

# The key messages about Positive Behaviour Support



# Aims of PBS

The overall aim of Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) is to improve the quality of a person's life and that of the people around them. This includes children, young people adults as well as older people.

PBS provides the right support for a person, their family and friends to help people lead a meaningful life and learn new skills without unnecessary restrictions. It is not simply about getting rid of problematic behaviour

With the right support at the right time the likelihood of behaviour that challenges is reduced.

## What is Positive Behaviour Support?

PBS is a person centred framework for providing long term support to people with a learning disability, and/or autism, including those with mental health conditions, who have, or may be at risk of developing, behaviours that challenge. It is a blend of person centred values and behavioural science and uses evidence to inform decision-making.

Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) approaches are based on a set of overarching values. These values include the commitment to providing support that promotes inclusion, choice, participation and equality of opportunity.

## Key principles of PBS

Behaviour that challenges always happens for a reason and may be the person's only way of communicating an unmet need. PBS helps us understand the reason for the behaviour so we can better meet people's needs, enhance their quality of life and reduce the likelihood that the behaviour will happen.

A PBS framework:

- Considers the person and his or her life circumstances as a whole including physical health and emotional needs such as the impact of any traumatic or adverse life events and mental illness
- Reduces the likelihood of behaviours that challenge occurring by creating physical and social environments that are supportive and capable of meeting people's needs.
- Is proactive and preventative and aims to teach people new skills to replace behaviours that challenge – and other skills that enhance the opportunities people have for independent, interesting and meaningful lives.
- Is likely to involve input from different professionals and include multiple evidence based approaches and treatments that come from a shared value base and are provided in a coordinated and person centred manner. These may include trauma informed care, autism specific approaches, active support and other appropriate interventions that support physical, mental health and wellbeing.

## Delivery of PBS

One core part of assessment in PBS is to understand why the behaviour that challenges happens – how the behaviour has been learned and how it is maintained. This process is called functional assessment.

Once the reason for the behaviour has been identified a PBS plan is co-produced and followed by everyone involved in supporting the person. PBS plans should be developed in partnership with the person and their family. PBS is most effective when individuals are supported by people who have a good relationship and rapport with them and who understand PBS.

A PBS plan promotes pro-active and preventive strategies and includes teaching new skills. It may include strategies to avert crisis and keep people safe. If this involves using restrictive interventions then these must be the least restrictive and there must be a plan about how to reduce reliance on restrictive practices.

It is important for staff and carers to be properly trained in PBS and supported by managers and organisations to deliver PBS effectively. Please refer to the CAPBS Organisational and Workforce Development Framework for further information: <http://bit.ly/2d8E8Qo>

The competencies for PBS have been described in detail by the PBS Academy:  
<http://pbsacademy.org.uk/pbs-competence-framework/>



## Footnotes

This document uses the term **behaviours that challenge** – you may also hear the terms: challenging behaviours, behaviours of concern, distressed behaviours or risky behaviours. These terms are all used to describe behaviours that have a negative impact on a person's life and/or others around them. These behaviours may put them at risk of harm, exclusion or the use of restrictive practices.

This document refers to Positive Behaviour Support although some people prefer to use the term Positive Behavioural Support to remind us of its basis in behavioural science. You will commonly hear it referred to as PBS.

The general term **people** is used to mean people with a range of ages. This would include children, young people, adults and older people.

The term **restrictive practices** is used to describe practices that restrict a person's liberty. This could include seclusion, physical restraint, the use of medication to control behaviour, locking of doors, as well as other practices. You may also hear these described as restrictive interventions or restraints.

## References

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*PBS Competence Framework*, PBS Academy, <http://pbsacademy.org.uk/pbs-competence-framework/>

