

Comprehensive Assessment of Triggers for behaviours of concern Scale (CATS)

Person's name: _____ Carer's name: _____

Type of challenging behaviour displayed: _____

Date and duration of challenging behaviour: _____

Instructions:

This is a list of triggers that may be associated with challenging behaviour/behaviour that challenges/behaviour of concern in people with learning (intellectual) disabilities. We have listed them under several categories and subcategories and within each subcategory we have provided examples of common triggers. However, these are only examples, therefore, if none of the triggers in the list applies to the person you support then make a note of your own example within a specific subcategory.

There can be more than one triggers associated with a behaviour of concern. In that case tick all those examples. There may be some similarities among triggers, in which case tick all. Similarly, same trigger may be associated with more than one type of behaviours of concern (for example, aggression towards others and self).

Fill in the personal factors section first to gain an understanding of the person you support before looking into the triggers list. This trigger checklist should help with the functional assessment of behaviour and completion of an A-B-C (antecedent-behaviour-consequence) chart. So, when a behaviour takes place, the carer/caregiver can go through this list to decide if any of the triggers acted as an antecedent.

You can complete this checklist together with the person you support to have a shared understanding of triggers for behaviours. You can write below if you think you know the trigger under its category or if you're unsure, click on the trigger category to explore potential triggers. Answer DK (Don't know) or NS (Not sure) or NA (Not applicable). If you are unsure, then you can go through the whole list.

<u>Personal factors</u>	Answer
Age	
Gender	
Severity of intellectual disabilities (mild or moderate or severe)	
Cause of learning (intellectual) disabilities (if known) including genetic syndromes.	
Does the person have autism (ASD-autism spectrum disorder)?	
Does the person have ADHD (attention deficit hyperactivity disorder)?	
Mental health diagnosis (if any)	
Physical health problems/ medical condition	
Current medication	
Presence of any abuse or neglect (current and/or past)	
Preferred communication style	

Trigger categories		Potential triggers you think caused behaviours of concern
<u>External Environment</u>	Physical environment	
	Social environment	
<u>Internal environment</u>	Aversive physical states (unpleasant physical state e.g. sleepy)	
	Physical health/medical conditions	
	Mental health	
	Emotional states	
<u>Expression of Volition (free will)</u>	Goal-directed behaviour	
	Limits to volition (limits to free will and choice)	
<u>Characteristics associated with learning (intellectual) disabilities or ASD</u>	Problems with adaptability / uncertainty	
	Communication issues	
<u>Specific activities/events</u>	Specific activities	
	Specific events	

External Environment			
Sub-categories	Trigger items	Tick if present	Provide trigger example
Physical environment	<i>Visual</i>		
	<i>Seeing lights or colours</i>		
	<i>Examples</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bright lights or flashing lights such as fireworks Specific colours (as in clothes/walls) 		
	<i>Seeing specific objects</i>		
	<i>Examples</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Police cars Pictures of things Certain images or programmes on TV Violent videos Seeing patterns 		
	<i>Related to seeing others</i>		
	<i>Example</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seeing people in uniform such as doctors, nurses, police etc. 		
	<i>Any other visual trigger (give example)</i>		
	<i>Auditory</i>		
	<i>Loud noise</i>		
	<i>Examples</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ambulance sirens or other sirens, repetitive music/noise Loud music Loud TV Doorbell 		
	<i>Unpredictable noise was heard</i>		
	<i>Example</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loud sneeze Loud cough Burst balloon Burst tyre 		

	<i>Any other auditory trigger (give example)</i>		
	<i>Taste</i>		
	<i>Abnormalities in taste sensation</i>		
	<i>Examples</i>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certain food (fruits, vegetables etc.) • Texture of food (such as crunchy or lumpy foods) • Certain tastes (such as sour, sweet, spicy etc.) • Was eating non-edible food or was prevented from doing this 		
	<i>Any other taste related trigger (give example)</i>		
	<i>Smell</i>		
	<i>Abnormalities in smell sensation</i>		
	<i>Examples</i>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong smell • Certain/specific smell (smell of flowers, perfumes, burnt coal, deodorant scents, chemical smells etc.) • Hyposensitive to smell and was not allowed to seek out strong inappropriate smell (such as faeces) 		
	<i>Any other smell related trigger (give example)</i>		
	<i>Touch</i>		
	<i>Abnormalities in touch sensation</i>		
	<i>Examples</i>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feel of certain textures or surface (rough or smooth) (clothes etc.) • Being touched by others • Hyposensitive to touch • Was hugging people/strangers • Was wearing tight clothing/shoes 		
	<i>Any other touch related trigger (give example)</i>		
	<i>Spatial</i>		
	<i>Being in a confined space</i>		
	<i>Example</i>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being in the car, taxi, train, bus, aeroplane etc. 		
	<i>People invading personal space</i>		

	<i>Examples</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People coming too close • Someone bumps or pushes the person 		
	<i>Related to the environment</i>		
	<i>Examples</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Busy environment • Hustle and bustle • Unpleasant environment • Temperature in the environment (too hot or too cold or humid) • Physical layout of the environment • Poor ventilation • Poor quality living accommodation • Specific locations • No space to retreat when stressed • No access to open space such as a garden • Noisy environment • Noisy children or loud people 		
	<i>Uncomfortable seating or sleeping</i>		
	<i>Any other space related trigger (give example)</i>		
Social environment	<i>Being singled out</i>		
	<i>Example</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feeling ignored or left out • Parent/carer/support staff sets strict limits applying only to the person 		
	<i>Criticism</i>		
	<i>Examples</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being 'told off' • Being bossed around • Being accused of lying • Being told they have done something wrong • Feeling 'talked down to' / nagged • Corrected or teased • Warned about consequences of a misbehaviour 		
	<i>Any other criticism (give example)</i>		
	<i>Confrontation or conflicts with others</i>		

	<i>Examples</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Near someone who is upset or angry • Others in conflict such as hearing parents or peers argue or fight with each other • Conflict/confrontation with peers/family/care staff/others 		
	<i>Any other conflict (give example)</i>		
	<i>Disturbed while resting</i>		
	<i>Interaction variables</i>		
	<i>Examples</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeking interaction, reassurance or sympathy • Get reaction from others following the behaviour • Disagreements with family, staff, or peers • Seeing someone they dislike • Hearing people talk about the person in a negative light • People saying “No” to them • People saying something in ‘the wrong way’ • People speaking to them in a way they don’t like • Poor interaction with others • Staff talking to each other and not enough interaction with the person 		
	<i>Any other interaction issue (give example)</i>		
	<i>Losing in a competitive activity</i>		
	<i>Example</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Losing in a game • Not allowed to watch favourite channel on the TV 		
	<i>Any other example of losing in a competitive activity</i>		
	<i>Loss/broken personal items</i>		
	<i>Example</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lost iPad • Broken music centre/PlayStation etc. 		
	<i>Any other example of lost/ broken personal item</i>		
	<i>Needing assistance</i>		
	<i>Specific people visiting</i>		
	<i>Lack of family visits</i>		
	<i>Punishment</i>		

	<i>Examples</i>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Punished/reprimanded/told off in front of others • Recently punished or physically restrained • Something pleasant is taken away • Something unpleasant is presented 		
	<i>Any other punishment (give example)</i>		
	<i>Related to peers</i>		
	<i>Examples</i>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Absence of a peer they like • Presence of a peer they dislike • Fails to dominate others 		
	<i>Any other peer related issue (give example)</i>		
	<i>Retaliation</i>		
	<i>Example</i>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To get a reaction from others • Others upsetting or annoying the person 		
	<i>Any other retaliation (give example)</i>		
	<i>Sense of rejection from families, staff, or peers</i>		
	<i>Examples</i>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jealousy over others seeing family • When a parent/support staff leaves • When a peer or a staff or a family member does not approve of them 		
	<i>Any other issue related to sense of rejection (give example)</i>		
	<i>Someone forgets to do something for the person</i>		
	<i>Someone irritating</i>		
	<i>Presence of strangers/new people</i>		
	<i>Support staff variables</i>		
	<i>Examples</i>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Absence of favourite support staff • Presence of support staff they do not like • Support staff' style of communication • Presence of certain staff or specific type of staff members • New staff • Staff leaving 		
	<i>Any other support staff related issue (give example)</i>		

	<i>Unhappy with current situation</i>		
	<i>Example</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unhappy with support given by carers • Unhappy in certain places/situations (if applicable), school, cafes, cinemas, crowded places, shopping malls, local clubs etc. 		
	<i>Any other example of unhappy situation (give example)</i>		
	<i>Unwanted attention from others or wanting attention from others</i>		
	<i>Example</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People staring • People talking about the person • Too much interaction/ attention from others • Others are getting attention 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wants to develop a relationship with other people or peers 		
	<i>Any other example of unwanted attention from others (give example)</i>		
	<i>Was expected to work or do things independently</i>		
	<i>Was hurried or rushed</i>		
	<i>Worried about loved one's health or loved one's problems e.g., family, friends etc.</i>		
	<i>Any other social situation (give example)</i>		

Internal Environment			
Sub-categories	Trigger items	Tick if present	Provide trigger example
Aversive physical states	<i>Discomfort</i>		
	<i>Examples</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New shoes • After meals-feeling bloated • Not being clean after going to the toilet • Feeling too hot or cold • Hypersensitivity • Hypo-sensitive • Feeling tired or sleepy • Feeling unwell or in pain 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hunger or thirst or diet related 		
	<i>Any other type of discomfort (give example)</i>		
	<i>Sexual frustration</i>		
	<i>Any other aversive physical state (give example)</i>		
Physical health/medical conditions	<i>Allergies</i>		
	<i>Chronic health conditions</i>		
	<i>Examples</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Constipation Dental condition Haemorrhoids (piles) Heartburn/reflux disorder Infections (including chest and urine infection) Irritable bowel syndrome Tumour, cancer 		
	<i>Any other chronic health condition (give example)</i>		
	<i>Common health problems</i>		
	<i>Examples</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Headache Flu 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cold High temperature 		
	<i>Any other common health problem (give example)</i>		
	<i>Injuries</i>		
	<i>Known medical condition/ problems/ disorders</i>		

	<i>Examples</i>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asthma/ respiratory problems • Difficulties swallowing/ aspiration • Hearing problem • Vision problems • Obesity • Epilepsy (before, during or after a seizure) • High or low blood sugar related to diabetes • Problems with bowels (constipation, diarrhoea etc.) • Problems with bladder • Problem with blood pressure • Arthritis • Other physical deformities/disabilities 		
	<i>Linked to hormonal changes</i>		
	<i>Examples</i>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Around menstrual cycle • Contraceptive use • Menopause 		
	<i>Medication related</i>		
	<i>Examples</i>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Starting a new medicine • Changes in medicine dose • Side effects of medicine (see accessible medication leaflets https://spectrom.wixsite.com/project) • Interaction between different medicines • Not happy to take medicine • Missed medicine • Does not like the taste of the medicine • Difficulty in swallowing medicine • Does not like blood tests, blood pressure monitoring etc. • Does not like to see a doctor 		
	<i>Mobility problems</i>		
	<i>Examples</i>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Muscular/ joint problems, • Paralysis 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weak muscle • Shakes in the body 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unsteady on walking • Spasticity/stiffness in joints 		
	<i>Any other medical or medication related condition (give example)</i>		
	<i>Sleep related problems</i>		
	<i>Examples</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of sleep/disturbed sleep • Too much sleep (daytime drowsiness) • Sleep apnoea (common in Down's syndrome and obesity) 		
Mental health	<i>Any other sleep related problem (give example)</i>		
	<i>Deterioration in mental health</i>		
	<i>Low self-confidence and self-esteem</i>		
	<i>Related to known mental health conditions</i>		
	<i>Examples</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depression • Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) (Remember obsession with certain objects is common in ASD/autism) • Phobia (Remember the person may develop phobia for some ordinary things such as water, pet, dog, stairs, storm etc. which may not be the cause of any concern for others) • Bipolar disorder (manic or hypomanic state, may seem too excited or talkative or agitated or hyperactive than his/her usual self) • Anxiety • Psychotic disorders/schizophrenia (feeling paranoid about other people in the house) • Dementia 		
	<i>Any other mental health problem (give example)</i>		

Emotional states	<i>Due to unpleasant emotions experienced by the person</i>		
	<i>Examples</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agitation • Excitement • Anger • Irritation • Anxiety • Distressed • Sad or depressed • Frightened • Feeling sensitive • Stressed • Upset 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frustrated • Jealousy • Feeling out of control • Hyperactivity or impulsivity (can also be related to ADHD) • Feeling embarrassed • Being bored • Feeling frightened or insecure • Feeling disappointed • Fed up 		
	<i>Feeling disrespected</i>		
	<i>Feeling under pressure</i>		
	<i>Feeling over-aroused emotionally</i>		
	<i>Mood swings (happy to sad to irritable to angry etc.)</i>		
	<i>Any other emotion (give example)</i>		

Expression of Volition (free will)			
Sub-categories	Trigger items	Tick if present	Provide trigger example
	<i>Task avoidance</i>		

Goal-directed behaviour	<i>Examples</i>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To get out of doing something Refusing to do something (Remember that the person may not have the skills to perform the task, or the task may provoke anxiety and/or cause distress) 		
	<i>To get own way</i>		
	<i>Example</i>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To get people to leave him/her alone Demand not being met 		
Limits to volition			
	<i>Choice related</i>		
	<i>Examples</i>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not getting what they want quickly Not getting the wanted response Lack of choice (given non-preferred food or being asked to do some tasks, which they don't want to do or can't do or go to places where the person does not want to go) Being asked to make a choice (what to have for lunch, where to go out etc.-remember use of pictures may help the person with her/his choice) 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Something is taken away from them Not being able to go out when wanted Not being able to see family or friends when wanted Earned rewards or something they like not given to the person Asked to take part in repetitive tasks/activities which they do not like Rushed to do things Not being able to leave a situation/ environment/ setting 		
	<i>Any other choice related issue (give example)</i>		

	<i>Feeling of being controlled</i>		
	<i>Examples</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being asked to go to his/her room • Lack of independence and autonomy • Difficulties with authority • Being asked to share things or activities with others 		
	<i>Any other examples of feeling being controlled</i>		
	<i>Any other issues with free will (give example)</i>		

Characteristics associated with learning (intellectual) disabilities or ASD			
Sub - categories	Trigger items	Tick if present	Provide trigger example
Problems with adaptability / uncertainty	<i>Any changes</i>		
	<i>Examples</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any change in the routine or plans (such as when a regular tea/coffee break is delayed, or an outing is cancelled etc.) • Changes in support staff • Change of seasons/weather • Major life changes • Changes to surroundings/ living arrangement/environments such as new wallpaper in the room • Family contact/visit cancelled or rescheduled • New activities/ places or environments • Objects were moved around the house 		
	<i>Any other unplanned change (give example)</i>		
	<i>Due to lack of abstract thinking or poor planning skills</i>		
	<i>Examples</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Was unable to plan something ahead • When travelling to an event 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not knowing what they are doing and with whom (things were not scheduled in advance) 		

	<i>Any other examples of due to lack of poor planning</i>		
	<i>Inconsistencies in support provided to the person by the same support staff or by different support staff</i>		
	<i>Interrupted when doing something</i>		
	<i>Examples</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ritualistic or compulsive acts (which could be part of OCD or autism) • Interrupted when doing something they like 		
	<i>Any other example of interruption (give example)</i>		
	<i>Impatience/waiting for things (these could be part of ADHD)</i>		
	<i>Examples</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Queuing • Taking turn 		
	<i>Any other example of impatience or impulsivity</i>		
	<i>Rigid schedule/ routine and lack of flexibility or unstructured setting</i>		
	<i>Task/ activity related</i>		
	<i>Examples</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Told that a non-preferred activity is coming up • Transition between events e.g., returning from a day centre 		
	<i>Unwilling to leave a specific setting (e.g., does not want to leave residential home or family home when visited or any other place they like such as a café or a club)</i>		

	<i>Unable to leave a specific setting (e.g., wants to leave residential home or family home or any other place they do not like such as a café or a club but cannot)</i>		
	<i>Unwilling to leave any other setting (give example)</i>		
	<i>Unpredictability/surprises</i>		
	<i>Example</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unexpected events • Unexpected activities • Unexpected visit from someone 		
	<i>Any other problems with adaptability / uncertainty (give example)</i>		
Communication issues	<i>Difficulty in communicating in general</i>		
	<i>Examples</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speech (articulation) difficulty such as lisping or stammering • Frustration for not being able to communicate • Difficulty in trying to get people to understand them • The person's communication or response was blocked/not heard by staff or family members or peers or others • Difficulty with social communication 		
	<i>Any other communication issue (give example)</i>		
	<i>Not understanding requests given by others</i>		
	<i>Examples</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty in understanding others • Support staff not giving clear instructions • Pace of instructions is too fast or too slow • Support staff may wrongly assume good understanding due to good expressive speech of the person • People not using proper communication means such as sign language, pictures, accessible form of information etc. 		

	Any other understanding issues (give example)		
--	---	--	--

Specific activities/events			
Sub – categories	Trigger items	Tick if present	Provide trigger example
Specific activities	<i>Related to routines or specific times or activities</i>		
	<i>Examples</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During mealtimes • After mealtimes • Getting up in the morning • Getting ready in the mornings • Going to bed • Breakfast time • Lunch time • Dinner time • Bath time • Waiting for an activity (excitement/build up before an activity) 		
	<i>Any other times/activities (give example)</i>		
	<i>Specific activities</i>		
	<i>Examples</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appointments • Exercise • Going to doctors / chiropody/ dentists etc. • Administering medications if self-medicates • Personal care such as bathing, combing hair/being dressed/undressed/cutting nails/shaving • Leisure/personal/domestic activities • Personal hygiene 		
	<i>Any other activities (give examples)</i>		
Specific events	<i>Specific events</i>		
	<i>Examples</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Going out • Not going out • Time of day/ week/ month/ year • Change in routine (needs to know the day's activity in advance or any visits by others or trip out) 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change in appointment time or time of any activities such as phone call to family, meal time, shopping time etc. • Change in the way things are placed/arranged • Visitors arrived • Visitors not arrived • Staff change over time • Family visits • Anniversaries • Birthday • Christmas • New Year • Holiday 		
	<i>Past or present traumatic experience/events</i>		
	<i>Examples</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abuse (such as physical, sexual, emotional, financial, environmental etc.) • Traumatic life events (such as bereavement, house move etc.) 		
	<i>Any other examples of experience/events</i>		