



# COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE: Positive Behavior Support

The Community of Practice (CoP) was developed through a partnership with IMPACT WV and the WV Home Visiting Program to help participants exchange technical information and share experiences about Positive Behavior Support related to serving clients currently experiencing or who have past experiences with substance use and neonatal abstinence syndrome (NAS).

**\*The information in this IMPACT WV product was taken from Community of Practice (CoP) presentation by Anastasia Riley, MBA CBIS Behavior Specialist. Virginia Maternal Mental Health Coalition.**


## Aim

The purpose of this CoP:

- Understand the key elements of Positive Behavior Support (PBS)
- Discuss how to proactively set up an environment for success
- Demonstrate person centered approaches to increase quality of life
- Identify functionally equivalent replacement behavior(FERB)

## General Info

PBS is centered around teaching in a strength based way. The focus is what is going to work for the individual that helps them reach their needs, while also fitting socially acceptable behaviors. To do so, it is important to determine what the individual's strengths and communication style is to help communicate their needs. All behaviors tell us something; therefore, we must first determine what the purpose of the behavior is as well as the need it meets. From here, replacement behaviors can be formed and quality of life can be improved to help an individual reach their full potential.



**ABC's of behavior:**

- **Antecedent (trigger)**
  - Happens before the target behavior
- **Behavior (target)**
  - Anything and everything an individual does
- **Consequence (function)**
  - What happens immediately after the target behavior?

### What is the individual's behavior telling you?

All behaviors have a purpose and convey a message. Operationally, behavior is defined as an action that is measurable, observable and all parties see in the same way. The target behavior must first be defined before providing an appropriate replacement behavior that provides the same benefit of a target behavior. When determining the purpose of the behavior, consider the following questions:

What does the child want to get or get away from?



# COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE: Positive Behavior Support

## Functions of Behavior

Sometimes behavior is really just to escape overwhelming emotions and the consequence we see is not the intended consequence from the individual. The need to relieve frustration and calm an overwhelmed emotional center of the brain is needed before someone can think through a problem.

### Ideas to help children with overwhelming emotions:

- Create a calming space, this helps teach a child how to walk away from frustration.
  - It is a great way to teach self-regulation skills
- Increase ways that they can identify their emotions.
  - Labeling feeling and playdates are a great way to enhance social-emotional learning
- Identify and remind them of their strengths
  - Using a child's strengths and interests can be a valuable way to help them calm in the moment.
  - Finding a healthy creative outlet such as art and physical outlets such as sports can be very beneficial and productive lifelong coping mechanisms.

## WAYS TO MITIGATE

### Proactive strategies

Proactive strategies aim to prevent problem behaviors before they start. By changing the antecedent, one can prevent the problem behavior from occurring. This may look like a change in setting for the individual or determining what starts the behavioral episode. Teaching these strategies when the individual is calm, helps them reinforce carry over to the next behavior.

#### Proactive strategies include:

- Velcro picture schedules
- Using a different tone of voice or asking a question in a different way
- Provide snacks or exercise before an activity
- Funny signal word
- Clear expectations
- Social stories
- Choice board
- Quiet, relaxing space to calm down
- Teaching relaxation methods
- Sensory integration techniques

#### Providing alternative communication outlets:

- Assistive technology devices
- American Sign Language (ASL)
- Picture exchange communication system (PECS)
- Communication boards/picture boards
- Gestures, pointing, and body language.



# COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE: Positive Behavior Support

## FERBS

### Functionally equivalent replacement behaviors (FERBS)

FERBS are used to replace the behavior with a more socially appropriate activity that serves the same purpose. These behaviors should be something that is easy for the child to do and obtain when needed. FERBS's are recommended to be introduced during a state of calm for the child, and in an area that is relevant to their daily life. Ignoring problem behaviors and reinforcing replacement behaviors can also be helpful when appropriate.

### How to teach replacement behaviors:

- When the individual is calm and happy
- Using social stories
- Recalling the benefits of FERB
- Help them feel empowered
- Provide immediate success
- Have prompts and cues ready
- Reinforce small victories


## Additional ways to support

### Catch them being good

Behaviors that get the most attention are those that can be strengthened. Find ways you can praise the individual, focusing on what they are doing correctly, rather than those they are doing incorrectly when providing feedback. You want to praise them as much as possible to help reinforce those correct behaviors.

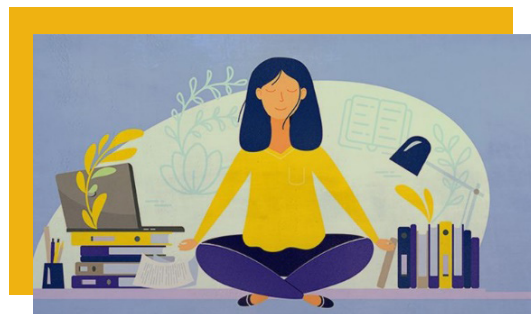
### Increasing choice and encouraging good choices

Provide the individual with a variety of options to choose from. By receiving their input, you provide the individual with the autonomy to make decisions that they feel will benefit them. You can provide support by helping them determine the pros and cons of the choices they make. These can be limited to choices that are acceptable for the behavior or context at hand. Finally, respect the choice the individual makes. This allows them to see they have control of their own life and builds the foundation of control.



**When a flower doesn't bloom  
you fix the environment in  
which it grows, not the flower.**

Alexander den Heijer



### Building strengths

Determine what the individual is good at and what they enjoy. This can look like a vision board of choices, reminding them of their attributes and finding ways they can utilize this in their daily lives. Each individual is unique and has their own talents or attributes that can be personal. Praise them for it!

### Mindfulness

Mindfulness can help mitigate the response to stress and fear exhibited by certain areas of your brain. The focus is to build upon an individual's resiliency, or to bounce back from adverse experiences. Mindfulness can serve a variety of functions in everyday life such as relieving chronic pain, integrating emotions, decreasing stress and reducing anxiety. Here are some ways to practice mindfulness:

- Leg up wall yoga posture
- Relaxation techniques: belly breathing
- Creating designated calming spaces



# COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE: Positive Behavior Support

## Resources

Nine Examples of Positive Behavior Support and Interventions:

<https://www.kickboardforschools.com/pbis-positive-behavior-interventions-supports/9-examples-of-positive-behavior-support-interventions/>



Carr, E. G., Dunlap, G., Horner, R. H., Koegel, R. L., Turnbull, A. P., Sailor, W., ... & Fox, L. (2002). Positive behavior support: Evolution of an applied science. *Journal of positive behavior interventions*, 4(1), 4-16.

Positive Behavior Support Ted Talk:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=995j6uhxN9g>



## Tips

Link to tips by the APBS:

<https://www.huntsvillecityschools.org/sites/default/files/APBS%20Behavior%20Support%20Strategies%20at%20Home.pdf>



- Know your child's strengths and interests
- Create clear expectations
- Create predictable routines
- Anticipate challenges and plan accordingly
- Know your own reactions
- Model the behavior you want the child to learn
- Use positive language for the behavior you want to see
- Provide words for emotions
- Know what the behavior is really telling you.
- Five to one positives to reinforce behavior you want