

ABC chart for recording behaviours of distress (with examples)

ABC charts can be a powerful tool for recording and understanding behaviours of distress. We have created a template for you to use, as well as an example below of a good and bad use case for ABC charts.



- It can be simpler to choose just one or two behaviours to track such as “shouting” or “throwing things”
- ABC charts can be a powerful tool to empower you to be able to design effective prevention strategies. Try to collect data over a few sessions (use this chart multiple times) so you can review the charts for patterns in behaviour. Asking yourself questions like: What are the common triggers? How are the consequences reinforcing the behaviour? Could you develop new consequences to encourage more positive behaviour?

Name of supported person:	Name of carer:
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Date	Time	Environment	A: Antecedent (trigger) What happened directly before the behaviour occurred?	B: Behaviour Describe the behaviour objectively	C: Consequence What happened directly after the behaviour occurred?	Possible Function Fill this out later for analysis

Any other notes? (wider context such as noise levels, people present, disruptions, medication, etc.)





A bad example of ABC chart use:

Date	Time	Environment	A: Antecedent (trigger)	B: Behaviour	C: Consequence	Possible Function
Monday	AM	Residence	Asked Jimmy to clean up paper from his origami creating	Temper tantrum	Told off	Out of the blue. He is aggressive. Spoilt. Wants his own way.
Any other notes? Nothing to add.						



A good example of ABC chart use:

Monday 06.09.24	9.15am	Communal room, by armchairs	<p>Jimmy had finished his lunch later than usual and had got out his paper to start making origami birds. The bus was waiting for him for the trip into town. There was a lot of noise out in the hallway and the radio was playing loudly.</p> <p>Tina (new care team member) asked him to tidy away the paper so he could get on the bus.</p>	Jimmy looked confused and angry. He threw the paper box across the room.	<p>Tina said “no” loudly and returned the paper box to the table in front of him.</p> <p>Jimmy got visibly upset (tears, no eye contact)</p>	<p>Jimmy didn't have time to engage in his favourite activity.</p> <p>Tina is a new carer and doesn't have full context of Jimmy's needs.</p> <p>Jimmy suffers from sensory overload with noise levels.</p>
<p>Any other notes: Jimmy has been finding going into town quite overwhelming and origami is a calming activity for him. It's important that we ensure he has time to engage in calming activities such as origami before potentially overwhelming activities. Removing going into town is not an option as “going to the movies” is one of his goals for this year.</p>						

