autism and It is difficult for me to keep the student in their seat. I am afraid that if we let them lay on the floor all the other students will want to lay on the floor as well. How would you recommend that I deal with this behavior? **Please see my response to #1: "Student Laying on the Floor" section after this question table. Page 3**
2	If we have a student that is laying on the floor and is so loud the other students can't hear, what strategies can I use in this situation? **Please see my response to #2: "Student Laying on the Floor" section after this question table. Page 4**
3	If a student is asked to leave the room but the student falls to the floor, how do we address this? **Please see my response to # 3: Addressing a Student Who Refuses to Leave the Room and Falls to the Floor section after this question table. Page 4**
4	If your student is a chronic eloper what are some strategies to minimize the behavior? **Please see my response to #4: Positive Behavior Support Statement: Addressing Elopement Behavior. Page 7**
5	What if I can't get the student to do anything in class? **Please see my response to #5: What If I Can't Get the Student to Do Anything in Class? Page 10**
6	A student becomes overwhelmed in class/cafeteria due to the noise and smells. They cover their ears, crawl under the table and yell. **Please see my response to #6: Supporting a Student Overwhelmed by Noise and Smells in the Cafeteria. Page 13**
7	A student puts their head down and refuses to start classroom work. **Please see my response to #5: What If I Can't Get the Student to Do Anything in Class? Page 10**
8	A student suddenly starts hitting, kicking or throwing objects in the classroom. **8. Responding to a Student Who Suddenly Hits, Kicks, or Throws Objects. Page 14**
9	A student sweeps everything off their desk and begins tearing classroom

	materials when asked to stop a preferred activity. **Please refer to #8**
10	A student hits their head and bites their arm, or scratches themselves when demands are placed on them or routines change.
11	Student chooses to stand on desks when frustrated. Knows he isn't supposed to and as soon as you walk toward him or get close, he gets down himself. How do I deter the behavior?
12	How do you deal with a student who makes noise so others can't listen to Lesson or are completely distracted. Parent doesn't want a bite stick or other support. You ask for quiet and you are ignored.
13	How to de-escalate a student who becomes frustrated when they don't understand their assignments by yelling out loud, pounding fists on the table & demanding immediate help. The student's actions are very disruptive to the class. Additional issues are constant burping, passing gas and scratching of private parts. The student ignores all requests to step out into the hallway or go to the restroom if needed.
14	
15	
16	
17	
18	
19	
20	
21	
22	
23	
24	
25	

1. Supporting a Student with Autism Who Prefers to Lay on the Floor

This behavior can be difficult to interpret without knowing more about the student. To better understand and support them, I would need clarification on a few factors:

- The student's **age** and **grade level**
- The **time of day** the behavior occurs
- The **subject or activity** during which it happens
- The **position of the student's seat** in relation to environmental stimuli

From experience, I suspect the behavior has both **sensory** and **social** components. Keep in mind that *"All Behavior is Communication."* Why does this student need to engage in this behavior? What is its purpose?

There is always an underlying aspect to "obtain" or "avoid." I hope the following bullets will start leading support strategies down a positive path.

1. Sensory Considerations

Laying on the floor may be the student's way of **self-regulating sensory input**. Environmental factors such as lighting, sound, or seat comfort can significantly influence behavior.

- Lighting: If the classroom uses fluorescent lighting, the flicker or hum even if imperceptible to neurotypical peers can be overstimulating to the neurotypical student. Consider using light diffusers, indirect desk lighting, or allowing sunglasses in the classroom to reduce glare.
- Auditory: The buzz of fluorescent lights or background noise can contribute to anxiety. Noise-reducing headphones that filter environmental noise while allowing the student to hear instruction may help.
- Seating comfort: The student may find the chair uncomfortable or restrictive. Experiment with alternative seating—such as a stability ball, wobble cushion, or standing desk option—to provide proprioceptive input in a regulated way.

2. Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) and Peer Understanding

If there is concern that other students will imitate this behavior, use the situation as a **teachable moment** for SEL. Encourage peers to understand that everyone has unique learning and sensory needs. Introducing the concept of **neurodiversity** helps foster empathy and inclusion:

> "Some of our friends need different ways to feel comfortable and ready to learn. That's okay—everyone's brain works differently."

By normalizing accommodations rather than isolating them, you reinforce respect and social awareness among all students.

3. Implementing and Monitoring Strategies

Once you've adjusted the environment or seating, track the student's response using a **Competing Behavior Pathway Diagram**. This will help determine:

- What triggers the behavior
- What sensory or social function it serves
- Which supports are most effective
- Where has he been successful in sitting at his desk and attending the teacher's lesson? Is this behavior in every location of the school?

This approach allows you to **implement, monitor, and refine** supports based on data, not guesswork. I will send an example of a competing behavior diagram that I recently developed that may be helpful in deciphering the intent of the behavior, what is maintaining it and how we can accommodate this person's communication needs.

2. **If we have a student that is laying on the floor and is so loud the other students can't hear, what strategies can I use in this situation? Please see my response to the "Student Laying on the Floor" section under #1 or #3**

3. **Addressing a Student Who Refuses to Leave the Room and Falls to the Floor**

Overview

This scenario requires understanding the *why* behind the behavior, not just responding to it. As with all challenging behaviors, it's essential to remember: **All behavior is communication.**

In this example, we'll refer to the student as *Benjamin*. When Benjamin is asked to leave the classroom but instead falls to the floor, the behavior is likely communicating distress, anxiety, or avoidance. Falling to the floor may also serve as a way to gain attention or express refusal. What's clear is that Benjamin does not want to leave—and compliance for its own sake does not promote meaningful learning or emotional regulation.

Benjamin may also lack perspective-taking skills to understand how his behavior affects his peers' learning or the teacher's ability to teach. For neurodivergent and autistic students, **structure, predictability, and understanding of social expectations** are critical.

1. Moving from Punishment to Predictability

Instead of removing Benjamin from the classroom as a reactive measure, use proactive strategies that create structure and predictability.

Classroom Rules and Visual Supports

Develop a **T-Chart of Classroom Rules** that all students receive. On the **left side**, list classroom expectations with text and visual icons; on the **right side**, describe what happens if a rule is not followed.

Example T-Chart Rule. This is only one, more should be added pertaining to the classroom. It's really helpful to have the students participate, including Benjamin:

Rule	If Not Followed
Use "inside voices" and respect others' right to learn.	If yelling or noise-making occurs, the student will visit the resource room or counselor for 15 minutes, then return to class.

This approach provides a clear, predictable consequence for all students, not just Benjamin.

2. Teaching Through Social Stories

Simply knowing the rules is not enough. Students like Benjamin must comprehend the *why* behind them. **Social Stories** help teach social concepts and expectations in a concrete, visual, and reassuring way.

Each story should include four parts: **Description, Perspective, Directive, and Affirmation.**

Example Social Story: "Using My Inside Voice"

1. **Description:**
   All students in Miss Abby's class are working on their U.S. Geography assignment and raising their hands for help.
2. **Perspective:**
   Learning is important to everyone in the class. When Benjamin yells, his classmates become upset because they can't learn. Miss Abby becomes frustrated because she can't teach.
3. **Directive:**
   When Benjamin raises his hand for help, everyone can learn. If Benjamin yells or

refuses to participate, he may need to visit the resource room for 15 minutes before returning.

4. **Affirmation:**
When Benjamin follows the rules, raises his hand, and asks for help, Miss Abby and his mom are proud of him for being respectful and ready to learn.

Social stories can be customized for different classroom rules or social expectations.

3. Sensory and Self-Advocacy Supports

Benjamin should have consistent access to tools that help him regulate and communicate needs before escalation occurs. These supports must be explicitly taught and reinforced.

Support	Description
"I Need a Break" Card	Allows Benjamin to signal overwhelm and request a resource room break.
Sensory Tools	Headphones, hoodies, or hats to reduce visual/auditory input.
Preferential Seating	Place near a wall or lower-traffic area to reduce stimulation.
Scheduled Sensory Breaks	Short breaks built into daily routine to prevent overload.

These supports foster **self-advocacy and independence**—skills that generalize beyond the classroom.

4. Collaboration and Comprehensive Planning

To ensure consistency across staff and settings:

- The teacher should collaborate with the **Special Education Case Manager** or **504 Officer** to review all supports and accommodations.
- Develop a **Comprehensive Autism Planning System (CAPS)** to document strategies, sensory supports, and transition plans.
- Share the CAPS plan with all teachers and aides to ensure continuity of support.

This proactive approach reframes behavior as a **teachable skill**, not a disciplinary issue. The focus remains on comprehension, regulation, and inclusion.

5. Implementation and Review

Step	Responsible Staff	Frequency	Notes
Review rules and social stories with Benjamin	Classroom Teacher	Weekly	Include visual aids
Provide sensory and break supports	Paraeducator / Teacher	Daily	Monitor use and effectiveness
Update CAPS plan	Case Manager	Quarterly	Adjust based on student progress

6. Key Takeaways

- All behavior communicates unmet needs.
- Predictability and structure reduce anxiety and improve participation.
- Teach—don't punish. Use visuals, social stories, and self-advocacy tools.
- Ensure consistent implementation across all learning environments.
- The goal is not compliance, but understanding and inclusion.

Next Steps / Recommendations

- Develop a personalized social story library for Benjamin's learning needs.
- Integrate SEL lessons to promote empathy and neurodiversity understanding among peers.
- Schedule a follow-up meeting with the case manager and family to review data and refine interventions via CAPS.

4. Positive Behavior Support Statement: Addressing Elopement Behavior

Overview

All behavior is communication. Elopement—leaving a supervised area without permission—is a form of communication that signals an unmet need. For this student (referred to here as

Bethany), the behavior likely serves as an attempt to avoid or escape something in her environment, or to gain access to something desired.

Based on observation and context, Bethany's elopement appears to be driven primarily by sensory avoidance, possibly triggered by auditory or environmental overstimulation. When exposed to distressing sensory input, her nervous system interprets it as a threat, activating the fight–flight–freeze response. In this state, Bethany's ability to process verbal direction or reasoned instruction is diminished, as her brain is focused on self-preservation.

The goal of this plan is to reduce elopement by increasing predictability, supporting sensory regulation, and teaching alternative, safe behaviors that fulfill the same function.

1. Behavior Function and Goal

Function: Avoidance of sensory discomfort, change, or overwhelming environments.
Goal: Bethany will remain in the designated classroom or area and use a taught strategy (visual cue, safe-space card, or verbal request) to communicate her need for a break or sensory relief.

2. Preventive and Proactive Strategies

A. Structure and Predictability

- Establish consistent daily routines with clear transitions and visual schedules.
- Provide advance notice for changes in activity or environment to reduce anxiety.

B. Environmental Sensory Adjustments

- Reduce or modify sensory triggers (e.g., dim lighting, minimize background noise, avoid harsh fluorescent lights).
- Allow noise-canceling headphones, a hood, or preferred sensory tools.
  Ensure doors to unsafe areas remain secured and install door chimes if necessary for safety.

C. Visual Boundary Cues

A "STOP" sign may be used on the exit door as a visual boundary rather than a physical barrier. To make this effective:

1. Teach the meaning of the STOP sign during calm, instructional times.
2. Pair it with a predictable cue, such as a visual schedule or timer, so Bethany understands when it is appropriate to move to the next area.
3. Rehearse: "When the timer rings, go to the door and stop at the sign."
4. Reinforce the behavior: Praise or provide preferred items when Bethany stops and waits appropriately.

3. Teaching Replacement and Coping Behaviors

Teach Bethany safe, functional ways to communicate her needs or discomfort:

- Visual communication cards such as "I need a break" or "It's too loud."
- A designated safe space in or near the classroom where she can go with/without permission using her "I Need to Go."
- Calming routines that she practices daily (deep breathing, fidget tool use, stretching).
- Social stories that describe, model, and affirm desired behavior.

4. Example Social Story: "Bethany Stays Inside the Classroom"

Description:
Sometimes Bethany hears sounds that are loud or scary.

Perspective:
That can make her feel nervous or frightened.

Directive:
When Bethany feels scared, she can walk to her safe space in the classroom.

Control:
Going to her safe space helps her feel calm and safe.

Affirmation:
When Bethany goes to her safe space, she is proud of herself, and her teacher and mom are proud of her too.

5. Response Strategies When Elopement Occurs

- Remain calm and neutral. Avoid scolding or raising your voice.
- Do not chase unless safety is at risk; this can escalate flight behavior.
- Redirect using practiced cues: **"Bethany, stop. Please go to your safe space."**
- Reinforce once she returns to the area safely.
- Debrief later, once she is regulated, using the social story or visuals to review what happened and how she can respond differently next time.

6. Data and Evaluation

Collect data on:

- Frequency and duration of elopement incidents.
- Environmental triggers (noise, task demands, transitions).
- Successful use of replacement strategies.

Review data with the IEP or 504 team regularly to refine supports and ensure consistency across staff.

7. Key Takeaways

- All elopement behavior communicates an unmet need; identify the function before intervening.
- Predictability, structure, and sensory accommodations reduce anxiety and escape behaviors.
- Teach replacement behaviors explicitly and practice them proactively.
- Reinforce safety, communication, and self-advocacy rather than compliance.
- Collaboration among teachers, specialists, and family ensures consistency and safety.

5. What If I Can't Get the Student to Do Anything in Class?

When a student "won't do anything," it's rarely about refusal—it's about **capacity, social comfort, and structure and clarity.**

So this is a challenging question to answer, one that requires context before it can be answered effectively. What grade is the student in? What is being asked of them? What are their interests, strengths, and challenges? Without those details, it's difficult to give a definitive answer. That being said, I will create a scenario similar to the other question in this list.

So, let's suppose our student, let's call him Raymond, is a middle school student participating in a group project on civic engagement, focusing on recycling in elementary schools. Raymond communicates verbally but is described as quiet, withdrawn, and resistant to group work.

Understanding the "Why" Behind the Behavior

For many students with autism, group learning can be overwhelming. According to the DSM-V, autism is characterized by two core features:

1. Differences in social communication and interaction, and
2. Restricted or repetitive patterns of behavior, interests, or activities.

In Raymond's case, the accommodations to his social-communication impairment is key. Working collaboratively requires skills that are often difficult for autistic students; such as understanding tone, facial expressions, social reciprocity (the give and take of group expression) and just understanding the social rules! Most students at this age have a good understanding of what the social rules are and group learning is a way of practicing. But for a student like Raymond, group work is unpredictable and socially demanding, which may increase anxiety and cause Raymond to "shut down" or disengage.

*His refusal to participate isn't defiance, it's communication. It likely signals that the task feels too **socially or cognitively demanding or that the structure** doesn't make sense to him.*

1. Build Predictability and Structure

Students like Raymond thrive when tasks are clearly defined and predictable.

- Clarify the group task. Break it down into smaller, visual steps.
- Assign clear roles. Give Raymond a specific responsibility that matches his strengths (e.g., "data recorder," "fact checker," or "presentation editor").
- Use visual supports. Provide a written or picture-based outline of the project so he can follow along without relying solely on verbal directions.

2. Scaffold Social Communication

Social communication skills must be taught—not assumed.

- Social scripts: Provide Raymond with a few pre-written responses or questions related to the topic (e.g., "I think we should include that in our presentation," or "That's an interesting idea about recycling bins.").
- Model and rehearse: Practice these scripts in advance, ideally with a speech-language pathologist (SLP) or paraeducator.
- Structured turn-taking: Arrange the group so each student answers a question in turn. This creates predictability and gives Raymond time to prepare his response.
- Allow processing time: Silence can be uncomfortable for peers, but Raymond may need a full minute to think and respond.

3. Use Priming to Prepare

Priming means giving Raymond a preview of what to expect. This helps reduce Raymond's anxiety through predictability.

- Send home a priming packet the day before that outlines the next day's task, topic, and social expectations.
- Include visual examples and Raymond's social script choices so he can practice at home with a parent or support person.
- Review these materials briefly before class begins to reinforce what he practiced.

4. Offer Alternative, multiple means of action and expression

Not every student is comfortable speaking in a group (that includes neurotypical students).

- Allow Raymond to communicate through writing, typing, or instant messaging to the teacher or group leader.
- Gradually shape this toward verbal participation as his confidence grows.
- Recognize and praise effort, not just spoken output, but through digital expression: "Thank you, Raymond, for sharing your idea through the chat—great thinking!"

5. Create a Supportive Social Environment

Group learning must be emotionally safe and inclusive.

- Pair Raymond with empathetic peers who model patience and inclusion.
- Teach peers about neurodiversity and respectful collaboration so group learning feels like teamwork, not pressure.
- Celebrate progress: even one short verbal contribution or typed response is a step toward independence.

6. Collaborate with Support Staff

Collaboration with the Special Education Case Manager, SLP, or school psychologist can make a significant difference.

- Ask for consultation on social-communication scaffolds, role adaptation, and data tracking.
- Include these supports in his 504 Plan or IEP, ensuring consistency across classes.

Summary

When a student "won't do anything," it's rarely about refusal, it's about their **social capacity, comfort, and clarity**. For students like Raymond:

- Structure reduces anxiety.
- Visual and social support promote engagement.
- Predictability fosters safety.
- Alternative communication builds success.

By meeting Raymond where he is and teaching skills systematically rather than expecting immediate compliance and participation, we create the conditions for <u>participation, confidence, and genuine learning.</u>

6. Supporting a Student Overwhelmed by Noise and Smells in the Cafeteria

When a student becomes overwhelmed in a loud or crowded environment—covering their ears, crawling under a table, or yelling—this behavior is not defiance or refusal. It is **communication**: the student is signaling distress and attempting to self-regulate in a situation that feels unbearable.

For many neurodivergent students, especially those with **sensory processing differences**, environments like cafeterias can be highly overstimulating. The combination of **noise, smells, movement, and unpredictability** can trigger anxiety, discomfort, and even physical pain. Loud sounds may feel to them like someone is screaming directly in their ears. The result is an overwhelming **fight–flight–freeze response**, making it difficult or impossible to eat, socialize, or remain seated calmly.

Understanding the Behavior

When this type of sensory overload occurs, the student's brain shifts into survival mode. Rational thought, language processing, and self-regulation become extremely difficult. Covering their ears, hiding, or yelling are instinctive coping mechanisms, the student's attempt to block out overwhelming sensory input.

It's important to recognize that sensory tolerance fluctuates. A student who manages the cafeteria one day may struggle the next, depending on fatigue, anxiety, or other sensory inputs earlier in the day. This inconsistency is not noncompliance, it's a reflection of the student's neurological regulation capacity at that moment.

Supportive Accommodations and Strategies

1. Environmental Adjustments

- Preferential seating: Allow the student to sit with their back to the crowd or in a quieter corner of the room to reduce visual and auditory stimulation.
- Noise-reducing tools: Provide noise-canceling headphones or ear defenders, with or without calming music, as appropriate.

- Scent management: When possible, seat the student away from kitchen doors or strong food odors.

2. Alternative Spaces

- Identify a quiet, designated space where the student can eat or take a short break when overwhelmed.
- Allow the student to transition to this space independently or with the support of a paraeducator, based on their self-regulation needs.
  Use visual passes or a "break card" system so the student can signal the need for a sensory break without verbalizing distress.

3. Flexibility and Choice

- Offer the student choices: where to sit, whether to use headphones, or whether to eat in the cafeteria or a quieter setting that day.
  Recognize that sensory thresholds vary, what is tolerable one day may not be the next.

4. Staff Awareness

- Train staff to recognize the signs of sensory overload (covering ears, fidgeting, hiding, crying, yelling).
- Respond calmly and supportively. Avoid verbal redirection in the moment—help the student access their chosen sensory support instead.
- Use neutral, reassuring language: "It's okay, let's go to your quiet spot."

Key Takeaways

- Sensory overload is a neurological experience, not a behavior choice.
- The student's response, by covering their ears, hiding, or yelling is simply a coping mechanism, not misbehavior.
- Provide predictable supports, flexibility, and environmental accommodations to prevent escalation.
- Encourage self-advocacy by allowing the student to access sensory tools or breaks independently whenever possible.
- Consistency across staff ensures safety, dignity, and inclusion for the student.

8. Responding to a Student Who Suddenly Hits, Kicks, or Throws Objects

When a student with autism suddenly begins hitting, kicking, or throwing objects, the behavior must be viewed as **communication**, not defiance. As emphasized throughout, **all behavior is communication** — the student is attempting to *obtain* or *avoid* something in their environment.

These behaviors often occur when a student's ability to regulate sensory input, process social expectations, or express needs has been exceeded. However, it's also important to recognize that this type of escalation may reflect a **co-occurring mental health condition**, such as **anxiety, depression, or trauma-related stress**.

A student who appears "fine" throughout the day may, in fact, be **accumulating stress** from multiple small challenges—unexpected transitions, social misunderstandings, sensory overloads, or task demands—until the emotional load becomes unmanageable and the student "explodes." This cumulative anxiety model highlights that the outburst is **the result of many small, unmet needs building up**, not a single triggering event.

1. Understanding the Behavior Through the Autism and Mental Health Lens

Every incident must be examined in light of how the student's autistic characteristics and mental health factors interact. Common contributing areas include:

- **Communication and Language Differences:** Difficulty expressing emotions or needs can cause internal frustration and anxiety. Limited access to functional communication (especially in moments of stress) often leads to physical behaviors.
- **Social Relating and Perspective-Taking:** Struggles with interpreting others' intentions, social boundaries, or group dynamics can increase emotional vulnerability.
- **Restricted and Repetitive Behaviors:** Change in staff, schedule, or environment can feel unpredictable and unsafe, intensifying anxiety.
- **Cognitive Processing and Executive Function:** Challenges organizing information, sequencing steps, or managing choices can lead to confusion and cognitive overload.
- **Sensory Processing Differences:** Over- or under-reactivity to sounds, smells, lights, touch, or movement can trigger distress and lead to fight–flight–freeze reactions.
- **Uneven Development:** Advanced intellectual skills combined with lagging emotional regulation can create internal conflict and shame, heightening anxiety.
- **Co-Occurring Anxiety or Mental Health Conditions:** Many autistic students also experience generalized anxiety, obsessive-compulsive tendencies, or trauma-related responses. These can amplify sensory sensitivities, increase irritability, and reduce tolerance for change or uncertainty.

2. Immediate Response: Safety, Calm, and Regulation

When aggression or throwing occurs:

- **Stay calm and neutral.** Maintain a soft tone and open body posture.
- **Prioritize safety**—move nearby students, reduce the audience, and remove unsafe items.
- **Lower sensory input:** Turn down lights, minimize verbal interaction, and limit movement around the student.
- **Avoid reasoning or consequences** in the moment. The student's brain is operating from the *survival center* (amygdala/brainstem), not the *thinking center* (cortex).

After de-escalation begins:

- Offer a **quiet or preferred calming space**.

- Use short, reassuring statements: "You're safe. Take your time. I'm here when you're ready."
- Allow adequate time to self-regulate before any conversation or return to activity.

3. After the Incident: Reflect and Reconstruct

After calm is restored, the team should debrief to understand what happened:

- **Setting Event:** What happened earlier in the day? Missed routines? Peer conflict? Change in environment?
- **Trigger:** What specific event or demand preceded the escalation?
- **Function:** Was the student trying to escape something, gain control, or communicate distress?
- **Cumulative Stress:** Could this outburst reflect built-up anxiety from multiple earlier stressors (noise at lunch, confusing assignment, social conflict)?

This reflective process helps identify not only the **trigger** but also the **underlying emotional buildup** that contributed to the escalation.

4. Preventive and Supportive Strategies

A. Predictability and Structure

- Maintain **consistent routines** and provide **visual schedules**.
- Prime the student for changes using written or visual "change alerts."
- Offer clear "first–then" or "now–next" prompts to reduce uncertainty.

B. Sensory Regulation

- Provide **noise-canceling headphones**, sunglasses, or sensory breaks as needed.
- Offer a **quiet corner or regulation space** that the student can access before reaching crisis level.
- Monitor for subtle signs of overload (fidgeting, covering ears, pacing) and intervene early.

C. Emotional and Mental Health Supports

- Incorporate **check-ins** throughout the day to gauge stress and emotional load.
- Provide **social-emotional learning tools**, like visual emotion charts or "calm choice boards."
- Collaborate with the **school counselor or mental health professional** to develop anxiety-reduction supports (e.g., relaxation exercises, cognitive reframing, grounding techniques).
- Allow **short breaks** or "escape passes" to self-regulate before escalation.

D. Communication Supports

- Ensure the student has a reliable way to express needs nonverbally (e.g., visual cards, AAC device, or written notes).

- Teach replacement phrases like "I need a break," "It's too loud," or "I feel angry."

5. Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) and Long-Term Planning

If these behaviors are recurring, a **Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA)** should be conducted to identify triggers, functions, and co-occurring factors such as anxiety or sensory overload.

The resulting **Positive Behavior Support Plan (PBSP)** should outline:

- **Preventive strategies** (priming, structured transitions, calming routines)
- **Replacement behaviors** (self-advocacy skills, coping strategies)
- **Staff response protocols** (how to respond safely and consistently)
- **Environmental adjustments** (lighting, noise, task structure)
- **Emotional supports** tailored to co-occurring anxiety or trauma

6. Key Takeaways

- All behavior communicates an unmet need or overload.
- Aggression or property destruction signals emotional or sensory dysregulation—not defiance.
- Co-occurring **anxiety or mental health challenges** can intensify the impact of sensory input and social stressors.
- Focus first on **safety and regulation**, then on understanding and prevention.
- Collaboration between educators, families, and mental health professionals is essential for sustainable support.

Next Steps:
During our upcoming meeting, we can review this case more closely—identifying potential sensory, communication, or emotional factors, and discussing whether to pursue a Functional Behavioral Assessment and mental health screening to ensure comprehensive support for the student.

9. Student chose to stand on his desks when frustrated. He knows isn't supposed to and as soon as you walk toward him or get close, he gets down himself. How do I deter the behavior?

1. Behavior Definition: Standing on desks when frustrated, typically to gain adult attention.

What is important to understand, is that even though Collin knows he should not stand on his desk, positive or negative behavior is still obtaining the teacher's attention. Collin stands on his desk when he becomes frustrated or anxious, especially when the teacher is engaged with other students. This behavior is short in duration and stops when an adult approaches.

Function of Behavior:
 To *obtain attention* from the teacher (and possibly to express emotional discomfort or uncertainty).

2. Antecedent Conditions

Collin's behavior is most likely to occur when:

- The environment is noisy or overstimulating.
- The teacher's attention is focused on other students.
- There is a lack of predictability in the schedule.
- He is uncertain about when he'll receive help or feels overlooked.

3. Preventative Strategies

Create a structured, predictable environment that reduces the likelihood of frustration.

Environmental Supports

- Use a visual daily schedule and first/then cards to clarify routines.
- Provide a visual cue (e.g., a "Help" or "My Turn" card) Collin can use to request assistance appropriately.
- Keep background noise low or allow Collin access to noise-reducing headphones.
- Offer a quiet space or sensory break area if frustration escalates.

Instructional Supports

- Teach the concept of "waiting" explicitly using visuals and short, timed waiting intervals with positive reinforcement.
- Reinforce small increments of waiting: start with 10 seconds → 30 seconds → 1 minute, etc.
- Pair waiting with acknowledgment cues ("I see your hand, Collin. You're next!").

Social-Emotional Supports

- Provide a social story to teach perspective-taking and appropriate help-seeking (you've written a strong example).
- Embed "help scripts" (visuals or short phrases like "Help me, please" or pointing to the "teacher" card).
- Reinforce calm body behaviors (sitting, hand raised, waiting quietly).

Social Story Example:

Description:
Miss Ronda (I'll call the teacher) is Collin's teacher. Miss Ronda is also the teacher to all the students in Collin's class. Miss Ronda's job is to help each student. Sometimes that is with your other classmates.

Perspective:
Sometimes Collin gets anxious and stands on his desk because he wants help from Miss Ronda too. Miss Ronda wants to help all of her students including Collin. Miss Ronda knows that Collin needs help but sometimes it is hard for him to wait.

Directive:
All the students in Miss Ronda's class can raise their hand and wait for Miss Ronda to help them. Miss Ronda wants to help Collin too and will wait his turn because Miss Ronda is the teacher to all of his classmates.

Control:
Collin knows that he needs to sit in his chair, raise his hand and wait for Miss Ronda to help him. While Collin is waiting, he can raise his hand and Miss Ronda will let Collin know that she will be there soon to help him.

Affirmation:
Miss Ronda will be so happy that Collin sat in his chair and raised his hand. She is happy that he could wait after she acknowledged him. Collin will be happy that he followed the class rules and raised his hand.

4. Replacement Behaviors

Help Collin communicate his needs effectively and access attention appropriately.

Teach Collin to:

- Use a visual "Help" card or raise his hand to request teacher support.
- Wait calmly after showing the card (use a timer or visual countdown).
- Engage in a self-regulation routine (deep breaths, squeezing a fidget, or using a "calm down" card) while waiting.

Reinforcement Strategy:

- Provide immediate verbal acknowledgment when he uses the help card or hand-raising.
  - "Thank you for waiting, Collin. I see your help card — I'll be right there."
- Offer praise and tangible reinforcement for successfully waiting without climbing (stickers, tokens, positive notes).

5. Reactive / Response Strategies

If Collin begins to stand on his desk:

1. Stay calm and consistent. Avoid rushing toward him — proximity may inadvertently reinforce the behavior.
2. Use a brief, neutral verbal cue (e.g., "Feet on the floor, Collin.").
3. When he gets down on his own, immediately reinforce compliance ("Nice job getting down safely, Collin. Thank you.").
4. Once calm, prompt the replacement behavior ("If you need help, show your help card or raise your hand.").
5. Debrief later, not in the moment — focus on teaching, not consequence.

6. Reinforcement Plan

- Immediate reinforcement: Specific praise every time he raises his hand or uses his help card.
- Daily reinforcement: Earns a preferred activity (e.g., time with a favorite sensory object or classroom job).
- Visual progress tracker: Use a token or sticker system to track successes in waiting appropriately.

7. Skill-Building: Learning to Wait

- Introduce the concept of waiting during calm times (not during frustration).
- Use visual timers or countdowns (sand timers, digital apps).
- Celebrate small successes ("You waited 10 seconds — great job! Next time, let's try for 20!").
- Involve the IEP/504 team to scaffold this skill as a social goal under "adaptive behavior" or "social communication."

8. Collaboration & Communication

- Share visuals, scripts, and reinforcement systems across home, school, and support staff.
- Regular check-ins with the behavior specialist, speech therapist, and family for consistency.
- Document progress and note conditions where Collin successfully uses replacement behaviors.

9. Data Collection

Track:

- Frequency of desk-standing episodes
- Time of day and environmental triggers
- Duration of waiting before frustration
- Frequency of replacement behavior use (help card/hand-raising)

Use this data to refine the plan and ensure consistent reinforcement.

10. Crisis & Safety Plan (if needed)

If Collin's behavior ever escalates beyond desk-standing:

- Ensure all staff use calm, non-confrontational approaches.
- Clear the immediate area if safety risk increases.
- Focus on preventative de-escalation, not punishment.

11. Review and Revision

The IEP/504 team should review this plan regularly, analyzing data and adjusting supports as Collin gains skills in communication and self-regulation.

Thank you for your participation today! I will upload a PDF version of my UCC, CAPS and Competing Behavior Diagram.