

Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect) uses a Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) approach in working with people in situations where there is challenging behaviour or behaviour of concern. This policy details the principles of a PBS approach and how this is addressed across the whole organisation.

Aspect understands that there are many reasons for challenging behaviour and uses a PBS approach to design autism-friendly environments, work proactively to prevent challenges, teach new behaviours and skills and to respond positively if challenges do occur. Aspect collaborates with students, participants and their families and others where appropriate at the first sign of any difficulties to ask for information, advice and to develop a mutually agreed plan even before the use of any restricted practices may be necessary.

This policy is for all Aspect staff working directly with or in an advisory way in situations where there is challenging behaviour. It is to be addressed at staff induction, via a commitment to positive practice, when addressing Aspect's Comprehensive Approach, incorporated into staff Position Profiles, during staff Management of Actual or Potential Aggression (MAPA) training, when developing or reviewing any PBS strategy or plan, especially where there are Restricted Practices or after an incident and when providing direct support to any individual.

PBS is a comprehensive approach to supporting situations where there is challenging behaviour and combines the science of learning (from Applied Behaviour Analysis) with human rights and values. PBS works in respectful collaboration with individuals and their families to use effective evidence based strategies to increase the quality of life for all involved.

Evidence based practices are derived from international research, standards, accreditation and understanding of contemporary best practice that goes beyond compliance.

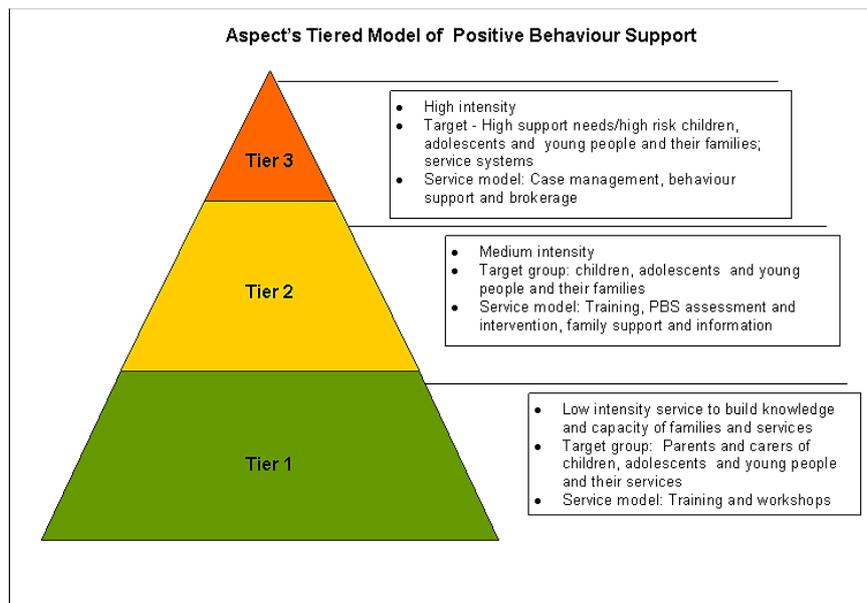
Reductions in behaviours of concern are necessary and important but improved lifestyles must also be a major outcome. This includes everyday life skills, community participation, expanded social networks, increased variety and accommodation of personal preferences, choice making and the capacity and confidence of those who support the individual.

PBS understands that all challenging behaviour has a purpose or reason (this is called the 'function') it is not random or meaningless. PBS uses a multi-component intervention based on a functional behavioural assessment to bring positive changes to a person and family life. PBS is both positive and proactive. Positive means increasing and strengthening helpful behaviours through 'reinforcement' (not using punishment or negative consequences such as 'response cost' to reduce the challenge). Proactive means developing supportive environments that prevent challenges,

anticipating where things may go wrong and planning to avoid that from happening rather than just reacting when things go wrong.

PBS services are delivered in a capacity building and collaborative way and are structured in a tiered or triangle model along a continuum of intensity of support.

PBS emphasises that strategies have to be able to be implemented in everyday family routines and community life. Strategies need to have a good fit with the context in which they will be implemented. PBS offers support to implement strategies consistently across environments and over time. Interventions are evaluated and aim for sustainability over time.



### Restricted & Prohibited Practices

Aspect recognises that different strategies may be used to keep people safe in crisis situations for some students or participants in certain circumstances. Specific behaviour change practices may also be required as part of Aspect's duty of care and commitment to a continuous culture of safety & wellbeing. These strategies however have the potential to be misused and so are required to be restricted and monitored in their use. The goal is to remove the use of the restricted practices over time with improved support and increased positive behaviours and skills.

Aspect also regards that some other strategies are inappropriate at all times as they may infringe on an individual's human rights and are therefore prohibited organisation wide.

Aspect maintains strict procedures and guidelines on the use of Restricted Practices, including information regarding which practices are prohibited.

These procedures aim to protect the human rights of the people we support; allow Aspect staff to work safely in challenging situations within an open, transparent and agreed framework; fulfil

commitments to state and territory governments restricted practices guidelines; and prevent prohibited practices and the misuse of restricted practices.

## External Framework

The Positive Behaviour Support policy upholds Aspect's intention to promote ethical, respectful and safe service delivery which meets, if not exceeds, legislative requirements and achieves positive outcomes for people we support across all Human Rights principles & conventions, relevant state and national legislation.

Aspect is committed to its obligations under the National Standards for Disability Services, Standard 1: Rights and Standard 2: Participation and Inclusion, which specifically acknowledge the promotion of individual rights, self-determination and expression; and the need for Aspect to collaborate with individuals, their families and other services to support participation and inclusion in areas of interest whilst engaging in safe, minimally restrictive, evidence-based transparent practices that actively prevent the risk of harm, neglect, abuse or violence.

The policy also speaks to the Disability Standards for Education 2005 Part 8: Standards for Harassment and Victimization which requires organisations to prohibit harassment, abuse or victimisation by a staff member to a student with disability, and requires that staff are trained in identifying and reporting suspected abuse, neglect, harassment and victimisation of students, and actively engage in the prevention of it in any circumstances as part of the educational environment.

## Critical Definitions

*Behaviour of Concern or Challenging Behaviour* - is any persistent behaviour that causes difficulties and limits a person's ability to have a good life. Challenging behaviour or behaviour of concern is understood as part of an *interaction* between (1) an individual, their current & past experiences and what they have been taught (2) the other people in their lives & (3) the environments, communities and cultures they live in. Behaviour is called 'challenging' because it challenges everyone who supports the person to understand why it is happening and to work together to find a solution. The terms behaviour of concern or challenging behaviour can be used interchangeably.

*Culture of Safety & Wellbeing* - refers to an organisational culture which takes a preventative, proactive and participatory stance on safeguarding the people we support by:

- putting the safety and wellbeing of the people we support as a paramount consideration when developing activities, policies and management practices;
- valuing and embracing the opinions and views of the people we support; and
- encouraging and assisting the people we support to build skills that will assist them to participate in society and taking action to protect the people we support from physical, sexual, emotional and psychological abuse and neglect.

## Legislation References

ADHC Policy and Practice Manual for Behaviour Support 2009  
Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 (NSW)  
Children and Young Person's Act 1998  
Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998  
Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Commonwealth)  
Disability Services Act 1993 (NSW)  
Disability Services Act 1993 (SA)  
Disability Standards in Education 2005  
Equal Opportunity Act 1984 (SA)  
Guardianship Act 1987 (NSW)  
Guardianship and Administration Act 1993 (SA)  
Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000  
Ombudsman Act 1999  
Prohibited Employment Act 2000  
Disability Standards for Education 2005  
National Standards for Disability Services 2013

## Appendix 1: PBS Guidance in Australian States and Territories.

There is no nationally agreed Australian standards for PBS or specific legislation. Aspect bases its approach on the continually developing PBS research literature from the USA, UK, Australia and other countries. Guidance in schools often differs from disability based provision.

Specific states and territory government services give guidance about good PBS practice or elements therein, especially in regards to Restricted Practices. Links to guidance is provided below.

*Queensland Centre of Excellence for Behaviour Support:*

<https://www.communities.qld.gov.au/disability/centre-of-excellence>

*NSW Government's Policy & Practice manual for Behaviour Support:*

[https://www.adhc.nsw.gov.au/sp/delivering\\_disability\\_services/behaviour\\_support\\_services/behaviour\\_support\\_policy\\_and\\_practice\\_manual](https://www.adhc.nsw.gov.au/sp/delivering_disability_services/behaviour_support_services/behaviour_support_policy_and_practice_manual)

*Victorian Government's Behaviour Support planning toolkit & positive Practice framework:*

<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-and-resources/policies,-guidelines-and-legislation/behaviour-support-planning-practice-guide-senior-practitioner>

South Australia Disability Services Positive Behaviour Support framework

*Western Australia Positive Behaviour Support:*

[www.disability.wa.gov.au/for\\_individuals/PBS.html](http://www.disability.wa.gov.au/for_individuals/PBS.html)