
Building and maintaining a team

The key to effective behaviour support planning and implementation



The
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Working together on positive
behaviour support (PBS)

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Every behaviour support plan needs a team working together to make it effective. This will include paid people within [the participant's support network](#) and – for plans to work best – unpaid people from [the person's Circle of Support](#), if they have one in place.

This document outlines a process you can use as a tool for building a team around the behaviour support plan and ways for maintaining the team effectively over an extended period.

Key steps in building a team

As the behaviour support practitioner, engagement with the participant and those who will support this plan is vital to provide consistent, high-quality, effective and ethical support.

Consistency is key to the success of behaviour support plans and also to effective behaviour change in the longer-term.

To build a team as part of the planning process, you should therefore:

1. **involve the participant** as much as possible in forming and connecting the team,
2. **identify who the plan needs** to involve in drafting, implementing, monitoring, and refining the behaviour support plan,
3. **connect these people** as a team with the overarching goals of the plan and their benefit for all involved,
4. **illustrate their role** in the team and why they are important,
5. **connect key people** with others in the team, and
6. **check in with the team** at key intervals to motivate them, keep them on track, celebrate successes and identify any issues that may need to be factored into the plan.

A behaviour support practitioner needs to do more than just write a plan, you need to be an active contributor to implementing, maintaining and refining the plan.

The success of the plan – as well as the safety and wellbeing of the participant – relies on you to initiate and maintain clear communication and coaching for those who will help make this plan work effectively.

Combined with data-driven decision-making and a commitment to reducing restrictive practices, behaviour support planning can take great steps toward improving the person's overall quality of life.

Why is the 'team' mindset important?

Building and maintaining a functional, connected team takes active work, but it can also save you time.

The right people in the right roles can help you identify issues early on and adjust the plan as you go.

Identifying roles (champions) and responsibilities from the start, will help you when you draft, implement, monitor and refine the behaviour support plan, for the long-term.

Trust and communication are essential for maintaining effective engagement and take time. It might seem like a challenge to in a busy day, but building an effective team is best for everyone involved, most importantly, the participant.

An effective behaviour support practitioner engages with the person with disability and builds a team around the person with disability.

Six stages of building and maintaining a team in behaviour support planning

1. Involve the participant

Involving the person with behaviours of concern in understanding who needs to be involved in their behaviour support plan – and seeking their help in choosing who else they might like to include – is important in engaging them in the process and upholding [their rights](#).

Using [the participant's support network](#) mapping will help identify who might be able to help and also who are [the participant's most trusted people](#) available as part of the support plan team.

2. Identify who the plan needs

Identifying early who you might need as part of your plan – including as part of information finding and longer-term implementation – will help you gather information, increase collaboration and connectedness among people who work to support the person with disability, and help you make better (evidence-informed) decisions.

Key people to consider when forming the team will depend on the roles and responsibilities required as part of the plan.

An important step is engaging the participant to find out who they wish to be involved, how, and when. Keep them informed according to their level

of desired involvement on the [Spectrum of Participation in behaviour support planning](#).

In addition to people in the person's support network, consider other paid professionals, community members, clubs or associations the person may benefit from having involved.

You need to ask if a self-advocacy association is involved or could be involved. An organisation such as this would provide independent advocacy and increase the quality and efficacy of the behaviour support plan.

Mainstream services will also have a place, for example emergency responders, community services, and other essential networks that interact with the person when needed.

3. Connect these people with the idea of a team

Explaining to people involved with the plan who else is involved and what their roles are can help with [engaging the team in change](#).

Effective communication, ensuring everyone understands the [person's communication preferences](#) and [decision-making rights](#).

People might also struggle at times with the requirements of the plan. Being part of a connected team and reminding them they are not alone

is an essential part of supporting them in doing a good job. Remind them you are there, the team is there and support is available.

Connect people with contact details, where appropriate. Make sure they know how to contact you, too, and when you plan to next contact them.

Make sure the person is connected to an independent self-advocacy organisation, and that the self-advocacy organisation is part of the behaviour support planning process.

Involving a self-advocacy organisation is one way you can demonstrate engagement with the person with disability in the behaviour support planning process.

4. Illustrate each member's role in the team

Connecting with the right people and explaining why they are important in starting the plan and keeping it in track will underpin a successful plan.

Always remember that there is one person who is at the heart of this plan – the person who is using behaviours of concern.

As such, they also need to clearly understand their role in the plan, what others' roles are, what they can expect to happen and why. You can do this effectively using model explained in how to [engage support networks in change](#).

Things to keep in mind:

- Check that they understand their role, the reason for it and why it is important.
- Listen to any questions or concerns and address these so the plan can progress.
- When making sure they can do what is asked of them by the plan, you can support staff with coaching and reflective practice to maintain high-quality implementation.
- You may also choose to connect them with training and support, so that they can gain or refine their skills and implement the plan well.
- Engage in problem-solving sessions to address concerns and adjust strategies when needed.
- Make sure the person is connected with an independent self-advocacy organisation as part of the engagement process.

5. Connect key people with others in the team

Key ways to connect can include making note of availability, agreeing on meeting schedules and confirming communication strategies.

Sharing this plan and staying connected is a good way to unite the people who will be working together on this plan, allowing them to contact each other, share information and rely on each other for support where needed.

This team will form a valuable base for sharing accurate information, which is useful for other team members when working with the participant and adjusting to various situations or triggers.

You can also benefit from this information through collecting data and monitoring the participant's progress to assess the effectiveness of the behaviour support plan.

The people in the person's behaviour support team will also need to know when to escalate information to include community and system supports, such as NDIA and regulatory bodies (ie the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission), so that you can ensure compliance with policies, such as restrictive practice reporting.

6. Check in with the team

Staying connected is key to [making a plan work effectively](#). Make your plan for checking in, ensuring people can contact each other (where necessary) and establishing a schedule for reviewing how the plan is working.

Let the people in the team know the details of this plan, as it relates to them, and what their part in the review will be and why they are important.

Checking in at key intervals also helps to:

- keep people accountable
- motivate them
- keep them on track
- increase connectedness, and
- identify any issues that may need to be factored into the plan.

It also provides a forum for celebrating successes and sharing information, adjustments and incident reviews.

Keeping the team connected in this way also aligns more complete behaviour support practices, ensuring that situations such as debriefs

and identifying areas for improvement include all the people required, after managing a reportable incident.

Make sure that the person and their team have a regular connection with an independent self-advocacy organisation as part of the engagement and behaviour support planning process.



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