



Student Resource Guide

11. Positive Behavior Support



Student Resource Guide: SESSION 11

Positive Behavior Support

O U T C O M E S

When you finish this session you will be able to:

- Identify what an individual's behavior may communicate.
- Identify how the environment may influence individual behavior.
- Describe how an individual's quality of life may influence behavior.
- Use the Positive Environment Checklist to identify things that may cause challenging behaviors.
- Show awareness of how the DSP's behavior may contribute to an individual's behavior.

K E Y W O R D S

Key Word	Meaning	In My Own Words
Behavior Function	What the individual is getting or avoiding through the behavior.	
Communicative Intent	What the behavior or action is intended to communicate or tell us.	
Positive Behavior Support	Strategies to assist individuals with disabilities to avoid inappropriate behavior, learn skills to communicate, and replace problem behaviors.	
Replacement Behavior	The new skills and behaviors that we want to teach the individual to take the place of the challenging behavior.	

A C T I V I T Y

What Do You Want to Know?

Directions: *Think about the topic of this training session. Answer the first two questions in the space provided below. You will come back to this page at the end of the session to answer the last question.*

.....
What do you **already know** about Positive Behavior Support?

.....
What do you **want to know** about Positive Behavior Support?

.....
To be answered at the end of the session, during review:
What **have you learned** about Positive Behavior Support?

Opening Scenario

David is 25 years old and has lived at his current home for three years. He tends to throw things and bite himself when he is not getting his needs met. He communicates in two- to three-word sentences, but he can be difficult to understand. He takes several psychotropic medications. David doesn't like to do chores (especially laundry) and will use his behavior to get out of them. He loves to watch sports on TV and would choose to do this all of the time if he could. He prefers simple meals like cereal for breakfast, peanut butter sandwiches for lunch, and hamburgers for dinner. David attends a day program four days a week and does janitorial work at McDonald's for one hour, one day a week.

Sam is a new employee at the home and is concerned about David's behaviors. Sam is afraid David will hurt himself or others with his biting. He doesn't know why David behaves this way, and he is not sure how to respond when David has an outburst. Where should Sam begin?

Overview to Positive Behavior Support

After reading through the scenario above, you might find yourself thinking of a similar situation where you were unsure of how to respond to the actions or behaviors of an individual you support. You may have found yourself wondering where to begin and what you should do to help the individual communicate with others in a more socially appropriate manner. You may also be thinking of examples of challenging behavior you have seen in your work that you would like to discuss.

Over the two years of this training, we will spend three sessions learning about **positive behavior support**. This first session will focus on understanding that all behavior is communication and that behavior is influenced by the environment. These ideas will promote a foundation for ways to assist individuals with challenging behaviors to avoid inappropriate behavior and to learn skills to communicate and

replace problem behaviors. Sessions in Year 2 will focus on understanding why challenging behavior is occurring, analyzing the behavior, and implementing an individual positive behavior support plan to deal with challenging behaviors.

In this session, you will examine how the overall quality of the individual's life might impact his or her behavior. You will also learn how to make small changes to the environment that can have a big impact on behavior. It is important to remember that when people have choices about the activities and routines in their lives and these choices are honored and respected, they are happier and less likely to use challenging behavior. Creating an environment that respects and values individual preferences and choices, as well as the needs of all the residents, will give the individuals you work with better quality of life. It will also make your job of supporting each individual easier.

Overview to Positive Behavior Support (cont.)

The Role of the DSP in Positive Behavior Support

The role of the DSP in positive behavior support is to understand what the individual's challenging behavior is communicating and why it is working for the individual. Once the behavior is understood, a plan can be made to teach a more appropriate replacement behavior and another way to communicate.

The Importance of the DSP Knowing About Behavior

In your role as a DSP, you may find yourself supporting individuals whose challenging behavior seems to interfere with their ability to live a rewarding and productive life. Assisting individuals with challenging behavior can be difficult. The challenging behaviors may range from simple (but perhaps annoying) to severe challenging behaviors that can be unpleasant and unsafe for both the individual and others around him or her. The solutions to these challenging behaviors often need to be developed by a team with the help of a behavior

specialist. The team may develop a positive behavior support plan that looks at all aspects of the individual's life and identifies ways to support the individual to be successful across all environments. The DSP will often be part of the team looking at the behavior and developing and carrying out the ideas of the team.



We will discuss this process in more detail in Year 2.

Often, challenging behaviors that you will see can be addressed using simple solutions. By using your observation skills to understand what the individual is trying to communicate with the behavior, you can come up with simple but creative solutions that can be very effective. Supporting an individual with challenging behavior starts with knowing the individual.

Let's begin by figuring out what is meant by challenging behavior and positive behavior support with a quick review of the history of behavior support and how it has changed over the years.

A Brief History of Positive Behavior Support

In the Past...

We used to think that the activities in which individuals engaged; the places where they lived, worked, and played; or the people they spent time with had nothing to do with their behavior. We didn't think these daily activities affected an individual's life. We placed individuals with disabilities in environments that made it easier for the people working with them, but were surprised when the results were not successful for the individuals. We now know that all of these factors greatly affect individuals' behaviors.

We often grouped individuals with disabilities together in institutions, schools, work, homes, and recreation centers, assuming their needs were similar. We thought that the individuals would feel more comfortable with other individuals who also had disabilities. Also, we thought we could more easily provide support and instruction for others with similar needs. What we found was that these individuals were unable to function well in society because they had not learned how to act in socially appropriate ways, they had learned only how to act like other individuals with disabilities.

For example:

When we:

Group children with communication challenges with other children with communication challenges...

Group children with challenging behaviors with other children who also have challenging behaviors...

Group children with autism with other children with autism...

They

learned:
Not to talk!

More challenging behaviors!

More autistic-like behaviors!

Individuals with disabilities used to have to earn the right to attend school or work with peers who did not have disabilities. Their families were told that their behavior had to be "under control" before they could ever participate in these environments. Over time, we have come to understand how much the overall quality of an individual's life depends on a variety of positive activities, positive personal interactions, and enriching environments. All people relate to and learn behavior from those around them.

We also used to write behavior plans based on rewards and punishments. The plans told us what to do *after* a behavior occurred. We weren't taught to figure out *why* a behavior occurred, only whether to reward it or punish it. We now know how important it is to understand behavior as communication.

Research has shown that individuals who participate in regular classrooms, real work settings, and typical social environments have fewer challenging behaviors. When we place individuals in separate environments (with other individuals with severe disabilities), where they have no appropriate behavioral models from which to learn, their behaviors are less likely to improve.

What Is Behavior?



All behavior is communication! Behaviors communicate wants, needs, and feelings. By “listening” to what the behavior is communicating, we can learn why the behavior is happening. There are always reasons for behaviors, even if we do not know those reasons right now.

What Makes a Behavior “Challenging”?

Behavior can be considered challenging when it affects an individual’s life in a negative way. For example, a child learning to say “please” before they ask for an object is not a challenging behavior. In fact, we say the child has learned a “social skill.” If the child has learned to scream when he or she wants something, we say the child has a “challenging” behavior. Generally, behavior is considered challenging if it:

- Causes harm to the individual or others
- Causes damage to property
- Prevents the individual from learning new skills
- Causes the individual to be “labeled” as different, or undesirable
- Prevents the individual from taking part in social and recreational activities



Once you understand that a behavior is challenging or disruptive to others, you must observe and figure out how the challenging behaviors are “working” for the individual. Then you can teach new skills and behaviors that are more socially appropriate or **replacement behaviors**. Remember that challenging behaviors don’t happen just to make you mad or to make you work harder.

What individuals do, where, and with whom have a lot to do with their behavior. When you look closely at these factors, you should be able to predict when, where and with whom the challenging behaviors are most and least likely to occur. Individuals use the strategies that have worked the best for them in the past.

What Is Behavior? (cont.)

As the previous discussion shows, the best strategy is one that works to get what the individual wants or needs. Your job is to identify and teach the individual a new, alternative strategy that clearly communicates their needs; otherwise, the individual will have little motivation to give up the challenging behavior he or she are using.

Before you can decide on an alternative strategy to the challenging behavior, you must first examine the behavior and try to figure out:

- What the individual is trying to communicate with his or her behavior.
- The **behavior function**—that is, what is the individual getting or avoiding through the behavior?

Behavior Is Communication

Sometimes it is easier to figure out what an individual doesn't want when they are using a challenging behavior. Sometimes these are the behaviors that make it hard for the individual to be with other people. The individual might spit out food they didn't enjoy or push away the staff person who wants to help. Imagine if you didn't have words to use. How would you let someone know that something was making you unhappy?

An individual's behavior usually communicates one of three things:

- What the individual wants.
- What the individual doesn't want.
- When the individual wants attention.

How would an individual's behavior tell you that they want something?

- They might point to an apple on the table, which lets you know the individual wants the apple.

- The individual might come to you and shake your hand, which lets you know he or she wants to greet you.
- The individual might come to you with a toothbrush in one hand and toothpaste in the other and a puzzled look on his or her face. That might let you know that the individual needs some assistance.
- When you offer an individual a choice of foods for dinner, they might point to what they want or look in the direction of the food they prefer.

Often, individuals just want someone to pay attention to them. Some individuals have learned that making loud noises gets the attention of the staff or that when there is a lot of activity, they need to wave their arms to get staff to focus on them. Or an individual might just pull at your arm to get your attention.

An individual's behavior will give you information about their interest and ability to be social, as well. An individual who doesn't use spoken words can often clearly greet us and say goodbye through facial expressions and body language.

Remember the observation skills you learned in Session 8 as you looked for signs and symptoms of injury or illness? The DSP gets to know as much as possible about the individual they are supporting by spending time with the individual and learning what is usual for that individual, such as daily routines, behavior, way of communicating, appearance, general manner or mood, and physical health. If the DSP doesn't know what is typical for a certain individual, they won't know when something has changed. A DSP needs to observe, listen and ask questions to learn as much as they can about the individuals they support.



What Is Behavior? (cont.)

These skills will help the DSP to figure out what an individual's behavior is trying to communicate:

- What the individual wants.
- What the individual doesn't want.
- When the individual wants attention.

Going Beyond Observation

The DSP needs to know the individual as a person to know what they like and do not like, and how they have acted in other situations. Over time, a relationship with the individual develops and the DSP knows what the individual they support prefers and understands how the individual shows their emotions. The DSP can use this information to better help understand what the individual is trying to communicate through their behavior.



DDS SafetyNet



The DDS SafetyNet is a website that has interesting and valuable information for DSPs (supporters) and the individuals they support. There is an article written by a DSP who has a son with behavioral challenges. His insight into what his son is trying to communicate is very informative. His article can be found in the Appendices on page S-28 or follow the link to see what he has to say about communication and behaviors: <http://www.ddssafety.net/how-do-you-deal-challenging-behaviors>.

Communicative Intent

As you were discussing the non-verbal communication of the individuals you support during the last activity, you probably found yourself trying to figure out the purpose behind each behavior or action used by the individual. The purpose of each behavior or action was to communicate a need. The **communicative intent** means what the individual’s behavior is meant to communicate.



You can begin to understand the “communicative intent” of an individual’s challenging behavior by documenting the behavior and what we think they are trying to communicate. A communication chart, such as the one that follows, is helpful in understanding the behavior and its intent. The DSP can list the specific challenging behavior on the left side and what it might be communicating on the right.

ACTIVITY

Communicative Intent I

Directions: Watch the video scenario and complete the chart. You will begin to interpret the communication by describing the challenging behavior (on the left side of the chart), describing what happened before and after the behavior (in the center), and describing what the individual might be communicating by the behavior (on the right side).

Challenging Behavior	Cause or Result	It May Mean
<i>What did you see?</i>	<i>What happened right before and right after the behavior occurred?</i>	<i>What do you think the individual wanted or needed?</i>

Communicative Intent (cont.)

It is critical that you become good at understanding the challenging behavior and deciding what the individual is trying to communicate with the behavior. It is also important that you discuss specific challenging behaviors with others who are around the individual and come to agreement on what the specific behavior

is and the communicative intent of the behavior.

In your group, watch the video scenarios and record on the chart below your thoughts about each challenging behavior and what it is trying to communicate.

A C T I V I T Y		
<u>Communicative Intent II</u>		
Directions: Watch the video scenario and record your thoughts about each challenging behavior. What it is trying to communicate and how did the DSP communicate?		
Challenging Behavior	It May Mean	DSP Communication
<p><i>What did you see?</i></p>	<p><i>What do you think the individual wanted or needed?</i></p>	<p><i>What did the DSP say and do? What effect did the DSPs words or actions have?</i></p>

ACTIVITY

Positive Behavior Support Video Demonstration

Directions: Answer the following questions using your notes and what you remember from the last video clip.

.....
1. What were some of the challenging behaviors that you observed?

.....
2. What were the results of the challenging behaviors?

.....
3. What do you think each of the challenging behaviors was communicating?

.....
4. How did the DSP communicate with the individual?

.....
5. What did the DSP's behaviors communicate?

Requesting and Responding with Respect



As you watched the video scenarios and identified the communicative intent of the individuals, you may have noticed that one of the things that “triggered” or started the behavior was the DSP telling the individual to do something. In some of those cases, by demanding that the individual do something right now or in a certain way, the DSP created a situation where the individual responded with challenging behavior. This often happens when the DSP feels rushed or under pressure to get things done quickly; the demand is not made deliberately to upset the individual.

Think about your own work day and times that either your supervisor or a co-worker has asked you to do something. If someone says, “You need to clean this mess up right now!” and does not consider that you may be doing something else or that it is someone else’s job, you

might not feel like doing it. Had she said, “I see a mess here that needs cleaning up. Can you do that now, or are you doing something else? Perhaps we could get someone else to help.” You might be more willing to help because she took the time to find out if you were already busy and offered to get help if you were.

How you make a request of someone or respond to someone’s request has a dramatic impact on whether or not the individual will comply. If you ask someone in a manner that is respectful and courteous, he is more likely to want to do what you ask. If you consider your request or response before making it to the individual, you might prevent the challenging behavior. This is one of the simple changes you can make in your behavior that will have a very positive impact on the individual and his or her willingness to comply with your request.

Requesting and Responding with Respect (cont.)

Respectful Responses

When you ask someone to complete a task or respond to an individual's request, it is helpful to consider:

- Is this an activity that the individual likes to do?
- Is this an activity that the individual knows how to do?
- Is the individual already doing something else?
- Does the individual have a **choice** about when or how to do the activity?
- Are you asking in a way that you would like to be asked?

A C T I V I T Y

Say It Another Way

Directions: *Each scenario below is an example of a DSP making a request or responding to a request from an individual in a way that caused a challenging behavior to occur. Read each scenario and think of how the DSP could have made the request or responded to a request in another way.*

Scenario 1

John, an individual with autism who is 35 years of age and lives in a family care home, is sitting on the couch watching his favorite game show. He watches the show every night and does not like to be interrupted during it. Doug is the DSP who asked John 20 minutes ago to take the dishes out of the dishwasher and has had it. He goes into the room and turns the TV off and says, "John, I told you 20 minutes ago to put the dishes away. Do it now." John starts screaming and throwing things.

What could Doug have done differently?

Scenario 2

Missy is a 20-year-old woman with an intellectual/developmental disability who is very social. She walks into the family room where everyone is watching TV after dinner and says, "I need some nail polish. Can we go to the store?" Sue is the DSP who has been working in the home for five years. She responds to Missy, "No, you don't need any nail polish." Missy gets mad and yells at her.

What could Sue have done differently?

Promoting Positive Behavior

Key Points About Promoting Positive Behavior

- What individuals are doing, where, and with whom affects their behavior.
- Behaviors are strategies individuals use to get their needs met. Part of your job is to figure out which behaviors currently work best for an individual.
- All behavior is communication. By “listening” to what the behavior is saying, you can discover the reason for the behavior.
- How you make a request or respond to an individual can decrease the chances of a challenging behavior occurring.

Quality of Life

Doug thinks about John’s behavior and what John might have been trying to tell him. “Perhaps he wanted to be given a choice about when to complete his chore instead of being told to stop what he was doing and do the chore now. Maybe he wanted to finish the TV show before beginning the chore. Does it really matter to me when he completes his job?” Doug begins to see that he created a battle by not giving John choices about how to use his free time. After all, it is his home, and he should be given the opportunity to enjoy his favorite activities. Doug now sees that everyone needs to be able to participate in activities they enjoy and to make decisions about when and where they do some tasks in their lives. Even so, Doug wonders how he will figure out what the favorite activities are of the individuals he works with and the activities that they don’t like.

It’s important to remember that quality of life issues are among the most important factors that influence behavior. If someone’s life quality isn’t what it could be, it can affect behavior.

The following activity will help you define what “quality of life” means for you and for the individuals with whom you support.

A C T I V I T Y

Quality of Life

Directions: Look at the boxes below and focus on the first section (“My Home”). Write three to five brief statements or phrases that indicate what you value about your HOME. (Examples: I live close to my job; I live with my family, spouse, friends, or alone; I value privacy and my stuff; I’m safe; I have good neighbors and a good view.) Repeat for each of the other three sections.

My Home

Community

My Job

My Free Time

OPTIONAL ACTIVITY

Quality of Life Questions to Consider

Directions: Answer the following questions for the individuals in your facility.

.....
1. What would increase or strengthen the individuals' friendships and social activities?

.....
2. How can you help individuals to be involved in more activities in their home, school, work, and community?

.....
3. How could you help individuals have more opportunities for making choices and be able to control more aspects of their lives?

.....
4. How can individuals' self-esteem and confidence be strengthened?

.....
5. What might interfere with individuals' abilities to have greater independence and quality of life?

Important Values in Promoting Positive Behavior Change



Quality of life values should be included in the lives of the individuals we support. Your role as a DSP, and as a member of the support team for each individual you work with, is to figure out how to make sure these values are reflected in the every day lives of the individuals you support.

As you'll recall from Session 1, the following set of values guides the system that provides services for individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities in California:

- **Choice**

Choices and preferences of individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities are encouraged, supported, and respected.

- **Relationships**

Individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities have close, supportive relationships with friends, family, and their community.

- **Regular Lifestyles**

Individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities live, work, play, and carry out daily activities in natural, integrated community and home settings.

- **Health and Well-Being**

Individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities are as safe, healthy, and happy as possible.

- **Rights and Responsibilities**

Individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities are treated with respect and fairness and are free from abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

- **Satisfaction**

Individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities achieve personal goals and feel their lives are fulfilling.

Taken together, these values lead to a higher quality of life for individuals. In order to support positive behavior change, these important "quality of life" values should be part of the daily life of each individual with whom you work.

By making sure the individuals you support have these values included in their daily lives, you are improving the quality of their lives and reducing their need to use challenging behaviors to express themselves or to make their needs known.

O P T I O N A L A C T I V I T Y

Important Values

Directions: Read the list of values and questions on the left side of the chart. As you read, think of individuals you support and ask yourself how you might answer those questions about their lives. On the right side of the chart, write down some ways that each value could be included in the daily lives of the individuals with whom you work.

Values

**Ways to Include Values in
Individuals' Daily Lives**

Choice

Choice

- How much choice do individuals have throughout their lives?
- Do individuals have choices from preferred options that they understand?
- Do individuals have choice about when they perform necessary activities, such as chores?
- How much are individuals involved in planning their days, evenings, and weekends?
- How do individuals communicate their choices, and how are their choices respected?

Relationships

Relationships

- What opportunities do individuals have to be “givers” in relationships?
- How are individuals recognized for their unique gifts and talents?
- Does the individual have friends?
- Are there opportunities to interact with and meet others (including individuals without disabilities who are not staff)?

(cont. on next page)

OPTIONAL ACTIVITY

Important Values (cont.)

Values	<i>Ways to Include Values in Individuals' Daily Lives</i>
<p>Regular Lifestyles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there opportunities for participation (even if only partial) in a variety of community and social activities? • How are you assisting individuals to connect within their communities (YMCA's, community colleges, support groups, social groups, gyms, sports leagues, churches, and temples)? 	<p>Regular Lifestyles</p>
<p>Health and Well-Being</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do the individuals you support eat healthy meals? • Are the individuals physically active? • Are the individuals supported in learning how to keep themselves healthy? • Do any individuals you support take medications that may affect their behavior? 	<p>Health and Well-Being</p>
<p>Rights and Responsibilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are individuals' routines and choices respected? • How well do you listen to the individuals you support? • Are individuals able to have personal privacy, especially at home? • Do individuals feel like they are living in their own homes or in a facility that is programmed and planned by staff? 	<p>Rights and Responsibilities</p>
<p>Satisfaction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are activities individuals participate in motivating and interesting to them? • Are you acknowledging individuals when they behave appropriately? • Are you giving feedback when you see positive behaviors? 	<p>Satisfaction</p>

Positive Environment

All people are affected by the environment around them, both inside and outside. The weather, noise, crowds, and confusion often cause many of us discomfort. These factors also affect the individuals you support and sometimes more than you realize. Think about how you feel when you are in a place where you are not comfortable. How do you react?

When you consider the quality of the lives of individuals you support, it is important to look at the environments where they spend their time. Are there details about those environments that are causing discomfort or not meeting the needs of the individual? Think about what you like about your home and what you would not be comfortable with in any environment.

A C T I V I T Y

Positive Environment Video

*Negative factors
found in the video*

*What could be done to
improve the environment*

One way to examine the environment of any facility is to use a checklist. The Positive Environment Checklist (PEC) is a tool you can use to look at all aspects of the environment to determine if there are situations, conditions, or factors that contribute to any of the challenging behaviors.

A C T I V I T Y

Positive Environment Checklist

The Positive Environment Checklist (PEC) is designed to examine settings in which individuals with moderate to severe disabilities live, work, and go to school to determine if they are structured in a manner that promotes and maintains positive, adaptive behaviors. Responses to questions in each area should be based on direct observation of the environment and review of written program documents and personnel.

Three response options are provided for each question: YES, NO, and UNCLEAR. The term “staff” applies to paid and volunteer personnel who provide support and services in the setting. The term “individual” refers to the individuals with disabilities who live, work, or attend school in the setting.

- **Directions:** Review each question and circle YES, NO, or UNCLEAR. Circle UNCLEAR if the answer is hard to determine, or if it is sometimes “yes” and sometimes “no.”

Adapted from: Albin, R., & O’Neil, R. (1994). Proactive behavior support: Structuring and assessing environments. Unpublished manuscript from the Specialized Training Project, University of Oregon.

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SECTION 1: PHYSICAL SETTING

1. Is the physical setting clean, well lit, and odor free?	Yes	No	Unclear
2. Is the temperature in the setting easy to control?	Yes	No	Unclear
3. Is the physical setting visually pleasant and appealing to look at?	Yes	No	Unclear
4. Does the arrangement of the furniture and objects make it easy for all individuals to move around in the setting?	Yes	No	Unclear
5. Is the setting organized in a way that makes it easy for staff to provide support and be supervised?	Yes	No	Unclear
6. Does the setting have interesting, age-appropriate items and materials for individuals to use?	Yes	No	Unclear
7. Is the setting located and organized in a way that encourages and supports participating in activities in the general community?	Yes	No	Unclear

(cont. on next page)

Positive Environment Checklist (cont.)

SECTION 2: SOCIAL SETTING

- | | | | |
|---|-----|----|---------|
| 1. Is the number of individuals in this setting appropriate for its physical size and purpose? | Yes | No | Unclear |
| 2. Are the individuals who share this setting well matched in terms of age, gender, and support needs? | Yes | No | Unclear |
| 3. Do the individuals that share this setting get along with each other? | Yes | No | Unclear |
| 4. Do staff actively work to build and support positive relationships with the individuals here? | Yes | No | Unclear |
| 5. Do staff encourage and support opportunities to socialize or be with people who are not paid to provide service? | Yes | No | Unclear |

SECTION 3: ACTIVITIES AND INSTRUCTION

- | | | | |
|---|-----|----|---------|
| 1. Do individuals participate in a variety of different activities? | Yes | No | Unclear |
| 2. Do individuals participate in activities in regular community settings outside of the home, school, or workplace? | Yes | No | Unclear |
| 3. Are individuals in this setting taught activities and skills that are useful and meaningful to their daily lives? | Yes | No | Unclear |
| 4. Are individuals taught individualized activities and skills to meet their needs? | Yes | No | Unclear |
| 5. Are individuals' personal likes and dislikes considered when choosing activities and tasks in which they participate and receive training? | Yes | No | Unclear |

SECTION 4: SCHEDULING AND PREDICTABILITY

- | | | | |
|--|-----|----|---------|
| 1. Is there a system or strategy used to schedule activities? | Yes | No | Unclear |
| 2. Is there a way to find out whether the activities or events that should be occurring actually do occur? | Yes | No | Unclear |
| 3. Do individuals in this setting have a way of knowing and predicting what they will be doing and when? | Yes | No | Unclear |
| 4. Do staff get individuals in this setting ready in advance for changes in typical schedules or routines? | Yes | No | Unclear |
| 5. Do individuals in this setting choose what they will do, when, and with whom? | Yes | No | Unclear |

Positive Environment Checklist (cont.)
.....

Section 5: Communication

1. Do individuals in this setting have appropriate ways to communicate (for example, requests, refusals, need for attention) with staff or others in the setting?	Yes	No	Unclear
2. Do staff encourage and respect communication?	Yes	No	Unclear
3. Do staff have appropriate ways to communicate with the individuals in this setting?	Yes	No	Unclear

A C T I V I T Y

Debriefing the Activity

Directions: Answer the following questions about your responses on the *Positive Environment Checklist*.

.....
How might the environment of your facility affect the behavior of individuals who live or work there?

.....
What did you find out about the social setting you looked at? Did you note any problem areas? How might this affect the behavior of individuals who live or work there?

.....
What did you find out about the activities and instructions you examined? Did you note any problem areas? How might this affect the behavior of individuals who live or work there?

.....
What did you find out about scheduling and predictability? Did you note any problem areas? How might this affect the behavior of individuals who live or work there?

.....
How about communication? Did you note any problem areas? How might this affect the behavior of individuals who live or work there?

Positive Environment (cont.)

Clearly, the environment can influence someone's behavior. It becomes your job to make sure the environments in which individuals live affect them in a positive way. Doing so not only improves the lives of the individuals, but makes your job easier as well.

Doug now realizes that he has tools that he can use to help him support individuals' positive behavior at the facility in which he works.

Doug knows how to:

- *Look at challenging behavior from all angles.*
- *Figure out what the challenging behavior is trying to communicate.*
- *Examine the quality of life of each individual.*
- *Examine the environment.*
- *Respect and honor the individual's desires.*

PRACTICE AND SHARE

Choose one of the individuals that you support who uses challenging behaviors to communicate his or her needs and wants. Using the strategies from this session, describe the specific behaviors and the communicative intent of those behaviors. Ask yourself whether or not quality of life values are reflected in the individual's everyday life. Do your responses to the individual value and respect that their choices and preferences? Think about areas of the individual's life that may not be as good as they could be. You will be able to use this information in Year 2 Positive Behavior Support sessions.

Session 11 Quiz

Positive Behavior Support

1. **An individual makes loud noises to get attention from the staff. This is an example of using behavior to:**
 - A) Annoy other people
 - B) Have fun when there is nothing else to do
 - C) Insult other people
 - D) Communicate a need or desire to other people

2. **In order to understand what an individual wants or needs, a DSP must:**
 - A) Observe the individual's behavior
 - B) Meet with the support team
 - C) Make a guess
 - D) Ask their supervisor

3. **The “communicative intent” of a behavior is:**
 - A) What the behavior or action tells us
 - B) Who the behavior is directed at
 - C) Who caused the behavior
 - D) What will stop the behavior

4. **To understand what an individual engaged in challenging behaviors is trying to communicate, the DSP should try to:**
 - A) Ignore the challenging behavior and ask the individual to talk
 - B) Punish the individual for communicating in an unpleasant way and wait until they behave appropriately
 - C) Offer the individual different rewards until they stop the behavior
 - D) Think about what happened before and after the behavior and what the individual got from the behavior

5. **In order to support an individual's positive behavior, a DSP's behavior should be:**
 - A) Thoughtful and respectful
 - B) Commanding
 - C) Shy and withdrawn
 - D) Threatening

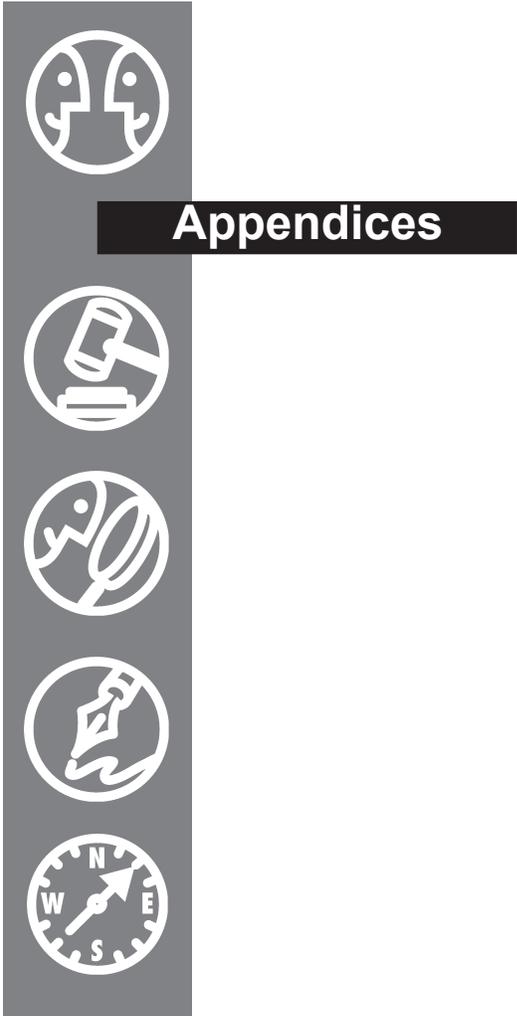
6. **When individuals with challenging behaviors are placed in a group of people without challenging behaviors, the behavior often improves because the individuals:**
 - A) Receive more behavior medications
 - B) Are better supervised
 - C) Learn how to behave from their peers
 - D) No longer need to communicate feelings or needs

7. **Challenging behavior usually is:**
 - A) Caused by a lack of discipline
 - B) An attempt to communicate
 - C) Caused by too much attention
 - D) A reaction to a positive environment

8. **In order to encourage positive behavior, the physical setting of an environment should be:**
 - A) Organized for easy access
 - B) Cold
 - C) Strictly monitored
 - D) Dark

9. **A social setting that can lead to more positive behaviors includes:**
 - A) Overcrowding
 - B) Same-age peers and support for positive interaction
 - C) Bossy support staff
 - D) Activities that are available only in special settings

10. **Which of the following will usually help reduce a challenging behavior?**
 - A) Looking carefully at the environment in which the behavior occurs to identify ways to support appropriate behavior
 - B) Giving a “time out”
 - C) Explaining to the individual what you need to make your job easier
 - D) Using candy as a reward



How Do You Deal with Challenging Behaviors?

ASK A DIRECT SUPPORT PROFESSIONAL: John*

My Son is My Teacher

My son Joe has given me a lot of experience as a parent that I use in my work as a Direct Support Professional (DSP). Joe has an intellectual disability and autism. He uses few words, but communicates in other ways (smiles, occasional behavior disturbances). Over the years, we have learned that emotional disturbances are usually caused by sinus infections or allergies.

Behavior is Communication

In general, we have a warm relationship and enjoy each other's company. I've taken a few blows over the years, but I don't take it personally. I just think to myself 'What is Joe telling me?' That's how I look at challenging behaviors with the six young men in our care. What are they telling us? Instead of thinking about behavior as bad, what can we do to provide better support? I encourage our support staff to look at things this way as well.

Problem-Solving

If the aggressive behavior is dangerous or if it happens a lot, we go to a behavior consultant for help. She helps us figure out what is causing the behavior and writes up a positive behavior plan. Many times, however, it's something we can figure out on our own. We sit down with our support staff and write up a team plan addressing what's going on, what we think are the causes, and what we can do to make the problem better. I'll use Joe as an example:

- What does he do? Joe hoots and bangs on the wall.
- When does it happen? Usually when he isn't feeling well.
- What do we think it means? He has a sinus infection and wants to tell us that he's in pain.
- What have we tried that works? Ask him if he hurts anywhere. If he says yes or points, we can try to help him feel better. We might ask him if he would like to go for a walk, get some air, or lay down.
- What do we need to do differently next time? Nothing at this time, we just need to stick with the plan.

The important thing is to keep doing what works. If you need to change the plan and try something new, make sure you keep doing it for several weeks before you give up on it. Stick with it and you'll find something that works for everyone!

John's Suggestions for Building and Keeping Positive Relationships with the People You Support

1. Know and honor the person's needs, desires, and preferences.
2. Be friendly and smile a lot. Have a sense of humor. Be enthusiastic, positive, and respectful.
3. Don't forget that body language (for example, a smile or frown) might say something you don't want to say.
4. If the person has limited use of language, spend time to figure out the best way to communicate.
5. Avoid "my way or the highway" thinking. If you need to present a choice, make sure that it's based on the person's needs and preferences, as well as available resources (for example, staff, finances, etc.).

*John and his wife Patty serve six young men in their home in Napa, CA. John's son Joe lives across town with two friends in a supported-living arrangement. The three receive support from a live-in housemate and other personal assistants.