

Tips for Parents: Participating in Behaviour Support Planning

Behaviour support planning is the process by which families, teachers and other school staff work as a team to meet the individual needs of students with behaviour disabilities. As a parent, you are an important member of your child's learning team.

You can participate in the behaviour support planning process by:

- providing information about your child's past experience and his or her goals, interests and areas of need
- regularly contacting your child's teachers
- taking an active role in the decisions made for your child
- learning about available services and resources
- working with your child at home to support the goals set through the behaviour support planning process
- actively participating in behaviour support planning meetings.

Before behaviour support planning meetings

- Discuss the positive elements in the behaviour support plan with your child.
- Find out about your child's involvement and role in the meeting. Decide if your child will benefit from participating in the meeting, or at least part of the meeting.
- Review the comments from your child's last report card, and goals and objectives from the last behaviour support plan. What progress have you seen? Note areas of concern.
- Ask your child questions or, if your child attends the meeting, he or she may be able to give input directly. For example:
 - What do you like best about school? What do you feel are your successes?
 - What problems do we need to find solutions for? What changes would help you learn better at school?
 - What would you like to happen this year?
- Be prepared. Jot down questions and concerns that you want to discuss. For example:
 - Whom should I call if I have concerns about my child's school program?
 - Will the team review the behaviour support plan every term?
 - What kinds of changes in our home does the school need to know about?
- Prioritize your concerns.

Tips for Parents (cont'd)

At behaviour support planning meetings

- Ask about new assessments, reports or observations.
- Ask about your child's strengths, interests, areas of growth, areas of need and friendships.
- Ask any other questions you have about your child's progress or programming.
- Talk about your present and future goals for your child.
- Discuss your specific concerns about your child.
- Talk about home conditions that may affect your child's performance or behaviour at school and provide recent documents or medical updates.
- Circulate samples of work your child has completed at home, if you think this can help other team members understand your child better. Ask to see samples of work your child has done at school.

At the close of behaviour support planning meetings

- Establish mutually agreed-upon goals and strategies for your child.
- Find out how you can support your child at home.
- Take notes on time lines, recommendations; for example, suggestions for additional services or assessments.
- Verbally summarize your understanding and interpretation of the decisions made, actions team members will take, time lines, and roles and responsibilities of each participant.
- Give feedback to the people working with your child about areas where you have noted positive effort, growth or change.
- Sign the behaviour support plan to indicate your agreement. If you do not agree with the behaviour support plan and do not wish to sign, the school has an obligation to document the reasons for your decision and the actions taken to resolve the issue.
- Ask for a copy of the behaviour support plan to refer to at home.
- Decide on the next meeting date.

After behaviour support planning meetings

- Give your child feedback from the meeting.
- Discuss what needs to happen in order to reach the goals of the behaviour support plan. Discuss your child's role and how school staff and your family will support the plan.

To review the effectiveness of your child's behaviour support plan, ask yourself these questions

- How does the behaviour support plan build on my child's strengths?
- How does the behaviour support plan address my child's individual needs?
- Does the behaviour support plan focus on key goals for my child?

Tips for Parents (cont'd)

- How are supports tailored to my child's strengths, areas of need and learning preferences?
- Does the behaviour support plan use more than one source of assessment data to determine strengths and areas of need?
- If several teachers are responsible for my child's education program, do all of them have access to the behaviour support plan so they can use it to plan instruction, monitor progress and help measure success?
- Is the school frequently monitoring progress toward the goals of the behaviour support plan? If my child is not demonstrating progress, does the team review the program and make changes?