



**POSITIVE BEHAVIOR
SUPPORTS *for*
ADULTS *with* DISABILITIES
in EMPLOYMENT,
COMMUNITY, *and*
RESIDENTIAL SETTINGS**

Practical Strategies That Work

Keith Storey, Ph.D.

Michal Post, M.A.

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By

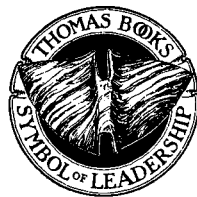
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To Norma and Ferd Denecke, Annie and John Storey, Elizabeth and Ferdinand Denecke, Eliza and Thomas Storey, Jane and George Milne, Valeria and Theodore Greilich, Elizabeth and Thomas Storey, Elizabeth and Ferdinand Denecke, Louisa and Harry Denecke, Eliza and Henry Oberhelman, Julia and Gottlieb Otto, Elizabeth and Christian Ziegler, Katharina and Johann Ziegler, Amalia and Christopher Otto, Elizabeth and Martin Greilich, Anna and Johann Ziegler, and Maria and Johann Ziegler. This book is part of their legacy. Perhaps surprised. Hopefully pleased.

K.S.

Dedicated in gratitude to Keith Storey and Joyce Montgomery for staying the course and inspiring me to do so. And for my son, Terrence, for his love and support, and to the memory of my parents.

M.P.

PREFACE

Scope

The scope of this book is to provide an overview of positive behavior supports for adults with disabilities in a written format that is directed to support providers who can immediately put the information to use. We have tried to write in a nontechnical format and include clear, real-life examples for using positive behavior supports in employment, community, and residential settings. It is generic across disability labels and should be of interest to those working with adults with disabilities in any capacity.

Plan

In this book, each chapter follows the sequence of:

Key Point Questions

Window to the World Case Studies

Best Practice Recommendations

Discussion Questions

Employment-, Community-, and Residential-Based Activity Suggestions

Purpose

This book is intended to give support providers the knowledge and skills for providing positive behavior supports in employment, community, and residential settings and thereby improve the quality of life for the individuals whom they support. The rubber meets the road, not only in how to support adults with disabilities, but also in how to implement positive behavior supports so that positive quality of life outcomes occur. An advantage of this book is that agencies and organizations preparing support providers can easily use it in courses or trainings that address positive behavior supports, as it covers methodology that is seldom covered in detail in most texts. Those who are al-

ready support providers will find the information to be practical and easily implemented in applied settings.

College instructors are likely to choose our book based on:

- a. The consistent format throughout the book.
- b. The “readability” of the book for students in college classes or adult service providers.
- c. The comprehensive coverage of positive behavior supports.
- d. The direct applicability to applied settings.

In addition to college instructors, we hope that others providing instruction, supervision, and training to support providers will find this book useful.

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**POSITIVE BEHAVIOR SUPPORTS FOR
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Chapter 1

OVERVIEW OF POSITIVE BEHAVIOR SUPPORTS

Key Point Questions

1. What is Applied Behavior Analysis?
2. What are Positive Behavior Supports?
3. How are Positive Behavior Supports different than other approaches?
4. Why are Positive Behavior Supports important?
5. What are Barriers to the Implementation of Applied Behavior Analysis and Positive Behavior Supports?
6. How do Applied Behavior Analysis and Positive Behavior Supports relate to the learning of Adults with Disabilities?
7. How are Applied Behavior Analysis and Functional Skills related?

WINDOW TO THE WORLD CASE STUDY ONE

Mabel is 24 years old, has a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorders, and works at an upscale clothing store. Mabel is very knowledgeable about women's clothing fashions and enjoys working at the store. She is looked upon as a very good and conscientious worker. Not only can she answer very detailed questions from customers, but she is meticulous about making sure that the clothes are displayed correctly, and she returns items quickly to the racks.

Recently, however, Mabel has started developing some behavior problems that are of increasing concern. When the store gets busy and the items to be restocked start piling up, Mabel has been getting agitated. She will start muttering obscenities about the customers under her breath, and if a customer interrupts her to ask a question when she is returning items to the rack, she will increasingly “snap” at the customer.

The supervisor, Ms. Hui, has called in Martha, Mabel’s job coach, and told her in no uncertain terms that, although Mabel has been a valued employee, this behavior cannot continue and that if it occurs again, Mabel will be terminated. Martha is in a panic. She understands job analysis and job supports, but she has no background in positive behavior supports. Martha contacts her supervisor at the supported employment agency, Mr. Rhodes, but he, too, has no background in positive behavior supports and also does not know what to do. It appears that Mabel’s job is about to come to an unfortunate end.

WINDOW TO THE WORLD CASE STUDY TWO

Herbert is a 40-year-old adult who is labeled as having a severe intellectual disability and also has mild cerebral palsy, which makes his walking a bit unsteady. After living in a state institution and then in group homes for individuals with intellectual disabilities, Herbert’s two siblings realized that he was unhappy and getting depressed living in a group home with five other adults with intellectual disabilities and having to share a bedroom.

A new agency, Innovative Behavior Interventions (IBI), just opened up in the town, and Herbert’s siblings contacted them. Ms. Ehl, the supported living director of IBI, did a Person Centered Plan with Herbert and his siblings, and it became clear, through the Person Centered Planning (PCP) process, that Herbert really wanted to live in his own apartment. Herbert worked full time at a local law firm where he delivered mail and supplies, did copying, and prepped rooms for meetings. Between the income from his job and the trust fund that his parents had set up for him, he had the financial ability to rent a nice apartment. Additionally, IBI provided full-time supported living services when he was not at work.

Herbert enjoyed his new apartment and the supported living supports from IBI. However, Herbert has started getting upset in his apart-

ment. He will sometimes yell out, start jumping around, and end by hitting his head very hard with objects in the apartment. This behavior is upsetting to both Herbert and the supported living staff. Ms. Ehl wonders whether IBI made a mistake in providing support to Herbert. Ms. Ehl and the supported living staff have never worked with someone like Herbert before, someone with such serious behavior problems. Ms. Ehl has decided to meet with the executive director of IBI and recommend that IBI withdraw its supported living services to Herbert.

**KEY POINT QUESTION 1:
WHAT IS APPLIED BEHAVIOR ANALYSIS?**

The foundation of Positive Behavior Supports is Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA). Applied behavior analysis is derived from the work of B. F. Skinner (1953, 1971). Skinner was a psychologist who advocated that the focus of interventions should be on the behavior of individuals rather than on internal states (O’Donohue & Ferguson, 2001). Behavior may be defined as observable actions that a person does. Sitting in a seat, completing a work task correctly, making a sandwich, cursing, and greeting a supervisor at work appropriately are all observable behaviors (verbal behaviors are classified as behaviors as well). These are all behaviors that can be changed (for better or worse). Being motivated, trying hard, and being unruly are not observable behaviors and thus cannot be directly changed.

John Watson is often credited as being the first behavioral psychologist. In his 1913 manifesto, he wrote that, “Psychology, as the behaviorist views it, is a purely objective experimental branch of natural science. Its theoretical goal is the prediction and control of behavior.” For Positive Behavior Supports (and education as a whole), the key words are “prediction” and “control.” Good support providers (*we will use the term “support providers” throughout the book, and we mean to include job coaches, residential staff, family members, social workers, case managers, and others who provide support to adults with disabilities in employment, community, and residential settings*) are effective at predicting what will work in their situations (such as using picture schedules, reinforcing positive behaviors, ignoring some behaviors, etc.) and then controlling the environment so that these behaviors occur. Sometimes support providers have concerns with the concept of control and view control as being a

bad thing. However, not positively controlling the situation only leads to anarchy and poor performance for the adult in his or her situation. For instance, by doing things such as having set routines, clear expectations about how to behave, and praising the person for completing tasks, the support provider is “controlling” the behavior of the adult. Having a support provider controlling a situation in this way is good support and is not deceitful or wrong. In other words, the focus is on the cause-and-effect relationship between the environment and the behavior of the individual (Nye, 1992). This cause and effect is not a oneway process as there is the issue of countercontrol, where the behavior of the individual also influences the environment (e.g., the behavior of the support provider).

As they read this, many support providers may be thinking, “I do this everyday.” Good support providers use these types of strategies all the time. In this book, we are presenting a coherent and systematic approach to understanding the purpose of Positive Behavior Supports and how support providers can implement these strategies to arrive at the desirable results by carefully targeting the behaviors that need changing, as opposed to a “hit-and-miss” strategy that many support providers use.

Applied Behavior Analysis

In applied behavior analysis, it is assumed that the behavior of individuals is lawful. This means that people do things for a reason, such as being previously reinforced for a behavior (such as completing work tasks successfully) or being punished for a behavior (such as talking back to a supervisor at a work site). In other words, individuals have a history of being reinforced or punished for certain behaviors, and this history influences their current behavior. For example, if Hart is consistently reinforced for preparing dinner for himself and his roommate by receiving positive feedback from the roommate on the quality of the food and having the roommate do the dishes after dinner, then Hart is likely to continue to prepare good meals for himself and his roommate. A person who does not receive this reinforcement for preparing quality dinners is less likely to consistently prepare good dinners.

The three basic assumptions of applied behavior analysis are:

1. All behavior is learned.