

Collaborative & Proactive Solutions

A model of practice that keeps families at the centre
when helping children with concerning behaviour

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Plan for today's presentation

- How our understanding of concerning behaviour has changed over time
- Overview of the CPS Ireland Project
- What is Collaborative & Proactive Solutions (CPS) and how is it a departure from conventional approaches?
- Examples and descriptions of how this model works
- Q&A

The unique challenges of concerning behaviour

- Families of children who have concerning behaviours report higher levels of stress, and lower levels of support.
- Concerning behaviour is often progressive.
- As the frequency and severity of concerning behaviour increase, “solutions” often become increasingly about control and containment. They become more “expert-led”, and less child- and family-centred.
- Families have highlighted the need for more prevention, more effective and realistic interventions, and improved partnerships between families and professionals.
- This presentation describes a demonstration project getting underway in Ireland using a non-coercive, family-friendly model of helping children who have concerning behaviour.

How our explanation of Concerning Behaviour evolved over time



Limitations of 20th Century behavioural approaches to providing behavioural support

- Worked from a limited understanding of the causes of concerning behaviour.
- Treat behaviour as separate from other areas of the child's functioning, and requires behaviour “experts” to treat the child.
- Did not adequately consider the voice and perspective of children who behaved in concerning ways.
- In recent years ABA and ABA-based approaches have come under criticism by former “consumers”, leading some to call for abolishment of ABA, and others to call for a “New ABA”.
 - <https://practicalfunctionalassessment.com/2021/01/25/a-perspective-on-todays-aba-by-dr-greg-hanley/>

Two trends that revolutionised our approach to behavioural support.

1. The 90s: The “Decade of the Brain”

Since the 90s, there has been an avalanche of research that has led to new and more effective ways of understanding the behaviour of children and young people, including those with neurodevelopmental differences.

Support for new ways of understanding concerning behaviour were derived from research in areas including executive function (EF), trauma and ACEs, learning, attachment and connection, motivation, anxiety, and crucially the central nervous system.

New approaches to helping children have resulted from understanding the implications of scientific research in these areas for understanding and helping children with behavioural challenges.



Two trends that revolutionised our approach to behavioural support.

2. The rise of values-led policies and practices

There have also been great strides made in responding to concerning behaviour in the context of the whole child, who has opinions, preferences, and rights to self-determination regardless of level of ability. Some policies and protocols which contribute to this include:

- United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- HIQA: Guidance on a Human Rights-based Approach in Health and Social Care Services
- HSE: A Rights Based Approach to Behavioural Support: Guiding Principles
- HSE policies including Progressing Disability Services (PDS), New Directions, Outcomes for Children and Their Families Framework...



The neurodiversity movement: The intersection of neurology and rights

- Neurodiversity was first referenced in the 90s by Judy Singer, an autistic sociologist.
- This movement, which is primarily a grass-roots social justice initiative, benefits from research and improved understanding of the vast array of neurotypes that make up our society.
- The Social Care Model of Disability posits that, rather than individual “deficits”, it is barriers put up by society that are the main factor that disables people.
- The most effective contemporary approach



Research-based, relationship-based, neuro-friendly approaches to understanding concerning behaviour

- New ways of supporting children who have behavioural needs draw on a body of research that shows that, regardless of antecedents, consequences, or function, concerning behaviour results when certain demands and expectations exceed a young person's capacity to respond adaptively.
 - **Ross Greene**
 - Mona Delahooke/Stephen Porges
 - Lori Desautels
 - Stu Shankar
 - Dan Siegel

Purpose of the CPS project

- The purpose of this project is to pilot in 2 CHOs a specific model for supporting families to prevent and respond to concerning behaviour in a way that is
 - Family-centred
 - Neuro-affirmative
 - Interdisciplinary
 - Evidence-based
- All staff on 9 CDNTs in the West and Midwest will be trained and supported to use CPS in their everyday work to promote the prevention of and effective response to concerning behaviour.
- We are aware of a number of Primary Care, Adult Services, and NEPS teams around the country who are also integrating CPS into their work.

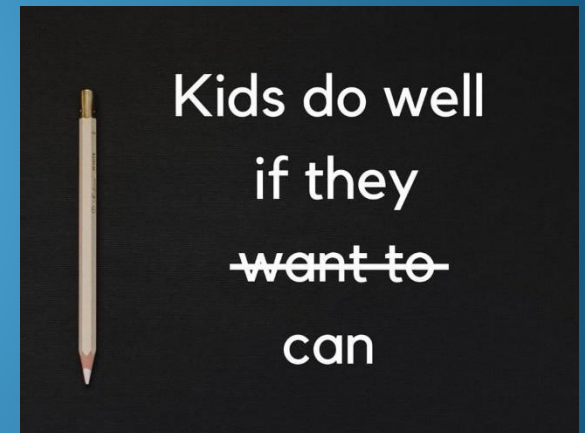
Brief animated overview of CPS

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IPTaeorwkGg>
- This is an overview of the foundation model that we are implementing at the 9 demonstration sites in the West and Midwest.

Collaborative & Proactive Solutions (CPS)

What is CPS?

- An evidence-based approach to understanding and helping children and young people who have behaviours that challenge developed by Dr. Ross Greene.
- Although it is a highly structured approach, the most important elements of the model are the philosophy and values that underpin it.
- CPS is based on the premise that when children don't behave well it's because they lack certain skills that would let them identify and address their concerns more effectively and peacefully.
- For more information, see www.livesinthebalance.org.



Important themes in *CPS*

The emphasis is not on behaviours, but on problems.



All of the important stuff happens “upstream” of the behaviour.



Important paradigm shifts in *CPS*

The problem-solving is collaborative rather than unilateral.



Important paradigm shifts in *CPS*

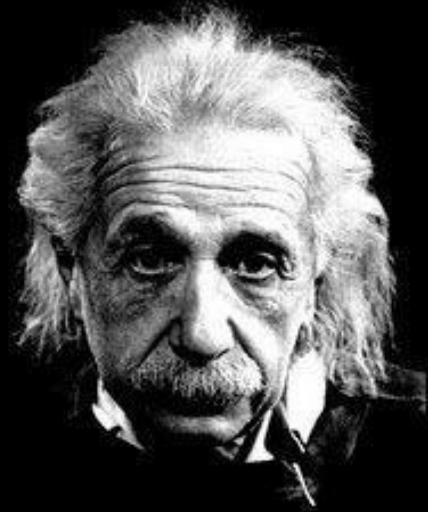
The problem solving is proactive rather than in response to behaviours that challenge.



The 3 steps of CPS

- Change your lens.
- Identify lagging skills and unsolved problems.
- Solve problems.

"WE CANNOT
SOLVE OUR
PROBLEMS
WITH THE SAME
THINKING WE
USED WHEN WE
CREATED THEM"



Adults have 3 options for solving problems

- Plan A: Solve the problem unilaterally.
 - In CPS, we try to reduce or eliminate this.
- Plan B: Solve the problem collaboratively using a 3-step process.
 - We do this with the top 2 or 3 Unsolved Problems.
- Plan C: Set the problem aside for now.
 - We learn how to genuinely drop expectations that are not the highest priority to make room for solving the most important problems collaboratively. This results in a far less stressful environment



From a parent of two autistic young adults

- “Then came the day that they started to use the process on themselves. They even helped me when I was stuck on my own problems. That is when I realized that without explicitly “teaching” any skills or “forcing” them to do anything, and just by modeling the collaborative process and being patient enough to hold space so they could do things when they were ready, my kids had figured out their own way to float.”

- Zaidee Martin, mother

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For more information

- www.livesinthebalance.org
- Books about CPS by Dr. Ross Greene
 - *The Explosive Child*
 - *Lost at School*
 - *Raising Human Beings*
 - *Lost and Found*

Or contact me, at Toby.Sachsenmaier@hse.ie