

Collaboration in the Development of Behavioural Social Scripts to Reduce Behaviours of Concern and Restrictive Practice






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Research Questions

- To what extent are behaviour support plans implemented in services?
- What factors do workers perceive as limiting or facilitating the implementation of behaviour support plans?
- Are plans which have been modified to include Social Scripts effective in reducing BOC and restrictive practices?

What is a social script?

- A written or pictured sequence of events which aim to support, inform and reassure an individual.
- Social scripts don't tell people what they can or can't do.

				
A casual will be on tonight	They will take me to the disco	They have a map, they will drive me to the disco	I will still have fun	It's OK

Participants

- All participants ($n=17$) had a behaviour support plan and were subject to restrictive interventions.
- Support workers: 28 in total, all 'ongoing' (not casual)
- A wide variety of service organisations, including both residential and day services were engaged.

Communication

- In order for a person to use social scripts they need to be 'symbolic' communicators – able to use some words, or pictures or formal signs to communicate.
- A proportion of people (n=7) in this study were not symbolic communicators, so social scripts were not implemented for them. However, data relating to our other research questions were also obtained from these people.

Method

- Effectiveness of the social scripts was assessed by comparing the frequency of behaviours of concern from before and after the intervention, through direct observation and interviews with support workers.
- The extent to which behaviour support plans are implemented and what DSWs see as facilitating or limiting was determined through interviews and direct observations.

Data Collection

- All participants assessed via the Motivational Assessment Scale and Challenging Behavior checklist as part of functional assessment of behaviour.
- Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test or Triple C administered.
- Assessment of individual's behaviour support plans.
- Baseline of restrictive intervention use was established.
- Observational recordings of the client (before and after intervention).
- Interviews with support workers before and after intervention.
- Support worker logs to record incidences of behaviours of concern, and their response to them.

Results – Social Scripts

- For participants with social scripts (n=5) it cannot be reliably concluded that social scripts are effective in reducing behaviours of concern.
- More time is needed to determine their effectiveness.
- Other variables also impact on any observed behaviour changes (eg. accurate functional assessment, activity levels, communication assessments, interaction style, casual staff).

Results – Implementation of BSPs

- Many DSWs do not utilise the behaviour support plan as a resource to guide their work. Many strategies are engaged which do not appear in BSPs.
- DSWs report:
 - To feeling ill equipped to deal with the complex area of behaviour support.
 - That BSPs amount to “more paperwork”.
 - That the majority of BSPs do not provide adequate proactive and reactive strategies sufficient to guide practice.
 - That they are seeking support and help, and that there is a lack of resources in this regard.

Recommendations

That DSWs receive more training and support in the functional assessment of behaviours of concern.

BSPs need to be in a easier to use more accessible format. They need to provide information for DSWs regarding specific strategies.

Although evidence is inconclusive at this stage, that DSWs consider engaging social scripts for individuals with behaviours of concern who are symbolic communicators.