

Challenging Behaviour in Smith-Magenis Syndrome

Challenging behaviour is a phrase that refers to any behaviour that has a negative impact on a person's well-being and/or leads to exclusion from the community.

What is challenging behaviour?

Challenging behaviour is usually used to describe behaviours such as [self-injury](#), [aggression](#), shouting and screaming, although it can include other behaviours. It refers to behaviours that the majority of people find difficult to watch.

When we use the term challenging behaviour we do not intend to imply that there is something about an individual that is inherently challenging.

The degree to which behaviour is perceived as challenging will depend on the environment and situation in which it occurs. It depends on the relationship between a person and their environment. You can read general background information about challenging behaviour in our [key topics area](#).

Is challenging behaviour inevitable?

If you are a parent or carer of a person with Smith-Magenis syndrome you might have arrived at this page with a sense of dread combined with worry about the sorts of behaviours that might be described. It is important to remember that challenging behaviour is not inevitable in any child or adult with an intellectual disability and is certainly not inevitable in a child or adult who has Smith-Magenis syndrome. If this is the first time you have visited this website you may wish to visit the [welcome area](#) first.

There is a slightly higher risk that children and adults with Smith-Magenis syndrome will show some challenging behaviour but we now have a very good understanding of why these behaviours occur and what we can do. Sometimes people ask whether it is important to know about person's genetic syndrome when understanding behaviour and you can read about this [here](#).

Challenging behaviour is behaviour like any other behaviour and occurs for good reasons. Just like other behaviour it can be changed.

What should I do next?

In the following sections we have made information available to support people to understand and reduce challenging behaviour. At any point when parents and support workers are tackling challenging behaviour it is important to seek advice. Challenging behaviour can place substantial demands on personal resources. It is easy to feel overwhelmed by the behaviour because it is happening so frequently and because when it happens you feel helpless and unable to deal with the incidents.

At this stage it is important to notice that challenging behaviour is there, that it is a cause of stress and that it is time to act. This does not need to be done straight away.

The best thing to do is to start to develop a plan of what needs to be done and how you are going to do this. We recommend that you do not try to act on your own. You need to build a team of people around you who you can trust and rely on and who have the right skills, whatever they may be, to help you take the right steps. In the following sections we have tried to indicate those professionals who might be able to offer the most available help and support at each stage.

[NEXT: Types of challenging behaviour in Smith-Magenis syndrome](#)