Using the TPOT to Support Effective Practices in Inclusive Preschool Classrooms

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Children who are identified as hard to manage at ages 3 and 4 have a high probability (50:50) of continuing to have difficulties in adolescence (multiple studies).
Goal of the Pyramid Model is to Promote Children’s Success By:

• Using a Public Health, tiered model
• Promoting the development of all children
• Creating an environment where EVERY child feels good about coming to school and promotion of child engagement.
• Providing a conceptual framework for a comprehensive array of interventions and approaches
• Focusing on promotion, prevention, intervention
• Teaching social emotional skills
Pyramid Model for Promoting Social Emotional Competence in Infants and Young Children

- Assessment based intervention that results in individualized behavior support plans.
- Systematic approaches to teaching social skills can have a preventive and remedial effect.
- High Quality early childhood environments promote positive outcomes for all children.
- Supportive responsive relationships among adults and children is an essential component to promote healthy social emotional development.

Effective Workforce

Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning
www.vanderbilt.edu/csefel

Technical Assistance Center on Social Emotional Intervention for Young Children
www.challengingbehavior.org
If a child does not know how to read, we teach.
If a child does not know how to swim, we teach.
If a child does not know how to drive, we teach.
If a child does not know how to multiply, we teach.

If a child doesn’t know how to behave, we......teach?........punish?

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

Tom Herner, NASDE 1998
Changing Our Viewpoint

Take the problem away from the child and ask: “Why is this behavior happening?”

What changes can I make to prevent the problem from occurring AND teach the child new skills?
Overview of the TPOT

• A classroom observational assessment designed to measure practitioners’ implementation of teaching and behavioral support practices associated with the Pyramid Model for Promoting Social Emotional Competence in Infants and Young Children

• Provides an objective way to measure the fidelity with which teachers implement Pyramid Model teaching practices, including
  • nurturing and responsive relationships and high quality environments,
  • targeted social emotional and behavioral support teaching practices
  • capacity for individualized social-emotional or behavioral interventions for children with persistent challenging behavior.
Correlation with ECERS Ratings

Overall ECERS R scores had noteworthy relationships with 10 of the 14 Key Practice items in the TPOT. Correlations between five of the seven ECERS R subscales and the key practices subscales were moderate.
Potential Uses of the TPOT

• Research regarding fidelity of implementation of Pyramid practices in a classroom, group of classrooms in a program, or a group of programs within an organization, region or state.

• Can be used in professional development or technical assistance activities to provide information about which practices are or are not being implemented. Need for staff coaching or support can be determined from this.

• Can be used in program improvement or quality rating initiatives as a measure of classroom or program quality related to Pyramid Model practices.
Program Leadership Team

• Identify staff strengths and emerging skills

• Look for trends in data when determining professional development needs and a timeline

• Develop your professional development plan (may include readings, observations across classrooms, focused instruction on strategies etc.)

• Use fidelity checklist to determine if steps are being taken and if professional development plan has increased staff skills.
Administration of the TPOT

• Includes a two hour observation of the classroom and a interview with the teacher.
• Observers rate teacher’s behavior in 14 Key Pyramid Practices
• Observers transition with the class to all school environments with the exception of outside play time.
Measuring Universal Practices Using the TPOT

Schedules, Routines and Activities
Transitions between Activities
Teachers Engaging in Supportive Conversations with Children
Promoting Children’s Engagement
Providing Directions
Collaborative Teaming
Measuring Targeted Social Supports

Teaching Behavior Expectations

Teaching Social Skills and Emotional Competencies

Teaching Friendship Skills

Teaching Children to Express Emotions

Teaching Problem Solving
Measuring Intensive Individual Interventions

Interventions for Children with Persistent Challenging Behavior
Measuring Family Support Practices

Connecting with Families

Supporting Families Use of the Pyramid Model Practices
Identifying Red Flags and Challenging Behavior Subscale

• Red Flags are issues related to teacher training or program policies and procedures. These are counterproductive to building social emotional skills or are inappropriate: eg: 50% of time spent in teacher directed activities, chaotic transitions, children not engaged in groups, children are threatened, learning centers do not have clear boundaries

• When Challenging Behavior occurs, these items look at the teacher’s response to the behavior
Researchers Report Overall Trends in TPOT Scores

• Mean percentage scores were 30% lower in the following Key Practice areas:
  • teaching behavior expectations,
  • teaching social skills and emotional competencies,
  • teaching problem solving, and
  • teaching friendship skills had mean percentage scores of 30% or lower.

• Mean percentage scores were 60% or greater in the Key Practices focused on supportive conversations and connecting with families.

• About 20% of red flag practices occur in preschool classrooms
Our TPOT Observations in Illinois Preschool Programs

• Observations were made in school districts with 2 observers to monitor for inter-rater reliability.

• Observations completed in what turned out to be fairly typical Blended and Self Contained preschool classrooms.

• Some teachers reported having had instruction on behavior training such as ‘Conscious Discipline’.

• Items scored and graphed so results could be shared easily with teachers.

• We defined ‘mastered’ as teachers who were observed to have 80% or higher on each indicator.
Schedules, Routines, and Activities

Transitions Between Activities Are Appropriate

Teachers Engage in Supportive Conversations with Children

Promoting Children’s Engagement

Providing Directions

Collaborative Teaming

Teaching Behavior Expectations

Teaching Social Skills and Emotional Competencies

Teaching Friendship Skills

Teaching Children to Express Emotions

Teaching Problem Solving

Interventions for Children with Persistent Challenging Behavior

Connecting with Families

Supporting Family Use of the Pyramid Model Practices
Identifying Strengths & Growth Areas

• Identify program strengths and weaknesses based on Key Practice data
• Respond to teacher challenges as well as the TPOT data
• Staff discussion and input towards the professional development plan
• Create an action plan and share with teachers
• Create a timeline and measurement for success
Selecting Targets for Professional Development

• Review data and select a Key Practice which is a relative strength for the program or the teacher

• Review data and select a Key Practice that is identified as an area of need
Professional Development Planning

Create an Action Plan!

Target Areas:

Supportive conversations with children

Teaching children to express emotions
Conversations
Teaching Emotions
Positive Adult-Child Interactions

- Acknowledge child’s communication (verbal or non-verbal)
- Greets children by their name
- Engage in one-to-one interactions, at eye level
- Use a pleasant, calm voice and simple language
- Provide warm, responsive physical contact
- Follow the child’s lead and interests during play
- Listen to children and encourage them to listen to others
- Acknowledge child’s accomplishments & efforts
Classroom Example

MIRROR
Checking In

Teachers and children can “check in” each morning by choosing a feeling face that best describes their affective state and putting it next to their name.

Children can be encouraged to change their feeling faces throughout the day as their feelings change.
Sample Song

To the tune of “Row, Row, Row, Your Boat”

- Happy, happy smiling faces, look at my big grin. I am happy, see my face, making a big grin.

- Sad, sad frowning faces, look at me boo hoo. I am sad, see my face, crying big boo hoos.

- Surprise, surprise is my face, eyes are open wide. I’m surprised, see my face, eyes and mouth open wide.

- Nervous, nervous is my face; eyebrows and teeth are tight; I am nervous, me oh my, trying with all my might.

- Proud, proud is my face, shoulders and smiles are big; I am proud, standing tall, smiling really big.
Book Nooks

On Monday When it Rained

Glad Monster
Sad Monster

Hands Are Not for Hitting

http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu/resources/strategies.html
Controlling Anger and Impulse

- Recognizing that anger can interfere with problem solving
- Learning how to recognize anger in oneself and others
- Learning how to calm down
- Understanding appropriate ways to express anger
Major Messages We Hope You Have Heard....

• Build positive relationships with every child and family.

• Focus on prevention and teaching appropriate skills.

• Promoting social emotional development is not easy. There are no quick fixes to challenging behavior.

• It requires a comprehensive approach that includes building relationships, evaluating our own classrooms and behaviors, and TEACHING.
Resources

• http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu/
• challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/TACSEI/index.htm
• http://www.pyramidmodel.org/resources/
The impact of teaching social emotional skills!!