

How to Work with My Child's Teacher About Using Positive Behavior Support in the Classroom

I'm interested in using the Positive Behavior Support process, but I'm not sure if it's used in my child's class. How do I explain what the positive behavior support process is to my child's teacher?

It's important to have a clear understanding of positive behavior support. Positive behavior support is a process used to prevent and replace challenging behavior, teach new skills, and improve quality of life. It is a team-based approach used to help parents, family members, educators, and others understand the reasons why a child is engaging in problem behavior. Parents and educators can work together to create and use strategies that will improve the quality of life of that child or adult. When you begin talking about the positive behavior support process with your child's teacher, be sure to mention that you want to have a collaborative relationship with open communication.

How do I approach my child's teacher about how positive behavior support is used at school?

Begin by having a discussion with your child's teacher about behavior issues seen at home. Ask the teacher if he or she is seeing or experiencing the same thing in the classroom. Ask the teacher what he or she is seeing that could be contributing to behavior issues (not being able to focus, grades slipping, outbursts, etc.).

Establish a common goal with the teacher on the issues that need to be addressed:

Ask your child's teacher questions about what is working in the classroom.

“Have you seen success with things that do work at the school? Because these are the things we see working at home.”

Start listing the behaviors or challenges seen at home and at school. Then discuss some of the strategies that are working at school and at home.

Ask if the teacher has heard of the positive behavior support process and how he or she uses it in class.

You could begin this type of discussion with your child's teacher, “I read this article about positive behavior support online and heard that it is successful and effective for other schools and teachers. I'm interested in learning about the things you do in the classroom that are related to positive behavior support.”

Share the resources you found to be useful and helpful for your family at home with your child's teacher(s). The important thing is to keep communication open and frequent between you and your child's teacher about their behavior. Be sure to share information on progress, when new patterns of behavior begin, or when certain strategies aren't working as effectively as they once did. Taking a team-based approach with your child's teachers, therapists, caregivers, and others who work with your child, is key to your child's success with improving behavior.