

Collaborative Problem Solving®  
Assessment and Planning Tool (CPS-APT)  
for \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_ .  
(Name/ID) (date)

Instructions: Complete each section in order. This is a working document and should be updated regularly. If you can, collaborate with others involved in the child's life to gather as much information as possible.

**CHALLENGING BEHAVIORS**

List the behaviors you see. These are behavioral responses to difficult triggers, situations, or expectations.

Ex. Yelling, swearing, refusing

**PROBLEMS TO BE SOLVED**

List the situations *when* the challenging behaviors occur. These are also known as expectations, triggers, antecedents, precipitants, or contexts. Identify the Problem as *specifically* as possible, including what, when, where, and/or with whom the Problem happens. If assigning Plan A (imposing will) or Plan C (drop it for now), describe who will be responsible for following the Plan and what they will do.

The Problem to be Solved is...	Need to gather more specific info from other adults*	Plan (A,B,C)	What will Plan A/C look like in action?
Ex. Transitioning from lunch to group on time	<input type="checkbox"/>	C	Group leader will allow them to enter late without comment or consequences
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\*Be sure to update your CPS-APT after you gather more information from others.

# THINKING SKILLS

Check the skills you believe the child struggles with and that are making it hard for them to handle specific triggers and expectations. Keep in mind the child's cultural background when assessing thinking skills. Check as many as apply, but do not obsess – this is your best guess!

## Language & Communication Skills

- Understanding what others are saying
- Following the flow of conversations
- Quickly understanding people who are talking
- Saying what they are thinking or what they need
- Saying what's bothering them
- Saying what they are feeling
- Quickly finding the words they need

## Emotion- and Self-Regulation Skills

- Handling feelings when angry or frustrated
- Handling feelings when annoyed
- Handling feelings when nervous, worried, or anxious
- Handling feelings when disappointed or sad
- Thinking about what might happen before doing something
- Pausing before they respond
- Waiting for something they want
- Being energetic at the right time; getting energy up when expected to
- Being calm at the right time; calming down when expected to

## Cognitive Flexibility Skills

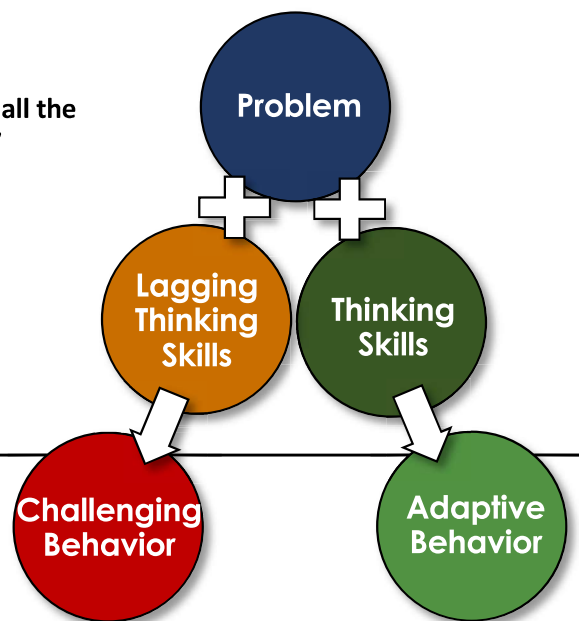
- Handling changing from one activity to another
- Understanding that things can be "kind of" rather than all one way or all the other way; seeing "shades of gray" rather than only "black and white"
- Imagining different ways things could happen in the future
- Handling changes to a routine or rule
- Handling new situations or unclear answers (e.g., "I don't know.")
- Changing their mind if offered a different idea or solution
- Understanding why a plan may need to change
- Not taking things too personally, exaggerating, or thinking things are worse than they are

## Attention & Working Memory Skills

- Sticking with things that need a lot of attention
- Doing things in order
- Keeping track of time
- Thinking about more than one thing at a time
- Staying focused during activities
- Ignoring distractions
- Thinking of more than one solution to a problem

## Social Thinking Skills

- Paying attention to what others are saying and doing
- Understanding what other people mean from the way they behave or talk
- Starting and having conversations with others
- Getting other people's attention in positive ways
- Understanding how their behavior makes other people feel
- Understanding what other people think of them and their behavior
- Understanding other people's points of view



## PLANNING STEPS

*First*, decide which Problems will be solved with Plan B right away. To help you decide, answer both questions below:

Do you have a good relationship with the child?  
Can they tolerate some stress?

**YES** to both?

Start with the Problems that cause the most frequent or severe challenging behavior.

**NO** to either?

Start with the easier Problems, ones that you feel most flexible about, or ones that the child is most invested in.

*Next*, for Problems that are not solved with Plan B right away...

- Choose Plan A if trying to get your expectation met is more important than reducing challenging behavior.
- Choose Plan C if reducing challenging behavior is more important than trying to get your expectation met.

*Then*, after a problem is solved using Plan B, choose a new problem to solve from those marked Plan A or C.