

## PBS Helpline Resources

### Why do concerning behaviours happen?

Often, when we see behaviours of concern, it can seem that it's come out of nowhere, and this can feel confusing or worrying. For example, I walk into a room, Emily hits herself with her hand. I think "it's come out of nowhere, I didn't even say anything, it's happened for no reason!" That seems logical BUT...

Often when I walk into the room I say "Emily, it's time to brush your teeth". So what might seeing me tell Emily, based on her past experiences? Maybe I was going to ask her to do something.

Maybe, when she hits her head, I try to distract her, or leave the room. Poor Emily had to hit herself on the head just to let me know she didn't want to brush her teeth.

ALL behaviour happens for a reason. We may not know the reason, but there is logic to what we do. How we behave sends messages to tell people what's going on for us. If we just look at the behaviour, we might miss the message. Understanding why they do what they do is the only way we can make things better for people. We do that by changing what we do, so people can get what they need without having to use other, more harmful ways of getting their message across.

But what if Emily doesn't always hit her head when she sees me or when asked to brush her teeth – in fact sometime she likes it? Let's look deeper.

The night before, Emily had stomach ache and went to bed early. People around her thought something wasn't quite right but weren't sure what. Emily didn't sleep well because of the pain. When she gets up she likes to look through her photo album which makes her feel happy, but this morning it wasn't there – someone had moved it. So Emily is tired, in pain, and couldn't do something that makes her feel better. Today, brushing her teeth was too much. So when she saw me she hit her head. I distracted her, forgot all about the teeth and offered her some other choices which helped her. It worked for her.

How we respond to any event is affected by things that happen further away – we need to look at the whole picture.

If you need some help with this, have a look at the BILD website <https://www.bild.org.uk/positive-behaviour-support-pbs/> or book a call with the PBS helpline.