

Positive behaviour support training as a primary prevention strategy: capturing hearts & minds

Challenging behaviour is an individual problem

- **most of the effort devoted to challenging behaviour has been spent conducting individualised assessment and treatment**
- **this focus is entirely consistent with most of the literature and professional guidance**
- **the clinical literature on challenging behaviour is largely about individual assessment and treatment**
- **we do not argue that this is not necessary, rather that it is insufficient.**

Rationale for the training

- **Thinking of challenging behaviour as something that happens in problematic environments rather than just an individual problem requiring assessment/ treatment**
- **We “treat” the wider environment, as well as the individual, with a view to, ultimately, reducing the prevalence of challenging behaviour – Primary Prevention**

Background

- Modular training piloted in 2001
- Re-designed and re-run in 2002
- 75 consecutive courses
- 1,400 course participants
- 120 focal clients
- 30 organisations

The modular training course

Seven modules:

1. Understanding Challenging Behaviour
2. Understanding (cont) & Challenging Environments
3. Environmental Change
4. Positive Programming
5. Early Intervention
6. Protective skills *
7. Core skills *

* Agreed and based on risk assessment

Audit methodology

- Visits between June & July 2012
- Appointments made with managers of seven services who use the full PBS Sussex package representing services for 83 people:

Audit content

- Physical intervention policy
- Individual support plans
- Physical interventions
- Staff training
- Monitoring of work completed
- Practice session
- Recording
- Post-Incident Support

Reactive Strategies

Defusion

Leading to calming place

Preferred activity

Move others away

Re-direction

Offer alternatives

Staff withdraw

Standing in front of person

High awareness of trigger points

Being environmentally aware (i.e. looking out for changing conditions, such as children in the environment).

Distractions.

Keeping hair exactly as she wishes.

Use of language, simple, tone of voice.

Use of communication methods (pictures)

Supported by 2 female staff, never a man

Lengthy introductions to new staff that have been successful in reducing need for PI

Audit summary

- Predominantly positive:
 - Support plans contain good balance between proactive and reactive strategies
 - Services continue to send staff on PBS modular training
 - Services are seeking wide consultation and recording necessary information
 - Physical interventions continue to be used infrequently

2012 Evaluation

Variable	
Sample size	59
Age	11 (18.6%)
16-22	19 (32.2%)
23-29	19 (32.2%)
30-45	9 (15.3%)
46-60	1 (1.7%)
61 and over	
Gender	22 (37.3%)
Male	37 (62.7%)
Female	
Seniority of occupation	42 (71.2%)
Support Worker	11 (18.6%)
Senior Support Worker	2 (3.4%)
Assistant Manager	0 (0%)
Manager	4 (6.8%)
Other	
Learning disability and challenging behaviour experience	
0-3 months	10 (16.9%)
3-6 months	6 (10.2%)
6-12 months	7 (11.9%)
1-3 years	13 (22%)
3-5 years	7 (11.9%)
5 years or more	16 (27.1%)

Results

	Pre training	Post training	t-test (df)	p	n
Scale	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)			
Multi-choice questionnaire PBS knowledge	5.05 (2.29)	6.82 (1.84)	-4.45 (37)	0.000**	38
Attribution	15.05 (3.07)	15.24 (4.89)	-0.23 (36)	0.82	38
Internality	13.27 (3.49)	12.78 (5.11)	0.60 (36)	0.55	38
Stability	13.70 (3.76)	11.35 (4.40)	2.81 (36)	0.008*	38
Controllability					
Helping behaviour	29.08 (4.60)	30.00 (3.46)	-1.07 (37)	0.291	38
Reactive helping	28.24 (3.73)	30.74 (3.54)	-3.10 (37)	0.004*	38
Proactive helping	21.82 (7.54)	14.74 (6.73)	7.00 (37)	0.000**	38
Unhelpful behaviour					
Affect	9.39 (4.86)	8.11 (4.83)	1.85 (37)	0.072	38
Negative emotion	9.39 (2.19)	10.08 (1.96)	-1.83 (37)	0.075	38
Empathy	7.24 (3.27)	7.03 (2.39)	0.48 (37)	0.663	38
Positive emotion					
Optimism/pessimism	16.08 (4.28)	17.53 (3.39)	-2.24 (37)	0.032*	38
Optimism					

* p<0.05; ** p<0.001

‘Cannot overstate how valued PBS training is for the organisation and the impact it has on the outcomes for people ***** support - essential primary training that is in line with the ethos of the organisation.’

‘It is very good, and is effective, has become part of the mandatory training. Can tell a difference in the staff who have completed the training. Received really well on the whole.’

‘It’s great - By far the best course’

‘Very positive feedback’

‘Feedback is positive’

‘Found the training good, pitched at an level easy to understand looking at complicated subject. All staff who have had the training have come back enthusiastic.’

Wills S, Shephard, J & Baker, P (2013) Evaluating the impact of positive behaviour support training on staff knowledge, attributions, emotional responses and helping behaviour: capturing hearts and minds. *International Journal of Positive Behavioural Support* 3:1.