

Use this tip sheet to review the four types of behavior. Recognizing the type of behavior a child or youth is using can help you respond in the most supportive way. **Visit the KIT Academy for more resources!**

What is behavior?

Observable actions in **response** to people (ex. other kids and adults), places (ex. activity center), and things (ex. transitions, sounds, etc.).

What are the types of behavior?

Unsafe	Puts the child or others at risk for immediate harm.	
Concerning	Affects participation and relationships; outside of expectations based on frequency, duration, and intensity.	
Challenging	Expected based on age and development; tests CYP Professionals' abilities or determination.	
Typical	Expected based on age and development; reflects a range of positive and negative emotion.	



Something to think about:

Is the behavior *unsafe* or *concerning*? A child climbing the playground fence is *concerning*. It's *unsafe* if the child tries to go over the fence onto a busy street. Climbing the fence is *concerning* and should be addressed, but it will not cause immediate harm.

How can I tell what type of behavior it is?

Pay attention to the **frequency**, **duration**, and **intensity** of the behavior. This will help you know if the behavior is typical, concerning, or unsafe. The more a behavior happens, the longer it lasts, and the more intense, it's probably *concerning* or *unsafe*. Remember, *challenging* behavior will feel different for each person. For example, whining might not impact your relationship with a child, but could make your co-worker feel disconnected to a child.



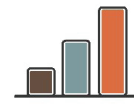
Frequency

How often the behavior happens (ex. Two times per hour, once per week, etc.)



Duration

When the behavior started & how long it lasts (ex. Started 6 weeks ago, lasts 12 minutes, etc.)



Intensity

The force or severity of the actions (ex. Biting with force to break the skin, hitting with force to knock a child down, etc.)

Examples:

Below are examples of how a behavior could escalate from typical, to concerning, to unsafe based on the **frequency**, **duration**, and **intensity**.

	Typical	Concerning	Unsafe
Toddler	18-month-old biting 1x/month and leaving a faint mark	18-month-old biting 3x/week and leaving a mark 	18-month-old biting 3x/week and breaking the skin each time 
Preschool	3-year-old pushing a child who knocked down their tower	3-year-old pushing others to the ground 5x/day 	3-year-old pushes a child to the ground and jumps on their stomach 
School-Age	7-year-old screaming occasionally when they lose a game	7-year-old screaming for 20 minutes every time they lose a game 	7-year-old screaming when they lose a game, then elbowing peers leaving bruises 
Teen	15-year-old saying, "Hell no!" every once in a while when asked to join an activity	15-year-old stating, "You're all stupid," 2x/week. Peers avoid hanging out with them 	15-year-old writing a list of youth they want to harm 

Where is the **challenging** behavior in these examples?

Remember, *challenging* behavior puts a strain on the relationship between the child and professional. Sometimes it's because of the *behavior* and sometimes it's because of the *response* to the behavior.

Due to **BEHAVIOR**

The 3-year-old pushes the teacher who tries to redirect their behavior

Due to **RESPONSE**

The professional yells in response to the 15-year-old who says, "hell no!"