



ADDRESSING CHALLENGING BEHAVIOR POSITIVE BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTIONS AND SUPPORTS

WHAT ARE POSITIVE BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTION AND SUPPORTS (PBIS)?

Addressing behavior in a positive manner brings results. Families and schools benefit from using the nationally recognized approach called **Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS)**. PBIS is an approach to **resolving challenging or disruptive behaviors** that recognizes that behavior is communication. It can be used at home and in school, although its use in school settings is much more formal. PBIS focuses on **prevention vs. punishment** and **replacement of problem behaviors** with more appropriate actions and ways of communication. PBIS allows schools to promote and reinforce positive behavior rather than to constantly be responding to negative behavior and helps students able to learn and practice positive behavior.

If your child **receives special education and related services under an Individualized Education Program (IEP)**, regulations require that if his/her behavior impedes their learning or that of others, **the IEP team must consider the use of positive behavioral interventions, strategies and supports to address the behavior**. If your child has a **504 plan**, behavioral supports may also be used.

HOW DOES PBIS WORK IN SCHOOLS?

Many school PBIS programs have three tiers.

- **Tier 1 is a schoolwide system where all students learn basic expectations of behavior** (respect, kindness, etc.). School staff recognize good behavior.
- **Tier 2 supports students who are at risk for**

developing more serious behavior challenges.

The goal of Tier 2 is to prevent significant behavior challenges by helping students develop the skills they need to be successful (e.g., social skills instruction).

- **Tier 3 is the most intensive level, designed for students who need ongoing individualized supports and services** due to continuing behavioral concerns. These students will likely need a **Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA)** to determine the cause of problem behavior and a **Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP)** to address the behavior. For children under an IEP, an FBA must be considered if the student is suspended for more than 10 days in a school year or is expelled.

WHAT IS A FUNCTIONAL BEHAVIORAL ASSESSMENT (FBA)

An FBA is done to help you and your child's team determine the cause or causes of a behavior. Steve, for example, may lack the communication skills to express what he needs. He may be trying to avoid a difficult task, or he may be bored. He may be seeking attention and discover that he gets it when he behaves in a certain way (tantrums, leaves the classroom, refuses to do assignments, throws things).

An FBA team may include a school psychologist or behavior specialist, teachers, administrators, therapists, you, and your child. **The behavior should be specifically defined** (Jennifer throws pencils in math class). An FBA should include **observations in different settings, over a period of time** in order to identify where the behavior occurs, what happens before it

occurs (antecedent), what happens during the behavioral incident, and what happens afterward (consequence). The FBA is not a quick or simple process and must be based on **measurable, observable data**. **Parents can ask for an FBA** if the school does not suggest one and ask for an **Independent Educational Evaluation (IEE)** if you disagree with the FBA. Once the team figures out the reason(s) for the behavior, **development of a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP)** is next.

WHAT IS A BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION PLAN (BIP)?

The BIP is a **written plan to prevent or replace unwanted behaviors with more acceptable behaviors**. The plan will document the behavior, why it is happening, and list the positive strategies and supports that will be provided. Here is one simple example. Steve tells jokes during silent reading because his reading skills are higher than the content level. Steve will be allowed to read higher-level books during silent reading.

It is critical that the BIPs be implemented consistently. Sometimes the BIP will not work. The FBA may be outdated, or new strategies are needed. New information may be received (e.g., a family crisis or a new teacher may result in the behavior coming back or in a new behavior). Keeping up is key.

REPORTED RESULTS OF USING PBIS IN SCHOOLS

- Increases instructional time and improves academic performance
- Improves attendance and decreases student time out of class
- Reduces disruptive behaviors and help prevent crisis situations
- Reduces staff turnover
- Reduces teacher-reported bullying and peer rejection
- Prevents a “wait to fail” approach by implementing a proactive approach to addressing behavior-challenges.
- Reduces discipline and law enforcement referrals
- Results in consistent expectations and improves school climate.

RESOURCES FOR PBIS

Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports
www.pbis.org

Behavior Intervention Plans: What You Need to Know,
<https://u.org/3ai4gn0>

Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning
<http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu/briefs/wwb10.pdf>

Association for Positive Behavior Support
<https://www.apbs.org/>

