

Positive Behaviour Support Planning

This guidance is based from information and research from the “challenging behaviour foundation”

Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) is an approach that is used to support behaviour changes in a child or adult with a learning disability. The focus is not on fixing the person or on the challenging behaviour itself and never uses punishment as a strategy for dealing with challenging behaviour. PBS is based on the principle that if you can teach someone a more effective and acceptable behaviour than the challenging one, the challenging behaviour will reduce.

A behaviour support plan is a document created to help understand and manage behaviour in children and adults who have learning disabilities and display behaviours that others find challenging.

A behaviour plan provides carers with step by step guide to making sure the child has a great quality of life but also enables carers to identify when they need to intervene, to prevent an episode of challenging behaviour.

A good behaviour plan is based on the results of a functional assessment and uses PBS approaches. The plan should contain a range of strategies which not only focus on the challenging behaviour/s but also ways to ensure the child has access to things that are important to them.

- Proactive strategies are intended to make sure the child has got what they need and want on a day to day basis and also includes ways to teach the child appropriate communication and life skills.
- Reactive strategies are designed to keep the child and those around them safe from harm. They provide a way to react quickly in a situation where the child is distressed or anxious and more likely to display challenging behaviours.

A good behaviour support plan has more Proactive strategies than Reactive ones. This helps to ensure that the focus of the plan is not just on the challenging behaviour but provides ways to support the child to have a good life, enabling the child to learn better, more effective ways of getting what they need.

Children and Young Adults will need a behaviour plan if they regularly display challenging behaviour/s to the extent that it severely impacts on the life, e.g. it may result in exclusion from school, swimming pools or mainstream community activities. A behaviour support plan aims to reduce the likelihood of challenging behaviour happening and if used consistently is very successful in supporting the child to find other ways to communicate. The emphasis is on preventing the need for challenging behaviour, but also to help carers to identify when an individual may display challenging behaviour, giving them a chance to intervene before the behaviour escalates.

Everyone has different beliefs about what is right or wrong and how behaviour should be managed based on their own experiences and understanding. Using a behaviour support plan means that everyone consistently uses the same techniques, rather than everyone doing their own thing based on what they think is best.

Ideally a behaviour support plan will be based on the results of a functional assessment, which will be carried out by a clinical Psychologist or behaviour specialist. A functional assessment can increase our understanding of a child's behaviour which may enable us to make changes in the child's life that will result in a reduction in their challenging behaviour.

If a functional assessment has not been made, then we can record the behaviour using the ABC/ 4w, s on a record sheet to help identify what the function of behaviour might be. Information gathered will help identify strategies to include on the behaviour support plan.

A = antecedents (what happened before) B = the behaviour C = the consequences
What happened? What rule did I break? Why did I do it? What can I do now?

Stages of behaviour

A really useful format to understand different stages of behaviour is based on the traffic light system.

Green = calm and relaxed

Amber = anxious, aroused or distressed

Red = incident!

Blue = calming down, but still need to be careful.

Colour coding a behaviour support plan can be a very useful way of clarifying the different stages of behaviour. Using the traffic light analogy, an individual's behaviour moves from typical behaviour, green, to a level that indicates problems are about to occur, amber, prior to the occurrence of the behaviour itself, red. After the behaviour, blue, care must be taken to ensure the child returns to the green phase... this format enables carers to more easily identify when they could intervene to prevent behaviour escalating into an episode of challenging behaviour,

Green phase

Proactive strategies are the green part of the behaviour support plan and aim to support the child to stay happy and calm. These strategies are designed to meet the child's needs without them needing to rely on challenging behaviours, to reduce the chances that the behaviour will happen.

Begin by thinking what the child likes and interests are, what they are really enthusiastic about.....the longer the likes list the better...

The aim is to try and keep the child in this green phase as much as possible, it is important to think what it is that helps the child feel calm and relaxed....the environment, communication and body language, preferred activity or object or person, predictable routine and structure, feeling happy and well, interaction styles, how you talk to the child.

Put boundaries in place to help teach the child what is and isn't acceptable in different situations. The green phase is a good time to teach new skills, develop effective ways of communicating and use rewards and incentives to reinforce positive behaviour.

Amber phase.

The signals may be subtle, but will often include observable signs, such as increased pacing, changes in vocalisations, facial expressions or body language. By clearly defining the behaviours seen at the amber stage carers can be cued in to the need to take immediate action and thereby avoid the child entering the red phase. Many episodes of challenging behaviour occur because the early warning signs were not recognised or because we failed to change our own behaviour at this time.

At the amber stage the child may be starting to feel anxious or distressed and there is a chance that they may challenge you in some way. We need to take quick action to support the child to return to the green proactive phase as quickly as is possible to prevent behaviour able escalation.

Things that can help, take away the trigger, not responding to or "ignoring" the behaviour, giving in- give the child what they want, humour – sing something, dance use your imagination and knowledge of the child's likes, redirect / distract, ask what is wrong

Red phase

A reactive plan describes what you should do, how you should react in response to the child's challenging behaviour. Reactive strategies are a way to manage behaviour as safely and as quickly as is possible to keep the child and those around them safe.

A reactive plan should include step by step advice on how to reduce the chance that the challenging behaviour will escalate and put people at risk. It should be informed by a functional assessment and

guided by the principle of implementing the least intrusive and least restrictive intervention first. More restrictive intervention such as physical restraint must be a last resort.

Physical intervention and medication that is used solely to calm a child down are not considered a good long term solution. Use of these must be recorded to help identify when to review the child's plan.

Red strategies are to be implemented quickly to achieve safe and rapid control on the situation when challenging behaviours occur. appear calm, use low arousal approaches – talk in a clam monotone voice, do not make prolonged eye contact, be aware of your own body language, do not make any demands of the child, or keep talking to them, distraction and redirection (e.g. using a technique such as a guided walk to remove the child from the room to keep them and others safe)

Following an incident, blue strategies will need to be implemented to support the child to become calm and relaxed again. These can include, giving the child more space, engaging in an activity, procedures for ensuring their physical and emotional safety i.e. supportive reassurance, physical checks.

We need to be careful at this time, as there is a possibility that behaviour could escalate quickly again, make no demands, help the child to recover, move to different environment if appropriate.

Use your observations to support the behaviour support plan. All people involved with the child including family members should be included in the process to ensure a broad range of views have been taken into account.

Behaviour support plans are an evolving document and information should be updated to reflect changes in the child's behaviour or a development in their skills.

Behaviour support plan

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Amber phase.: anxious aroused distressed

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Behaviour Assessment Record

Name of Child:
DOB:

Challenging Behaviour we wish to address	
Appearance: what the behaviour looks like	
Rate: how often it occurs	
Severity: how severe is the behaviour	
Duration: How long does it last?	

Functions of the challenging behaviour: the reason the behaviour happens	
Social attention: i.e. if the child is hitting to get your attention	
Escape / avoidance i.e. if the child hits others to escape or avoid something	
Tangible: i.e. when the child hits others to get something tangible like a drink/ toy/ DVD etc.	
Sensory. i.e. when a child hits to get their sensory needs met	

Behaviour Support Plan

Child's Name

DOB:

Date of plan

Planned review date:

<p>My difficult situation</p>	<p>Behaviours I might display:</p> <p>Early warning signs:</p> <p>If the early warning signs are not noted I may:</p>
<p>What you can do to avoid this difficult situation</p>	<p>What you can do if I display challenging behaviour:</p> <p>When I am showing early warning signs:</p> <p>If the situation has escalated:</p> <p>Afterwards:</p>