

Early Development and Challenging Behavior

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Agenda

- Welcome
- Overview of BAT project
- DEC and NAEYC position statements related to behavior
- Big feelings and hot buttons
- Early development in context
- Behavioral challenges in young children (3-8 years focus) and common strategies, FBA and environmental manipulations
- Brief overview of the Pyramid Model and PBIS
- Self-reflection / Q&A
- Exit survey



Behavior Assessment Training (BAT) project



The Special Education Behavior Assessment Training Project will provide comprehensive, professional learning for special education personnel on culturally responsive Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) practices and Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPs) for students across all grade levels identified as having a disability in one or more of the 13 categories specified in IDEA...Additionally, the successful Offeror will coordinate with ISBE on mandate 105 ILCS5/14-8.05, which requires ISBE to **develop and implement State-level guidelines on culturally responsive, evidence-based behavior interventions for students across all grade levels** identified as having a disability in one or more of the 13 disability categories specified in IDEA.



BAT project continued

- Awareness of culturally responsive behavioral processes including those related to the FBA/BIP process
- Awareness of personal lens related to behavior and need for ongoing examination and reflection
- Integrate resources to support data collection and strategies to respond to challenging behavior



DEC and NAEYC Position Statements related to behavior



- The Division for Early Childhood's (DEC) and the National Association for the Education of Young Children's (NAEYC) joint statement on inclusion:
 - *Desired results of inclusive experiences for children with and without disabilities and their families include a sense of belonging and membership, positive social relationships and friendships, and development and learning to reach their full potential*
 - *Defining features are access, participation, and supports*

<https://www.decdocs.org/position-statement-inclusion>



DEC and NAEYC continued



- DEC's Position Statement on Challenging Behavior and Young Children

Executive summary:

<https://www.decdocs.org/executive-summary-challenging-behav>

Full statement: <https://www.decdocs.org/position-statement-challenging-beha>

- NAEYC resources are available at <https://www.naeyc.org/resources/topics/guidance-and-challenging-behaviors>



DEC's Position Statement



- Key points of DEC's Position Statement on Challenging Behavior and Young Children
 - *Challenging behavior often can interfere with the development of **social-emotional competence**. Conversely, children with low social-emotional competence may develop challenging behavior as a way to communicate their needs.*
 - *Punitive practices don't teach children needed social and communicative behaviors. Additionally, punitive practices, such as corporal punishment, **suspension, and expulsion disproportionately affect young children of color.***
 - ***Professionals and families need positive strategies to support young children's development and prevent challenging behavior.***



Young children, BIG feelings



“Hot Buttons”

- Which specific child behaviors “push your buttons” including aggression, defiance, disrupting activities, destroying materials, elopement and other common behaviors?
- How do these behaviors impact your internal state?
- How do you respond to these behaviors?

November webinar will go in depth on internal states and dysregulation.



Key considerations related to the early childhood years which impact behavior

- **Unique developmental considerations** and commonly utilized strategies and interventions with young children and/or adapted from older children for use with 3-8 year olds.
- Collecting behavioral data and developing an **intervention plan is often informal** due to a child's limited language and communication development as well as social emotional skills.
- **Teaching age-appropriate behavior must be implemented in context, across settings, and with many opportunities for practice and feedback.**



Key behavioral skills for young children aged 3-8 years

- Getting along with peers and adults
- Following directions (more than compliance)
- Regulating emotions
- Negotiating solutions to conflict
- Persistence in making needs known, completing tasks etc.
- Managing challenges/frustration



Behavioral expectations need to be framed by early childhood development

Key cognitive skills

- Understands opposites (e.g., fast/slow)
- Can compare (e.g., big, bigger, biggest)
- Understands sequences (e.g., classroom job)
- Understands time concepts (e.g., yesterday)
- Avoids danger (e.g., not jumping off slide)
- Pays attention for five or more minutes



Early childhood development continued

Key social-emotional skills

- Engages in interactive play with adults and peers
- Follows group rules (e.g., shares, takes turns)
- Volunteers to be a helper (e.g., door helper)
- Has preferred friend(s) among peers/adult(s)
- Shows sympathy (e.g., comforts crying peer)
- Asks for help
- Describes emotional state
- Talks about new experiences



Common types of challenging behavior and early childhood development

- **Escape**

- Running away/elopeing
- Not staying seated/wandering
- Refusing to participate in specific activity

- **Gain attention**

- Tantrum
- Aggression including kicking, biting, etc./Harms self
- Destroying classroom materials

- **Gain access**

- Turning on/off lights for visual stimulation
- Misbehaving outside to be sent indoors



General strategies

- Small number of expectations and corresponding rules
 - Facilitates their implementation
 - Assists with use and reinforcement across settings, people etc.
 - Consistency is key
- Be proactive rather than reactive to behavior
- Avoid an overstimulating, disorganized environment
- Maintain a predictable daily schedule of routines and activities to the extent possible; learn flexibility
- Carefully plan and implement transitions

Additional strategies to address challenging behavior

- Be proactive, not reactive
- Provide attention for positive behaviors
- Limit the number of expectations and rules and be consistent in implementation
- Sufficient opportunities for choice-making
- Organized environment
- Predictable daily schedule and routines
- Planned transitions and routines



Redirecting young children

- Observe children to learn what draws and maintains their attention along with what is developmentally appropriate
- Become aware of the times of day as well as activities and routines when challenging behaviors are more likely to occur.
- Become aware of specific children and their interactions
- Provide reminders about expectations and rules (e.g., “we are kind to each other”, “use your indoor voice”)
- Verbally guide children toward the desired object, activity etc. (e.g., “here is your favorite book”)
- Provide praise to reduce challenging behavior (e.g., “Thanks for putting away the blocks.”)



Effective use of reinforcement

- Precisely identify the behavior to be reinforced
- Provide reinforcer immediately after the behavior occurs (tangible, time with adult, praise) and fade
- Provide natural reinforcers whenever possible



Consider context and nuance related to young children's understanding of behavioral expectations

- Developmental level in key domains
- Disability and developmental delay
- Multiple placements with differing expectations
- Expectations at home and in community may be at odds with one or more early childhood setting
- Parenting skills of caregivers
- Impact of trauma

Disability and developmental delay

- Impact on acquisition and use of skills across developmental domains, with adults and peers and in a range of settings
- Adjust expectations for chronological compared with developmental age
- Review demands in daily activities and routines
- Intentional grouping for activities (peer models)
- Collaborate and consult with professionals including IEP team members as needed



Multiple placements with differing expectations

- Behavioral expectations in classroom, on bus, cafeteria, playground etc.
- Schedule and materials
- Skill level of peers (language, social-emotional)
- Focus of activities
- Structure of daily routines
- Training and experience of adults



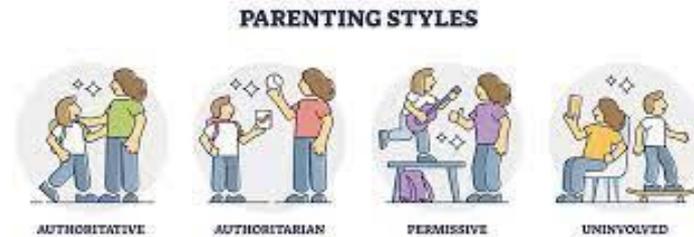
Expectations at home/community and school

- Impact of diversity (culture, race, SES, education)
- Implicit rules and behavioral expectations
- Perspective of leaders and administrators
- Available resources including to needed materials and social-emotional support
- Our own biases...



Parenting skills of caregivers

- Experiences as a child
- Understanding of child development and behavioral expectations
- Priorities of daily life (e.g., pay rent, repair vehicle)
- Amount and types of available support
- Parenting style



Trauma and young children

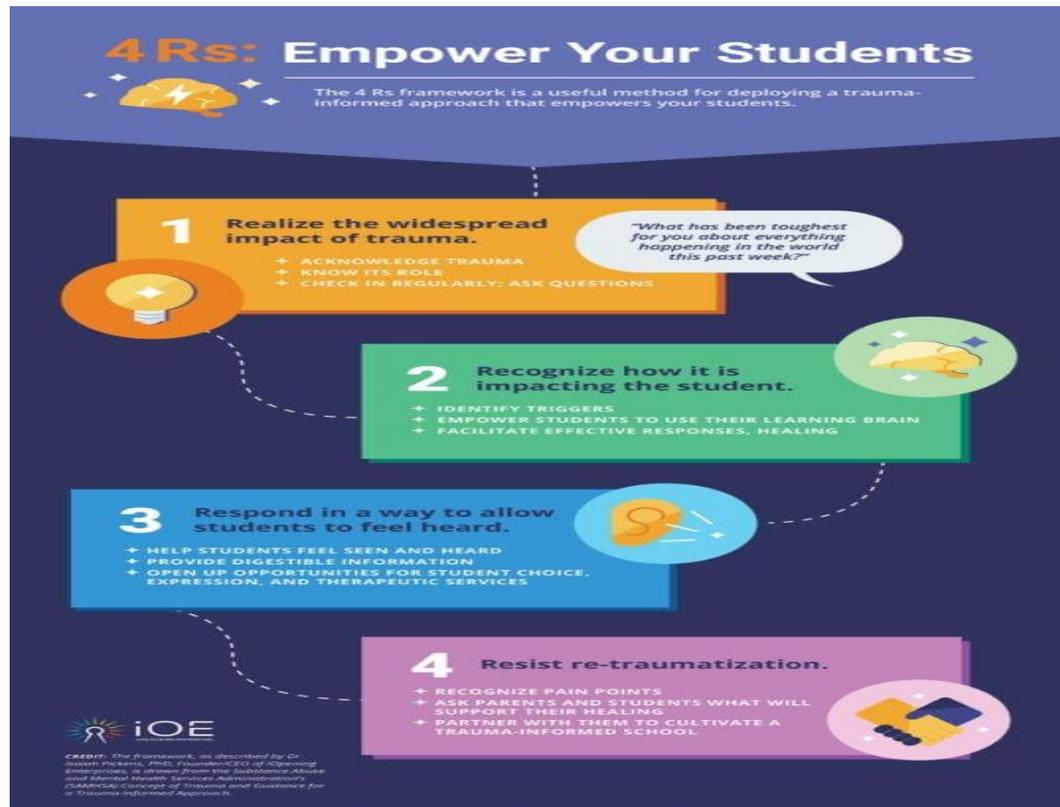
- Frequency and intensity vary including parent incarceration, domestic violence and, unstable housing
- Immediate, short- and long-term impact
- Providing support to child (verbal, emotional)
- Adjusting behavioral expectations does not mean excusing or not responding to challenging behavior; it is acknowledging its root cause within context of development

Resource: Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). Items available at <https://sparqtools.org/mobility-measure/adverse-childhood-experiences-ace/#all-survey-questions>

Strategies for reducing impact can be found at <https://dph.illinois.gov/topics-services/life-stages-populations/maternal-child-family-health-services/child-health/adverse-childhood-experiences.html>



Trauma and young children continued



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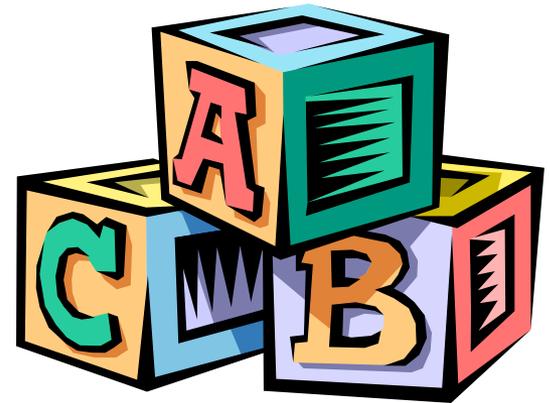
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Functional Behavioral Assessment and young children

- **Underlying assumptions of FBA**
 - Primary influence on behavior is environment
 - Behavior serves a function for child
 - Modify environment, not child
- Identifying function assists process to replace challenging behavior with more appropriate behavioral response(s)
 - Gather and analyze relevant data
 - Recommend and implement changes
 - Monitor child's behavior in response to changes

A key component of a Functional Behavioral Assessment: ABC analysis

- Identify environment(s) to observe
- Systematic observation and data collection:
 - **A**ntecedents – provides key information
 - **B**ehavior
 - **C**onsequences
- Use **ABC** data to develop intervention including environmental manipulations



Observing Antecedents: Setting events

- **Child-related:**
 - Physiological factors such as sleepiness, hunger, reaction to medication, seasonal allergies, illness
 - Family situation such as parent illness, change in housing, new sibling, divorce, etc.
 - Is behavior acute or chronic?
- **Setting-related:**
 - Social environment (e.g., staff turnover)
 - Physical environment
 - Activities and Routines



Observing Antecedents: Environment related

- **Physical set up:**
 - Lighting and sound levels
 - Defined areas and walkways
 - Adequate space for each Center
- **Activities and teaching strategies:**
 - Developmental requirements
 - Pace (balance of active and quiet times)
 - Grouping (individual, small/large group)
- **Materials:**
 - Appropriate display and storage
 - Variety of quiet/individual activities
- **Schedule** including planned transitions (signal, time to prepare), routines (snack, bathroom, naptime) and daily activities



Outcome of ABC analysis

Answers the question of “Why” by identifying:

- **Who** is displaying the behavior
- **When** the behavior is displayed including specific activity and/or routine and time(s) of the session
- **Where** the behavior is displayed such as classroom area, playground, bus
- **How** the behavior is displayed such as frequency, duration, etc.



Environmental manipulations: Antecedents

- Modify classroom schedule
- Modify grouping strategies for specific activities or routines
- Modify adult supervision during activities and routines
- Modify physical set up of setting
- Out-of-sight storage options
- Monitor and teach during transitions

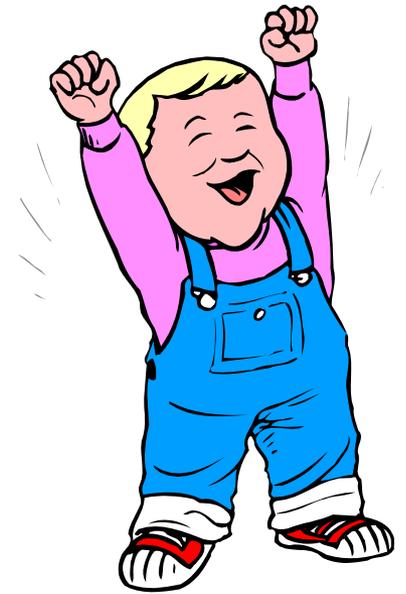


Environmental manipulations: Behavior

The focus is to reduce inappropriate behavior while increasing appropriate behavior.

Focus on teaching a **replacement behavior**, **which** is a developmentally appropriate **behavior** that is maintained by the same consequences as the challenging behavior.

By **servicing the same function** as the challenging behavior, the appropriate **skill** can be used to meet the same need met in a more appropriate way.



Environmental manipulations: Consequences

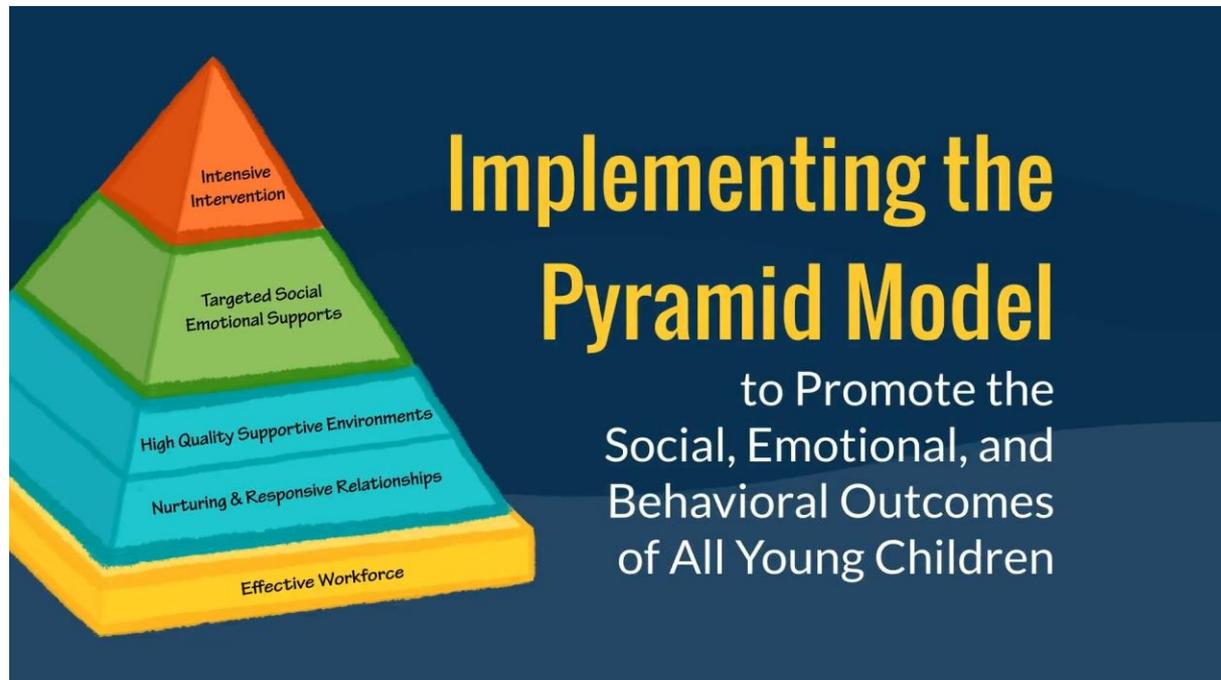
- “Catch” child demonstrating appropriate behavior rather than reacting to inappropriate behavior(s)
- Provide positive attention, praise, access etc.
- Vary reinforcement (amount, time of day, etc.)
- Ensure frequent opportunities to respond correctly

AND/OR

- Ignore or redirect behavior
- Remove reinforcing consequences
- Removal from activity (sparingly)
- Loss of privilege (sparingly)



The Pyramid Model for preschoolers

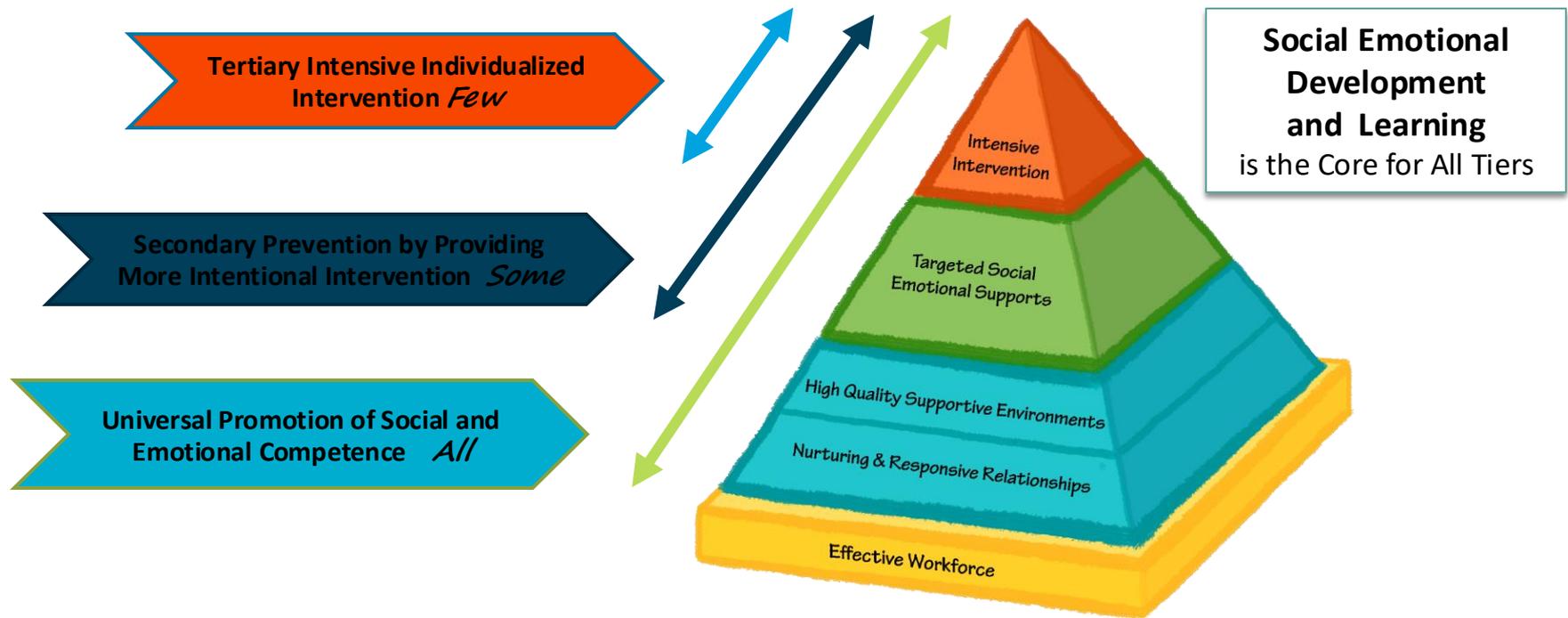


Goal of the Pyramid Model

Ensure each and every child has the support, experiences, relationships, opportunities, guidance, and instruction to thrive in their social-emotional development and learning



Pyramid Model for Promoting Social and Emotional Competence in Young Children

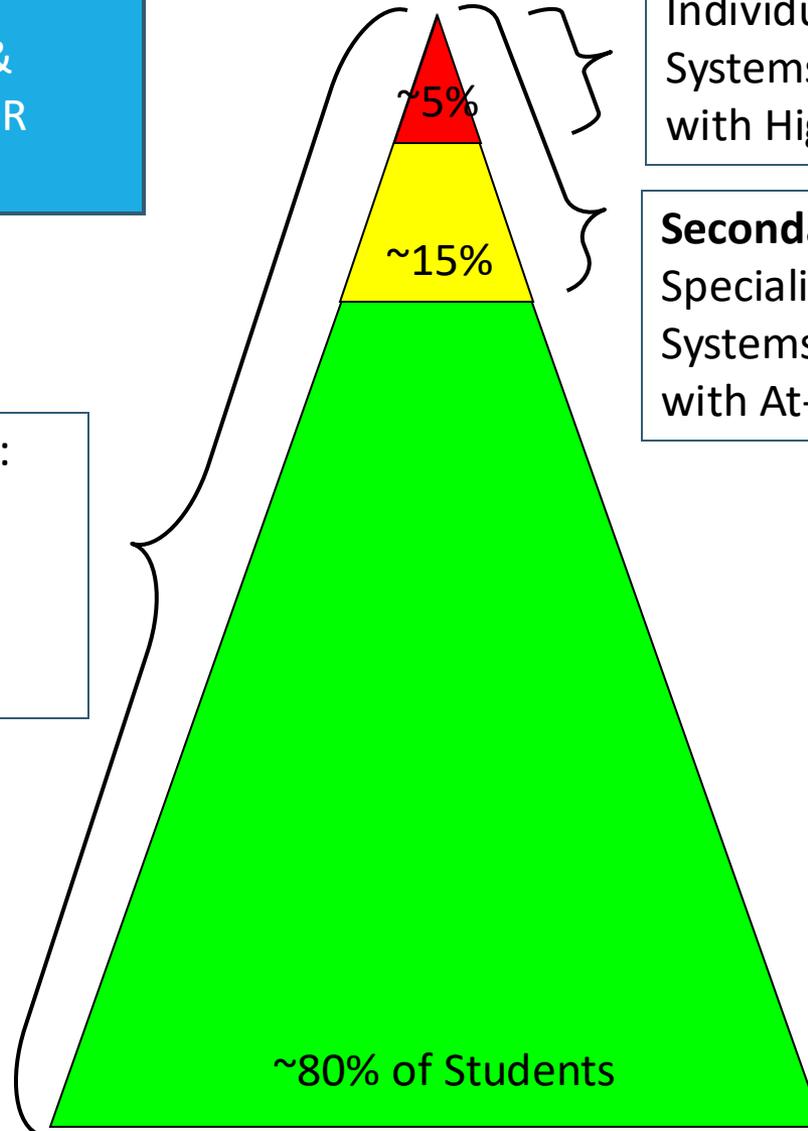


Critical components for implementing the PBIS model with older children (K-12)

- Team process
- Be specific (e.g., each step in developing and implementing the plan)
- Understand context of family's life when making decisions related to a child's behavior
- Prepare for success...as well as possible failure

CONTINUUM OF
SCHOOL-WIDE
INSTRUCTIONAL &
POSITIVE BEHAVIOR
SUPPORT

Primary Prevention:
School-/Classroom-
Wide Systems for
All Students,
Staff, & Settings



Tertiary Prevention:
Specialized
Individualized
Systems for Students
with High-Risk Behavior

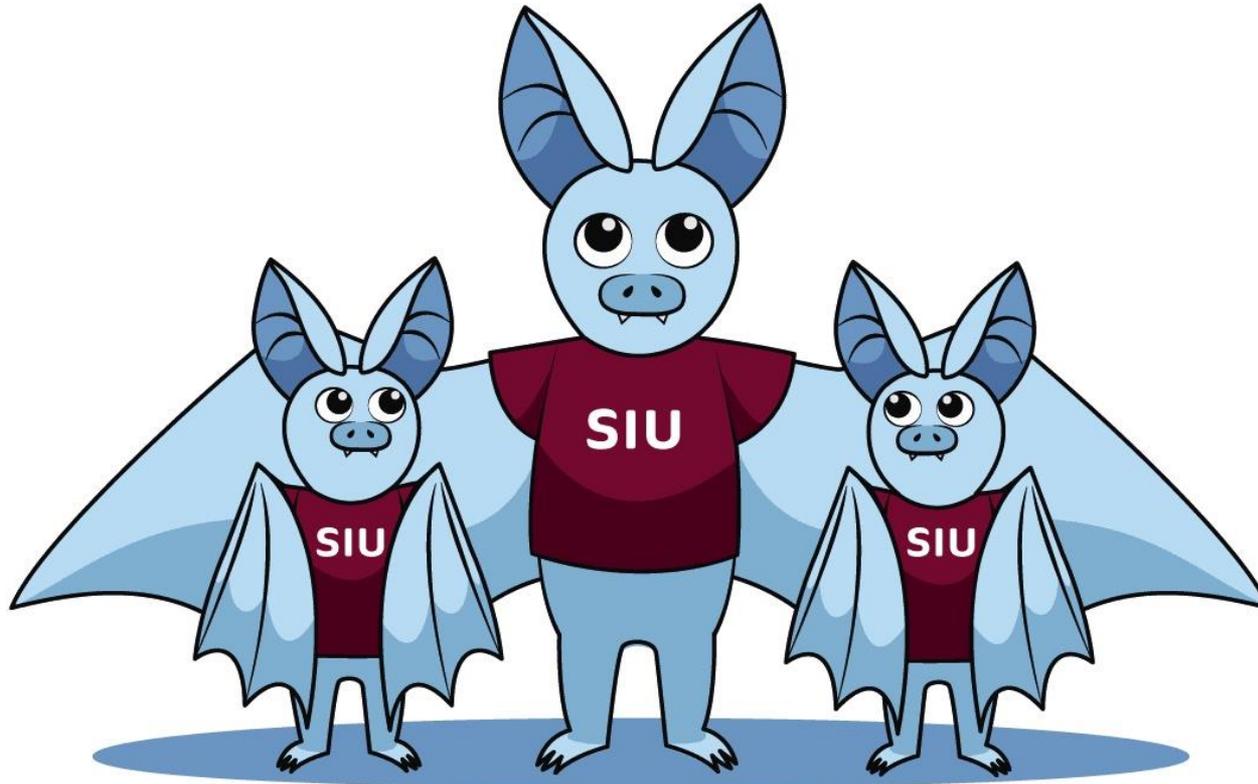
Secondary Prevention:
Specialized Group
Systems for Students
with At-Risk Behavior



Self-reflection

- What types of skills, experiences, and resources do you need to effectively work with young children with challenging behavior?
- What types of strategies etc. are currently in place in your program, school and/or district?
- Does your FBA/BIP process address the unique strengths and needs of young children? If yes, how? If no, what needs to be adjusted or changed and how soon can this occur?

Thank you!



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