

PBS Helpline Resources

What is Positive Behaviour Support?

Positive behaviour support (PBS) is a framework which gives us a way of thinking about how to help someone to have a good quality of life. This involves finding out what a good quality of life would look like for the person, and helping them to get as close to it as they can. It always starts with the person.

PBS is based on strong values around being treated with respect, being included as much as you want to be, having no more restrictions than necessary and having the same rights as everyone else.

Sometimes in difficult times we might behave in ways that are difficult for us and for those around us. PBS tries to prevent that from happening by having a good life, and by understanding the reasons for the behaviours based on evidence. There is always a reason for behaviour.

When we know the reason, we can help plan. We may teach the person ways of coping with things they find difficult, teach ways to get their needs met (for example to get some support or to escape a stressful situation), teach skills to help with relationships or work – whatever will help the person's quality of life.

We need to consider those around the person too – family, friends and support – to make sure they get the support they need to support the person well. It might mean changing how support is provided to meet the needs of the person better.

We also need to check that what we're doing is working, that their quality of life is getting better. If it's not, we'll change something.

PBS always works with the values. We work out the reason for the behaviour, improve the way we support people and improve quality of life so that they won't need to use the behaviours any more.