

What is Positive Behaviour Guidance (PBG)?



PBG is a proactive approach educators can draw upon to support and positively guide children's behaviour. It is the most positive and effective way educators can support children towards developing the skills and understanding they need to interact positively with others.

PBG is not a reactive approach used only when children are engaging in unsafe behaviours. It is a whole-setting and all-day approach that occurs through educator-to-child connection, interactions and communication.

Educators are encouraged to develop three core understandings to support the successful implementation of PBG in practice: a deep understanding of **behaviour**, an awareness of children's experience of **regulation**, and the ability to build positive and respectful **relationships**.

Understanding Behaviour

To implement PBG, educators are encouraged to become curious and think deeply about the underlying reasons contributing to a child's behaviour. Through identifying underlying needs, educators can then positively and proactively guide the child towards safe behaviours.

Regulation

Educators are encouraged to develop increased understanding of regulation development. This assists educators in adjusting their expectations and understanding the neuroscience behind what a child's experience is when they are dysregulated. Educators are encouraged to use co-regulation to validate all emotional experiences of children. Educators are also encouraged to validate all emotional experiences of children and support children to identify and express their emotions.

Positive Relationships

Educators are encouraged to develop positive connections with children. These supportive relationships create a sense of safety, decreasing reactivity, and increasing behaviour responsiveness and engagement. Educators can role model positive interactions, promoting an environment where children interact and behave with peers positively.

What are the outcomes of PBG?

Children who experience PBG in early childhood settings are more likely to develop behaviours that support positive engagement with peers and their community as they grow. The use of PBG allows educators to support children to:

- **Express themselves and their opinions:** Educators can create environments where children feel safe and confident to express their opinions openly with others. Through these opportunities (and when educators model how to respectfully listen and respond), children become aware their opinions are important and they learn to do the same for others.
- **Undertake experiences that develop self-reliance and self-esteem:** Educators can create safe spaces where children feel supported to try new things, make mistakes, and learn. This helps build their confidence and self-esteem as they discover what they can do—without pressure to get it perfect.
- **Receive positive encouragement towards behaviour and actions:** Prioritising safety and encouraging emotional expression in ways that do not harm themselves or others. Educators can embrace emotional validation, however sometimes children benefit from guidance in finding ways to express their emotions safely.
- **Experience equal opportunities:** Educators can respond to diversity through authentic inclusive practices and consider childrens' social, cultural, and linguistic diversity. This includes learning styles, abilities, disabilities, gender, family circumstances, and geographic location, ensuring all experiences are recognised and valued.
- **Interact and develop positive and respectful relationships:** With each other, and with educators, staff, and volunteers.
- **Have their rights and dignity respected:** Every child has rights that should always be protected. Educators can support this by showing care, understanding, and respect, and by encouraging children to make their own choices.

References

Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority [ACECQA] (2018). Supporting children to manage their own behaviour. Retrieved 10 October 2024 from QA5_Supporting_children_to_regulate_their_own_behaviour.pdf (acecqa.gov.au)

Australian Government Department of Education [AGDE] (2022). Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia (V2.0). Australian Government Department of Education for the Ministerial Council

O'Connor, E. E., McCormick, M. P., & Early, D. M. (2023). The influence of teacher-student relationships on behavior in the classroom: Evidence from early childhood to adolescence. *Educational Psychology Review*, 35(1), 67-92.




O'Toole, L., & Hayes, N. (2019). *Supporting Positive Behaviour in Early Childhood Settings and Primary Schools: Relationships, Reciprocity and Reflection* (1st ed.). Routledge.

Porter, L. (2016). *Young Children's Behaviour: Guidance approaches for early childhood educators* (4th ed.). Routledge.

Sprott, J. E., Jennings, W. G., & Mazerolle, P. (2022). Long-term impacts of positive behavioural interventions and supports on student outcomes: A longitudinal study. *Journal of School Psychology*, 90, 12-24.

Autism Queensland is here to help—get in touch to learn more:



 **Website:** autismqld.com.au
 **Phone:** (07) 3273 0000
 **Email:** css@autismqld.com.au



Scan QR code to view other resources, services and supports offered by Autism Queensland.