

---

# People's communication rights in behaviour support planning

Upholding the communication rights of people  
with disability through engagement



The  
Right  
Direction

---

Working together on positive  
behaviour support (PBS)

# What are communication rights?

[The Right Direction resources](#) focus on improving effective engagement between behaviour support practitioners and people with disability during the behaviour support planning and implementation process.

Rights ensure people can participate and can do so fairly. They help to protect people from exploitation or abuse. They also provide clarity for all people involved in a process.

These communication rights apply to every person you work with to create or implement a behaviour support plan.

While these rights are not legislated, they should underpin all positive behaviour support work, especially – as is the focus of this portfolio of resources – behaviour support planning and implementation.

## What are people's communication rights for behaviour support planning?

### People's communication rights in behaviour support planning.

Everyone has the right to:

- be listened to
- express their feelings and needs
- have their choices heard, respected and considered
- say 'no'
- ask questions about what is happening and why
- ask for information they can understand
- be part of making their behaviour support plan
- information to help them take part in making their plan
- be spoken to and about with respect
- have information about behaviour support planning
- learn how their plan will improve their life
- learn about how others will keep them safe

## How can I make sure I uphold these rights?

As a behaviour support practitioner or as anyone in a person with disability's support network, there are several things you can do – and should do – to ensure the person's rights are upheld throughout the behaviour support planning and implementation engagement process.

- **Help the person with disability understand** that they have communication rights, what they are, and that they are important and apply throughout the planning process.
- **Repeat their communication rights**, mentioning them where appropriate, preferably multiple times and every time you meet.
- **Highlight relevant communication rights** as you undertake different parts of the planning and implementation process.
- **Advocate for these communication rights**, as part of your support for the person with disability and remain alert to any activities that might violate their communication rights.
- **Raise awareness of these communication rights** with people in the person with disability's support network and other relevant people.

- **Make space for questions** from the person with disability (and others) to ensure they understand their communication rights.

### Next steps...

Begin by watching our video, [Understanding communication and engagement](#) to get orientated to your responsibility to consistently engage the person with disability in creating, implementing and reviewing their plan, according to their needs and wishes.

The one-page [poster Your communication rights in behaviour support planning](#) provides a useful visual representation of these communication rights. You can take this with you when you visit participants and people in their support network.

You can also print and use the [conversation cards for Your communication rights](#) (download [customisable conversation cards for Your communication rights](#), too) as a way of talking about these rights with a participant. Each A4 printable card focuses on one communication right to help you engage in conversation in a more focused way.

You may also find resources on [adapting communication to people in different contexts](#) and the [Spectrum of Participation resources](#), which helps you work together to understand how much the person wants to be involved in making their plan, valuable in preparing to discuss people's communication rights in behaviour support planning.

Finally, we encourage you to review [the Bill of Communication Rights](#) developed in the USA by the National Joint Committee for the Communication Needs of Persons with Severe Disabilities (NJC), which these communication rights were adapted for the behaviour support process.



The  
Right  
Direction

---

Working together on positive  
behaviour support (PBS)

**[therightdirectionpbs.com](https://therightdirectionpbs.com)**

Funded by the NDIS Quality and  
Safeguards Commission Grants Program



**NDIS Quality  
and Safeguards  
Commission**