



POSITIVE BEHAVIORAL SUPPORTS – SPECIAL EDUCATION

What are Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports?

Positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS) are educational practices that promote positive student behaviors and avoid rewarding negative ones. They also reduce disciplinary incidents, reduce and prevent the need for seclusion and restraint, increase a school's sense of safety, and support improved academic outcomes. It is a way to support everyone – especially students with disabilities – to create the kinds of schools where all students are successful.

PBIS schools apply a multi-tiered behavioral framework used to improve the integration and implementation of behavioral practices, data driven decision-making systems, professional development opportunities, school leadership, and evidence-based instructional strategies. A PBIS framework uses academic and disciplinary data and principles of behavior analysis to develop schoolwide (Tier 1), targeted (Tier 2), and individualized (Tier 3) interventions and supports to improve behavioral and academic outcomes, identify, and prevent problem behavior as early as possible, and improve school climate.

The U.S. Department of Education has emphasized the need for schoolwide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports

In its 2012 publication "[Restraint and Seclusion: Resource Document](#)", the Department of Education included positive behavioral interventions and supports in its "15 principles" and best practices designed to prevent the use of restraint or seclusion in schools. The Department said that behavioral strategies, particularly when implemented as part of the schoolwide program of positive behavioral supports, can be used to address the underlying causes of violent and dangerous behavior and reduce the likelihood that restraint or seclusion will need to be used.

Under the IDEA, when a student exhibits violent or dangerous behavior, before implementing disciplinary procedures, the school must decide whether the behavior in question was a manifestation of the student's disability. If it is, the school must conduct a functional behavioral assessment (FBA) and implement a behavioral intervention plan (BIP) for the student. According to the DOE Resource Document, a FBA should be used to identify the combination of antecedent factors (that immediately precede behavior) and consequences (that immediately

Please contact Protection & Advocacy for an alternative format of this handout.

(October 2022)



POSITIVE BEHAVIORAL SUPPORTS – SPECIAL EDUCATION

follow behavior) that are associated with the occurrence of a student's inappropriate or dangerous behavior.

Data collected through direct observations, interviews, and record reviews help to identify the function of the dangerous behavior and then guide the development of the student's BIP. A complete BIP should describe strategies for:

- (1) addressing the characteristics of the setting and events;
- (2) removing antecedents that trigger dangerous behavior;
- (3) adding antecedents that maintain appropriate behavior;
- (4) removing consequences that maintain or escalate dangerous behaviors;
- (5) adding consequences that maintain appropriate behavior; and
- (6) teaching alternative appropriate behaviors, including self-regulation techniques to replace the dangerous behaviors.

The Department of Education emphasized that positive behavioral strategies should be used in schools and teachers should be regularly trained on the appropriate use of effective alternatives to physical restraint and seclusion such as positive behavioral interventions and supports. School personnel should also be trained to collect and analyze individual student data to determine the effectiveness of PBIS procedures in increasing appropriate behavior and decreasing inappropriate behavior. This data should inform the need for additional training, staff support, or policy change.

In 2016, the Department of Education issued a "Dear Colleague" document offering "significant guidance" regarding the requirement that an IEP team must consider the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports in cases where a student's behavior impedes the student's learning or that of others. The guidance says that PBIS, when done with fidelity, often serve as effective alternatives to unnecessary disciplinary removals, increase participation in the instruction, and may prevent the need for more restrictive placements.

For more information, see: the ND Dept of Education FBA & BIP Guide:
<https://www.nd.gov/dpi/sites/www/files/documents/SpeEd/Guidelines/FBA-BIP%20Guide%207.28.2020.pdf>

ND PROTECTION & ADVOCACY PROJECT
400 E. BROADWAY, SUITE 409
BISMARCK, ND 58501
1-800-472-2670 OR (701) 328-2950
www.ndpanda.org; panda_intake@nd.gov