Behaviours of concern

To effectively implement Positive behaviour support (PBS), we need to understand behaviours of concern. This is crucial to deciding what response is required, and targeting behaviours with appropriate interventions.
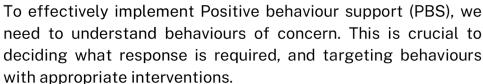
What are behaviours of concern?
Behaviours of concern are behaviours of such intensity, frequency or duration that the physical safety or emotional wellbeing of the child, or others around them, is at significant risk (i.e. beyond what is usually expected for the child's developmental stage).

DCJ Behaviour Support in OOHC Guidelines

Behaviours of concern can include:
- hitting
- kicking
- throwing objects
- spitting at others
- damaging property
- self-harm
- absconding
- psychological symptoms such as detachment and dissociation
- the absence of behaviours usually expected for a child's age.

Impact
Behaviours of concern often limit kids' access to their usual activities, services, experiences and environments. They often significantly affect the acceptance of a child/teen by their community.

Behaviours of concern may disrupt kids' quality of life, and that of their family, peers and carers. The impact of these behaviours includes challenges faced by families, carers and staff in attempting to provide appropriate support to a child/teen.

Why do behaviours of concern develop?
Behaviours of concern are often misinterpreted as kids being deliberately defiant or naughty. It's important to understand that the behaviours are likely to serve a purpose in a particular environment. They may be, or have been, used to ensure safety, gain attention, or maintain control.

Family time
LINKS Training and Support

Kids in out-of-home care have often experienced trauma and unmet needs. Until they learn new skills to effectively meet their needs, behaviours of concern are likely to continue . It is vital that kids develop skills to better suit their current context.

Next steps

Behaviours of concern require well-formulated response strategies. PBS is effective in responding to and reducing behaviours of concern. PBS includes a holistic assessment of behaviours to develop a behaviour support plan (BSP). These plans aim to increase kids' skills while ensuring appropriate responses are used.