



## Creating a Climate of Support for Students in Early Childhood/Elementary Settings

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Pyramid Model  
INNOVATIONS  
[ChallengingBehavior.org](http://ChallengingBehavior.org)

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### What Are We Going to Do Today?

- Context for This Work
  - Young children's social emotional development
  - Supporting families and teachers
- Overview of the Pyramid Model – an MTSS
  - Creating a climate of support at all tiers



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### What is our Goal?



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**Jones, Greenberg, & Crowley (2015)**

- Children reported to have better social skills such as sharing, cooperating, and helping other children in K are:
  - More likely to get a college degree and have a full time job
  - Less likely to be arrested, use drugs or be on a waiting list for public housing

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### Trajectory of Challenging Behavior



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### Gilliam (2005)

- Preschool children are three times more likely to be expelled than children in k-12
  - 6.7/1000 – PreK
  - 2.1/1000 – k-12



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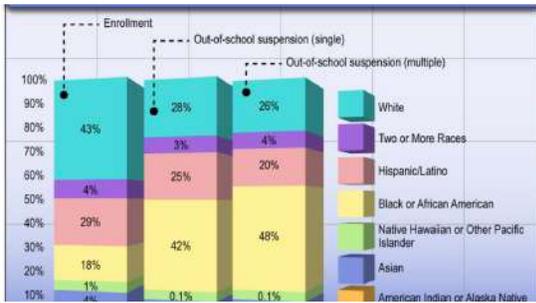
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### US Department of Education Office of Civil Rights (2014)



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### Key Points about the Effects of Suspension/Expulsion

- Suspension/Expulsion in early years is predictive of problems in school and beyond
  - The best predictor of expulsion is a previous expulsion
  - Implications of "behavior" label early in life
- May hinder child's development
  - Lack of continuity in care settings
  - Missed opportunities for learning and interactions
- Potentially contributes to family stress
  - Economic issues
  - May increase likelihood of punitive discipline practices in the home




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### What Teachers Say...




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### Our Focus....

- Adopting a posture of **support**:
  - Supporting all children
  - Supporting all families
  - Supporting all teachers and providers
  - Supporting all programs
- Promoting **confidence** and **competence**
- Supporting **inclusion**, not exclusion




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### Critical Concepts

Pyramid Model is about supporting ALL children, families and colleagues:

- Applying an **Equity Lens**
- Understanding **Implicit Bias**
- Using Culturally **Responsive Practice**




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### The Pyramid Model: Promoting Social-Emotional Competence and Addressing Challenging Behavior




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“An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.”

- Benjamin Franklin



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It's all about relationships



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Relationships Between Children



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**“Every child needs one person who is irrationally crazy about him.”**

Uri Bronfenbrenner



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**“Parents need to know that we care before they care what we know”**  
(Klass, 1997)



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**Walter Gilliam**

“I’ve never seen a case where a child was expelled from a preschool or child care program when the teachers and parents knew and liked each other. I’ve never seen it once.”



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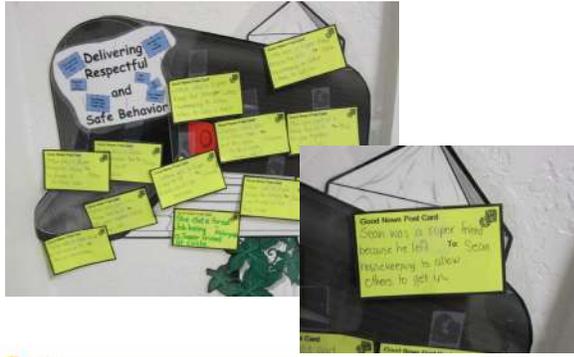
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### Sharing Good News with Families




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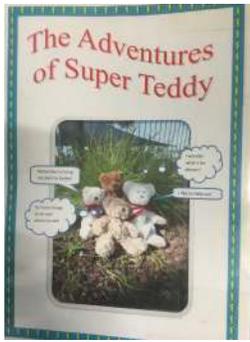
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### Bridging Home and School




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### #PyramidWinatHome

- Jackson – 3 years old
  - I am going to put on daddy's Titans hat to make me feel better when I am missing him
- Avery – 4 years old
  - I had to go to my room and take 3 deep breaths to calm down
- Skye – 4 years old
  - That's just embarrassing
- Joseph – 4 years old
  - That's not very responsible daddy




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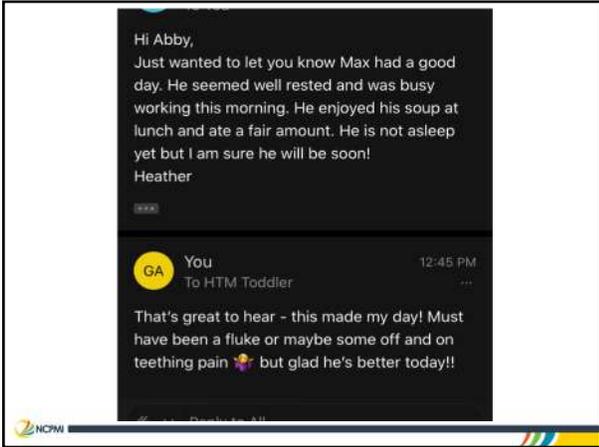
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### Relationships with Colleagues

- A common goal of supporting children where children spend time
- Respect for each other's expertise
- Absence of blame
- Nonjudgmental
- Transparency
- Within a classroom:
  - Behavior support approach
  - Modeling what we want children to do

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### Collaborative Teaming

- Everyone interacts with children; even visitors to your class
- Talk between adults is classroom related
- Adults give each other praise
- Roles are shared; including instruction
  - Decision making is shared

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### Supportive Environments

- Predictable and consistent schedules
- Clear expectations
- Well-designed transitions
- Developmentally appropriate, appropriately challenging, engaging activities
- Planned social opportunities
- Visual supports
- Individualized supports




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### Creating Environments that Support All Children's Engagement and Prevent Challenging Behavior




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### Supporting Family Routines




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**Going to School** 



Mary Go Round Child Care Center  
Story by Mary Go Round South Pointe Childcare

**We all go to school at Mary Go Round.**




Some of us are here all day and some of us here only part of the day. We all need to remember to be safe and respectful while we are at school.




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**The Pyramid Model:  
Promoting Social-Emotional Competence and  
Addressing Challenging Behavior**




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**“If a child doesn’t know how to read, we teach.”**  
**“If a child doesn’t know how to swim, we teach.”**  
**“If a child doesn’t know how to multiply, we teach.”**  
**“If a child doesn’t know how to drive, we teach.”**  
**“If a child doesn’t know how to behave, we.....**  
**.....teach? .....punish?”**

**“Why can’t we finish the last sentence as automatically as we do the others?”**

**Tom Herner (NASDE President ) Counterpoint 1998, p.2)**

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### Expectations



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### Friendship Skills



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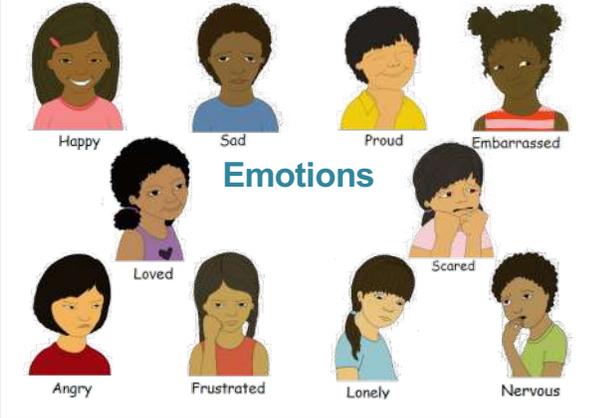
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### Emotions



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### Super Turtle Letter



Dear Parent,

Billy did a great job today handling frustration and not getting angry when we ran out of his favorite cookie at snack. Instead of getting upset, Billy took three deep breaths and decided he would try one of the other cookies. That was a great solution and he really liked the new cookie too!

You can help Billy at home by: Asking him what he did at school today when we ran out of his favorite cookie. Ask him how he calmed down. Comment on what a great job he did. Tell him that you hope that he will do that again when he gets frustrated about something.

Thank you so much!

Mr. Phil

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### The Pyramid Model: Promoting Social-Emotional Competence and Addressing Challenging Behavior



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### Tertiary: Individualized Intensive Interventions

- Comprehensive interventions across all settings
- Assessment-based
- Collaborative team
- Skill-building



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### Positive Solutions for Families

Session	Content
1. Making a Connection	Building relationships, quality time, positive comments, and encouragement
2. Making it Happen	Play, supporting the development of friendship skills, encouraging positive behavior
3. Why Do Children Do What They Do?	Determining the meaning of behavior, making expectations clear, developing and teaching household rules
4. Routines, Routines, everywhere	Understanding how to structure routines, giving directions
5. Teach Me What to Do	Emotional vocabulary, managing anger and handling disappointment, problem solving
6. Facing the Challenge Part 1	Strategies to promote positive behavior
7. Facing the Challenge Part 2	Problem solving, challenging behavior




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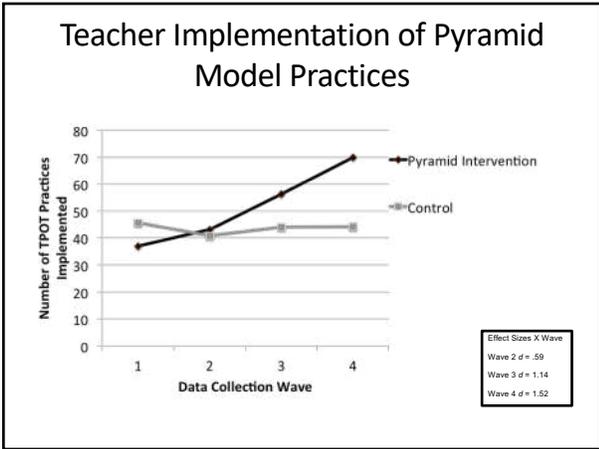
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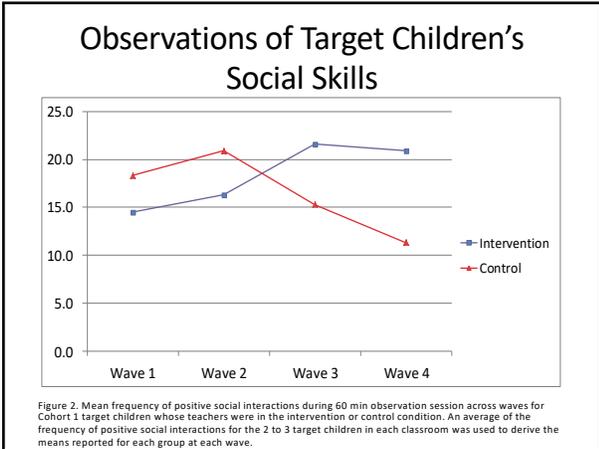
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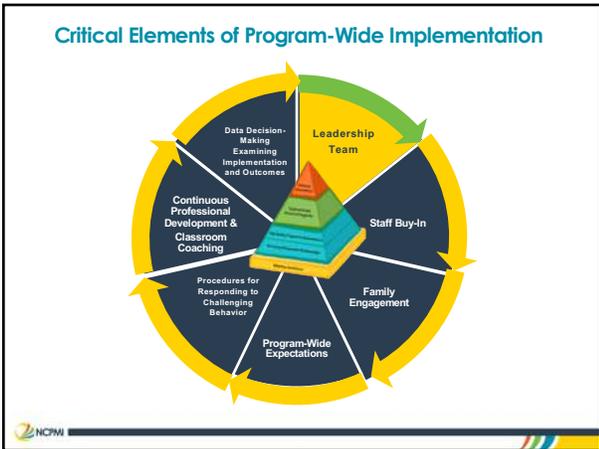
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## Components of Program-Wide Implementation

1. Establish a leadership team
2. Ensure staff buy-in
3. Promote family engagement
4. Establish program-wide expectations
5. Develop and implement a plan for professional development and staff support
6. Develop procedures to identify and respond to individual children's social and emotional support needs
7. Monitor implementation and outcomes




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**Early Childhood Program-Wide PBS  
Benchmarks of Quality**

Don Fox, Nancy Louise Henninger, Susan Jock, and Denise Perez-Archer

Program Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Location: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Team Members: \_\_\_\_\_

Critical Elements	Benchmarks of Quality	Check One		
		Not in Place (0)	Partially in Place (1)	In Place (2)
<b>Establish Leadership Team:</b>	1. Team has broad representation that includes at a minimum a teacher, administrator, a member who will provide coaching to teachers, or member with expertise in behavior support and/or family members. Other team members might include a teaching assistant, related service specialist, a community member, and other program personnel.			
	2. Team has administrative support. Administration attends meetings and trainings. It is active in problem solving to ensure the success of the initiative, and is visibly supportive of the progress of the model.			
	3. Team has regular meetings. Team meetings are scheduled at least 1 per month for a minimum of 1 hour. Team member attendance is consistent.			
	4. Team has established a clear mission/purpose. The team purpose or mission statement is written. Team members are able to clearly communicate the purpose of the leadership team.			
	5. Program has a clear discipline policy statement that includes the promotion of social and emotional skills, use of positive guidance and prevention approaches and <b>emphasizes the use of suspension and exclusion.</b>			
	6. Team develops an implementation plan that includes all critical elements, a written implementation plan guides the work of the team. The team reviews the plan and updates the progress at each meeting. Action steps are identified to ensure achievement of the goals.			
	7. Team reviews and revises the plan at least annually.			

10 min.

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## Ensure Family Engagement

- Multiple mechanisms for input at the beginning
- Multiple mechanisms for sharing the plan
- Multiple mechanisms for home implementation
- Family partnerships in developing and implementing individualized support that are culturally supportive.




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### The Promise, The Challenge



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### The Promise, The Challenge



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Visit us online at [ChallengingBehavior.org](http://ChallengingBehavior.org)



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