












THE RED FLAGS OF CHANGE



If you are supporting someone who has just moved, changes jobs, has a change in support provider or roommate, loses a family member, changes medications, has new serious health issues or faces any other significant changes in the normal rhythm of life, *be alert for signs of distress!*

Challenging behavior is frequently a means of coping with frustration, anxiety and stress

Changes to watch for

-  Changes in behavior
-  Inappropriate interaction with roommates or staff
-  Tears for no apparent reason
-  Over eating or refusal to eat
-  Signs of anxiety or irritability
-  Wanting to sleep all of the time
-  New health complaints - - headaches, backaches
-  Self-injurious behavior
-  More accidents than usual



When you see these changes -it's time for CAUTION. Help by responding to the problem, not by ignoring it.



Once you identify a problem behavior that is possibly a result of life changes, develop a positive way to deal with that behavior.



Some examples are:

1. Know the person's needs and support plans, including a Positive Behavior Support Plan if there is one.
2. Listen to what the person you work with is saying or demonstrating and respond.
3. If the person has lost a caregiver or loved one help them memorialize the person.
4. Redirect people to fun activities – have a plan.
5. Get help if the behavior continues or is serious, don't wait for complications.
6. Get help for any health problem before they become serious.
7. Take walks with the person, pay attention to any actions that are different than normal.
8. Make sure special attention is paid to having good nutritious food in the house.
9. Think about soft music to help create a relaxing environment.
10. Learn deep breathing skills and teach them to those with whom you work.
11. Laughter is great medicine.
12. A little bit of exercise goes a long way, learn some fun exercises that will help people relax.

Don't wait for someone else to solve the problem, be PROACTIVE!



Being prepared can make a world of difference in how you and the person you support cross the “finish line.”

Ask your supervisor for advice in planning how to help someone overcome the stressful feelings they have.