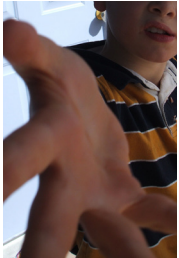


Informing Families *Building Trust*

A Partnership for Better Communication
on Developmental Disability Issues in Washington State

Focus on the Positive: The Language of Behavior



Using words to express our feelings, frustrations and needs is a natural, healthy way of coping with stress; however, for individuals with limited verbal skills, the language of behavior may be the only way to communicate. If the behavior becomes disruptive or dangerous to the individual or others, it's time to get help.

Children and adults with developmental disabilities and their families/caregivers can get support to identify and address the root cause of challenging behaviors through the following services and supports:

Behavior Support Services

Counseling and *positive behavior support* services are offered to clients of DDA enrolled in the Individual & Family Services (IFS) program or a Home and Community Based Services waiver (based on assessed need).

They are also available on a short term basis to families on the IFS wait list who are in crisis.

Positive behavior support is used to help families and care providers identify and understand the root cause of challenging behaviors.

How *positive behavior support* works:

A behavior specialist gathers information; interviews family and caregivers; observes how the individual responds to his/her environment where the behavior is occurring (home, school, community); and uses the information to create a *positive behavior support plan*.

The specialist then supports the family and/or caregivers in carrying out the plan.

Children's In-Home Intensive Behavior Support (CIIBS)

Family-centered, wrap-around services designed to support individuals age 8 to 21 who engage in aggressive behaviors that put them at risk of out-of-home placement. The CIIBS approach is strengths-based, with a focus on solutions that help the child continue to live at home.

Parent Support Groups

Connecting with other parents who have faced similar issues can go a long way toward resolving challenging behaviors. Parent to Parent is a great resource for families seeking to connect with one another, exchange ideas and get support. To find a chapter near you, visit: arcwa.org/getsupport.



When there is a break in communication, for anybody, if words are not the language used to communicate, other languages have to be developed. And (in our case) with autism, the language of behaviors is fluent.

Diane L.
Parent