

Overview of Positive Behavior Support

Renee Bradley
Office of Special Education Programs
Rob Horner
University of Oregon

At this point, we have a better science than practice,
better understanding than policy, better vision than reality.
(Horner, 1998)

Positive Behavior Support Defined: "Positive behavior support" is the integration of:

- (a) valued outcomes,
- (b) behavioral and biomedical science,
- (c) validated procedures, and
- (d) systems change

... to both enhance quality of life, and minimize/prevent problem behaviors.

"Positive Behavior Support"

PBS is a broad range of systemic & individualized strategies for achieving important social & learning outcomes while preventing problem behavior with all students.

PBS misrules

- Not specific practice or curriculum...it's general approach to preventing problem behavior
- Not limited to any particular group of students...it's for all students
- Not relevant to instructional priorities
- Not new...its based on long history of behavioral practices & effective instructional design & strategies

Typical response... *Get Tough?*

- *Increase monitoring for future problem behavior*
- *Re-re-re-review rules & sanctions*
- *Extend continuum of aversive consequences*
- *Improve consistency of use of punishments*
- *Establish "bottom line"*

System's response... *Get tougher*

- Zero tolerance policies
- Security guards, student uniforms, metal detectors, surveillance cameras
- Suspension/expulsion
- Exclusionary options (e.g., alternative programs)

Solution...

- Adopt & sustain use of research-validated practices
- Give priority to unified agenda of prevention
- Apply function-based approach to behavior support
- Attend to systems that support adoption & sustained use of effective practices for all students

Goal

- Establish host environments that support adoption & sustain use of evidence-based practices (Zins & Ponte, 1990)
- Create effective & supportive learning environments for all students.

School-wide Positive Behavior Support

- School-wide Positive Behavior Support is a set of strategies and systems to increase the capacity of schools to (a) reduce school disruption, and (b) educate all students including those with problem behaviors
- Clearly defined outcomes
- Research-validated practices
- Supportive administrative systems
- Use of information for problem solving

Practices and Systems for School-wide Behavior Support**Practices**

- Define expectations
- Teach expectations
- Monitor expected behavior
- Acknowledge expected behavior
- Correct behavioral errors (continuum of consequences)
- Use information for decision-making

Systems

- Admin Leadership
- Team-based implementation
- Defined commitment
- Allocation of FTE
- Budgeted support
- Development of decision-driven information system

Key Messages

- Addressing behavior support is critical for the success of schools.
- School-wide PBS emphasizes
 - Prevention
 - Multiple Systems
 - Controlled Implementation
 - Active use of information for decision-making
- School-wide PBS improves
 - Problem behavior
 - Academic Success
 - School Safety

How We Get There

- Invest in prevention
- Create an effective environment
 - Leadership, teams, host for effective practices
- Use different systems for different problems
 - Individual student level alone will be insufficient
- Build a culture of competence
 - Define, teach, monitor and reward appropriate behavior
- Build sustainable systems
- Invest in gathering and using information for decision making/problem solving.

Remember...

- Organization does not "behave" ...individuals do
- "Organization is group of individuals who behave together to achieve a common goal" (Horner, 2001)
- "Systems are needed to support collective use of best practices by individuals in an organization" (Horner, 2001)

What is Needed?

- Expectation that schools will work with all kids.
- Demonstrations of success at all levels of the triangle.
- Empirical Validation of Procedures and Systems that work.
- Emphasis on Prevention First
- Clarify roles for districts, regions, states.
- Greater collaboration among education, juvenile justice, community mental health, family support.

Key Questions

- Can schools implement school-wide PBS?
- What are the effects on social behavior?
- What are the effects on academic outcomes?
- What is needed?

Main Logic

- Schools face a difficult challenge
 - Academic gains, social competence, safety
 - Children enter school more different from each other than ever before
- Individual behavior support
 - Functional assessment
 - Commitment to all students
- School-wide behavior support.
 - Behavior support in schools begins by investing in building a positive social culture
 - School-wide intervention
- Effective practices need nurturing systems
 - Information gathering and use for decision-making

"What the Worlds Greatest Managers Do Differently" (Buckingham & Coffman 2002, Gallup)

Interviews with 1 million workers, 80,000 managers, in 400 companies.

- Create working environments where employees:
 1. Know what is expected
 2. Have the materials and equipment to do the job correctly
 3. Receive recognition each week for good work.
 4. Have a supervisor who cares, and pays attention
 5. Receive encouragement to contribute and improve
 6. Can identify a person at work who is a "best friend."
 7. Feel the mission of the organization makes them feel like their jobs are important
 8. See the people around them committed to doing a good job
 9. Feel like they are learning new things (getting better)
 10. Have the opportunity to do their job well.

Six Major Ideas

1. Build Multiple Systems of Behavior Support - Different systems for different challenges
2. Invest in Prevention - Build a culture of social competence
3. Administrative Leadership/Commitment
4. Efficient/Team-based Implementation
5. Adapt procedures to "fit" the context - Implement sustainable practices and systems
6. Collect and use information for decision-making

Results

- Do schools already use school-wide pbs?
- If schools go through the process do they succeed in implementing school-wide pbs practices and systems?
- Is implementation of school-wide pbs related to reduction in discipline problems?
- Is implementation of school-wide pbs related to improved academic performance?
- Is implementation of school-wide pbs related to improved school safety?

System Evaluation Tool (SET)

- Seven Key Elements
 - Define school-wide expectations
 - Teaching school-wide expectations
 - Acknowledge/reward school-wide expectations
 - Correct behavioral errors
 - Information system for decision-making
 - Administrative leadership/support
 - District-level support
- Summary Score (mean of key elements)
 - 80% on summary + 80% on Teaching element

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