



The science underpinning Positive Behavioural Support and its applications

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Behaviour analysis

The scientific study of **learning** and **behaviour**

Behaviour is the **interaction**
between the **person** and their
environment

To **understand** behaviour, we
have to understand the
environment in which it occurs



Over time, we **learn** which behaviours work for us in a given **context**

Gamora

Applications

Challenging behaviour in people with a learning disability

Autism

Older adults

Acquired brain injury

Typically developing children

Gambling and addiction

Organisational behaviour management

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Goal

Improve quality of life

Method

Teaching new skills and change environments

Older adults

Example

Setting: Care home for people with dementia

Goal: improve communication and engagement

Strategy: change the layout of the communal lounge

Lounge layouts

1. chairs-around-the-edge layout
2. activity-specific layout
3. small-groups layout

Results

Engagement

10 times higher in **activity-specific** than **chairs-around-the-edge**

Communication

12 times higher in **small groups** than **chairs-around-the-edge**

Acquired brain injury

Example

Background:

- Patient had suffered a right hemisphere stroke
- Mobility issues → hoist for transfers
- Sequencing problems, distractibility

Goal:

- Increase independence and improve quality of life

Method:

- Self instruction

Results

Within 1 day

- the patient was self-prompting without error and the staff stopped using the hoist
- He went out for a trip to with his family

Typically developing children

Context

Local authority

Children and young people

Missing school, self-injury, aggression, crime

Oppositional defiant disorder, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, obsessive compulsive disorder

Assessment

Created tool based on ...

Constructional Questionnaire

Goldiamond, I. (1974). Toward a constructional approach to social problems. *Behaviorism*, 2, 1-79.

Functional Assessment Interview

O'Neill et al. (1997). *Functional assessment and program development for problem behavior: A practical handbook*. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole

Sample questions – goals

- a. What is going well for you at the moment?
- b. What do you really like to do? [If the young person struggles to answer, you could use the following prompts: leisure, relationships, education, hobbies, work]
- c. Do you spend enough time doing the things you enjoy?

[If NO]

- What stops you?
- Was there a time you spent enough time doing the things you enjoy? If so, what made it possible then? What changed?

Sample questions – precursors

- a. Is there anything that tells you when you are about to [behaviour]?
- b. [Following on from previous question] Are there any particular thoughts that go through your mind?
- c. Do you feel a certain way in your body?
- d. Do you experience any particular emotions?
- e. Is there anything you find yourself doing or saying?

Examples

Anthony – self management

Examples

Mia's – recognising and rewarding good behaviour

Quill

Examples

Samantha – positive interaction scripts

Common interventions

Recognising and rewarding good behaviour

Collaborative rule setting

Self-management

Behavioural contracts

Summary

Science underpinning PBS

Older adults, neuro-rehab and typically
developing young people



Thank you

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