

INFORMATION SHEET



Challenging Behaviour - Supporting your Loved One at Home

You may experience an escalation in behaviour that challenges during the time you and your family are together. We know that many children and adults find changes to their routines very difficult. We do not underestimate the impact being confined to your home will have on you and all members of your immediate family. It may be helpful to think about the following if you begin to see a change in the behaviour of your relative:

- 1) Has my relative developed any physical health problems? It is important to check this out as physical health needs can be overlooked. For more information please see our information sheet on [Health and Challenging Behaviour](#)
- 2) Consider if environmental changes are having an impact and how you might be able to alter these: for example, is it noisier, hotter, are there more people than usual in the house?
- 3) Can I control or reduce setting events (or triggers) i.e. things that happen in the environment or in their body that might make behaviour that challenges more likely to happen?
- 4) Try to let your relative have as much control as possible about things that are in their control. E.g. how much to do of something or where to do something.
- 5) Is the person's Positive Behaviour Support plan up to date? Is their Communication Passport up to date? Follow this link to see a good example of how to build one: <https://vimeo.com/364781207>
- 6) Communication systems need to be in place- e.g. if a communications system is used at school then try to ensure it continues now. People should have maximum support with their communication.
- 7) It may be helpful to try and work out what the change in behaviour is "saying" so you have a better chance of meeting that need. Do they want:
 - positive attention
 - something tangible – a DVD, sandwich, drink?
 - to avoid doing something (offer an alternative if so)
 - sensory feedback
- 8) Consider how you might introduce a **new routine**:
 - think about activities you may wish to introduce
 - think about activities that can replace the usual daily activities

- what can you include from other routines that will be familiar to the person
 - choose an activity that you can continue on a daily basis so you can build a new everyday programme together (e.g. if you start cooking, you may not be able to cook everyday)
 - it is important that a new routine is followed through in the same way each time
- 9) Provide as much free access to things the person enjoys, increase their access to preferred activities. These are short term changes to accommodate a crisis
- 10) At this time of change and increased anxiety consider reducing demands and expectations. E.g. usually your son/daughter may be able to do XX independently, but currently may need more support because the circumstances are different.
Further guidance can be found here on our information sheet '[Positive Behaviour Support Planning](#)'
- 11) Displaying Behaviour that challenges is distressing for the person and for anyone in the immediate environment. Consider the following if you see a change in the person's behaviour:
- Provide choice where possible
 - Praise and reward positive behaviour
 - Keep language simple
 - Use positive language
 - Divert or distract
 - Involve them in everyday activities
 - Use body gestures/signs
 - Give reminders of rules and routines
 - Plan activities
 - Withdraw from a situation if safe to do so
 - Give what is wanted at the start to avoid escalation
 - Stay as calm as possible in a low arousal approach
- 12) Try to keep a record of what happened before, during and after the incident. This will help you to work out why it may have happened and give you an idea of the changes you might be able to make to reduce the likelihood of it happening again. You will need to do this more than once so you can build up the picture.
- 13) Ask for external help and advice- contact your relative's social worker or behaviour support team at the community learning disability team. They may be able to give advice over the phone.
- 14) Look after yourself. Being at home with family members for a long period is hard and challenging behaviour makes this even tougher. Think about:
- what can I do if XX happens?

- how is my breathing?
- can someone else step in?
- can you have time out after an incident? can you discuss it with someone else? do you have a “phone buddy” who will listen to you?
- plan breaks for yourself and take them even if the situation appears calm

If your relative has a severe learning disability you can contact us at:

- CBF telephone: 0300 666 0126
- E-mail: info@thecbf.org.uk
- Website: www.challengingbehaviour.org.uk

Created & reviewed 01/04/2020