

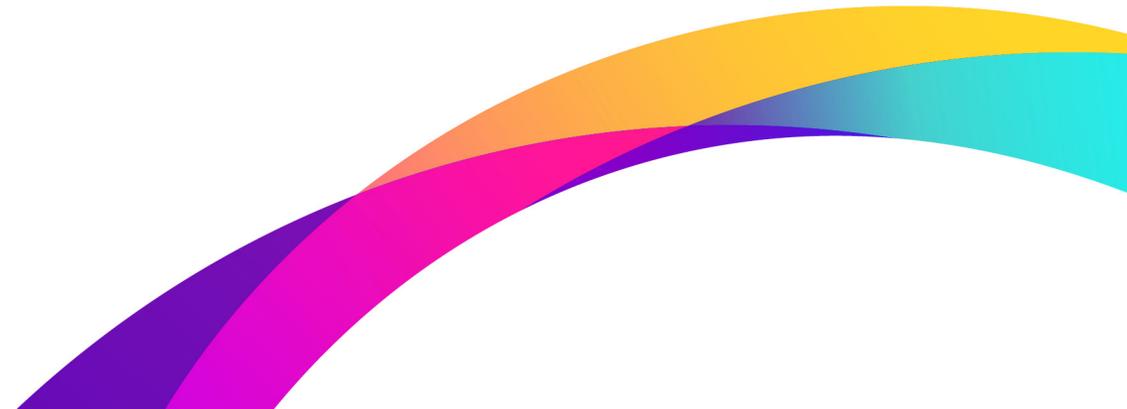
Capable environments

Lizzie Mason BCBA
PBS Specialist Practitioner
National Autistic Society

Aims and objectives



- To recognise what Capable Environments are and understand why they are important
- To list the key areas within Capable Environments
- To explain how Capable Environments can be used to improve the quality of life for the people we support
- To illustrate how Capable Environments can be embedded within assessment and support processes alongside other evidence based approaches.



What are Capable Environments?



Our current understanding of behaviour that challenges



All behaviour including behaviour that challenges should be understood in the context of the internal and external environment - factors within and around the individual and those who support and care for them (Baker and Osgood 2019)

These factors work together to influence how people respond (behave) in a specific situation and whether they repeat that action again.

By understanding the context in which behaviour occurs and what it achieves for the person we can reduce the need for the person to engage in those behaviours that may be challenging and support them to learn other ways to get their needs met.

We can also make changes to the environment around the person which helps promote communication, positive interaction skill building and engagement.

Definition – What is a capable environment?



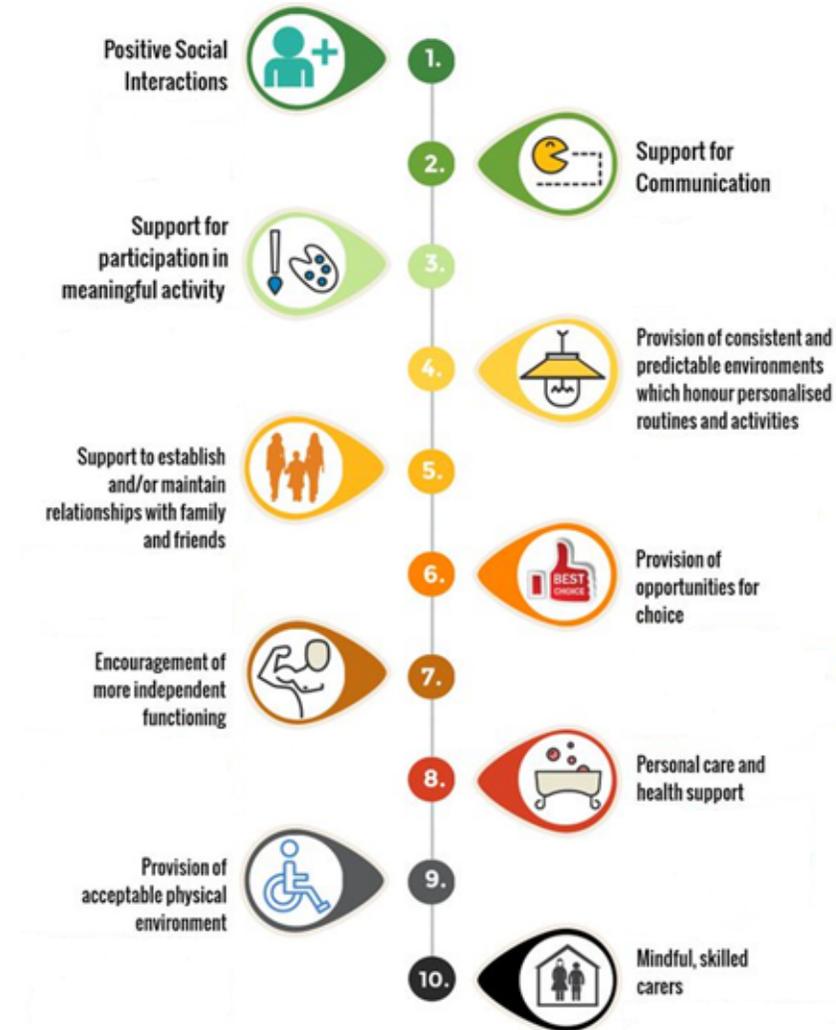
Capable environment - an environment associated with reduced frequency and/or severity of challenging behaviour (McGill et al 2020)

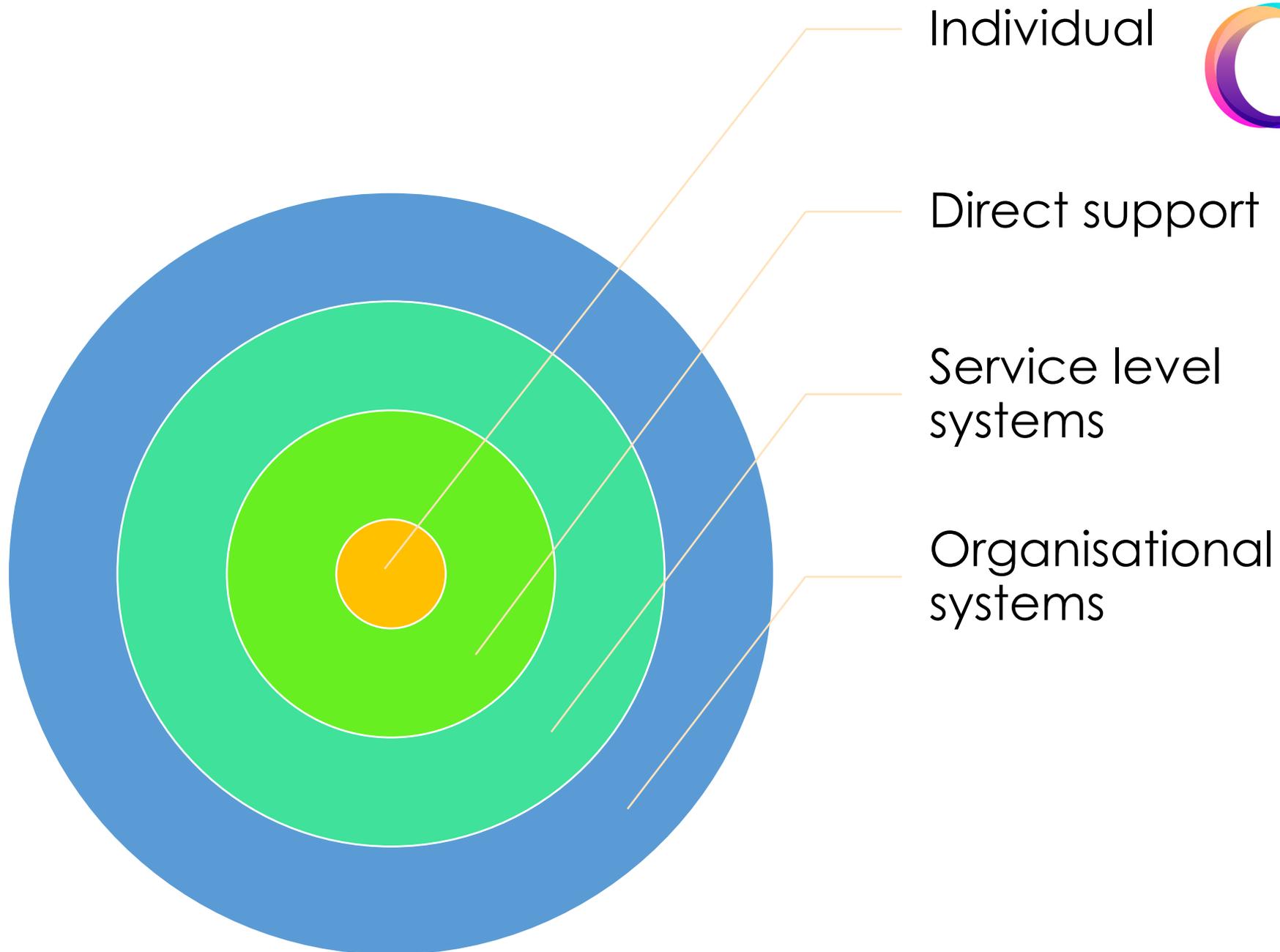
- Our role is to create environments that are ‘capable rather than challenging’
- May include factors within the social, physical and organisational environments
- Help move the focus away from the individual and move it towards to focusing on changing the environment around the person.
- Based on what we know about what’s important to and for people and what has worked to help improve people’s quality of life.

Key areas

McGill et al (2020) structures them into 12 key areas

Focus on a mixture of direct staff support and systems levels support





Why use them?



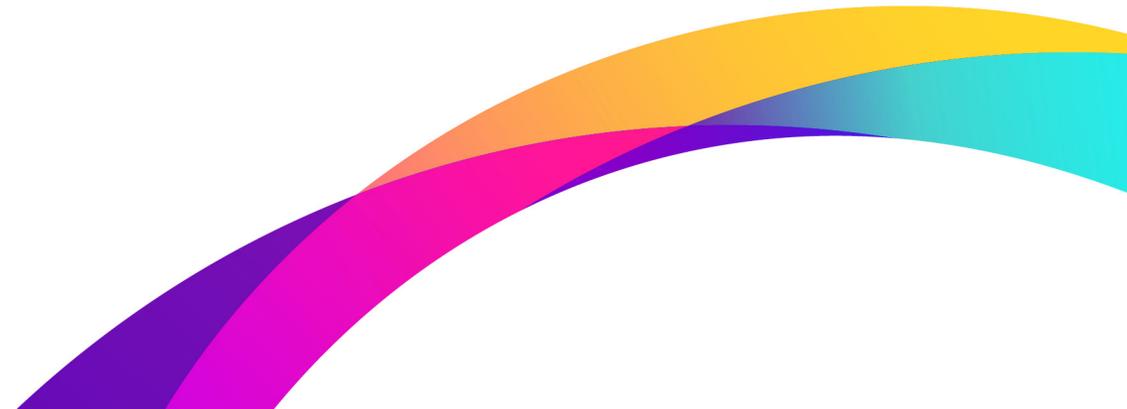
Getting the environment right (at all levels) prevents or reduces challenging behaviour for individuals with increased risk.

Shown to have an impact on

- Increased quality of life
- Reduction of restriction practices
- Increased staff wellbeing
- Reduction in placement breakdown

Foundation of good support

Embedding Capable Environments in our processes



PBS in the NAS



National PBS team

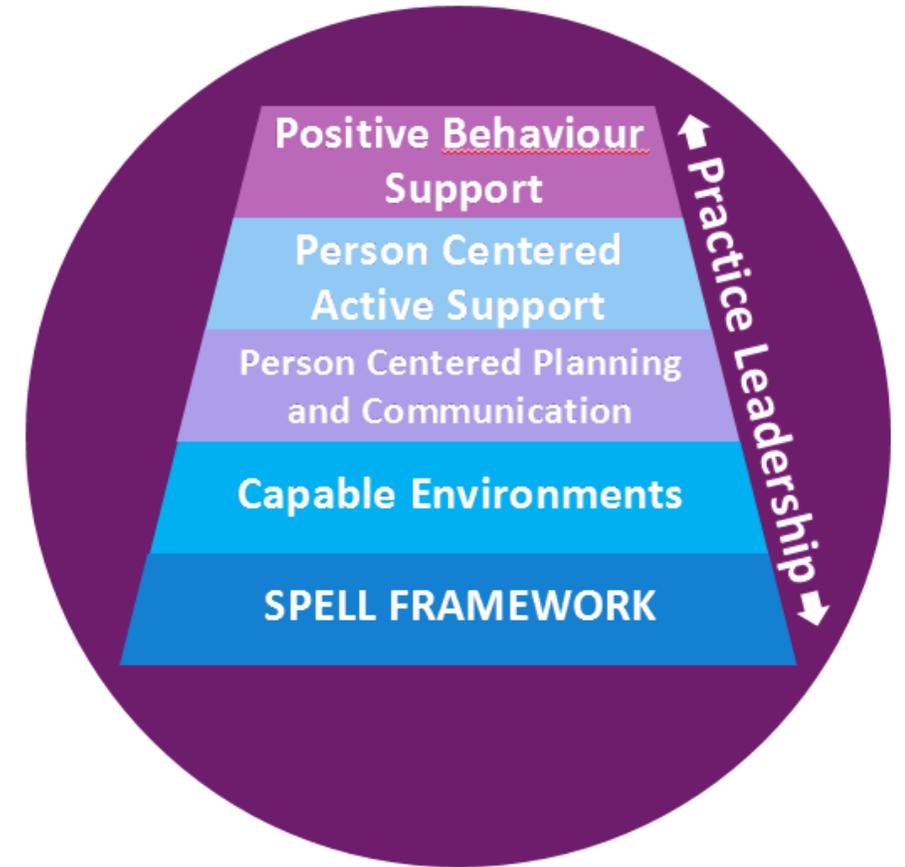
- Nine team members across six areas of the UK
- Focus on building a national team and ensuring a consistent approach to PBS input and paperwork. – Not easy in a huge organisation!
- Sits as part of the quality team both nationally and within local teams.
- Two main types of input – Short term/task focused and behaviour assessment

Capable environments have played a key role and have helped us develop a structure within our paperwork, training, support structures which is effective and fits well with other organisational approaches e.g. SPELL.

Embedding CE into our processes

Helps provide structure, focus on positive and comprehensive approaches.

- Policies
- Preventative and short term support
- Assessment and development of Positive Behaviour Support Plans
- Training
- Service/systems level support



Using CE within our assessments



Our assessment process often starts with a focus on Capable Environments and SPELL.

- Use interviews and observations
- Gather information from individuals, staff and family
- Use a what's working/what's not working or areas for development approach
- Formal observations focusing on the different areas of capable environments
- Whole service assessment and mediator analysis

Useful tools

Capable environment assessment recording form (what's working/areas to develop)

Capable environments checklist – based on Surrey Coaches programme

Tools which focus on specific areas within Capable Environments and SPELL

- Foundations of good support (United Response)
- What does good look like (United Response/Tizard)



+	Checklist	Yes	No
	Staff state that they like the person (Over 80% of the staff team)		
	When observing staff frequently interact positively with the person and in a way they person understands and can communicate		
	Staff understand the persons communication needs, create opportunities and maintain resources to help them communicate effectively		
	Staff provide appropriate assistance for the person to do a range of routine, predictable and meaningful activities		
	Staff provide clear routines consistently and in a way the person can understand. E.g. timetables, menu plans, staff boards, now and next		
	Staff have positive relationships with the person's family and friends, provide support for these relationships to flourish and thrive		
	Staff encourage and provide opportunities for choice making		
	Staff support the person to become more skilled, competent or independent using approaches that the person can understand, e.g. TEACCH, Active Support		
	Staff recognise and respond to health of the person, promoting a healthy		

Example – Positive interaction and engagement



What's working

- P likes to be around others and will initiate being in the main area rather than a side room. She has particular people she will sit near and engage with.
- Staff use lots of praise when engaging with P
- P has a good relationship with her staff team. The staff speak positively about her.
- Staff consistently used intensive interaction when engaging with P
- P is provided with sensory activities during the day e.g. pens, scarf.

Areas to develop

- During sessions staff are often sat at some distance from P
- Staff are not always fully focused on P
- Staff do not always engage with her at her level
- There is not a lot of variety in her activities

PBS plans



Primary prevention/Proactive		
Positive Social Interactions	See	•
Support for communication	See Communication passport	•
Support for participation in meaningful activity	See one-page profile	•
Provision of consistent and predictable environments which honour personalised	See communication passport	•

Our PBS plans use Capable Environments as a way to structure the key strategies for an individual.

This helps us ensure that we are providing comprehensive support and that areas aren't missed.



Positive Behaviour Support Plan Name Surname

routines and activities		
Support to establish and/or maintain relationships with friends and family	See risk assessments and circle of support	•
Provision of opportunities for choice	See Visual Schedule & communication	•

Training



We have embedded Capable environments within our training packs

- Induction training for all support staff
- PBS for managers
- Practice leadership
- Active support training

Example - Case study from training



Laura is a twenty-three year old woman who lives in a house with five other people. Laura communicates her needs through a few signs (e.g. toilet), by pointing to pictures/objects and by leading staff. Staff communicate to Laura verbally but it is not clear how much Laura understands. Staff have worked really hard on getting everyone in the house involved in helping with household tasks e.g. cooking, cleaning using a weekly rota. All of Laura's chores are completed on one day every week according to the rota and Laura is given a list of tasks she needs to complete. Laura's behaviour of concern is dropping to the floor and then banging her head against the floor or walls. The behaviour is presented when Laura is asked to do something she does not want to, particularly household chores. The behaviour results in staff leaving Laura alone. Laura appears to display the behaviour of concern more often when asked to Hoover. Staff use quite a number of words to communicate when asking Laura to do something e.g. "Laura it's time to do the hoovering now".

Example - Case study from training



Focus on two areas of Capable Environments for your case study individual

Consider what is currently working well for the person in these areas.

What suggestions could you make for further strategies the team could use?

Monitoring implementation



Skill checkers
based on PBS
plan

Quizzes based
on the PBS
plan

Periodic
service review



Capable Environments: 10 a day Periodic Service Review (PSR)

Name of person supported:

Name of practice leader:

WHAT	Exactly what you want staff to do or the responsibility you would like them to perform in observable terms.
WHEN	Specify exactly when you want the action to be carried out.
WHO	Specify who has the responsibility for carrying out the action.
HOW	Specify how (verifiability) you will know the action has been carried out (e.g. direct observations, ability to answer questions on subject, ability to describe process in great detail, record review)

Positive Social Interactions	
WHAT	
WHEN	
WHO	
HOW	

Summary



Capable Environments have been important in helping us practically structure our support and ensure it is proactive, effective and comprehensive.

It forms an important part of our PBS assessment and input process.

We see it as crucial for ensuring the best outcomes for the people we support.

Thank you – any questions?



Lizzie.mason@nas.org.uk



References and useful documents



Baker, P. and Osgood, T (2019). *Understanding and responding to Behaviour that Challenges in Intellectual Disabilities* (2nd Edition). UK: Pavilion.

McGill, P., Bradshaw, J., Smyth, G., Hurman, M. and Roy, A. (2020), "Capable environments", *Tizard Learning Disability Review*, Vol. 25 No. 3, pp. 109-116.

United response – Foundations of good support

https://s33156.pcdn.co/wp-content/uploads/Foundations_of_Good_Support.pdf

What does good look like

https://s33156.pcdn.co/wp-content/uploads/What_does_good_look_like_guide.pdf