Book Study
Prepared by the
Technical Assistance System Network (TASN)

Implementing Positive Behavior Supports Systems in Early Childhood and Elementary Settings

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(Corwin Press, 2008)

Book Description:
This book is written for early childhood and primary educators who deal with challenging behaviors in young children. It describes the development of a system of program-wide and school-wide positive behavior supports (PW/SW-PBS), and provides the research base and identifies the critical components for successful implementation. Throughout the book the overarching theme is that social behavior needs to be taught and practiced in order to prevent and intervene with challenging behavior. The authors describe the key features of universal supports, as well as targeted small-group and intense individual interventions. The book includes many examples from preschool programs and elementary buildings.

Target Audience:
- **Structuring teams**
- **Behavior**
- **Building Leadership Teams**
- **General Staff**
- **Tier 1 teachers**
- **Leadership**
- **Professional Development**
- **Early Childhood Team**
- **Elementary Team**

-Chapter 1: A Proactive Approach to Behavior Management-

Brief Overview:

In this chapter the authors review the research showing support for use of program-wide and school-wide positive behavior support (PBS) systems. They emphasize that these systems are not ready-made discipline programs, but systems that staff members must build to fit their own unique setting. Most important is ensuring that all staff members are effectively teaching social skills.

Discussion Questions:

1. Why do the authors think the educators struggle when trying to manage children's behavior in the classroom?
2. Discuss the information in Box 1.1 on page 5. How does antisocial behavior develop?
3. The major premise underlying much of the authors' writing is that behavior is learned. Do you agree with the premise? Why or why not? What research do the authors present that aligns with that premise?
4. Consider the research-based strategies in Box 1.2 on page 6. How many of these strategies are currently being used in your building? How do you think your building could implement more of these strategies?
5. Compare the tiers of primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention in a program of schoolwide positive behavior support. How are they the same? How are they different?
6. Discuss the information in Box 1.3 on page 11. Has your building ever used behavior data in a similar way? What would your building need to accomplish to be able to collect and analyze data in a similar way?

-Chapter 2: Supporting Systems Change-

Brief Overview:

Systems within school-wide PBS refers to the supports that the adults in the school need to implement best practices for students. Lack of attention to what the adults need has often led to failure of attempts to implement best practices. If schools are to implement school-wide PBS, they must understand that student behavior is functionally related to the teaching environment, and that they need to create a positive, supportive teaching environment for both students and teachers.

Discussion Questions:

1. Review the four steps to getting started in building a PBS system. How might you convince fellow staff members that you need to develop a PBS system in your building or program? Will this be a hard sell or easy sell? Why do you think so?
2. Compare the roles of PBS coaches, trainers, and coordinators. Are there staff members filling these roles available in your program or district? If not, plan how to access these resources.
3. Discuss Figure 2.2 on pages 28 and 29. Fill in all the sections that you can. Who do you need to work with to complete this information? Will you need to get administrator buy-in to begin to build a PBS framework in your program or building?
4. Why is building capacity so important?

-Chapter 3: Team Leadership-

Brief Overview:
Leadership teams apply the key principles and practices of school-wide PBS in a way that fits with the culture of their building. This chapter focuses on team formation, planning, roles within teams, data collection and professional development.

Discussion Questions:
1. Review the information about forming a team. Who would be critical members of a leadership team in your building or program?
2. Consider completing the needs assessment in Figure 3.1 on pages 33-35. Why do you think the authors advocate spending time on needs assessment and not rushing into implementation?
3. Review the team roles in Figure 3.4 on page 40. Identify staff members in your building or program who could fulfill each role.
4. Compare team meeting template 1 and template 2. Think about using one of these templates or another meeting template (e.g., MTSS) for helping to organize your team meetings.
5. Discuss the aspects of professional development presented on pages 44 and 45. Consider the professional development you currently receive. Is it aligned with learning the key features of school-wide PBS?
6. Devise a plan for promoting school-wide PBS to the staff and families of your building or program. Identify some roadblocks to staff or family buy-in to school-wide PBS.

-Chapter 4: Teach Behavioral Expectations-

Brief Overview:
School-wide PBS programs proactively teach behavioral expectations, in contrast to the reactive orientation found in most schools. Many schools assume that students come to school knowing the social skills needed to be successful. In contrast, in school-wide PBS programs students are not expected to know social skills, but as part of universal prevention strategies, they are taught expectations and desired social skills in context.

Discussion Questions:
1. Does your building have behavioral expectations already in place? If so, how many? If not, develop building-wide behavioral expectations.
2. Why do you think the authors have leadership teams identify behaviors in common settings that represent the building's behavior expectations?
3. If you don't have a behavior matrix already, develop one for your building or program.
4. Describe a direct instruction approach to teaching behavior. Is behavior directly taught in your building or program?
5. Review the sample lesson plans in Figure 4.5 (preschool) and Figure 4.6 (elementary).   How are they similar? How are they different? See if you can find other examples of behavior lesson plans online.

-Chapter 5: Support Appropriate Behavior-

Brief Overview:
This chapter provides strategies for staff to use to support appropriate behavior in context. This includes setting up the environment to elicit the desired behaviors and then providing praise and reinforcement after the behavior occurs. The support provided needs to be frequent and intense when children are first learning the behaviors, then it can be adjusted as children become more proficient with the behaviors.

Discussion Questions:
1. Describe the strategy of using prompts and cues. Provide other examples from your own experience.
2. Describe the strategy of proximity. Provide other examples from your own experience.
3. How might setting factors be modified? Why is modifying setting factors important in influencing child behavior?
4. How can verbal feedback help build fluency with a new behavior?
5. Why is establishing school-wide or program-wide reinforcers an important systemic practice? Why do you think the authors describe their purpose as changing staff behavior rather than student behavior?
6. Do you agree with the authors that frequent review of social behavior is important? Why or why not?

-Chapter 6: Corrective Consequences-

Brief Overview:
This chapter addresses factors that need to be in considered whenever problem behavior occurs. Three practices need to be in place: (1) clearly define problem behavior and consistently correct it, (2) consistently document problem behavior to help drive decision making, and (3) the problem behavior needs to guide corrective consequences.

Discussion Questions:
1. Why is it important for adults to be consistent in how they respond to problem behavior?
2. Why do you think the authors advocate exhausting proactive strategies before using corrective steps?
3. How do the authors suggest documenting the occurrence of problem behavior?
4. Why is it important to distinguish between a skill deficit and a performance problem?
5. What is precorrection? Is it a proactive or a reactive strategy?
6. What do you see as the critical differences between the example of precorrection (Recess Is Over) and the non-examples (Sorting Skittles and Philip Hates Math)?
7. Why are (1) considering the child's development and (2) determining different consequences for unique needs important?

-Chapter 7: Data-Based Decision Making-

Brief Overview:
This chapter describes how data collected about student behavior are used to make decisions about systems change efforts. The process begins with a systematic data collection plan. The collection and analysis of data for decision making at all levels is a primary and never-ending responsibility of the leadership team.

Discussion Questions:
1. Think about developing a data collection plan for your building or program. What questions do you have? What are standard data sources in your building/program? What are other sources of data? Use the data sources identified in Figure 7.4 on page 101 to help you review possible sources of data.
2. Review the surveys in Figures 7.1 (page 98), 7.2 (page 99), and 7.3 (page 100). What do you like about them? What do you dislike about them? Would they be useful for your building/program?
3. Compare how data are used to assess the <u>integrity</u> of PBS implementation to how data is used to assess the <u>effectiveness</u> of PBS implementation.
4. Compare how data are used for system-level decision making and for individual decision making. Were the examples helpful for understanding both systemic and individual decision making?

-Chapter 8: Building Foundations for Small-Group and Individual Supports-

Brief Overview:
This chapter provides an overview of the components needed to build targeted small-group and individual student supports within school-wide or program-wide PBS.

Discussion Questions:
1. Why do the universal or program-wide supports need to be in place before beginning to build targeted small-group or individual supports?
2. Why is it important to match interventions to student need? Make a list of targeted supports available in your building or program. Are those supports chosen for a student based on data regarding the student's needs?
3. Discuss the subsection titled "Write It All Down" on page 118. What are the pieces to this step? Why is each and every piece important?
4. Discuss the types of targeted small-group strategies described in this chapter. How are they different? How are they similar?
5. What are the steps to implementing targeted small-group supports?
6. Why do the authors recommend basing intense individual supports on a functional behavior assessment (FBA)?
7. What are the three critical features of an individual positive behavior support plan?