



CHARGE Behavior Cause Checklist

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All behaviors happen for a reason. Children with CHARGE syndrome have many complex factors that influence behavioral responses. Many sudden, unexpected changes in behavior are due to medical issues. The following is a simple checklist that can help staff working with these children to increase their awareness of some of the reasons why behaviors occur.

- Has the child had enough sleep?
- Has the child had adequate nutrition?
- Has the child been seen by a health professional for sinus, ear infections, constipation?
- Has the child's schedule been designed to prevent fatigue?
 - Has the child had several active classes in consecutive session and simply cannot pay attention for that long without a break?
 - Does the child have both vision and hearing challenges and therefore has to work very hard to attend to communication and curriculum content, with the outcome of poor attention, outbursts, and/or the child simply shuts down?
- Are the child's hearing/vision/sensory needs being met so she/he can function in the classroom?
 - Is text accessible?
 - Is there ambient noise?
 - Is there bothersome sun or outside noise?
 - Is his/her desk in the path of classroom traffic that might be distracting?
 - Are hearing aid batteries/FM unit working?
 - Are glasses in good repair and clean?
- If the child is relying on sign language, is it available in all places the child goes during the day
- Is there a back up communication system for times of stress, such as pictures, needs board, notebook with short printed comments (take a deep breath, ask for help, ask for quiet time, etc.) Are these available to the child at all times
- Is there a flexible schedule

Behavior responses of the child to any or all of the above might include:

- Increase in anxiety
- Increase in OCD-like behaviors and thoughts

- Increase in questions about what is next, what is cancelled, etc.
- Increase in overall arousal levels
- Increase in tantrum, shut down, or general agitation
- Decrease in the ability to clearly communicate and to be an effective self-advocate
- Self-stimulatory behaviors: picking at nails, skin, hair; body movements