

## Behaviour Policy

### Policy Statement

This Policy defines Liberty Supported Living Limited approach to handling and managing young people who exhibit challenging behaviour. This Policy is divided into 3 sections as follows:

Section A: General information regarding challenging behaviour. Section B:

Non-intervention management of challenging behaviour. Section C: Prevention of challenging behaviour.

### **A: General information regarding challenging behaviour:**

#### Definitions:

Challenging behaviour is most often exhibited by persons with developmental disabilities, dementia, psychosis and by young people, although such behaviour can be displayed by any person. There are 2 types of challenging behaviour for which the following definitions apply:

- “Challenging behaviour” - culturally abnormal behaviour by individuals or groups, which causes others problems, and which significantly interferes with the quality of life of all concerned. In a supported living setting scenario, this will relate to challenging behaviour displayed by a young person towards other young people, a staff member and/or family member, visitors etc.
- “Severely challenging behaviour” - challenging behaviour of such frequency, intensity or duration, that the physical safety of the young person or others is likely to be placed in serious jeopardy, and which is likely to seriously limit or delay access to and use of ordinary community facilities.

### Types of challenging behaviour:

Challenging behaviour can manifest itself in many forms and can depend upon many parameters. The more common types that a support worker may encounter are as follows:

- Aggressive behaviour towards others; e.g. spitting, screaming, hitting, kicking, biting.
- Self-harm; e.g. hitting self, head-banging, biting, skin picking.
- Destructive behaviour; e.g. ripping clothes, breaking windows, throwing objects; stealing.
- Inappropriate sexualised behaviour; e.g. groping, public masturbation.
- Other stereotyped behaviours; e.g. repetitive rocking, elective incontinence, running away; eating inedible objects.

### Causes of challenging behaviour:

Challenging behaviour can be caused by a number of factors. It is expected that the original Baseline Assessment of Needs conducted on the young person at the initial stages of service provision will highlight concerns in this respect and provide a basis for addressing these issues through the support that is delivered. The following can contribute to challenging behaviour:

- Social factors - e.g. social isolation, reaction to change, boredom, seeking social interaction.
- Inadequate management - e.g. insensitivity of the staff member to the young person's wishes and needs, incompatibility with the allocated Keyworker/Support worker, both of which could trigger a latent reaction.
- Clinical factors - e.g. pain, medication, constipation.
- Environmental factors - e.g. physical aspects such as noise and lighting, or prevention of access to preferred objects or activities.
- Psychological factors - e.g. stress, anxiety, frustration, feeling lonely, excluded, devalued, disempowered, or living up to people's negative expectations.

- Mental illness - e.g. personality disorder, psychosis, imagination seeing things.
- Past environment or circumstances - e.g. home environment, sexual abuse, institutionalisation.

## **B: Non-intervention Management of Challenging Behaviour**

Since challenging behaviour can manifest itself for a number of reasons, the actual management of such behaviour can often be a complex process. The policy of this organisation is 'non-intervention'. Where an assault or extreme aggression is perpetrated towards another young person or a staff member Police will be called to attend. For management purposes, challenging behaviour can be viewed as occurring in a cycle:

- Trigger
- Escalation
- Crisis
- Recovery

It follows that great emphasis should be placed on training staff to recognise possible "flashpoint" (trigger) situations and minimise any potential confrontations. In this way, handling challenging behaviour situations will be pro-active rather than reactive (see section B.2 below).

### **Staff Training:**

Staff will undergo specialist non-intervention training to ensure awareness of the types, causes and effects of challenging behaviour, and to ensure that they are able to work pro-actively in a person-centred way to respond effectively to triggers, signs and symptoms of challenging behaviour. Staff training will be built into Induction Training programmes, and will be structured as a 3-stage strategy:

Stage 1: All staff should receive techniques of non-intervention risk management training appropriate to their needs in how to develop the skills and knowledge necessary to support young people with mental health disorders.

Stage 2: More intensive training will be provided to support staff working with young people where the expected level of challenging behaviour is high. It will be tailored to meet the specific needs of the individual whose behaviour has been identified as challenging. The basis for the provision of this training will be the original Risk Assessment leading to the young person's Placement Plan.

Stage 3: Liberty Supported Living Limited operates a hands-off policy when it manages risk behaviours. Staff are trained to manage difficult situations through de-escalation techniques. Where an assault or extreme aggression is perpetrated towards another young person or a staff member Police will be called to attend.

### **Duty of Care to Staff:**

Liberty Supported Living Limited acknowledges its responsibilities under the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999. This legislation places a duty upon Liberty Supported Living Limited as an employer to conduct appropriate and adequate assessments of risk to the health and safety of employees while they are at work.

Detailed assessments of a young person's needs and wants prior to starting service delivery (see section B.4). In this way, adverse clinical conditions such as challenging behaviour can be identified and the young person's Placement Plan developed accordingly to address these issues as far as possible.

### **Baseline Assessment of Needs before Admission:**

The form provides for a detailed assessment of a young person's needs to be undertaken prior to admission to Liberty Supported Living Limited premises. This will form the basis of the young person's Placement Plan and it is at this point that careful consideration will need to be given to any aspect of the management of challenging behaviour. It is the responsibility of the Service Manager to determine whether the Liberty Supported Living Limited is able to meet the specific needs of the prospective young person. In this respect, the following will be considered:

- Whether the stated Aims and Objectives of Liberty Supported Living Limited are applicable to this young person.
- Whether Liberty Supported Living Limited can meet the young person's developmental, support and independence requirements.
- Whether there are adequate levels of staff support to meet the young person's needs; for example, "doubling up" in high-risk situations.
- Whether staff have the skills and experience necessary to deliver the required service/support.
- Where the Assessment of Needs has been identified, a young person's risk assessment must be conducted to identify the benefits and risks associated with different non-intervention strategies for supporting the young person.

### Specific Recommendations:

For action that can be taken to manage the escalation, crisis and recovery stages of challenging behaviour (see section B.1) The young person's Placement Plan will often involve specialised professionals or outside agencies who may contribute to the Placement Plan. The service manager should consider the following recommendations for reducing incidences of challenging behaviour to a manageable level for individual young people, as appropriate to circumstances. This can involve input from outside agencies or health professionals, as relevant:

- Increased emphasis on all areas of health promotion for a young person with mental health disorders.
- Recognising that health and medical conditions can be a contributory cause to challenging behaviour, and organising regular health screening for a young person with mental health disorders.
- Equal access to treatment for diagnosed medical and psychiatric conditions.
- Speech and language therapy interventions should include communication skills to help individuals identify pain and illness and communicate this to others.
- Active involvement from Liberty Supported Living Limited senior staff that ensures the support staff are valued, supported and adequately monitored to provide best practices at all times. For specific job positions, this should start at the interview stage to ensure candidates are clear about the job requirements and expectations, and promote the selection of staff who are truly committed to providing the highest standards of care.

### C: Prevention of challenging behaviour.

Reference section B.1 of this Policy, a support worker's first priority in managing challenging behaviour is to prevent a challenging situation from either occurring or worsening. There are 3 basic principles involved in preventing challenging behaviour:

- Reviewing a young person's general life situation and environment (see section C.1 below);
- Acting to de-fuse a challenging situation at its earliest stage (see section C.2 below);
- Managing one's own behaviour appropriately (see section C.3 below).

### Young person's life situation and environment:

- Support workers must be sensitive to the environment in which a young person with challenging behaviour lives, and how best to provide an environment that offers the greatest possible support for the young person.
- Support workers must be sensitive to the need for young people with challenging behaviour to communicate their needs and feelings in all aspects of their life.
- Support workers must be sensitive to the need to maintain a balance when considering a young person's general lifestyle, particularly in the areas of social contact and task requirements. Too much stimulation can prove as counterproductive as too little.

### De-fusing a challenging situation:

Prevention of challenging behaviour should begin at the initial stages, i.e. ensuring effective needs assessment, support planning for the young person, and thorough risk assessments. However, in the event of a challenging situation occurring support workers should employ the following techniques or approaches as appropriate to the situation. These techniques must be identified and agreed at the support planning stage:

- Talk calmly to the young person - try and find out what the young person is thinking or feeling, or whether he/she is upset, hurt, annoyed or in pain. Try and find out what triggered the behaviour.
- Comfort the young person - if upset, try and comfort the young person verbally and, if appropriate, by gentle physical contact. It is vital that touching is not interpreted as an invasion of space; some people hate being touched and may react adversely.
- Ignore the behaviour, but not the person - treat the young person as if the behaviour is not occurring, though there is a risk that this may trigger an escalation of challenging behaviour if the young person feels that he/she is being ignored.
- Interrupting and deflecting - try and get the young person to focus on another person or situation.
- Rewarding positive behaviour - reward any positive behaviour that the young person may be showing with praise or attention.
- Allow the young person time - access to a quiet place and giving the young person some time to recover themselves can be helpful.
- Monitor others' behaviour - challenging situations often happen in the presence of others. It must be ensured that they do not inadvertently make a challenging situation worse, and they must be supported accordingly.

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### Managing your own behaviour:

How the support worker appears and behaves are key factors in preventing the onset and escalation of challenging behaviour. Support workers should be aware of himself/herself and be in control at all times. When faced with a challenging situation the support worker should try to:

- Acknowledge personal prejudices, emotions and feelings; appear calm and confident;
- Be aware of not being arrogant, aggressive or challenging;
- Consider the causes of previous episodes of challenging behaviour move slowly and purposely.
- Keep proper space and distance.
- Speak clearly and calmly.
- Remain relaxed and maintain normal breathing.

- Maintain eye contact but do not stare or show anger.

### References:

- Safeguarding Young People
- Baseline Assessment Of A Young Person's Needs
- Personal & Social Profile - Young Person
- Handling Challenging Behaviour - The Use of Physical Intervention (Restraint)
- Baseline Assessment of Needs for Daily Living - Young Person
- Young person's Religious & Cultural Requirements
- Managing Harassment, Abuse & Actual Violence By A Young Person Policy

### Monitoring and Review

The Company Secretary will check this policy is working properly and they will review it at least once a year. We will make improvements to the policy wherever we can.

Employees are invited to suggest any ways the policy can be improved.

This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment, and it may be amended at any time.

### **After reading this Policy, you should be able to:**

Understand what Challenging Behaviour Management Policy is and how the Challenging Behaviour Management Policy operates;

- Understand how Challenging Behaviour Management Policy operates at Liberty Supported Living Limited and have an awareness of the actions we take in preventing, identifying and reporting concerns;
- Understand the role you play in Challenging Behaviour Management Policy.

If you have not understood any of these points, please ask your Line Manager or trainer for further help

### Policy Review

A Director will review this policy at least once a year to make any updates needed.

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### Authorisation and Signature

This Policy is the authorised version agreed by the Directors of Liberty Supported Living Limited.

All employees are expected to follow this policy and failure to do so could result in disciplinary action.

*F. Mushaniga*

Director's Signature  
Fred Mushaniga

Director





