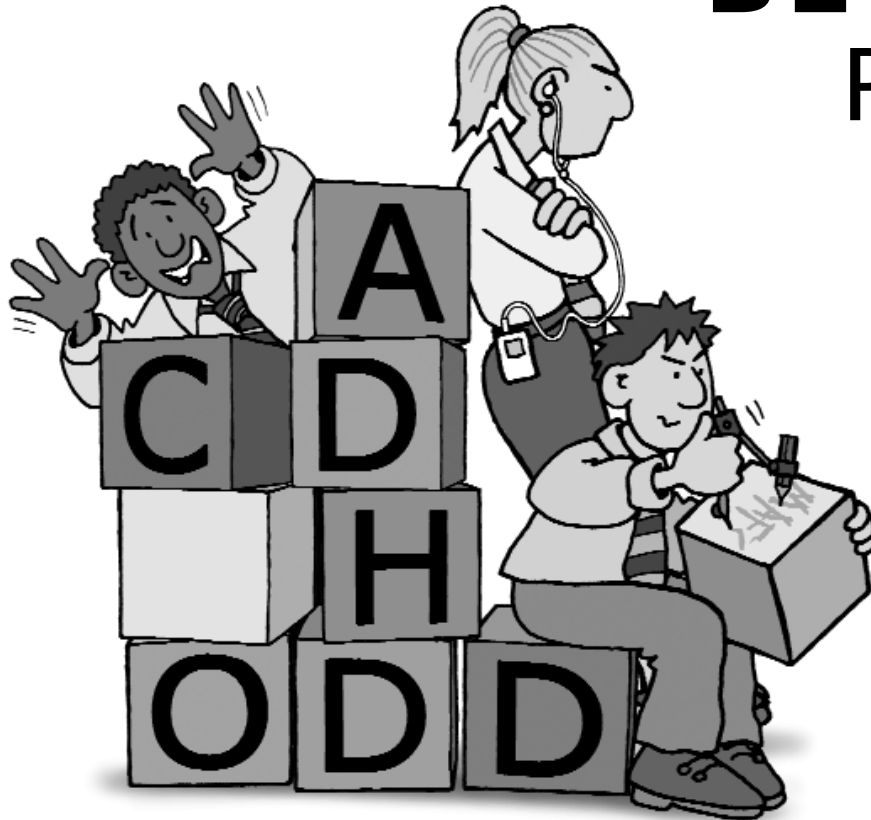









CHALLENGING BEHAVIOURS Pocketbook

By Fintan O'Regan



Cartoons:
Phil Hailstone

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Three main types of SEBD



SEBD = ADHD + ODD + CD

Though there are a number of different categories of challenging children, the following chapters deal with three main types:

- Those that **can't** learn but generally **want** to (ADHD)
- Those that **won't** learn but **might** if it's on their terms (ODD)
- Those that **don't** care; they appear to have a different agenda (CD)

SEBD = can't + won't + don't care

A classroom scenario



Consider the following situation: the teacher Miss Maple is working from the board and behind her back a pen is thrown across the room. She turns around and eyes up three individuals she feels might be involved: Liam, Vicky and Darren.

The case for Liam

Liam is looking really uncomfortable, shifting both on his seat and his gaze when Miss Maple looks at him. Twiddling his tie, he looks helplessly along at the boy sitting next to him, Darren. Darren ignores both Liam and the teacher.

'Liam,' says the teacher.

'Yes Sir.... I mean Miss,' says Liam. 'What did I do?'

'I didn't say you did anything,' says Miss Maple, 'but a pen was thrown across the room.'

'It wasn't me Sir... I mean Miss. I don't have many pens left... I lost most of them. Was it one of mine?' he asks.



A classroom scenario



The case for Vicky

'Vicky,' says Miss Maple, but before she can finish...

'You don't think I did it,' says Vicky shouting. 'Why are you always picking on me? You never leave me alone. I never even touched your stupid pen.'

'Vicky,' Miss Maple begins, but before she can finish...

'Why do you always blame me for everything? You have 29 other kids in here but it's always me. If you would concentrate on making the lesson more interesting and not so boring perhaps people wouldn't go around chucking pens anyway.'



A classroom scenario



The case for Darren

Darren is texting on his phone and ignores the first request that Miss Maple makes to him.

'Darren do you know anything about the pen that was thrown across the room a few minutes ago? And by the way, please put that phone away.'

'No, why should I?' he says. 'It's nothing to do with me.'

'Are you sure?' asks Miss Maple. 'It came from this direction.'

'Did it?' says Darren flippantly. 'But how do you know? You had your back turned. Anyway, didn't Liam say it was one of his? Look, here's mine.'

So... Which of the three students, Liam, Vicky and Darren best fits the 'can't learn, won't learn, don't care' criteria and why?



The verdict



Difficult though it is to create stereotypes, from the three students profiled:

Liam is likely to be regarded as the **can't learn** student. He comes across as the type who does not think about the implications or consequences of their actions and who would not have thought through the throwing of the pen.

Students with ADHD often fit into this category.

Vicky is likely to be regarded as the **won't learn** student as she is potentially explosive when asked about the incident. Her fragile temperament leads her to challenge the teacher almost before she knows it. It is this secondary behaviour that gets her into most hot water.

Students with ODD often fit into this category.

Darren is typical of the **don't care** student; his actions are more premeditated and controlled than the other two and he is more calculating in his responses.

Students with CD are more likely to fit into this category.

The culprit?



As for who actually threw the pen, it could have been any one of them but the example demonstrates three things:

1. Students with ADHD are usually the easiest to catch as they are impulsive. Because they do not plan in advance, they will not have an alibi for their behaviour. (They may try to lie but they are poor liars because in addition to their impulsiveness they have poor short-term memory.)
2. Students with ODD are more difficult to catch after the act than those with ADHD but easier than those with Conduct Disorder. However, be warned: by the time you have proved their complicity they will have twisted the story so much that they'll have convinced you it was your fault – the lesson was so boring they threw the pen to liven it up.
3. Students with Conduct Disorder do plan and are difficult to catch. They generally do have an alibi, usually the student with ADHD sitting beside them!

About the author

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Fin is a science teacher and former headteacher of The Centre Academy School, regarded as the first specialist school in the UK for children with ADHD/ODD.

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He has written a number of published articles on the subject of behaviour management and is the author of the TES award-winning book, *Educating Children with ADHD (2000)*; *How to Teach and Manage Children with ADHD (2001)*; *Surviving and Succeeding in SEN and ADHD: Impact and Intervention (both 2005)*.

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