



National Center for Mental Health Promotion  
and Youth Violence Prevention

## **The Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports Peer-to-Peer Teleconference Tuesday, September 19, 2006**

### **FACILITATOR**

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### **PURPOSE OF THIS CALL:**

- To provide information about Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)
- To identify challenges and concerns of grantees implementing Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)
- To provide a networking opportunity for grantees using PBIS

### **HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE PRESENTATION BY SANDRA KEENAN**

To improve the academic success of our children, we must also improve their social success. Academic and social failures are directly related.

PBIS is based on a 3-tiered intervention model:

- 80% of children require preventions and universal interventions.
- 10-15 percent need selective, indicated intervention.
- 5-10% require targeted, intensive interventions.

PBIS is a research-based *systems* approach designed to enhance the capacity of schools to effectively educate all students, including students with challenging social behaviors. By adopting this approach, educators will sustain the use of effective instructional practices.

#### History of PBIS

PBIS was originally created to work with developmentally delayed individuals.

It is now being used to provide behavioral support in schools for the general population.

The National Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports [www.pbis.org](http://www.pbis.org) was founded through this school-wide initiative.

SW-PBIS is a whole-school approach to discipline that includes a broad range of systemic and individualized strategies for achieving social and learning outcomes while preventing problem behavior with all students. This program changes the practices, policies, and climate for the entire school. Currently, 5,000 schools implement PBIS in over 30 states.

#### Framework

Major components of the program:

- Team approach

- Coach
- Curriculum emphasizing prevention, teaching, and behavioral function
- On-going data collection and use of data for active decision-making

The framework focuses on connecting academic and social learning. In most situations, PBIS falls under the responsibility of the student support team and involves intensive training—1 year to 18 months—to change and shift the culture within a school.

This involves team-based planning and problem solving, where the staff meets on a regular basis, looks at the data, and makes decisions about how to intervene. For example, if every morning the school experiences a large number of problem behavior incidents, then they would choose to implement instruction and practice to improve the data during that time of day. At a later date, they would review the new data to measure the effect of these changes on students' behavior.

The program is easy to understand if you look at it from both an academic and behavioral standpoint. For example, if you are teaching a class to read, 80% will succeed with the traditional program, and 10-20% may not master learning the curriculum. If you provide intervention and extra help for those 10-20%, and change the way you deliver the lesson, most will learn to read. A remaining 5% will need more individualized, intensive help to successfully master this skill.

Take that same scenario, and apply it to school behavior. 80% of children do well with school-wide positive behavior programs, 10-20% need additional support, and 5% need intensive support. We need to teach positive social behavior just like we teach reading and math. That's the analogy—the behavioral component is side-by-side with the academic.

### Implementation

Implementation emphasizes

- Team-based planning & problem solving
- Instructional approach
- Active administrator support/participation
- Long-term action planning
- Staff commitment
- On-going professional development

### Making it Work: Commitment

Staff commitment is necessary. We have learned that when 80% of educators and administrators at a school buy into the program, PBIS is more likely to have a greater impact and is also more sustainable in the long run.

The National Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports is encouraging districts to make staff aware of the programs and get commitment for buy-in, although we realize that this is not always easy to do. Ongoing professional development is essential.

Schools need to have an instructional approach to this program and teach social behavior just like they teach academics. It is also not only about changing behavior within the school but about faculty using data to make decisions. We find that once staff use data in the PBIS system, they use data to make more decisions about general curriculum.

### The PBIS process

PBIS is more about a process and less about a curriculum. The emphasis is on being efficient, focused, and looking at how you are using the resources in your building. PBIS requires:

- Two-three year focus to get sustainable change
- Active administrative support and participation
- Administrative leadership for PBIS teams
- Commitment from staff (80%)
- Ongoing communication and support with staff
- Completion and use of data collection (discipline and academic data, survey, checklists)
- Staff participation in ongoing training

### Data Support

The PBIS program is supported by data collection. The following are types of data used to monitor and measure school-wide student behavior trends:

- # referrals per day per month
- # referrals by student
- # referrals by location
- #/kinds of problem behaviors
- # problem behaviors by time of day

The following schools used data to demonstrate an improvement in student behavior at their schools:

- Steuben School – The total number of out-of-school suspensions per year decreased from over 200 during the 2000-2001 school year to less than 25 during the 2002-2003 school year.
- Gavin Central Elementary – The number of office discipline referrals per day per 100 students decreased from .7 in 2001-2002 to .1 during the 2002-2003 school year.
- Harrison School – The time students spent away from the classroom due to behavior in a non-academic suspension decreased by 61% from the 1997-1998 school year to the 1998-1999 school year.

## **DISCUSSION**

*You talk about a school-wide approach, but what about a district-wide approach?*

*Sandra Keenan:* What we have seen is that the most influential changes occur when an entire district philosophically buys into implementing this program, and the whole district does the training and makes the two to three year commitment. However, whether it is district-wide or you are a single school in rural Wyoming, you can implement at a school-level—the school is the unit. The review and the analysis and the team are essentially a school-based team, even if the entire district is implementing PBIS.

*How is Data Collected?*

*Sandra Keenan:* SWIS School-Wide Information System is from the National Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports, and we do have information and provide training. 5,000 schools are connected to this network, their data is reported back to the National Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports.

However, there is no prerequisite here. There are other ways to record data, but you do need to have the training. You don't have to sign up for training through the National Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports or make a commitment to do SWIS in order to use this framework and think about implementing. There are schools and districts across the country that have hired trainers recommended by the National Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports, but are separate from SWIS. There are multiple ways to achieve the same outcome. The data is important, and you need a formalized way to record it.

*In our district, every building is in a different place in regard to PBIS, and it's more difficult to implement at the middle and high school. What are your suggestions?*

*Sandra Keenan:* We have heard that the most difficult place to implement is at the high school level. The National Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports has some of the best information, research, and resources, and you can call them to find out about where it's done and where it's done well. In many cases, the middle school is a good place to implement if you already have a team in place. It's about working smarter, not harder. When we start PBIS, we don't want to start a brand new team and add all this additional work. You are already supporting kids, and you are already responding to students and their needs. So take a look and analyze where you already have people working with students with social, emotional, and behavioral needs and then try to build on the skills and expertise that already exists. Let's use these teams to make this program work.

*Carol Saddler:* In Hillsboro, Oregon, we just finished our tenth year of PBIS. We did have some success with high schools, and it did take longer for them to get the idea. Once they adopted the school-wide approach, they did well with it. Lane County Educational Service District in Oregon received a grant to study high school implementation. They have had several meetings a year inviting high schools to share information. And you might be able to access this through the PBIS Web site or by googling Lane County.

*How are community services outside of the school involved in the PBIS program?*

*Sandra Keenan:* What we know is that at all levels we have children with many different emotional, behavioral, and social needs. This is key to the coordinated, collaborative efforts that you are beginning to build through your Safe School/Healthy Students initiative of access to mental health services. This is where your partnerships and the community become a vital link to help the school do this job. It's not yours alone. Schools need to use additional community supports and resources. That's where the expertise and training come into the school-based team, so that when the referrals come through, everyone can acknowledge when individual interventions are necessary. (This doesn't sound right. You might want to ask Sandra exactly what she said here.)

*Liza Andrew-Miller:* In Hillsboro, I think that the partnerships can really benefit from implementing PBIS. We have had situations where we've had juvenile offices, community agencies, or mental health work with individual children and realize that they can only get so far with a child within the school system. The school system and the school structure also need to be able to provide the support for the child. So where we have PBIS teams, our community partners can see both systems change and the individual change. The agencies are really thankful to see the whole system change when PBIS is used in schools.

## **NEXT STEPS**

We will post resources on the teleconference webpage.  
(<http://learn.aero.und.edu/pages.asp?PageID=83850>).

A follow-up peer-to-peer PBIS implementation call will be scheduled for October 24, 2006, 12-1pm EDT. We will e-mail grantees with an invitation two weeks prior to the call.