



# A Program-Wide Model for Implementing Positive Behavior Support

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# Positive Behavior Support

A values-based, empirically-valid approach derived from social, behavioral, and biomedical science for achieving reductions in problem behaviors and improvements in quality of life



# Historical Foundations of PBS

Emerged in mid-late 1980s to address problem behaviors of children and adults with severe problem behaviors

Inspirations:

- Concerns over aversive, intrusive, and stigmatizing treatments
- Movements toward least restrictive environments and de-institutionalization
- Research contributing to functional understanding of problem behavior



# Current Status and Developments

PBS expanded beyond initial populations

- (1) EBD/SED
- (2) General education
- (3) Young children

Initiatives in most states to build capacity

Efforts to integrate PBS perspectives and strategies into additional systems (mental health, child protection, etc.)

Development and implementation of School-wide PBS



# School-wide PBS

Began to emerge in mid-1990s

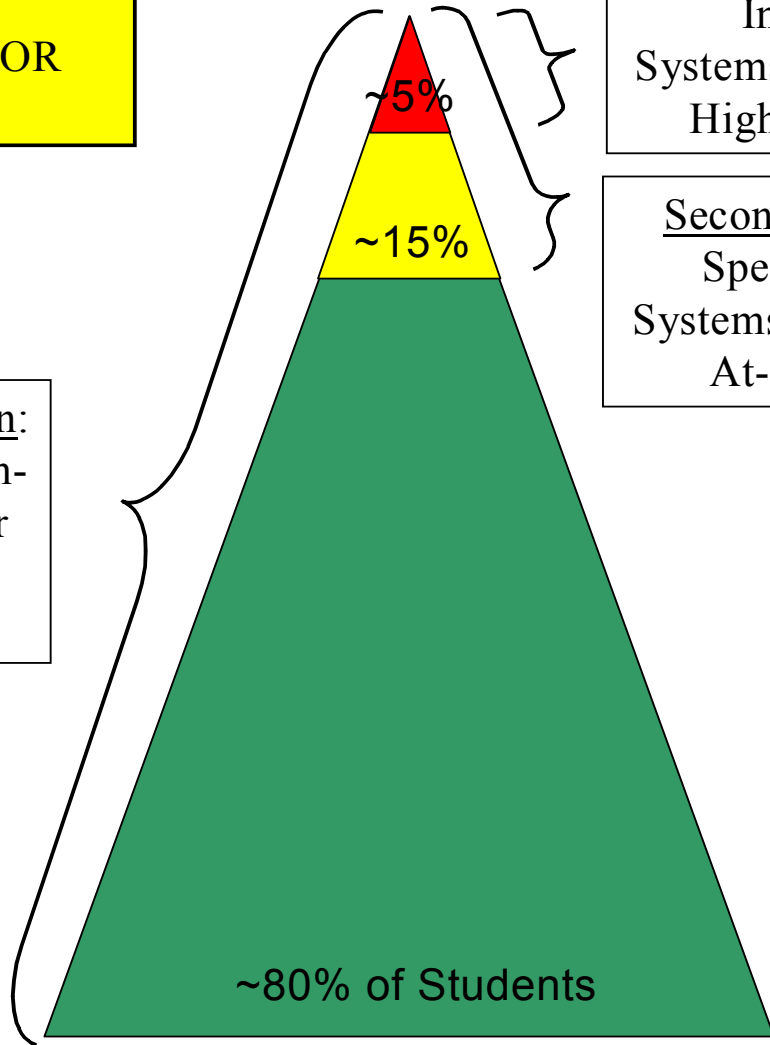
- (though basis existed well before this time)

## Inspirations

- Impossible to use individual PBS with all students (children) with behavior problems
- Need for more comprehensive prevention approach
- Increasing concern about school safety and school culture

**CONTINUUM OF  
SCHOOL-WIDE  
POSITIVE BEHAVIOR  
SUPPORT**

Primary Prevention:  
School-/Classroom-  
Wide Systems for  
All Students,  
Staff, & Settings



Tertiary Prevention:  
Specialized  
Individualized  
Systems for Students with  
High-Risk Behavior

Secondary Prevention:  
Specialized Group  
Systems for Students with  
At-Risk Behavior



# School-wide model

Whole school (universal) systems

- For all students, staff, settings

Classroom and non-classroom systems

- For setting-specific routines (reflecting whole-school procedures and expectations)

Targeted group (secondary) systems

- For at-risk students

Individualized (tertiary) systems

- For students with existing, high-risk behavior problems



# Features of School-wide PBS

Clear Statement of Purpose (& full staff commitment)

Clearly defined expectations and rules – for all students and staff

Procedures for teaching expected behaviors

Procedures for acknowledging and encouraging expected behaviors

Consequences and clearly stated procedures for correcting problem (challenging) behaviors

Procedures for data collection and data-based decision making





# Features of School-wide PBS

Procedures for family and community involvement

Strategies for specific settings

Strategies for targeted (at-risk) groups

➤ e.g., academic supports, social skills groups

Strategies for intensive, comprehensive individual supports



## **Evidence Re: SW-PBS**

Extensive data showing decreases in Office  
Discipline Referrals

Data indicating improvements in school culture

Some emerging data showing school-wide academic  
improvements



# **Characteristics of EC Programs**

**Philosophy**

**Curriculum practices**

**Age and cognitive abilities of children**

**Availability of resources, expertise, and supports**

**Structure of early childhood programs**

**Need for different types of outcome measures**

# ***The Teaching Pyramid***

Program Philosophy

Teacher  
Training/Implementation

Administrative  
Supports

**Individualized  
Interventions**

**Social and Emotional  
Teaching Strategies**

**Creating Supportive Environments**

**Positive Relationships with Children, Families, and  
Colleagues**

Adapted from *Fox, Dunlap, Hemmeter, Joseph, & Strain, 2003*



# Critical Elements of a Program Wide Model in EC Programs

Administrative support and buy-in

Buy-in from staff

Family involvement

Identification of schoolwide expectations that are  
developmentally appropriate



# Critical Elements of a Program Wide Model in EC Programs (continued)

Curriculum approaches that promote expectations and acknowledge children's achievement of the expectations

Strategies for responding to problem behavior

Team based, individualized approach for addressing ongoing problem behavior

Professional development plan

Strategies for supporting teachers

Process for monitoring outcomes



# Program Wide Models

- Illinois; Valeska-Hinton Early Childhood Education Center
- Kansas; SEK-CAP Head Start



# Valeska-Hinton

vh nti





# SEK-CAP Head Start

- Rural program in Southeast Kansas
- Covers over 7,000 square miles in 12 counties
- Serves 768 children and families
- Employs 174 staff in the Early Childhood Services Department
- 14 centers, 17 classrooms, 25 home visitors and 19 child care partners



# Why We Needed PBS:

Even with training in behavior management techniques, SEK-CAP staff reported:

- leaving work in tears
- unable to “deal” effectively with all children
- high levels of stress and burnout
- looking to outside “experts” to solve problems in the classroom



# Program-Wide Implementation

In partnership with the Kansas University Center on Developmental Disabilities, SEK-CAP developed a comprehensive plan that identified:

- Administrative resources
- Professional development plan
- Ongoing follow-up & technical assistance
- Monitoring and evaluation



## Impact of PBS:

Administrative Resources have been re-aligned to allocate for:

- Training and consultation
- Materials and curricula
- Expansion to other program areas
- Expansion to include community partners



## Impact of PBS:

Professional Development has been re-designed to include:

- Comprehensive PBS training for all staff
- Ongoing technical assistance for targeted staff
- Developing internal expertise in providing individual supports to children



## Impact of PBS:

Monitoring and Evaluation has demonstrated:

- Reduced referrals to outside experts
- Elimination of time-out as a practice
- Improvement in overall program quality
- Increased use of comprehensive strategies and team planning
- Changes in individual interventions
- Improved Staff satisfaction



## Impact of PBS:

SEK-CAP Teaching Staff Say:

“...it has changed my actual teaching style.”

“The stress level is reduced. I feel more confident to try new things.”

“By having this program, it’s helping daily. More children are more successful.”

“And it helps keep our turnover down. People stay.”

“I think overall the environment has shifted.”



# SEK-CAP's Future Plans

- Offer PBS training to every enrolled family
- Offer a class on PBS for college credit
- Develop an Internal PBS accreditation process
- Conduct community- wide PBS training sessions
- Conduct joint training with partners
- Become a training site for other early intervention programs