

Positive Behaviour Support Policy

Purpose

Early Start Australia (ESA) recognises, upholds and promotes the rights of people with disability and their right to personal freedom and is committed to positive behaviour support.

ESA’s Positive Behaviour Support Policy meets the National Standards for Disability Services (specifically standard 1: rights); and the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Quality and Safeguarding Framework Quality and Practice Standards (specifically support planning; responsive support provision; and implementing behaviour support plans). It complies with state and territory based legislation, the NDIS (Restrictive Practices and Behaviour Support) Rules 2018 and the Positive Behaviour Support Capability Framework for NDIS providers and behaviour support practitioners 2019 (updated February 2021).

Scope

This policy applies to all ESA staff, students, and volunteers. This policy guides staff on the standards of practice regarding positive behaviour support. Refer also to the Eliminating Restrictive Practices Policy.

Definitions

Positive Behaviour Support: a comprehensive approach to assessment, planning, and intervention which focuses on addressing the person’s needs, their environment and overall quality of life. It is an evidence based approach to supporting people with disabilities who use behaviours of concern. It seeks to both improve the quality of life of the person with a disability and to reduce the impact of the person’s behaviours of concern.

Behaviour Support Practitioner: a person the Commissioner considers is suitable to undertake behaviour support assessments (including functional behaviour assessments) and to develop behaviour support plans that may contain the use of restrictive practices. Only practitioners who are considered suitable by the Commissioner in accordance with the Positive Behaviour Support Capability Framework for NDIS providers and behaviour support practitioners July 2019 (Update February 2021) can deliver these supports.

Behaviour Support Plan: specifies a range of person-centred, proactive strategies that focus on the individual needs of a person, in order to build on their strengths; increase their opportunities to participate in community activities; and increase their life skills. It may include restrictive practices. It is developed by a behaviour support practitioner in consultation with the participant, their family and other relevant people, as well as the provider implementing the plan.

Informed consent: means a person is provided with appropriate and adequate information in order to make a decision which they make freely and without unfair pressure or influence. Part of informed consent is that the person also understands the consequences of their decisions.

Restrictive practices: any intervention and/or practice used to restrict the rights or freedom of movement of people with disability, with the primary purpose of protecting the person or others from harm. This includes seclusion, chemical, mechanical, physical, environmental and psychosocial restrictive practices.

Restrictive interventions: see restrictive practices.

Behaviours of concern: when clients behave in ways that might hurt themselves, hurt other people, or break things, or put themselves or others at risk of harm.

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Policy Statement

ESA supports the use of positive behaviour support to effectively work with people with disability who use behaviours of concern, recognising that different service types and approaches may be needed for different people in order to ensure each person has the same opportunities. Positive behaviour support is about working with families and carers to develop a shared understanding about why a person has a need to engage in behaviours of concern.

ESA recognises that positive behaviour supports are best developed in collaboration with people with disability, family, friends, carers, advocates and other stakeholders as people with disability, their families and carers are the natural authorities for their own lives and are in the best place to communicate their choices and decisions.

Positive behaviour support can help develop skills of the person displaying the behaviour of concern to help them experience success and personal satisfaction; develop more appropriate ways to communicate their needs; and develop skills in daily living to meet potential gaps in being able to engage in meaningful activities.

ESA expects staff to focus on positive behavioural strategies to address minor behaviours of concern, even where there is no need for this to be formally documented in a behaviour support plan. For example, some strategies might include using clearer ways of communicating, such as using pictures; or changing the environment to suit, such as reducing noise levels.

Positive Behaviour Support Plans

A PBS plan is a document developed for a person with disability by an NDIS registered behaviour support practitioner. PBS plans are developed to outline the supports the person and relevant stakeholders need to make positive changes and minimise or eliminate the use of restrictive practices. The PBS plan should include strategies to develop the necessary skills and any environmental changes needed. It specifies a range of evidence-based and person-centred, proactive strategies that focus on the individual needs of the participant. This includes positive behaviour support to build on the person’s strengths and increase their opportunities to participate in community activities and develop new skills. It also includes any restrictive practices that may be required, subject to conditions. PBS plans are developed in consultation with the participant, their family, carers, guardian, and other relevant people, as well as the service providers (ESA therapists) who will be implementing the plan.

An NDIS registered specialist behaviour support practitioner will work with the participant, informal supports, and implementing provider (ESA) to develop a behaviour support plan that is based on a functional behaviour assessment and will ensure:

- A statement of intent to use a restrictive practice is given to the participant and their supports in an accessible format;
- The behaviour support plan contains strategies that are outcomes focused, person centred, and proactive, and that address the participant’s needs and the functions of the behaviour;
- The behaviour support plan contains strategies to reduce or eliminate the use of restrictive practices with the participant over time;
- The behaviour support plan is registered with the NDIS Commission to enable monitoring of regulated restrictive practices.

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Training

ESA provides access to training to its clinic staff on positive behaviour support and the elimination of restrictive practices on a regular basis.

Roles and Responsibilities

All client-facing staff must participate in training on positive behaviour support and elimination of restrictive practices.

Compliance

Staff found to be non-compliant with this policy are subject to appropriate disciplinary action by ESA including, but not limited to one or more of the following:

- Counselling;
- Further training and development;
- Demotion;
- Suspension;
- Warning;
- Referral to appropriate legal and regulatory bodies as appropriate;
- Termination of employment (with or without notice or any payment); or
- Termination of engagement (in the case of contractors)

Associated Documents

Eliminating Restrictive Practices Policy

Source:

Positive behaviour support capability framework: For NDIS providers and behaviour support practitioners. NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission (April 2019; updated February 2021).

NDIS Commission “Your introduction to behaviour support”

WA Disability Services Commission “Positive Behaviour Support Information for Disability Sector Organisations”

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