

Carers' Self Advocacy Toolkit

Behaviours and body language



Body language

The following table gives some examples of the body language associated with assertive, aggressive and passive behaviours. Do you recognise yourself in any of them? Are there any changes you would like to make?

	Assertive	Aggressive	Passive
Eye Contact	Comfortable direct eye contact	Direct eye contact which becomes a stare, eyes open wide	Looking away
Posture	Open body, still and relaxed, upright posture, straight shoulders	Body closed off, looking bored, hands on hips, folded arms	Shuffling feet, slumped shoulders, looking at the floor
Mouth	Smiling when appropriate	Talking through clenched teeth	A smile that seems misleading
Voice	Appropriately firm/warm	Loud voice, conveying sarcasm or anger through tone of voice	Voice soft and difficult to hear
Gestures	Hand gestures when talking, to emphasise words	Pounding hand, pointing/wagging finger	Fiddling with watch/jewellery, playing with hair/rubbing face
Distance & Touching	Respecting personal space, being aware with no inappropriate touching contact	Invading others' space, 'the right to touch whenever I want'	Allowing space to be invaded, no challenge to touch