

POSITIVE ENVIRONMENT CHECKLIST

The Positive Environment Checklist (PEC) is designed for use in evaluating whether the settings in which persons with disabilities live, work and go to school are structured in a manner that promotes and maintains positive, adaptive behaviors. The PEC looks at whether settings provide the conditions that support positive behaviors and do not present conditions that make negative behaviors more likely. It also addresses several concerns related to the ways in which program staff support and interact with the people with disabilities in the setting.

The checklist should be used as part of a proactive, preventive approach to addressing problem behaviors. The checklist can be used as a general tool to provide an overall assessment of a setting. Also, when a particular individual is targeted, it can be used as part of a comprehensive analysis of an existing problem behavior(s) to determine whether environmental conditions are contributing to the problem.

The PEC focuses on the physical, social, and programmatic structure of the environment. Checklist questions are divided into 5 sections:

1) Physical Setting, 2) Social Setting, 3) Activity & Instruction, Scheduling and Predictability, and 5) Communication.

Responses to questions in each area should be based on direct observation of the environment, review of written program documents and personnel. Three response options are provided for each question: **YES**, **NO**, and **UNCLEAR**. The term “staff” applies to paid and volunteer personnel who provide support and services in the setting. The term “people” refers to the people with disabilities who live, work, or attend school in the setting.

Scoring the completed PEC is simply a matter of determining which questions received a **YES** response, and which received **NO** or **UNCLEAR** responses. **NO** responses indicate areas or issues that should be addressed to create a more positive environment. **UNCLEAR** responses indicate the need for further analysis, perhaps by extended observation or by questioning a larger number of program personnel.

SECTION 1: PHYSICAL SETTING

- | | | | | |
|----|--|------------|----|----------------|
| 1. | Is the physical setting clean, well lit and odor free? | YES | NO | UNCLEAR |
| | Is the temperature regulation in the setting adequate? | YES | NO | UNCLEAR |
| 3. | Is the physical setting visually pleasant and appealing? | YES | NO | UNCLEAR |
| 4. | Does the arrangement of the setting promote easy access for all individuals within the setting? | YES | NO | UNCLEAR |
| 5. | Is the setting arranged in a manner that facilitates needed staff support and supervision? | YES | NO | UNCLEAR |
| 6. | Does the setting contain or provide interesting, age-appropriate items and materials for people to use? | YES | NO | UNCLEAR |
| 7. | Is the setting located and structured in a manner that promotes and facilitates physical integration into the “regular” community? | YES | NO | UNCLEAR |

SECTION 2: SOCIAL SETTING

- | | | | | |
|----|--|------------|----|---------|
| 1. | Is the number of people in this setting appropriate for its physical size and purpose? | YES | NO | UNCLEAR |
| 2. | Are the people who share this setting compatible in terms of age, gender and support needs? | YES | NO | UNCLEAR |
| 3. | Is the staff ratio in this setting adequate to meet the support needs of all the people here at all times? | YES | NO | UNCLEAR |
| 4. | Do the people share that share this setting get along with each other? | YES | NO | UNCLEAR |

- | | | | | |
|----|---|------------|----|---------|
| 5. | Do staff actively work to develop and maintain a positive rapport and relationship with the people here? | YES | NO | UNCLEAR |
| 6. | Do staff promote and facilitate opportunities for social integration with people who are not paid to provide service? | YES | NO | UNCLEAR |

SECTION 3: ACTIVITIES AND INSTRUCTION

- | | | | | |
|----|---|------------|----|----------------|
| 1. | Do people in this setting regularly participate (whether independent, supported or partial participation) in activities and tasks that are useful and meaningful to their everyday lives? | YES | NO | UNCLEAR |
| 2. | Do people participate in a variety of different activities? | YES | NO | UNCLEAR |
| 3. | Do people participate in activities that occur in regular community settings outside of the home, school or workplace? | YES | NO | UNCLEAR |
| 4. | Do people in this setting receive instruction on activities and skills that are useful and meaningful to their daily lives? | YES | NO | UNCLEAR |
| 5. | Is the instruction that people receive individualized to meet specific learner needs? | YES | NO | UNCLEAR |
| 6. | Are peoples' personal preferences taken into account when determining the activities and tasks in which they participate and receive training? | YES | NO | UNCLEAR |

SECTION 4: SCHEDULING AND PREDICTABILITY

- | | | | | |
|----|--|------------|----|---------|
| 1. | Is there a system or strategy used to identify what people in this setting would be doing and when? | YES | NO | UNCLEAR |
| 2. | Is there a means to determine whether the things that should be occurring actually do occur? | YES | NO | UNCLEAR |
| 3. | Do people in this setting have a way of knowing and predicting what they will be doing and when? | YES | NO | UNCLEAR |
| 4. | Do staff prepare people in this setting in advance for changes in typical schedules or routines? | YES | NO | UNCLEAR |
| 5. | Do people in this setting have opportunities to exercise choice in terms of what they will do, when, with whom & what rewards they will receive? | YES | NO | UNCLEAR |

SECTION 5: COMMUNICATION

- | | | | | |
|----|---|------------|----|---------|
| 1. | Do people in this setting have “acceptable” means to communicate basic messages (e.g., requests, comments, rejections) to staff or others in the setting? | YES | NO | UNCLEAR |
| 2. | Do staff promote and reward communication? | YES | NO | UNCLEAR |
| 3. | Are effective, efficient communication strategies being used by or taught to the people in this setting? | YES | NO | UNCLEAR |
| 4. | Are staff familiar with the receptive language levels & skills of the people in his setting? | YES | NO | UNCLEAR |
| 5. | Do staff have “acceptable” means to communicate basic messages to the people in this setting? | YES | NO | UNCLEAR |