

# The Behaviour Support Plan Audit Tool (BSPA-tool)

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## About the BSPA-tool

- The BSPA-tool is an audit tool to assess the quality of a positive behaviour support plan, from the perspective of the plan's technical compliance with behaviour principles.
- The BSPA-tool is based on the first nine items (Domains A to I) of the *Behaviour Inventory Plan Quality Evaluation* (BIPQEII; Browning-Wright et al., 2013) – the domains related to behavioural assessment and intervention planning (i.e., technical compliance with behavioural principles).
- The BSPA-tool can be considered as a “simplified” version of the first nine items of the BIPQEII. The items were simplified by:
  - Removing technical language from the BIPQEII domain items as much as possible, and replacing it with lay descriptions (e.g., replacing the term ‘function’ with ‘purpose’).
  - Changing the three-point Likert scale used by the BIPQEII to a NO/YES dichotomy scale [NO = 0 (zero), YES =1].
    - This approach allows the scorer to identify the presence of a quality domain in a positive behaviour support plan, without needing to evaluate its sophistication to same degree required by the BIPQEII.
  - Changing the structure of some items from one specific item to an item that contains multiple sub-questions.
    - Where an item seeks a response to two or more questions, the scorer answers each question, and the item receives a score of 1 (Yes) if all relevant elements are present.

## Who Can Use the BSPA-tool

- The authors advise that the BSPA-tool should only be used by practitioners and researchers with **extensive experience and knowledge of positive behaviour support**.

## Scoring

- Each of the nine items of the BSPA-tool is scored on a NO/YES dichotomy scale [NO = 0 (zero), YES =1]. Each item contains specific criteria as to what stipulates a score of 0 (zero, NO) or 1 (YES) for that item.
- The minimum total score possible for the BSPA-tool is 0 (zero) and the highest possible score is 9.
- No interpretation criteria have been proposed for the total score; at this stage, **higher scores** on the BSPA-tool reflect that the audited positive behaviour support plan **better complies** with the principles of behaviour assessment and intervention planning.

## Psychometric Properties

- See Vassos, Carberry, Davis, Wardale and Nankervis (2023) for the initial psychometric properties of the BSPA-tool.

## References

- Browning-Wright, D, Mayer, G & Saren, D 2013, *The behaviour intervention plan quality evaluation guide, Version II*. Positive Environments, Network of Trainers (PENT), California.
- Vassos, M., Carberry, T., Davis, F., Wardale, S., & Nankervis, K. (2023). Can the Behaviour Intervention Plan Quality Evaluation, Version 2, be simplified for use by stakeholders with limited experience of positive behaviour support? *Journal of Intellectual Disability Research*, 67(5), 488-497. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jir.13020>

BSPA-tool SCORING CRITERIA		SCORE
A	<p><u>Respond to <i>either</i> (1) or (2):</u></p> <p>(1) Is the person's behaviour described in terms that would allow someone to act it out? If YES, score 1. If NO, score 0.</p> <p><b>OR</b></p> <p>(2) If the person's challenging behaviour is described as an <b>emotion</b> (e.g., anger, sadness) – does the plan explain <b>what the person does</b> when feeling that emotion? If YES, score 1. If NO, score 0.</p>	
B	<p><i>Challenging behaviour tends to occur because of something happening in the person's direct environment, i.e., something happens in the environment that <b>triggers</b> the person to display that behaviour. Some examples include loud noises, the presence or absence of a person, or being told to do a certain task.</i></p> <p>(1) Are any long or short-term <b>triggers/factors</b> of the person's challenging behaviour <b>defined</b> in the plan? If NO, score 0. If YES, answer (2) below.</p> <p>(2) Are the identified triggers/factors described as the <b>person's thoughts</b>, an <b>emotional state</b> they may be experiencing (e.g., anger, sadness), or a <b>diagnosis</b> (e.g., autism spectrum disorder)? If YES, score 0. If NO, score 1.</p>	
C	<p>Does the plan explain <b>how</b> the identified trigger(s)/factor(s) are <b>linked</b> to the person's challenging behaviour? If YES, score 1. If NO, score 0.</p>	
D	<p><i>Challenging behaviour can be addressed by improving a person's quality of life and making changes to the person's direct environment, for example giving people more time to complete a task, removing distractions or reducing noise, ensuring that the person has access to assistive technology, or enabling positive social interaction with others.</i></p> <p>(1) Does the plan outline any <b>changes</b> that could be made to the <b>person's direct environment</b> as a way of decreasing the person's challenging behaviour? If NO, score 0. If YES, answer (2) below.</p> <p>(2) Are the changes to the person's direct environment <b>linked</b> to the identified <b>triggers/factors</b> for the person's challenging behaviour? If YES, score 1. If NO, score 0.</p>	

BSPA-tool SCORING CRITERIA (cont.)		SCORE
<b>E</b>	<p><i>All behaviours serve a purpose; this purpose could be to get more of the things we like or to get away from those things we do not like, or to communicate a need or point of view.</i></p> <p>(1) Does the plan clearly identify the <b>purpose</b> of the person's challenging behaviour?  If NO, score 0.  If YES, answer (2) below.</p> <p>(2) Is the identified purpose of behaviour related to an <b>emotional state</b>, e.g., low self-esteem, depression, etc.?  If YES, score 0.  If NO, score 1.</p>	
<b>F</b>	<p><i>One way to address a person's challenging behaviour is to identify and encourage the person to use another behaviour or skill that serves the same purpose as the challenging behaviour. This could be a new behaviour or skill to be taught to the person, or an existing behaviour or skill that the person already has.</i></p> <p>(1) Has the plan identified one or more behaviours and/or skills that the person <b>could use instead of</b> the challenging behaviour?  If NO, score 0.  If YES, answer (2) below.</p> <p>(2) Do the identified behaviours and/or skills serve the <b>same purpose</b> as the person's challenging behaviour?  If YES, score 1.  If NO, score 0.</p>	
<b>G</b>	<p>Are there instructions on how to teach any new behaviours and/or skills (e.g., step-by-step instructions, teaching materials required, etc.)?  To score 1 (YES), a teaching strategy must be available for <b>each</b> new behaviour and/or skill listed in the plan.  If teaching strategies are <b>missing for one or more</b> of the proposed new behaviours and/or skills, score 0 (NO).</p>	
<b>H</b>	<p><i>Often people will not learn a new behaviour or skill unless there is an incentive to do so. This incentive can be in the form of a reward such as praise, more time to do an activity the person likes, access to desired items, or having a break from a certain situation, task, or activity.</i></p> <p>Does the plan outline any <b>rewards</b> that could be provided to the person for using the new behaviours and/or skills they have been taught?  If YES, score 1.  If NO, score 0.</p>	
<b>I</b>	<p><i>At times, a person may resort to using challenging behaviours again even if new behaviours and skills have been taught. Given this, it is important to have a plan in place to manage these situations. These plans should avoid negative outcomes for the person as much as possible.</i></p> <p>Does the plan identify <b>how to keep the person and the people around them safe</b> when the person starts displaying challenging behaviours again?  If YES, score 1.  If NO, score 0.</p>	
TOTAL SCORE		/ 9