

**Prof.
Tim Hartshorne
(USA)**

Friday, June 18, 2021

02.30 – 03.30 p.m.

**CEST- Central European Summertime
(Germany)**

**„Trying to make sense of
behavior“**

Trying to Make Sense of Behavior

Tim Hartshorne
Central Michigan University
tim.hartshorne@cmich.edu



That's weird; must be autistic



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There seems to be a presumption with disabilities that if behavior is weird

- It must be part of a diagnosis
- It can have little or no meaning
- It is out of the child's control
- I think otherwise
 - All behavior has a purpose
 - All behavior is communication



Walking the floor with Jacob



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Why did Jacob behave that way?

- Touch was painful
- Being carried was confusing his senses
- Lying on the floor was more stable
- This was his preference
- But it took us a while to figure this out and understand it
- And it is really hard to not know how to comfort your child



Common Deafblind Behavior

- Eye pressing
- Finger flicking
- Rocking
- Tapping body/objects
- Self-injurious behavior
- Mouthing objects
- Tactile defensiveness
- Clinging
- Spinning
- Vocal tics
- Feces smearing
- Lining things up
- Extreme preferences
- Darting/running off
- Learned helplessness
- Submissive
- Stare at lights
- Inappropriate vocalization

What is the difference?

Behavior is learned

Behavior is chosen





**It changes things when we look at behavior as
chosen**



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The child chooses a behavior to solve their situation, and then



- It works, and so they keep doing it
- It does not work, but the reaction of others maintains the behavior
- It is reinforced by the reaction of others and so becomes habit and no longer chosen



Chosen behavior can become a habit, based on what happens next

- Balloons
- Breaking TV
- Feces smearing
- Button pulling





Understand behavior first

The Big Three



Pain: Jacob's ear



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Why pain is so important

- Can affect normal brain and neurological development
- Can affect sleep
- Can interfere with exploration of the environment and learning
- Can interfere with the development of attachment and trust
- Once tolerated may be ignored even while it is affecting health and behavior



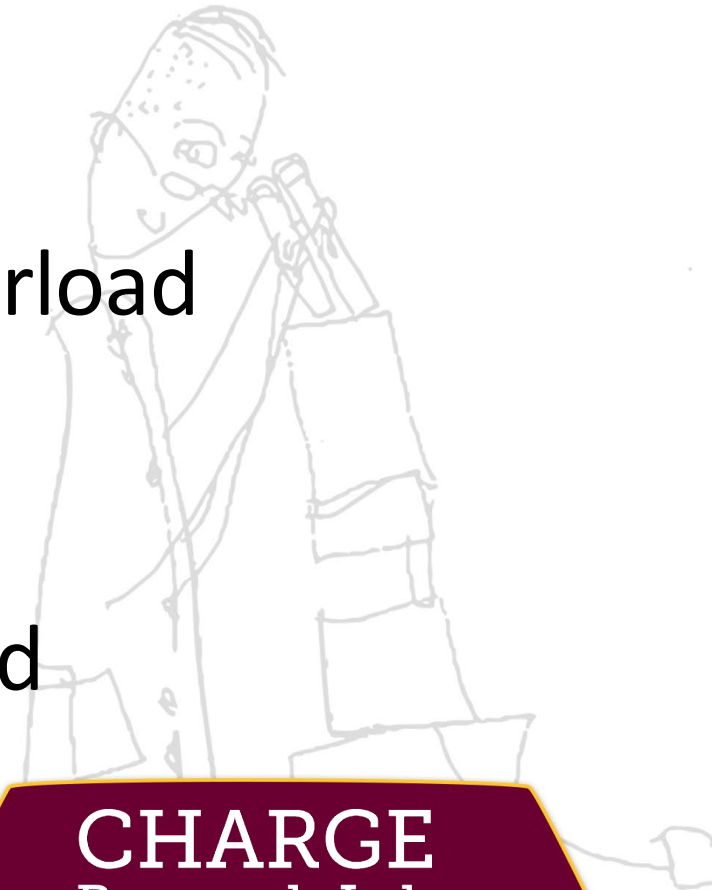
Sensory Deficits in CHARGE

- Hearing – sensorineural hearing loss
- Vision – coloboma
- Smell – anosmia
- Taste – prefer strong tastes
- Tactile – defensiveness
- Vestibular – balance issues
- Proprioceptive – awkwardness



Sensory processing problems

- Frequently occurring in genetic syndromes
- Exacerbated by sensory impairments
- Associated with anxiety and OCD
- Even incidental sensory events may overload the child
- May lead to sensory self-stimulation
- Need to intervene very carefully to avoid meltdowns





What could
our kids
possibly have
to be anxious
about?



We like to know what is going on.



- What are we doing right now?
- What are we going to do next?
- What did we just do?

When we are not sure...

- We become anxious
- We engage in behavior which expresses our feelings
- We engage in behavior or activities that help us feel more secure



- *Pessimism and negative thinking patterns**
- *Anger, aggression, restlessness, irritability, tantrums, defiance**
- *Constant worry about things that might happen or have happened**
- *Crying**
- *Physical complaints such as stomachaches, headaches, fatigue**
- *Avoidance behaviors**
- *Sleeping difficulties**
- *Perfectionism**
- *Excessive clinginess and separation anxiety**
- *Procrastination**
- *Poor memory and concentration**
- *Withdrawal from activities and family interactions**
- *Eating disturbances**

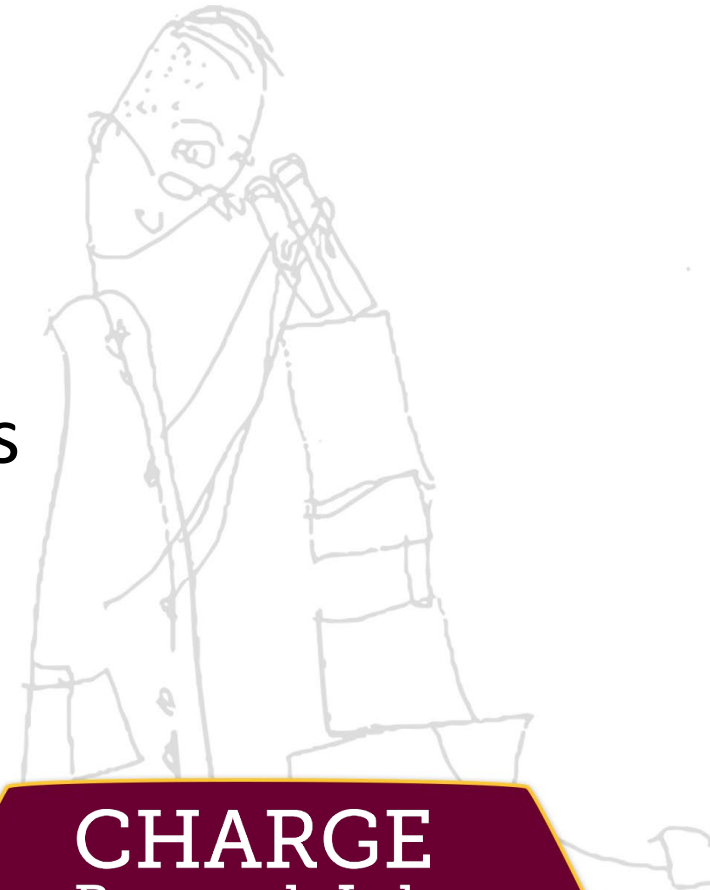
Self-regulation begins with a goal

- What do you want to have happen?
- What must you do to make it happen?



Self-regulation of pain

- Pain anxiety and pain catastrophizing
- Tension, distress, nervousness, irritability
- The role of stress
- Changing one's thoughts and expectations
- Meditation
- Distraction



This is self-regulation of sensory systems



Self-regulation of anxiety

- Making life more regulated
 - Routine
 - Predictability

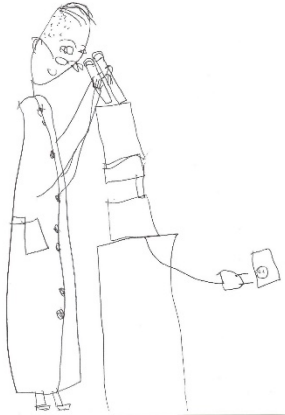


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CHARGE
Research Lab

CHARGE Syndrome Research Lab
At Central Michigan University



Current Lab

Megan Schmittel
Bree Kaufman
Shanti Brown
Shelby Muhn
Anna Weatherly
Lily Slavin
Sarah Sykes
Mallorie Beavers



<https://www.cmich.edu/colleges/chsbs/Psychology/charge>

Facebook: CHARGE syndrome research lab