

# Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports: PBIS 101

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# Common Classroom Behavior Problems

- “Jaime’s all over the place. He touches other kids stuff, disrupts their concentration, & always getting in fights. I don’t know what to do with him!”
- “What can I do to reduce # of kids who come to class late?”
- “I can’t get Masao to keep stuff out of his mouth. Books, paperclips, cd’s,...you name it, he’s eaten it”
- “When I tell Sasha what to do, I’m ignored. When I repeat, I’m ignored again. So, I repeat again & tell her that if she doesn’t answer, I’m sending her to the office. She gets up & leaves! I want compliance.”
- “Every other word out of Margie’s mouth is sexually or culturally inappropriate....how do I get her to speak appropriately?”
- Others you can think of?

**The answer is PBIS!**

# Overview of Presentation

- Session 1:
  - Understanding Challenging Behavior
  - What is PBIS?
  - Tier 1
- Session 2:
  - Tier 2
    - Managing Behavior through PBIS
  - Tier 3
    - Dealing with Challenging Behavior
- Learning Goal: To walk away equipped to implement PBIS in your classroom transforming student behavior in the process.
- *To learn how to implement principles of PBIS in your classroom to manage student behavior in a positive way.*

# Session 1

## Understanding Challenging Behavior

Why do they misbehave?

**Why are they bad? Could  
it be...**



# Setting Events

- Physical, social and environmental variables “set the stage” for challenging behavior to occur.
- Three common types of setting events:
  - Biological: thirst, hunger, fatigue, medication side effects
  - Environmental: Clutter in the classroom, disruptions in routine, unplanned transitions, overcrowded work areas, room temperature
  - Social Interpersonal: Disagreements with others, communication difficulties

# Two Major Classes of Learning Problems

- Skill deficits
  - Does not possess the sufficient skill set to perform the task
  - Skill deficits result from:
    - A failure to develop mastery of a skill
    - Having little or no opportunity to learn the skill
    - The student was not fluent in the skill before instruction was terminated
    - Inconsistent use of teaching strategies (i.e., instructional cues)
- Performance problems
  - Does not attempt performance at his/her level of ability
  - Lack of motivation

Can't vs. Won't

# Why do they misbehave?

- Inability to select alternative responses due to a limited repertoire of skills
- Behaviors are maintained and/or reinforced by triggers found within learning environments



# Past Management Techniques

- Traditionally schools have responded to challenging behavior using rapid suppression methods relying on punishment to extinguish these responses
- This approach is clearly reactive and does nothing to teach replacement skills and or prevent these behaviors from occurring

Getting “tougher” is ineffective!



# ALTERNATIVES FOR THE PREVENTION OF CHALLENGING BEHAVIOR

- Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS)...
  - Represents a pro-active and constructive approach for addressing student behavior
  - Transforms the culture and climate of a classroom through investing in practices that work
  - Research shows that effective implementation can eliminate 80%-90% of common behavior problems.

**What is PBIS?**

# What is PBIS?

- Framework which
  - Changes undesirable behaviors,
  - Respects a person's dignity,
  - Respects an individual's capabilities, expands his/her opportunities, and enhances his/her quality of life
- Emp
- T
- T
- T
- Attention
  - Primary (school wide)
  - Secondary (classroom)
  - Tertiary (individual)
  - Improve lifestyle results (personal, health, social, family, work, recreation)
  - For ***all children and youth***
  - By making targeted behaviors less effective, efficient, and relevant, and desired behavior more functional

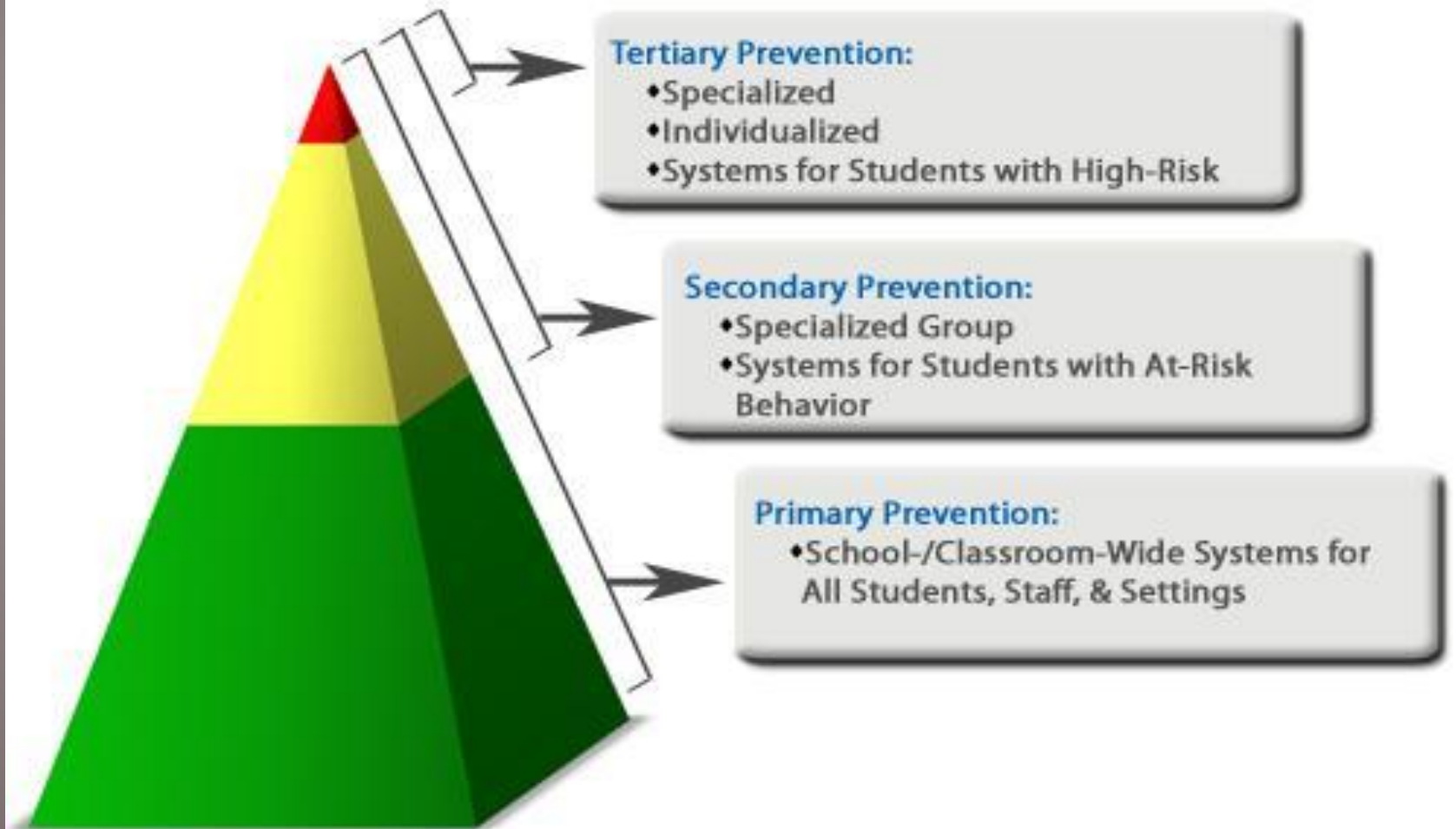
**Systems change to promote positive behavior!**

# Who should use PBIS?

- Entire school or district
- Team of approximately ten representative members of the school will attend a two or three day training provided by skill
- **Everyone at the school who interacts with the students!**
- The school will focus on **three to five** behavioral expectations
  - Positively stated
  - Easy to remember
  - Avoid telling students what NOT to do
  - Tell students what TO do (preferred behaviors)

# What does PBIS look like?

## Continuum of School-Wide Instructional & Positive Behavior Support



# When should PBIS be used?

- In the past, school-wide discipline has focused mainly on **reacting** to specific student misbehavior by implementing **punishment**-based strategies
  - Reprimands, loss of privileges, office referrals, suspensions, and expulsions
- Responding to misbehavior with other positive strategies
- Intervention is an important step of a student's educational experience.
- Teaching behavioral expectations and rewarding students for following them is a much more positive approach than waiting for misbehavior to occur before responding.
- The purpose of school-wide PBIS is to establish a climate in which appropriate behavior is the norm.

**So, it should be used all the time!**

# Where should PBIS be used?

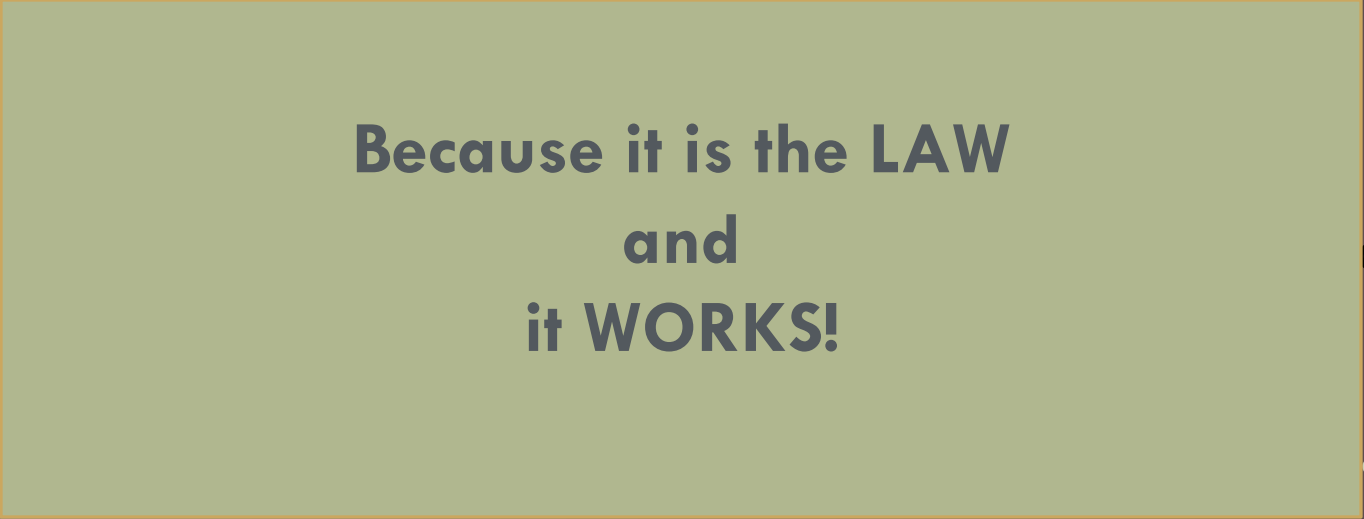
- One of the foremost advances in school-wide discipline is the emphasis on school-wide systems of support that include positive behavior support, and social skills training. **In all environments in which teaching and learning occurs!**
- Insuring that positive behavior support for all students within a school is implemented in areas **including the classroom and nonclassroom settings** (such as hallways, buses, and restrooms).



	Bus	Cafeteria	Restroom	Playground
Respect Property	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Keep feet and hands where they belong.</li> <li>2. Throw unwanted items in wastebasket.</li> <li>3. Keep food and drinks in backpack.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Place tray on kitchen window shelf after scraping leftovers into wastebasket.</li> <li>2. Wipe table with sponge provided.</li> <li>3. Clean food spills off floor.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Flush toilet after use.</li> <li>2. Use two squirts of soap to wash hands.</li> <li>3. Throw paper towels in wastebasket.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Report any graffiti or broken equipment to adult on duty.</li> <li>2. Return playground equipment to proper area.</li> <li>3. Use equipment as it was designed.</li> </ol>

# Why should PBIS be used?

- "Why should I have to teach kids to be good? They already know what they are supposed to do. Why can I not just expect good behavior?"

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**Because it is the LAW  
and  
it WORKS!**
- (F) providing incentives for whole-school approaches, scientifically based early reading programs, positive behavioral interventions and supports, and early intervening services to reduce the need to label children as disabled in order to address the learning and behavioral needs of such children (emphasis ours). [IDEA, 20 U.S.C. § 1401(c)(5)(F)]

# Tier 1

Classroom Management

# A Pro-Active Teacher

- Accepts Responsibility
- Understands students come with strengths and weaknesses
- Approaches discipline positively
- Promotes positive behavior
- Knows you must teach social skills as well as academics
- Emphasizes civility
- Models appropriate behavior



# Pro-Active Teacher's Approach to Classroom Management



- No Blaming – Accepts responsibility for classroom control
- Seeks long-term solutions for problem behaviors
- Analyzes problem behavior for possible causes

# Being a Reflective Practitioner

Student behavior is a result of:

how a teacher structures the classroom,  
how the teacher communicates with the students,  
and how creatively the teacher designs lessons.



**ALWAYS DID  
YOU'LL ALWAYS GET WHAT YOU  
ALWAYS GOT!**

# Rules and Expectations

- *Rules* - explicit statements of the teacher's expectations for student behavior in a classroom
- *Expectations* - desired behaviors or outcomes
- Keep classroom rules to between 3-5
- Classroom rules must:
  - Be positively stated
  - Use simple, specific terms
  - Be measurable and observable
  - Convey expected behavior



# Example of Elementary Rules

## Sample Rules: Elementary Level

- Be respectful.
- Be safe.
- Be cooperative.
- Be prepared.
- Be focused.



## *Sample Rules: Elementary*

- 1. Arrive on time.*
- 2. Be prepared by bringing all materials to class.*
- 3. Care for and respect others.*
- 4. Do your work carefully.*
- 5. Exercise safety and cooperation.*



# Examples of Secondary Rules

## *Sample Rules: Middle School*

- 1. Report to class on time.*
- 2. Follow directions the first time.*
- 3. Respect the feelings, space, and property of others.*
- 4. Bring all necessary materials to class.*
- 5. Complete all classwork and homework on time.*

## Sample Rules: Middle School

- Follow all directions.
- Respect others and their property.
- Settle your differences peacefully.
- Listen quietly and speak softly.
- Do quality work.



# Procedures

- Explain the accepted process for carrying out a specific activity, such as walking in the hallway, using lockers, or sharpening pencils.
- For procedures to be effective, teachers must clearly articulate:
  - Why the procedure is needed?
  - Where the procedure is needed?
  - When the procedure is needed?
  - How the procedure should be implemented?

# Examples - Procedures

## Sample Bathroom Procedure: Middle School

- Use the bathroom during class changes.
- In case of an emergency:
  - Your planner is your pass to the bathroom.
  - Hold up your planner to signal a bathroom request.
  - If permission is given, take your planner and proceed directly to the bathroom.
  - Use the bathroom number indicated on your pass.



*Adapted from Deer Park Middle Magnet School  
([www.parpjproject.org/manuals/manuals.htm](http://www.parpjproject.org/manuals/manuals.htm))*

## Sample Entry Procedure: Elementary

- Line up by the outside door when the bell rings.
- When the teacher opens the door, walk into the room quietly.
- Hang up jackets.
- Get all necessary materials and go sit at your desk.



# Examples - Procedures

## Sample Late Entry Procedure: Middle

1. Students who are tardy must get a pass from the office.
2. Enter the room quietly.
3. Hand the teacher your office pass.
4. Go straight to your seat and take out your work.



## Sample Hallway Procedure: Elementary

- Single
- Straight
- Silent
- Stop at checkpoints



*Adapted Brooklyn Park Elementary School  
uals/manuals.htm)*

## Sample Hallway Procedure: Middle School

- Walk to the right of the hall.
- Use the closest bathroom.
- Use school rules in the hall.
- Use the most direct route.



*Adapted from Old Court Middle School  
(www.parproject.org/manuals/manuals.htm)*

# Misbehavior

- Ask yourself
  - How can I redirect this student in a positive fashion?
  - What social skills does this student need to learn?
- When to intervene – Choose your battles
  - When the behavior is dangerous
  - For psychological protection
  - When there is too much excitement
  - To protect the property
  - When the learning environment is disrupted
  - To enforce school policies/values



# Consequences

- Can be positive or negative
- Key to changing behavior
- Logical and natural consequences
  - Clearly connected to a behavior
  - Punishment should fit the crime
- Congruent consequences
  - Teacher and student interpret the consequence the same way
  - Natural consequences are more congruent than logical because there is no need for interpretation
  - Consequences change depending on the situation
- Assertive consequences
  - Should not be physically or psychologically harmful
  - Consequences are choices the students made
  - Do not need to be severe to be effective
  - Hierarchy of consequences



# Delivering Consequences

- When delivering consequences, keep in mind that you need to:
  - Apply them consistently
  - Use the power of proximity
  - Make direct eye contact
  - Use a soft voice
  - Be firm and anger-free
  - Link the consequence to the expected behaviors
  - Never accept excuses, bargaining, or whining
  - Be educative, not vindictive

# Verbal Interventions

- Be concrete and specific
- Avoid judgmental terms
- Speak directly to students and emphasize the present
- Speak calmly
- When talking to students use...
  - Direct appeal
  - Sane messages
  - “I” messages
  - Humor
    - Saves face
    - Is engaging
    - Redirects feelings and behaviors
    - Projects confidence
- Listen
  - Builds trust
  - Models positive social skills
- Data collection
  - Promotes due process
- Acknowledge feelings





# Nonverbal Interventions

- Use to deal with minor disruptions
- Benefits
  - Does not draw attention to the student
  - Does not take away from instruction/activity
  - Non-confrontational
- Examples of interventions
  - Proximity control
  - Planned ignoring
  - Signals
  - Instructional changes
  - Environmental changes



# Consequences

- Three R's (key requirements for consequences)
  - Must be **R**elated to misbehavior
  - Must be **R**easonable
  - Must be **R**espectfully applied



# Positive Reinforcement

- Reinforcing a behavior to INCREASE a behavior
- Tangible reinforcers
  - Food, stickers,
- Social reinforcers
  - Hugs, praise, smiles
- Token reinforcers – used as tangible reinforcers and are traded for something else at a later time
  - Easy to administer but sometimes delay gratification
- Natural reinforcers
  - Goal is to get the students to a point where they are naturally reinforced for appropriate behavior
- Group Contingencies
  - Reinforcement based on group behavior

# Positive Reinforcers

<b>Free and Frequent</b>	<b>Intermittent</b>	<b>Strong and Long-term</b>
Verbal praise	Notes home	Field trips
Smiles	Phone calls	Special projects
Stickers	Special privileges	Recognition to the principal
Rubber stamps	Extra computer time	Student of the week
Thumbs up	Special seat	Honor roll

# Examples of Positive Reinforcers

<b>Tangible</b>	<b>Social</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Intrinsic</b>
Candy	A smile	Reading a story	Reaching a personal goal
Comics	Showing respect	Drawing	Increasing knowledge
Tokens	Praise	Earning extra recess	Overcoming a problem
Stickers	A thumbs up	Giving out materials	Having a sense of pride
Money	Approval	Tutoring others	Plotting personal progress
Popcorn	Choosing a partner for an activity	Using the computer	Exploring a topic of interest
Baseball cards	A nod	Selecting own seat	Feelings of accomplishment

# Positive Reinforcers

- “Caught Being Good” coupons
- “Gotcha” tickets
- Extended Free time
- Treats
- Drawings
- Homework passes
- PRAISE!
- The “Good Behavior” Game
- Peer Tutoring
- Beginning of class recognition
- Open gym
- Social acknowledgement



GOTCHA!



04/09/2004



# Reinforcement Suggestions-Individual (Elementary)

- Feeding pets
- Playing a board game
- Arts and Crafts
- Computer time
- Line leader
- Teachers helper
- Delivering messages
- Music
- Reading
- Playing sports
- Buddy time
- Snack
- Stickers
- Pencils
- Positive time with the principal
- Play with dolls or cars
- Play with puppets
- Puzzles
- Drawing/coloring on chalkboard/dry erase



# Reinforcement Strategies-Individual (Secondary)

- Computer time
- Time to sleep
- Reading magazines/  
newspapers/books
- Listening to music
- Working on a hobby
- Arts and crafts
- Snacks
- Library/Teacher/  
Coach assistant
- Game playing
- Running errands
- Extra time in high interest  
areas (shop, PE, art, etc.)
- Puzzle time
- Assist with younger children
- Socialization time
- Sitting at teachers desk
- Door prizes/drawings
- Crosswords/Word Searches
- [www.agoogleaday.com](http://www.agoogleaday.com)

# Reinforcement Strategies (Class)

- Field Trip
- Class outside
- Lunch outside
- Class visitor/guest speaker
- Class movie



**Student of the Week**

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**is the  
Student of the Week  
because**

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# Negative Consequences

## Elementary School

Level 1: Class rule reminder

Level 2: Individual rule reminder

Level 3: Modification (e.g., change seat)

Level 4: Time away in another class

Level 5: Parent contact

Level 6: After-school detention

Level 7: Office referral

## Middle School

Level 1: General reminder

Level 2: Individual reminder

Level 3: Second individual reminder or "see me"

Level 4: Lunch detention

Level 5: Time out I (goes to in-class time-out area and completes think sheet)

Level 6: Time out II (goes to alternative room to complete think sheet)

Level 7: Parent Contact

Level 8: Referral

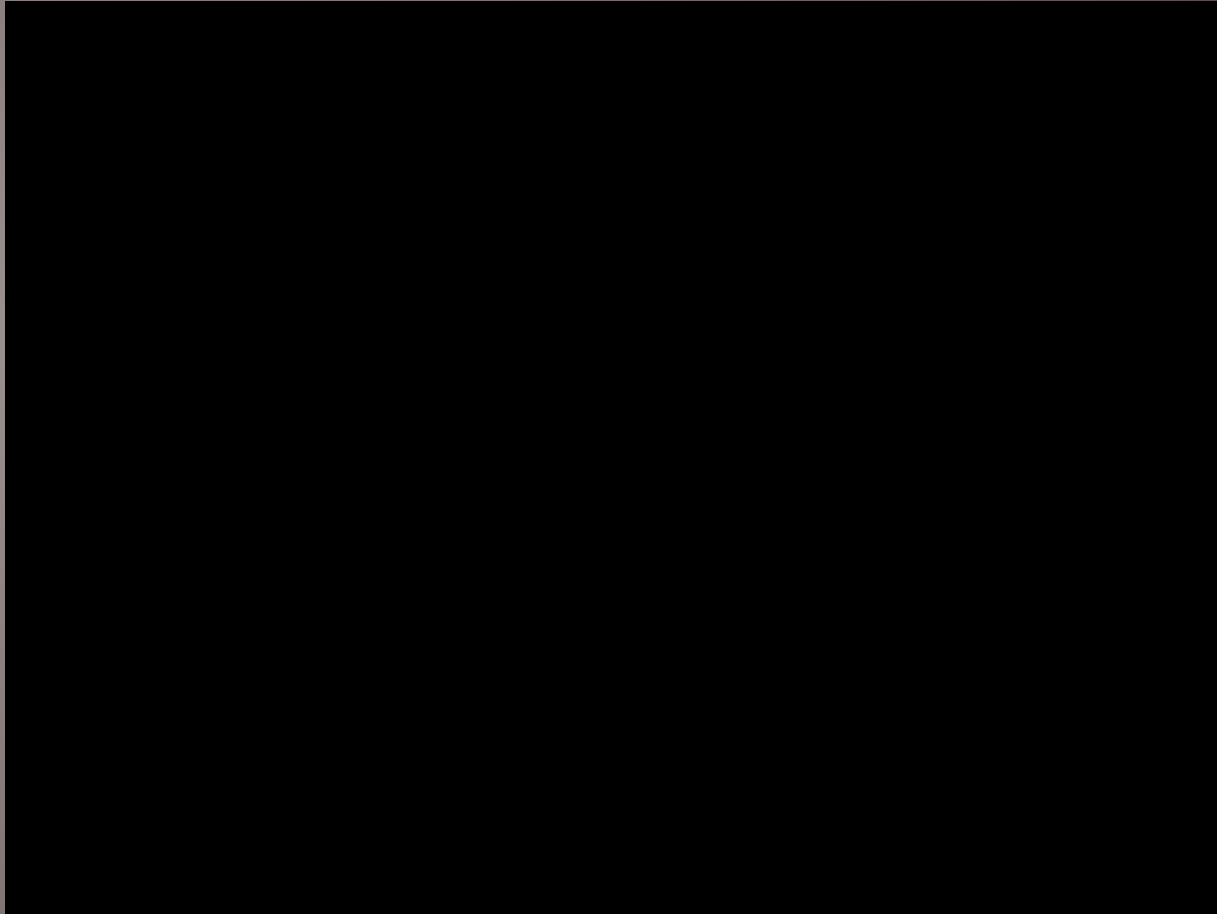


## Session 2

# Tier 2: Secondary Prevention

Small-Group Interventions for  
Students At-Risk of Problem Behavior

# Look or Sound Familiar?



# Tools Available on PBIS.org

- Top 17 Classroom Management Strategies that Should be Emphasized in Every Classroom (Lewis, 2007)
- Effective Teaching Strategies (Lewis, 2007)
- Promoting Positive & Effective Learning Environments Classroom Checklist (Lewis)
- Effective Classroom Plan (Newcomer & Lewis)
- Environmental Inventory (Lewis, 2007)
- Classroom Management: Self-Assessment (Revised from Sugai & Colvin)

# Tier 2: Secondary Prevention

- Focuses on small-group interventions for students at-risk of behavior issues
- Involves more intensive direct instruction and modeling
- Allows for practicing of new skills





### Tertiary (FEW)

- Reduced complications, intensity, severity of current cases



### Secondary (SOME)

- Reduce current cases of problem behavior



### Primary (ALL)

- Reduce new cases of problem behavior



# Pre-requisites for Implementation of Tier 2 Interventions

- School- & classroom-wide rules and procedures in place with integrity
- Team meets at least monthly
- Behavioral capacity in school
- >80% staff participation
- Active administrator participation

# 1. Appropriate Behavior

- Look continuously for appropriate behavior
- Label appropriate behavior
- Appropriate positive reinforcement

# 2. Prompts for Desired Behavior

- Use effective signal/prompt
- Label display of expected behavior

# 3. Minor, Non-interfering Problem Behavior

- Remove attention
- Wait for desired behavior, then reinforce
- Positively reinforce other-student displays of desired behavior
- Prompt expected behavior
- Use positive reinforcement

# 4. Minor, Interfering Problem Behavior

- Signal error or problem behavior
- Remind ask student for expected behavior
- Display/practice expected behavior
- Positively reinforce
- 1 & 2

# 5. Repeated Minor Problem Behavior

- Identify context/setting when problem behavior likely
- Conduct FBA
- Develop BIP
- 1 & 2

# 6. Classroom-Managed Major Problem Behavior

- Develop pre-correction plan
- Teach/practice desired behavior
- Conduct FBA
- 1 & 2
- **PRECORRECTION**
  - Identify & **analyze** setting in which problem behavior most likely
  - Triggers & function
  - Expected & acceptable behaviors
- **DURING**
  - Monitor & reinforce
  - Re-direct
- **AFTER**
  - Reinforce
- **BEFORE**
  - Modify setting
  - Check-in w/ student
  - (Re)teach & remind
  - Reinforce
  - Re-direct
  - Revise, (re)teach, remind



# 7. Office-Managed Problem Behavior

- Follow school & district disciplinary procedures
- 1 & 2
- Be business like; use “teaching” voice
- Stick to protocols, procedures, agreements
- Work as team w/ non-responders
- Use data for decisions
- Anticipate & pre-correct
- Reinforce at high rates, continuously
- Are policies/procedures clear?
- Do policies/procedures reflect “best practice?”
- Do staff implement with accuracy & fluency?
- What enhancements need to be made?
- How can enhancements be implemented?

# Evidence-Based & Promising Practices

- Cognitive-behavioral counseling & therapies
- Targeted & direct social skills instruction
- Group contingency management & behavioral contracting
- Precorrections & positive reinforcement
- Function-based behavioral intervention planning
- Integrated academic-behavioral programming
- <http://www.colorado.edu/cspv/blueprints/>
- <http://www.pbis.org/common/pbisresources/presentations/0309gsrespondingtonormviolatingbx.pdf>

# Other Things to Keep in Mind for Tier 2

- Functional approach logic
  - Behaviors are maintained by consequence events (function)
  - Positive or negative reinforcement
- Behaviors are occasioned by antecedent events
  - Relate antecedent to emission of behavior & likelihood of consequence event
- Changing behaviors requires consideration of maintaining consequences

## Session 2

# Tier 3: Tertiary Prevention

Individual Interventions for Students  
with Problem Behaviors

[www.crisisprevention.com](http://www.crisisprevention.com)

# Tier 3: Tertiary Prevention

- Tertiary Prevention was originally designed to focus on the needs of individuals who exhibited patterns of problem behavior.
  - Dangerous, highly disruptive, and/or impede learning and result in social or educational exclusion
  - Includes developmental disabilities, autism, emotional and behavioral disorders, students with no diagnostic label
- Tertiary Prevention is most effective when there are positive primary (school-wide) and secondary (classroom) systems in place.
  - Comprehensive and collaborative
  - Should include the individual with behavioral challenges and people who know him/her best all working together to promote positive change
  - Support should be tailored to people's specific needs and circumstances
  - Comprehensive approach to understanding and intervening with the behavior, and should use multi-element interventions
  - The goal is to diminish problem behavior and increase the skills and opportunities for an enhanced quality of life

# Tier 3: Tertiary Prevention

- Tertiary Prevention involves a process of functional behavioral assessment (FBA) and a support plan comprised of individualized, assessment-based intervention strategies, including a wide range of options such as:
  - guidance or instruction for the student to use new skills as a replacement for problem behaviors
  - some rearrangement of the antecedent environment so that problems can be prevented and desirable behaviors can be encouraged
  - procedures for monitoring, evaluating, and reassessing of the plan as necessary.
  - may also include emergency procedures to ensure safety and rapid de-escalation of severe episodes or major ecological changes, such as changes in school placements

# What is FBA?

- Functional Behavioral Assessment
- Process designed to analyze problem behavior and identify the reason the problem behavior is occurring
  1. Describing the problem behaviors
  2. Identifying events, times, and situations that may predict problems
  3. Identifying consequences that maintain problems
  4. Developing summary statements that describe behavior, situations, and consequences
  5. Collecting direct and indirect data that support summary statements
- 3 basic functions of behavior:
  - Escape
  - Attention
  - Power
- Sample

# What is a BIP?

- Behavioral Intervention Plan
- Plan designed by the IEP team to support the student
  - Occurs after FBA is conducted
  - Individualized interventions specifically for the student in question
- Sample



# Consider...

- What are the individual learning strengths of the student?
- What are the specific teaching/response formats that have been used successfully in the past?
- What are the learner's preferred activities?

# Modifying Instruction

## Task Design

- Make tasks relevant to the learner
- Match tasks to learner's abilities
- Build in opportunities for choice
- Determine the appropriate length of activities
- Vary activities
- Use of activity schedules

## Task Presentation

- Use of clear and consistent cues
- Use of embedded cues within the task
- Interspersed requesting
- Systematic instruction
- Use of naturally occurring reinforcers

# Understanding the ABC's of Behavior

- **Setting Events:**
  - What is going on around the student?
  - Environmental concerns
- **Antecedents**
  - What happened right BEFORE the behavior?
- **Behavior**
  - What EXACTLY did the student do?
  - Specific
  - Observable
  - Measurable
- **Consequences**
  - What happened right AFTER the behavior?
- **ABC chart**

# Schedules of Reinforcement

## Continuous Reinforcement

- Occurs when a target behavior is repeatedly reinforced following its occurrence
- Used during acquisition stages of learning

## Intermittent Reinforcement

- Target behavior is reinforced every so often or after XX number of the appropriate behavior
- Used to build fluency and maintenance

# How to Handle Crisis

- Crisis: a moment in time when an individual in your charge loses rational, and at times even physical, control over his or her own behavior.
- This can be very challenging and anxiety producing for those responsible for intervening.
- Due to the chaotic, unpredictable nature of a crisis, it is vital that staff stay calm and proceed with a plan.
- There are almost always warning signs that let you know an individual's behavior is escalating.



# Acting-Out Behavior Cycle (Colvin, 2005)

## Phases of Acting-Out Behavior



# When in Crisis...

1. Explain which behavior is inappropriate.
  - Saying “*Stop that!*” may not be enough.
  - The person may not know if you are objecting to how loudly he is talking or objecting to the language that he is using.
  - Be specific.
2. Explain why the behavior is inappropriate.
  - Again, don’t assume that the person knows why her behavior is not acceptable.
  - Is she disturbing others? Being disrespectful? Not doing a task she’s been assigned?
3. Give reasonable choices with consequences.
  - Instead of issuing an ultimatum (“Do this or else”), tell the person what his choices are, and what the consequences of those choices will be.
  - Ultimatums often lead to power struggles because no one wants to be forced to do something.
  - By providing choices with consequences, you are admitting that you cannot force his decision. But you can determine what the consequences for his choices will be.
4. Allow time.
  - Generally, it’s best to allow the person a few moments to make her decision.
  - Remember that if she’s upset, she may not be thinking clearly.
  - It may take longer for her to think through what you’ve said to her.
5. Be prepared to enforce your consequences.
  - Limit setting is meaningless if you don’t consistently enforce the consequences you’ve set.
  - It’s important to set consequences that are reasonable, enforceable, within your authority, and within the policies and procedures of your facility or school.

# Ten Tips for Crisis Prevention

- 1. Be empathic.
  - Try not to judge or discount the feelings of others. Whether or not you think their feelings are justified, those feelings are real to the other person. Pay attention to them.
- 2. Clarify messages.
  - Listen for the person's real message. What are the feelings behind the facts? Ask reflective questions and use both silence and restatements.
- 3. Respect personal space.
  - Stand at least 1.5 to 3 feet from an acting-out person. Invading personal space tends to increase the individual's anxiety and may lead to acting-out behavior.
- 4. Be aware of your body position.
  - Standing eye-to-eye and toe-to-toe with a person in your charge sends a challenging message. Standing one leg-length away and at an angle off to the side is less likely to escalate the individual.
- 5. Ignore challenging questions.
  - When a person in your charge challenges your authority or a facility policy, redirect the individual's attention to the issue at hand. Answering challenging questions often results in a power struggle.



# Ten Tips for Crisis Prevention

- 6. Permit verbal venting when possible.
  - Allow the individual to release as much energy as possible by venting verbally. If you cannot allow this, state directives and reasonable limits during lulls in the venting process.
- 7. Set and enforce reasonable limits.
  - If the person becomes belligerent, defensive, or disruptive, state limits and directives clearly and concisely. When setting limits, offer choices and consequences to the acting-out individual.
- 8. Keep your nonverbal cues nonthreatening.
  - The more an individual loses control, the less that individual listens to your actual words. More attention is paid to your nonverbal communication. Be aware of your gestures, facial expressions, movements, and tone of voice.
- 9. Avoid overreacting.
  - Remain calm, rational, and professional. Your response will directly affect the person's behavior.
- 10. Use physical techniques only as a last resort.
  - Use the least restrictive method of intervention possible. Physical techniques should be used only when individuals are a danger to themselves or others. Physical interventions should be used only by competent/trained staff. Any physical intervention may be dangerous.

# How to Set and Enforce Limits

- Setting a limit is not the same as issuing an ultimatum.
- Limits aren't threats
  - *If you don't attend group, your weekend privileges will be suspended.*
- Limits offer choices with consequences
  - *If you attend group and follow the other steps in your plan, you'll be able to attend all of the special activities this weekend. If you don't attend group, then you'll have to stay behind. It's your decision.*
- The purpose of limits is to teach, not to punish.
  - Through limits, people begin to understand that their actions, positive or negative, result in predictable consequences.
  - By giving such choices and consequences, staff members provide a structure for good decision making.
- Setting limits is more about listening than talking.
  - Taking the time to really listen to those in your charge will help you better understand their thoughts and feelings.
  - By listening, you will learn more about what's important to them, and that will help you set more meaningful limits.