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Positive Behavior Intervention Supports (PBIS) for Parents

PBIS is a school-wide approach that creates a safe and positive environment for all students. Children with disabilities who may require a higher level of behavioral support through a behavior intervention plan can still benefit from universal supports provided to all students through school-wide PBIS.

What does the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) say about behavior supports for students?

IDEA provides clear guidelines about the behavior supports that should be provided to children with disabilities. Here are the key points:

1. Individualized Education Program (IEP)

- **Behavioral Goals and Supports:** If your child's behavior interferes with their learning or that of others, the IEP team must consider the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS) to address that behavior. The IEP should outline the specific interventions and supports that your child receives.

2. Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) and Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP)

- When your child's behavior is significant and leads to disciplinary action, the school may conduct an FBA to understand the root causes of their behavior. The FBA helps the IEP team design a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) tailored to your child's needs. A BIP is developed based on the results of the FBA. It includes strategies to support positive behavior and reduce negative behaviors. It may involve changes in your child's surroundings, teaching new skills, and providing positive feedback/rewards.

3. Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)

- IDEA emphasizes educating children with disabilities in the least restrictive environment, including providing behavior supports in the general education classroom. Placing your child in a different learning space should be considered only when supports provided in the general education environment have been provided but are not effective. A decision to change where your child learns would be made in an IEP meeting, of which the parent is an IEP team member.

4. Parental Involvement

- Parents must be involved in decisions about behavior interventions, supports, and disciplinary actions. You are part of your child's IEP team that discusses and provides behavior supports.



PBIS and IDEA

IDEA emphasizes the need for proactive, positive, and individualized behavior supports to help children with disabilities succeed in school and prevent unnecessary discipline or exclusion. PBIS is a comprehensive, school-wide approach to create a positive and safe school climate for all children. It is not a specific practice but a framework that teaches positive behaviors and provides different levels of support based on children's needs. PBIS is practiced consistently across all areas of the school (classrooms, hallways, cafeterias, etc.) and among all staff. Everyone in the school uses the same set of behavioral expectations and strategies, providing a unified approach to behavior management.

What does PBIS look like?

1. Three-Tiered Support System:

- **Tier 1: Universal Prevention**
All children are taught proactive strategies and expectations for positive behavior in all school settings. Schools establish a consistent set of behavioral expectations (e.g., being respectful, responsible, and safe) and teach these behaviors to students. Children's positive behaviors are acknowledged and rewarded.
- **Tier 2: Targeted Interventions**
For children who need additional support, Tier 2 interventions provide targeted behavioral strategies. This might include small group interventions, social skills training, or mentoring to help children develop positive behavior patterns.
- **Tier 3: Intensive, Individualized Supports**
Children with significant behavioral challenges receive individualized interventions, often through Functional Behavioral Assessments (FBAs) and Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPs). These interventions focus on addressing specific behavioral issues with intensive support.

2. **Data-Driven Decision Making:** PBIS uses data to guide decision-making. Teachers collect data on behavioral incidents, monitor children's progress, and adjust interventions and strategies as needed.

3. **Prevention Focus:** The PBIS framework emphasizes prevention by teaching and reinforcing positive behaviors before problems arise, rather than relying on punishments. This creates a more supportive learning environment.

4. **Positive Reinforcement:** A key aspect of PBIS is the use of positive reinforcement to encourage socially appropriate behavior. This can take many forms, including praise, rewards, and special privileges. Reinforcing desired behaviors helps to create a positive school culture.

5. **Evidence – based Practices:** The PBIS framework uses evidence-based practices that have proven to work well with children and provides schools with concrete tools for teaching desired behaviors.

Benefits of PBIS

1. Reduces disciplinary actions (e.g., suspensions, referrals, restraint and seclusion).
2. Improves social, emotional, behavioral, learning and academic outcomes.
3. Engages more students in learning.
4. Prevents interfering behaviors from happening or escalating.
5. Promotes equity by reducing disciplinary actions being applied unfairly, which may affect children who are of color, or have disabilities, or have different sexual/gender orientations, or are in lower socio-economic circumstances.
6. Improves teacher efficiency and wellbeing

What does PBIS look in Schools

At the universal level, PBIS is individualized in schools. Using the PBIS framework, schools explain school-wide expectations clearly, and teach social skills across environments (school, home etc.) Messages are delivered in a positive, visually appealing and easily understood manner. Schools acknowledge and reward positive behaviors rather than correct challenging behavior. Data is collected and interventions are implemented/changed accordingly.

If your child has more complex behavioral needs, they might receive specific and intensive supports within a behavior intervention plan (BIP) to help with those behaviors. This plan could be part of your child's Section 504 plan or IEP.

Early MTSS and the Pyramid Model

Early MTSS wraps around The Pyramid Model Practices to supports each and every child and their social and emotional development.

The Parents' Role

1. Find out if your child's school or Prekindergarten provider implements Early MTSS or PBIS. If not, ask how the school supports each and every child's social and emotional development while building competencies for the adults to ensure their appropriate responses.
2. Partner with your child's school or early learning center and volunteer to participate on the school PBIS team. Help your school design parent involvement activities in PBIS.
3. Learn about PBIS at your child's school/early learning center and share your thoughts. Find out what equitable and inclusive high-quality evidence-based practices are being used and what data sources are being collected.

4. Work with your child's teacher to help your child learn. Ask your child's teacher to teach you or share common language so you can use it at home.
5. Communicate with the school/early learning center regularly and not only when a crisis of challenge happens. Ask how the school will inform you if your child needs further intervention.
6. Most importantly - celebrate successes!

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