

Comprehensive Guide Behaviour Support Plans and the Positive Behaviour Support Framework

1. Introduction

A Behaviour Support Plan (BSP) is a structured, evidence-based document designed to improve a person's quality of life and reduce behaviours of concern by understanding their purpose and providing proactive, positive, and least-restrictive strategies. Under the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Quality and Safeguards Commission, BSPs are a key tool in delivering Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) that is person-centred, evidence-informed, and aligned with human rights principles.

2. Purpose and Objectives of a BSP

The central purpose of a BSP is to understand why a behaviour of concern occurs and to address the underlying causes, rather than simply managing or suppressing the behaviour.

The objectives are to;

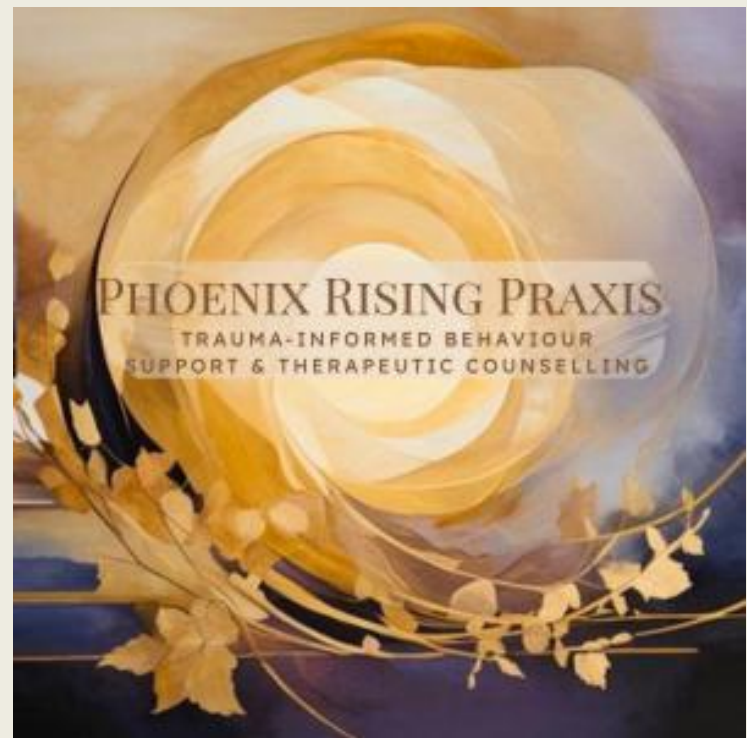
- Promote the person's safety, dignity, and wellbeing.
- Reduce the occurrence and impact of behaviours of concern.
- Increase independence, communication, and social participation.
- Support the reduction and eventual elimination of restrictive practices.
- Provide staff, families, and carers with clear, consistent guidance.

3. The Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) Framework

Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) is an evidence-based, person-centred framework for supporting people with disability who display behaviours of concern. It is grounded in human rights and the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD). The PBS Capability Framework, developed by the NDIS Commission, defines the standards of knowledge, skills, and values required for practitioners.

The PBS Framework is built on the following principles

- Person-centred: tailored to the individual's unique needs, preferences, and goals.
- Evidence-informed: based on data and behavioural science.
- Strengths-based: builds on existing skills and positive behaviours.
- Collaborative: developed in partnership with the person, their family, and support network.
- Least restrictive: prioritises freedom and choice, using the minimal intervention necessary.
- Trauma-informed: recognises the impact of trauma and promotes psychological safety.



Sector	Purpose
Disability / NDIS	To improve quality of life and reduce behaviours of concern for participants, with oversight by the NDIS Commission.
Mental Health Services	To manage behaviours linked to psychiatric conditions, often alongside clinical treatment plans.
Child Safety / OOHC	To support children and young people with trauma-related behaviours in residential or foster care.
Aged Care	To address responsive behaviours such as agitation, wandering, or resistance to care (especially in dementia).
Justice / Corrections	To reduce aggression, self-harm, or non-compliance within custodial or community-corrections settings.
Education	To support inclusion and learning for students with behavioural challenges.

4. Key Components of a Behaviour Support Plan

A BSP must align with NDIS Commission requirements and include the following sections

1. Participant Information: personal details, strengths, communication style, and background.
2. Functional Behaviour Assessment (FBA): a comprehensive assessment of the purpose and function of behaviour.
3. Description of Behaviours of Concern: clearly defined, observable, and measurable descriptions.
4. Hypothesis of Behaviour Function: explains why the behaviour occurs (e.g., to gain attention, escape a demand, or meet sensory needs).
5. Proactive Strategies: prevention and environmental adaptation strategies.
6. Skill-Building Strategies: teaching new, alternative skills.
7. Reactive Strategies: safe and respectful responses during behavioural incidents.
8. Restrictive Practices: only included, when necessary, with a reduction plan and NDIS Commission authorisation.
9. Monitoring and Review: data collection, evaluation, and continuous improvement.

5. How a Behaviour Support Plan is Developed

The development of a BSP follows a structured process that includes assessment, collaboration, planning, and review:

1. Information Gathering: review case notes, incident reports, and interview the person and their support team.
2. Functional Behaviour Assessment (FBA): identify the triggers, consequences, and function of the behaviour.
3. Hypothesis Development: determine why the behaviour occurs and what purpose it serves.
4. Strategy Development: design proactive, teaching, and reactive strategies that promote skill-building and safety.

5. Review and Consultation: share with key stakeholders for input and consent.
6. Implementation: train staff and support networks in consistent application.
7. Monitoring: collect and analyse data to evaluate effectiveness.
8. Review and Revision: adjust the plan as the person's needs change.

6. Contexts in Which BSPs Are Used

Behaviour Support Plans are applied across multiple sectors, each adapting the principles of PBS to the specific environment:

- NDIS/Disability Services primary use under the NDIS Commission.
- Mental Health alongside clinical treatment and recovery plans.
- Out-of-Home Care (OOHC) to address trauma-related behaviours in children and young people.
- Aged Care – for responsive behaviours such as agitation or aggression.
- Justice/Corrections – to reduce aggression and self-harm in custodial settings.
- Education – to promote inclusion and positive behaviour in schools.

7. Restrictive Practices and Authorisation

Restrictive practices are any interventions that limit a person's rights or freedom of movement.

Under the NDIS, restrictive practices include:

1. Seclusion
2. Chemical restraint
3. Mechanical restraint
4. Physical restraint
5. Environmental restraint

Restrictive practices can only be used as a last resort, with clinical justification, clear reduction strategies, and proper authorisation from the relevant state or territory authority and the NDIS Commission. The BSP must include detailed documentation and a plan for eliminating restrictive practices over time.

8. Monitoring, Review, and Reporting

The NDIS Commission requires ongoing monitoring and review of BSPs to ensure they remain effective and person-centred. Practitioners must:

- Collect data on the frequency, intensity, and duration of behaviours.
- Review outcomes regularly with the person and their team.
- Report monthly on the use of any restrictive practices.
- Update the BSP whenever there are significant changes in the person's behaviour or environment.

9. Summary

A Behaviour Support Plan is more than a document—it is a living, evolving process that aligns with the NDIS Positive Behaviour Support Framework. It ensures people with disabilities receive the right support, in the right environment, with respect for their autonomy and human rights. When developed properly, a BSP is both a roadmap for positive change and a safeguard against unnecessary restrictions.