



Meeting Agenda: Behavior Support Self-Assessment

Welcome (5 minutes)

- Introduce any new members to your team.
- Provide space for employee recognition through shout-outs for a job well done.

Introduction (5 minutes)

- **Topic/Meeting Purpose:**
 - Youth development professionals will be introduced to the concept of behavior support and complete the Behavior Support Self-Assessment to examine their approach to responding to youth behavior.
- **Why:**
 - To begin the process of creating a culture of behavior support.
 - To better understand their personal approach to responding to, and supporting youth behavior.

Icebreaker/Teambuilding (10 minutes)

- Ask youth development professionals to think of their childhood mentor and a time they felt particularly supported by this person.
- Ask them to share the following answers with the group:
 - Who was your mentor, and why?
 - Describe when you felt supported by this person.
 - What did they do that made you feel supported?

Meeting Content (25 minutes)

- **Main Points:** Introduction to Behavior Support
 - **What is behavior?** Behavior is an observable action and form of communication.
 - Behavior is an action you can see or hear.
 - For example, behavior could include things like words, facial expressions, tones, postures and other body movements.
 - The youth we serve represent many different backgrounds, cultures and lifestyles. Our backgrounds and how our parents/caregivers reacted to our behavior has shaped our ideas of “acceptable” and “unacceptable” behavior.
 - For example, in some cultures making eye contact with adults is viewed as disrespectful, and in others it is considered a sign of respect.
 - Behavior is communication. Youth and adults communicate the way they think, feel, and how they experience the environment through their behavior.
 - For example, you may observe a young person walking away with their head down. These observable actions tell you that the young person may need support.
 - **What is behavior support?** Behavior support is a process of understanding what youth are communicating with their actions and using that information to adjust their environment and teach skills that promote positive behavior.
 - Behavior support involves understanding what youth are communicating through their behavior.
 - For example, if a young person raises their voice and leaves the room following an interaction with a peer, you may interpret that to mean their interaction upset them.
 - Behavior support involves using what we understand about the young person’s behavior to shape how we respond to it.
 - For example, this may mean checking in with a young person to see what kind of support they need and adjusting your behavior and expectations based on their needs.



➤ **The 5 Guiding Principles of Behavior Support**

1. All behavior is communication.
2. All youth are in the process of learning how to cope with demands, recognize emotions and negotiate interactions. As youth are learning to meet expectations, they will often act in ways that are challenging or concerning.
3. People interpret behavior based on culture, upbringing and experience.
4. Behavior is an opportunity to learn how youth respond to their environments, and the skills they are working on in those spaces.
5. Behavior support is a team approach that should include parents, mentors, elders, extended family, or other caregivers, and supportive adults in the young person's life.

• **Practice Activities: Behavior Support Self-Reflection**

- Behavior is a highly sensitive and personal topic.
- The way we understand and respond to behavior is shaped by our culture, identities and experiences.
- Our understanding of behavior shapes the way we interpret and respond to youth behaviors.
- Provide each youth development professional with their own copy of the Behavior Support Self-Reflection and give them enough time to independently complete the reflection process.

Planning for Action (10 minutes)

- Discussion
 - What was your overall experience of taking the self-assessment?
 - Were there any themes?
 - Were there any answers that surprised you?
 - How can you use this information moving forward?
- Next Steps
 - The next step in improving our approach to supporting and responding to youth behavior is to complete an organizational assessment. Who would like to be part of that process?

Reflection (5 minutes)

Ask staff to evaluate the effectiveness of the meeting and their ability to apply the information they learned.

Total time: 1 hour



Behavior Support Self-Assessment

Behavior is a highly sensitive and personal topic. Begin your planning process by reflecting on your own understanding and experiences with behavior. Your understanding of behavior shapes the way you interpret behaviors in youth. Answer the following questions:

1. The thoughts that come to mind when I hear the word behavior are:
2. My cultural identities are best described as:
3. My parents/caregivers and close family members were mostly:
 Strict In the middle Lenient
4. My teachers and school professionals were:
 Tolerant of chatter/joking In the middle Not tolerant of chatter/joking
5. When I made a mistake, the adults in my life were:
 Mostly understanding In the middle Mostly not understanding
6. The messages I received as a young person were:
 Do as you are told without question
 Voice/express your opinion
 Question things that don't make sense to you
 Other:
7. I believe in:
 Looking for the root cause of behavior
 Consequences for negative behavior
 Teaching skills
 Restorative practices to rebuild relationships
 Other:
8. The methods I use to respond to unwanted behavior tend to lean toward:
 Discipline Punishment Rules Support Other:
9. When I see behavior that concerns me, I tend to focus on:
 The youth/circumstances
 The Club environment or program activity
 The Club as a whole
 Other:
10. My experiences with, and beliefs about behavior affect my interactions with youth in the following ways:
11. The ways adults respond to behavior send important messages to youth. The messages I would like to send are:

NOTE: Keep your thoughts, culture, experiences and beliefs in mind as you work with others on your team to assess your Club's policies, practices and programs. You have a unique perspective that is shaped by your upbringing and cultural lens. It will be much easier to discuss your approach to behavioral support if you are aware of your perspective and message. Remain open with yourself and your colleagues as you assess, plan and improve your policies, practices and programs.