

How is behaviour support different from therapy?

Behaviour Support is aimed at helping the support system (carers, services, staff) to identify the function of specific behaviours and to provide a consistent approach to behaviour change in a written Behaviour Support Plan. On the other hand, Therapy is typically provided through regular one on one session with a therapist. Usually, in therapy you don't receive a behaviour support plan.

What is a Behaviour Support Plan?

Behaviour Support Plan is a written document developed by our behaviour specialists in consultation with the person, their family and support network. It is essentially a "how to" support guide that provides guidance of how to support a person when they are displaying behaviours of concern and provides clear strategies in skill development to reduce the persons use of problem behaviour in the future.

What Makes Behaviour Support Successful?

Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) is not just about managing the problem behaviour, it's about learning to communicate, developing skills needed to be independent and/or to learn self-control or manage emotions. Positive Behaviour Support aims to reduce challenging behaviour by helping the person develop skills they need, so they no longer rely on using problem behaviours into the future.



Our vision is an empowered community, which values and supports the health and wellbeing of all women and their families

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swslhd-bankstown-womenshealthcentre@health.nsw.gov.au

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Behavior support plans
gender safe transport
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Disability Service

PHONE: 8749 3539

is a safe place for women, girls and boys and wheelchair accessible

Behaviour Support Practitioner



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What is a Behaviour Support Practitioner

A NDIS behaviour support practitioner is a person whom the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commissioner (NDIS Commissioner) considers suitable to undertake behaviour support assessments (including functional behavioural assessments) and to develop behaviour support plans that may contain the use of restrictive practices.

The person must have an NDIS Plan which is funded for Behaviour Support (Improved Relationships)

Behaviour Practitioners work closely with individuals, families, and a person's wider care team to create plans which identify individualised strategies for people with disability that are responsive to the person's needs, in a way that reduces the occurrence and impact of behaviours of concern.

Behaviour Support is for both children and adults (adults who are under 65 years of age). Essential components of the behavior support plan are prevention strategies, the instruction of replacement skills, new ways to respond to problem behavior, and lifestyle outcome goals. The behavior support plan represents the culmination of the assessment process.



Functions of Behaviour

The function of a behavior refers to the source of environmental reinforcement for it."

Four Common Functions of Behaviour

Before getting more technical about the functions of behaviour we're going to outline four common behavioural functions below.

#1 Social Attention

A person may engage in a certain behaviour to gain some form of social attention or a reaction from other people. For example, a child might engage in a behaviour to get other people to look at them, laugh at them, play with them, hug them or scold them.

While it might seem strange that a person would engage in a behaviour to deliberately have someone scold them it can occur because for some people it's better to obtain "bad" attention than no attention at all (Cooper, Heron & Heward, 2007).

#2 Tangibles or Activities

Some behaviours occur so the person can obtain a tangible item or gain access to a desired activity. For example, someone might scream and shout until their parents buy them a new toy (tangible item) or bring them to the zoo (activity).

#3 Escape or Avoidance

Not all behaviours occur so the person can "obtain" something; many behaviours occur because the person wants to get away from something or avoid something altogether (Miltenberger, 2008).

For example, a child might engage in aggressive behaviour so his teachers stop running academic tasks with him or another child might engage in self-injury to avoid having to go outside to play with classmates.

#4 Sensory Stimulation

The function of some behaviours do not rely on anything external to the person and instead are internally pleasing in some way – they are "self-stimulating" (O'Neill, Horner, Albin, Sprague, Storey, & Newton, 1997). They function only to give the person some form of internal sensation that is pleasing or to remove an internal sensation that is displeasing (e.g. pain).



We understand that every behaviour serves a purpose. If you or a loved one has behaviour difficulties we can provide support to act in more appropriate ways.

Positive Behaviour Support works to reduce or eliminate difficult behaviour and is the best approach for children and adults living with disability who display behaviours of concern.

Behaviour Support Practitioners are trained in behaviour support strategies. They start with a functional assessment and use that to prepare a behaviour support plan, in consultation with you and your family or support people.

The plan is aimed at making difficult behaviour unnecessary by removing the things that trigger, encourage or reward that behaviour. It will also teach you alternative and more appropriate behaviour to replace the difficult behaviour.

Your plan may cover:

- Improved communication and social skill
- Environmental changes (e.g. the home environment)
- Safe methods of response to unsafe behavior
- Stress and anger management

A good plan will lead to more effective ways for you to communicate, resulting in improved relationships, better community participation, and a sense of independence over your own life.

The reason why Positive Behaviour Support works so well is that it's based on the idea that all behaviour serves a purpose, and difficult behaviour can be reduced if you know what someone is trying to achieve or communicate by behaving in this way.

For instance, a child who lives with autism and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder may display aggressive behaviours at school that lead to suspensions. A functional assessment will find out the purpose of this behaviour, which may for example be linked to feelings of isolation and anxiety from being separated from working parents. It may find that misbehaving in the school environment and being sent home is the quickest way for the child to be reconnected to his parents and reduce his separation anxiety.

The behaviour support plan may subsequently involve changing the child's routines at home and at school, to create a greater sense of stability. For instance, regular family activities may foster feelings of connection and belonging, as would modifying work schedules to remove before and after school care.

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