A Program-Wide Model for Implementing Positive Behavior Support

Lise Fox
University of South Florida
Mary Louise Hemmeter
Vanderbilt University
Susan Jack
SEK-CAP PBS Project, Kansas
Sharon Doubet
University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign

www.csefel.uiuc.edu
www.challengingbehavior.org
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
Primary Prevention:
School-/Classroom-
Wide Systems for
All Students,
Staff, & Settings

~80% of Students

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

~15%

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

~5%

CONTINUUM OF
SCHOOL-WIDE
POSITIVE BEHAVIOR
SUPPORT

Center for Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (2002)
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

Individualized Interventions

Social and Emotional Teaching Strategies

Creating Supportive Environments

Positive Relationships with Children, Families, and Colleagues

Administrative Supports

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
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