



# Our approach to Positive Behaviour Support

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## What is Positive Behaviour Support?

Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) is a framework that supports individuals who have been described as exhibiting 'behaviours that challenge' (behaviours that create risk for the individual or those around them).

The framework focuses on understanding the reasons behind why these behaviours occur, to then provide person-centred proactive strategies to help reduce them without putting the person or others at risk, or by having to implement unnecessary restrictions. For example, if an individual regularly uses pinching to show that they no longer wish to be involved in an activity, their support team will teach them alternative ways to communicate, such as using a hand gesture or word. PBS ultimately helps people to learn new skills, communicate more effectively and enjoy more choice and control in their everyday life.



## Our Specialist Support Team

We're proud to have an in-house Specialist Support Team who deliver our PBS framework. The team's approach is based on Applied Behaviour Analysis strategies that focus on meaningful engagement for the people we support.

The team consists of PBS practitioners and Specialist Trainers led by Lead Specialists and headed up by the Specialist Support Manager. Every Lifeways service has access to this valuable resource who offer both diagnosis-specific training as well as behaviour management training (PROACT-SCIPr-UK® or NAPPI). All of our PBS practitioners have completed, or are in the process of completing, their Level 5 Diploma in PBS.

## Positive risk-taking

PBS recognises there may be certain situations where new approaches need to be considered, including positive risk-taking. Positive risk-taking aims to strike a balance between keeping a person safe, whilst also ensuring that some well-calculated and managed risks are taken. The desired outcome is that PBS encourages and supports people to learn skills in new ways, whilst retaining as much independence as possible.





## How does the PBS process work?

Our Referral & Assessment Team and our support teams can complete a PBS referral form for any individual they feel would benefit. Our Specialist Support Team will then complete a functional behavioural assessment to determine why behaviours that challenge occur by meeting with the individual, their support team, and any health professionals already involved in their support. They'll gather a full picture of the social and physical environment along with the individual's behaviour history, their likes and dislikes, and goals.

Once this information has been gathered, it serves as a basis for the development of an Individual Behaviour Support Plan (IBSP) that looks to replace an individual's behaviours that challenge with a functionally equivalent skill. The IBSP will be integrated into the individual's current support plan. As part of creating the plan, our PBS team will assess if there are any additional training needs of the support team, as well as reviewing if any other individuals living at the same service require any additional support.

### **PBS takes a proactive approach to support, carefully managing risk, and involves:**

- adapting the support team's communication skills to meet the individual's needs
- teaching new skills to help the person we support to become more independent
- supporting the individual to find different ways of coping with situations they find difficult
- reducing the need for the support team to implement restrictive physical intervention.

The Specialist Support Team will stay close to the individual and their support team, carrying out regular evaluation reviews until the PBS plan is seen to be effective in significantly reducing or negating the behaviours.

## Who can benefit from PBS?

PBS is available to all the people we support, so it could be someone who is transitioning into Lifeways, or someone we support who has started to display behaviours that challenge.

## Alison's story

Before moving to Lifeways, Alison\* had always lived with her mum and led a fairly sheltered life. There had been numerous attempts at setting up respite placements and support at home, but these had always broken down. When her mum went into hospital, Alison arrived at one of our Lifeways services as an emergency placement.

Alison was 38 and lives with a diagnosis of Autism, a moderate learning disability and was considered to be non-verbal. She uses signs to communicate and had a strong dislike for visual aids. Alison arrived with a Local Authority Behaviour Support Plan and a long list of high-risk behaviours – it was advised that she should only access quiet fields or secluded areas for walks, and should not be allowed to access transport.

The Specialist Support Team visited the service four days after Alison arrived. Staff had done incredibly well to manage the situation in the first few days and had been supporting her to go for walks three times a day. The Specialist Support Team helped staff by:

- using Alison's behaviour support plan to create a traffic light system, making it easier to follow
- implementing PROACT-SCIPr-UK® training to support with physical interventions
- introducing environmental restrictions to keep both Alison and staff safe.

When Alison first moved in, the staff found it difficult to understand some of her signs and she was very resistant to any demands being placed upon her. However, with consistency and reassurance, within four weeks Alison had taught staff most of her signs, along with learning to use the microwave, make drinks and do her own laundry.

Over the next few months, it was agreed Alison would remain at the service permanently. Alison was able to spend more time out in the community (with visits to coffee shops and supermarkets firm favourites) and incidents reduced in both severity and frequency. Environmental restrictions were removed and following reviews so were the physical interventions. Support hours were reduced and Alison continues to shine.

\*name and image changed to protect individual's privacy.





## Elliot's story

Elliot\* who has a diagnosis of autism, learning disabilities, Tourette's syndrome and mental health conditions, moved to Lifeways in 2017 from another service provider.

Elliot was displaying high levels of self-injurious behaviour and would also show verbal and physical aggression towards his support team, with incidents lasting for two to four hours at a time.


Following the referral to the Specialist Support Team, a functional assessment was completed, along with incident analysis, observations and joint meetings. From this the team were able to identify that the verbal aggression is actually part of Elliot's diagnosis of Tourette's and was therefore involuntary.

The Specialist Support Team worked with the local team to help them better understand Elliot's diagnosis and how it presented. In order to proactively meet Elliot's needs, the team were supported to adapt their approach to manage his behaviours, which included:

- redirecting to different activities
- engaging in meaningful activities
- methods such as counting or repeating phrases to calm
- talking to Elliot about triggers and how he felt when upset
- managing his health needs and pain proactively.

The support Elliot and his team received from the Specialist Support Team was successful in calming his behaviour and reducing his incidents from what were previously around two to four hours to just 15 minutes. As a result, his relationship with his support team improved and he is able to enjoy a vastly improved quality of life.

\*name and image changed to protect individual's privacy.



**“Lifeways have had such a positive impact on my sister – they’ve supported her to learn so many life skills in order to maximise her independence. It’s a big step to trust someone to care for your family member, but thanks to Lifeways I’ve never felt so confident!”**

Family of person supported by Lifeways.

Find out more by contacting us today  
at [specialist.support@lifeways.co.uk](mailto:specialist.support@lifeways.co.uk)

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