

Positive Behavior Support

Training Topic

Universal Enhancements & Supported Routines

Dr. Tom Pomerantz is a nationally recognized authority, trainer, clinician and consultant in the field of disabilities. He presents to direct support staff how to use universal enhancements and supported routines when working with individuals with disabilities.

Supported Routines – Providing opportunities for people to participate in all aspects of their lives with appropriate support.

As support staff, you should be doing tasks/activities WITH the members, not FOR the members. They have a right and somewhat of an obligation to participate in their lives. For some individuals it is easy to figure out how to do that. For others it may be more difficult.

Following are some examples of how you can engage members who may be less able to participate due to ability or desire:

- For someone who is unable to make their bed, have them be in the room with you as you make the bed. Tell them what you are doing as you complete the task. This can be true of any task or activity.
- Visit new places by turning the wheels to their wheelchair.
- For someone who utilizes a wheelchair, ALWAYS tell them where you are going or if you are going to move them.
- When cooking, tell them what you are doing and when they are willing, assist them hand-over hand.
- Assist them with a garden – vegetables and/or flowers. If they are unable to help with the task, have them beside you as you complete the task. Tell them what you are doing.
- Ask them where they want the new picture to be hung up.
- Make an effort to talk with people who do not speak.
- Have a presence with people who are not as active.
- Use picture schedule or written schedules to increase independence, as a way to communicate, or as a way to maintain consistency and predictability.
- Tell them what their medications are as they are taking them.
- Have the member answer the door with you. Assist them in answering the phone. If this is something they are able to do independently, then encourage them to do it! It is their house, not staff's.
- Assist or encourage them in using the key to unlock their front door.

It's not their own home when WE answer their phones, set their table, serve their meal, hang their coats, replace their toilet paper rolls, decorate their home for the holidays, do their shopping.....

There are MANY things you can do to promote supported routines, and are likely already doing some. Share what you are doing with your team. Have those discussions.

Life's everyday activities promote skills, relationships, interests, and enhance sense of self.