Supporting Complex Needs & Homelessness Through Positive Behaviour Support in Australia

By Jessica Degrassi (Autism Spectrum Australia)

Before we begin...

This is Scott

- Scott loves drawing, filing papers, walking, playing basketball, cooking and playing in his bowling league
- Scott is enthusiastic, always wants to try new things and gives everyone the thumbs up to check how they are
- Scott lives in Independent Living with 1:1 support from disability support workers from My Goal Australia, and one other resident

Scott’s Story – the first month

- Relinquished to emergency
- Secluded, physically & chemically restrained daily for three months
- Build the team & positive relationships
- Initial behaviour support strategies

Positive relationships

- Initially Scott had very few people in his life with whom he had positive relationships
- Building positive relationships included:
  - Developing a different belief system around Scott
  - Identifying and using favourite activities to engage
  - Using humour and laughter to engage
  - Sharing ideas and strategies for building relationships
Scott’s Story – the next three months

Psychiatric ward
- Secluded & chemically restrained weekly

Team collaboration & shared goals
- Secondary behaviour support strategies

Secondary Strategies
- Functional behaviour assessment
- Emotional regulation skills teaching
- Community participation

Team collaboration and communication
- Specialist support coordinator to continue to build the team
- Team communication twice a week
- Meetings scheduled once a month
- Trial and feedback of strategies and supports
- Assisting Scott’s mother as his guardian to advocate

Shared values and goals with the individual
- Assessment using visual supports of what was important to Scott
- What was important to Scott was valued by all of Scott’s team
- Positive behaviour support, good quality of life and developing positive relationships were valued by all of Scott’s team
- Shared values and goals equated to the team working cohesively and in collaboration

Scott’s Story – after hospital

On the floor coaching & modelling
- Contextual fit assessment for environment and support staff
- Feedback and input from disability support workers who worked with Scott daily was vital to the success of behaviour support plans

Supported independent living
- 2:1 support Intensive preventative supports

Ongoing Strategies
- Maintenance of skills and supports
- Team collaboration and regular meetings
- Evaluation of behaviour support plans and skill development

On the floor coaching & modelling
- Ongoing behaviour support

Future directions
- Aspect Therapy and My Goal Australia continue to work collaboratively using the previous principles to support a number of individuals with complex care needs
- Collaborative approaches minimise challenges of individualised funding for those with complex care needs
- Feedback to government about challenges and learnings from Scott’s story
Thank you Scott

• Thank you Scott for the opportunity to work with and support you
• Thank you to your family and mum for wanting your story to be told to help others
• Thank you for everything we have learned from you, and how you have showed us the best way forward