

# Adopting the Teaching Pyramid: Effective Practices for Promoting Social Competence and Addressing Challenging Behavior

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[www.csefel.uiuc.edu](http://www.csefel.uiuc.edu)


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**Center on the Social  
and Emotional Foundations  
for Early Learning**



# CSEFEL Resources



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Thursday, Sept 29

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- What Works Briefs
- Practical Strategies
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**Welcome!**

The **Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning** is a national center focused on strengthening the capacity of child care and Head Start programs to improve the social and emotional outcomes of young children.

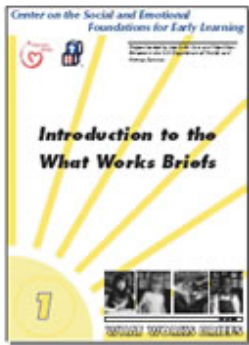
The Center will develop and disseminate evidence-based, user-friendly information to help early childhood educators meet the needs of the growing number of children with challenging behaviors and mental health challenges in child care and Head Start programs.

The Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning will:

- Focus on promoting the social and emotional development of children as a means of preventing challenging behaviors.
- Collaborate with existing training and technical assistance (T/TA) providers for the purpose of ensuring the implementation and sustainability of practices at the local level.
- Engage in a comprehensive, culturally sensitive approach that is inclusive of and responsive to the needs of programs, families, other professionals, and communities.
- Provide ongoing identification of training needs and preferred delivery formats of local programs and T/TA providers.
- Disseminate evidence-based practices.

**Hurricane Katrina Resources**

Training Modules are now available! [View](#) or [Order](#) them now!



Check out the [What Works Briefs](#). The Briefs describe practical strategies, provide references to more information

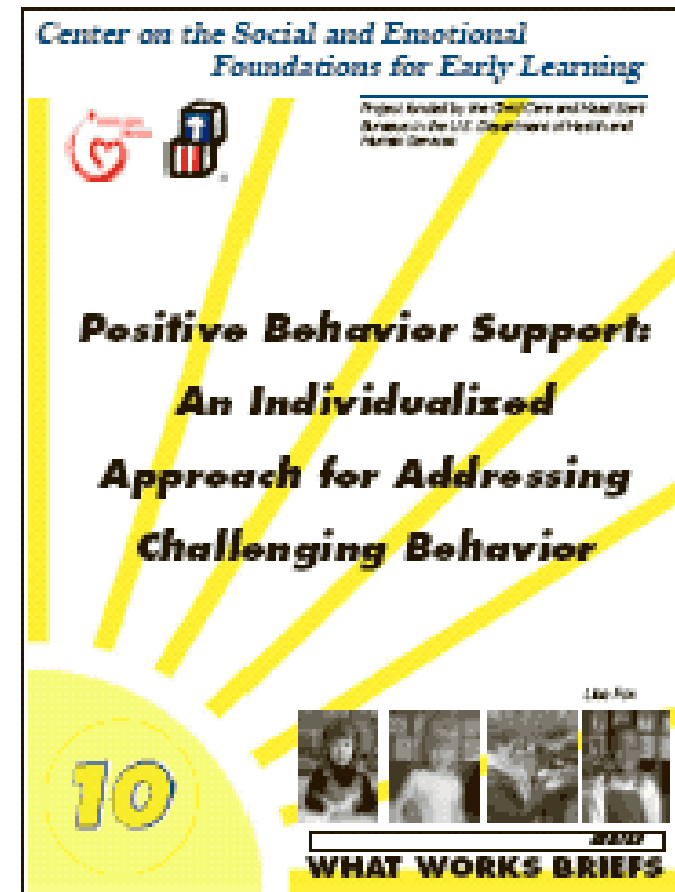
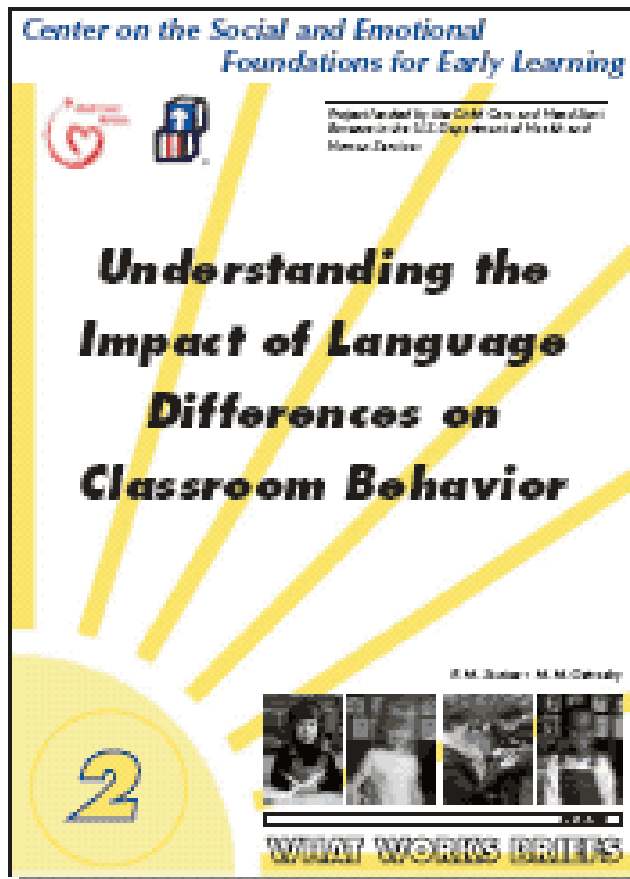
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# CSEFEL - What Works Briefs



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# Training Modules

- Module 1- Promoting Children's Success: Building Relationships and Creating Supportive Environments
- Module 2 - Social-Emotional Teaching Strategies
- Module 3a- Individualized Intensive Interventions: Determining the Meaning of Challenging Behavior
- Module 3b - Individualized Intensive Interventions: Developing a Behavior Support Plan
- Module 4 - Leadership Strategies for Supporting Children's Social and Emot Development and Addressing Challenging



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## Welcome!

The Center for Evidence-Based Practice: Young Children with Challenging Behavior is funded by the [U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs](#) to raise the awareness and implementation of positive, evidence-based practices and to build an enhanced and more accessible database to support those practices.



Be sure to check the [Center for Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning \(CSEFEL\)](#) Web site!

## What's New

Click on logo to visit the National Training Institute website:



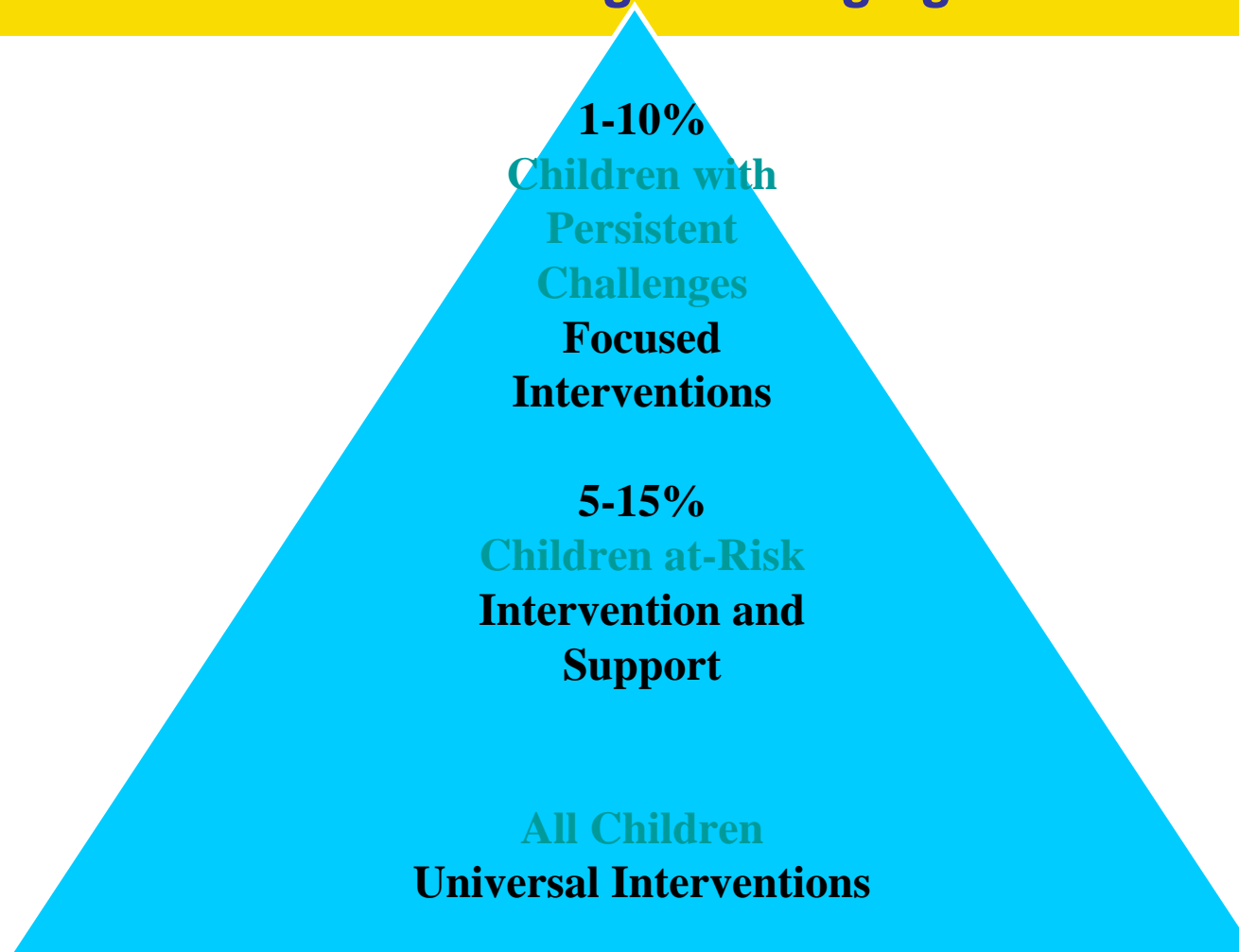
May 4 - 6, 2008 *Workshop Report* | *Charlotte, North Carolina*  
Pathways to Service Utilization: A Synthesis of Evidence Relevant to  
Young Children with Challenging Behavior



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# Promoting Children's Social and Emotional Development and Addressing Challenging Behavior



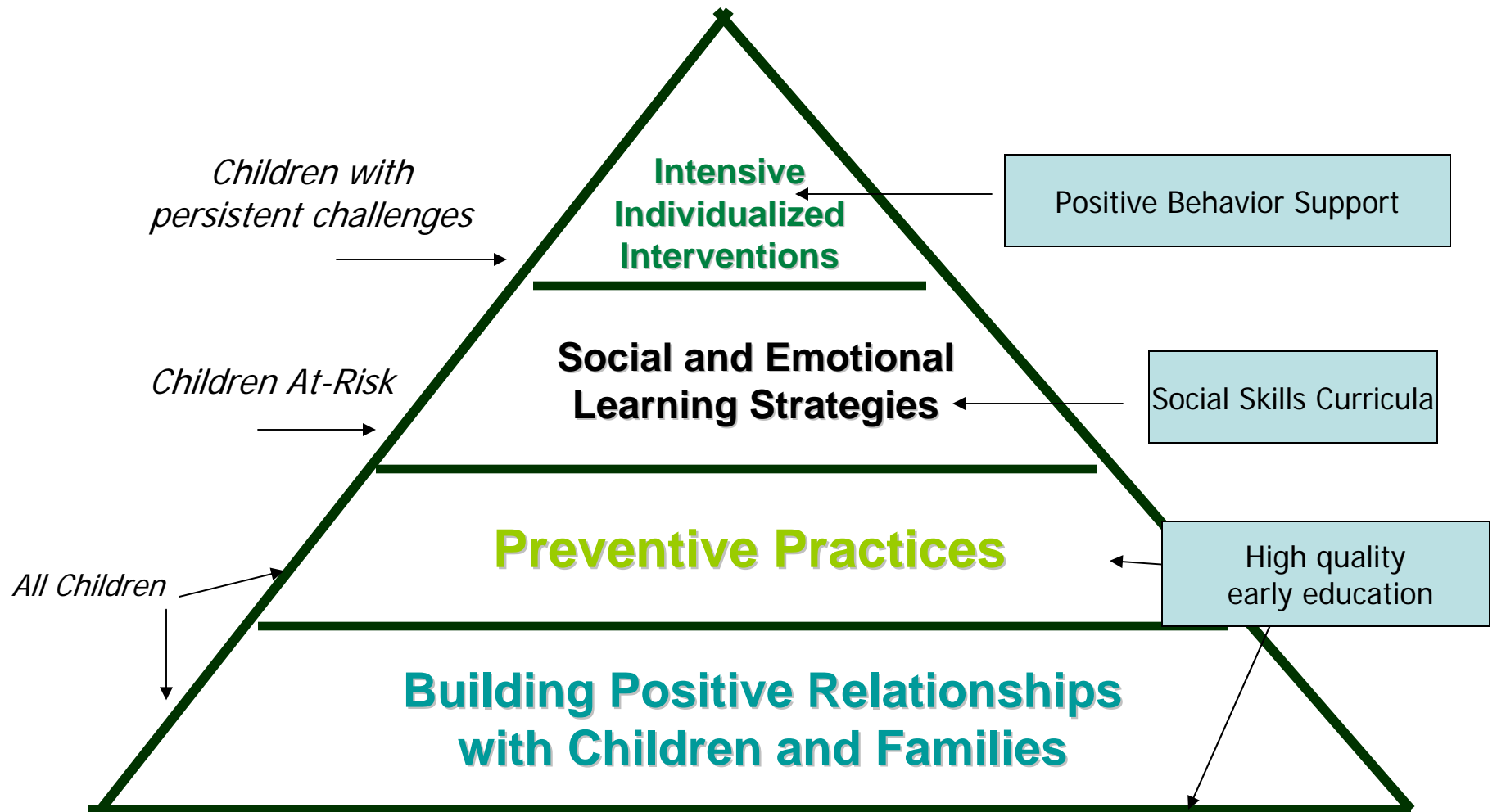
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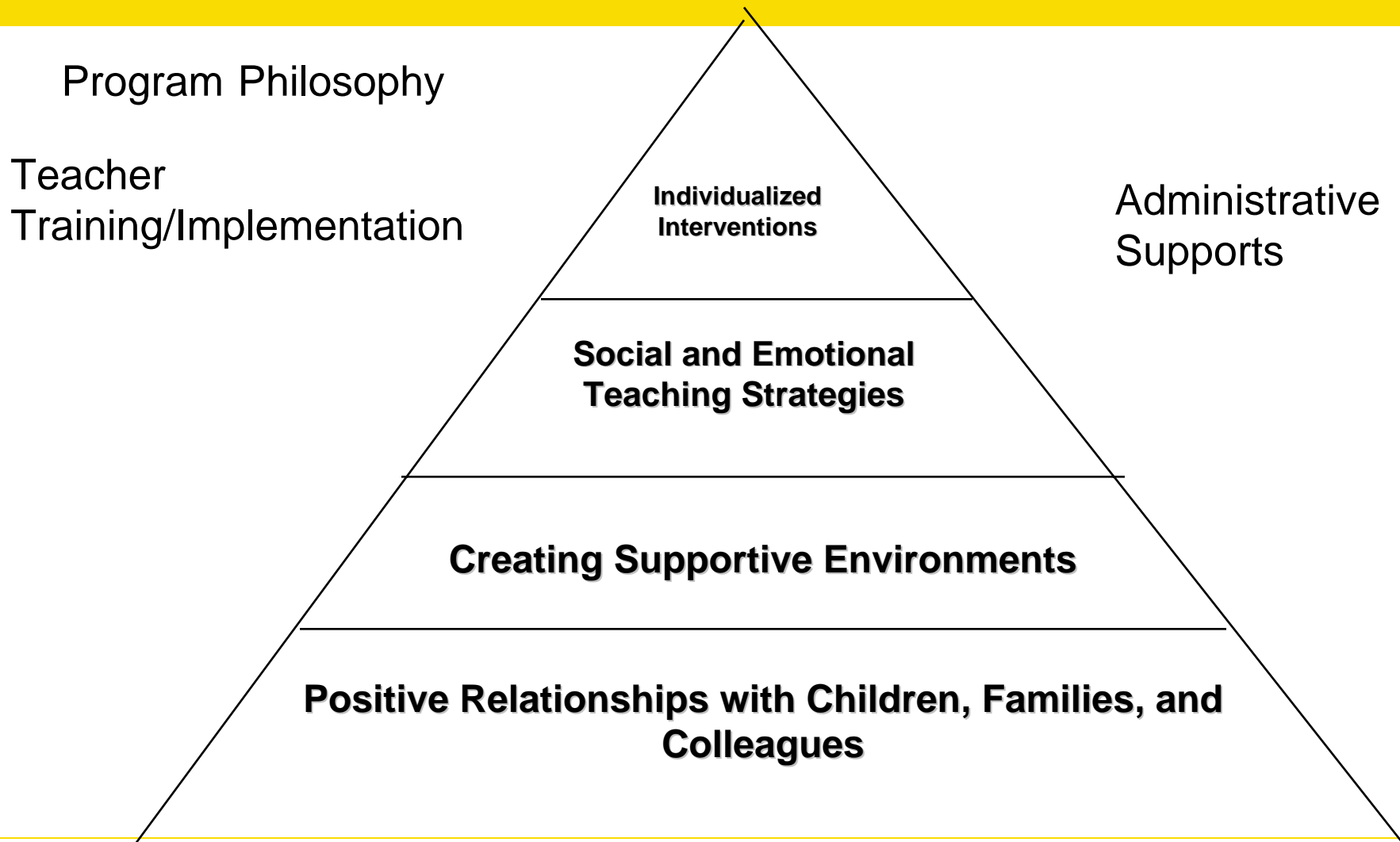
Center for Evidence Based Practice: Young Children with Challenging Behavior

[www.challengingbehavior.org](http://www.challengingbehavior.org)

# Promoting Social and Emotional Competence within Early Education and Care Environments



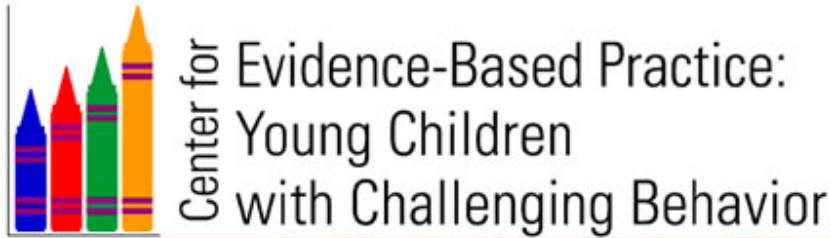
# *The Teaching Pyramid*



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# Issues in Implementing these Practices in Community Based EC Settings

- Many early childhood programs do not have policies and procedures in place related to behavior support and guidance
- When policies and procedures are in place:
  - they often are not communicated clearly to staff and families
  - they often are not implemented consistently
- Teachers report challenging behavior as their primary training need



# Issues in Implementing these Practices in Community Based EC Settings

- IHEs report that their graduates are least prepared to address the needs of children with the most challenging behavior
- Many early childhood programs do not have expertise in behavior support or resources to access this expertise



# Critical Elements of a Program Wide Model in EC Programs

- Administrative buy-in and commitment
- Buy-in from staff
- Family involvement and buy-in
- Developmentally appropriate and clearly articulated expectations for children's social behavior
- Intentional strategies for teaching social skills, supporting emotional competence, and acknowledging children's behavior



# Critical Elements of a Program Wide Model in EC Programs

- Strategies for addressing problem behavior
- Team based, individualized approach for addressing ongoing problem behavior
- Ongoing professional development
- Strategies for supporting teachers
- Process for monitoring outcomes



# Outcomes Across Programs

- Improved staff satisfaction
- Decreased turnover
- Increase in overall program quality
- Clearly articulated and implemented policies and procedures
- More intentional teaching and purposeful in supporting children's emotional development
- Elimination of “time-out”
- Less reliance on “outside” experts
- Stronger collaboration with mental health providers



# Program Wide Models

- Palma Ceia Presbyterian Preschool
- Illinois; Valeska-Hinton Early Childhood Education Center



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# Palma Ceia

- Director's Perspective
- Working with Families
- A View from the Classroom



# Director's Perspective

## Palma Ceia Presbyterian Preschool

*"We do no great things, we do only  
small things with great love "  
Mother Teresa*

- Located in a residential community
- Enrollment 90 1-4 year olds
- Faith based
- NAEYC accredited
- 25 years young
- Nationally recognized
- Mission:
- Best Practices and Inclusion



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# Director's Perspective

- Working from a mission of inclusion, but challenged by children's problem behavior
- Looking for evidence based practices that could help, but frustrated at the "expert model"
- USF and PCPC form "First Steps Together", a comprehensive, integrated strategy



# Director's Perspective

## How our collaboration developed

Collaborations are structures where resources, power, and authority are shared and where people are brought together to achieve common goals that could not be accomplished by a single individual or organization independently.”

– Sharon Lynn Kagan

- Setting parameters of team building
- Designing goals that are possible within the program culture
- Integrating program goals with new knowledge
- Reflection and revision



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# Director's Perspective

## Universal Foundation in place?

- Well planned and responsive learning environments
- High quality interactions between staff and children
- Predictability
- General positive guidance strategies
- Visual cues
- Culture allowing reflection and honesty, valuing staff contributions

## If so, then working at the top of the pyramid:

- Integrate program function with demands of child-specific interventions
- Provide staff training and technical assistance for specific interventions
- Place statements about teaching pyramid into all aspects of school communication so parents and allied staff are involved
- Implement program wide implementation of Positive Behavior Support.



# What were the nuts and bolts for our particular program?

- Learning Functional Assessment
- Learning Behavior Support Plan Development
- Implementation
- Monitoring



# Director's Perspective

## Outcomes:

- Empowered staff, happier administration, parents and children
- Less crisis management, more prevention
- Knowledge base is fully integrated and can be passed on as part of the school culture
- Empowered to meet our twin mission: best practices and inclusion
- Capacity to include and support all children



# Director's Perspective

May you have the courage of  
your tenderness.

D.H. Lawrence



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# The Teaching Pyramid and working with families

- **The Teaching Pyramid model** for promoting social competence and preventing challenging behavior along with **Positive Behavior Support's approach** requires that families and school personnel be in accord.
- In order to get there, we as educators need to work closely with families, both those supported and those affected by behavior.



# Working with the Families: The Assistant Director's role

## Build Strong Relationships:

- Start from day 1
- Children need to feel safe and secure
- Parents need that too
- Do not wait till there is a problem to make contact with a family. They will have a difficult time listening to you as you explain their child's behavior.



# Working with the Families: The Assistant Director's role

## Connect With Families

- Share information about yourself. If we need parents to share information about themselves, we need to do the same.
- Find common ground.
- Get to know and understand their family culture



# Working with the Families: The assistant Director's Role

## Develop a sense of trust

- Always keep parents informed.
- Be positive, be truthful, be respectful
- Keep lines of communication open and frequent: home visits, email, daily journals, phone calls, video-taping...etc.
- Make sure parents realize they are the most important part of “*the support team*”. Once they realize this, they find it easier to exchange information regarding their child.
- Assist families in understanding their child's behavior, why they engage in problem behavior, and how we will work together to:
  - develop a behavior support plan
  - develop strategies for preventing problem behavior
  - teach replacement skills



# Parents

- **Encourage**
- **Empower**
- **Educate**



# Families

## Encourage Families

- They are not alone
- Offer them names of other families for mutual support and support groups
- Share success stories
- Encourage their support and ideas



# Families

## Empower Families

- Let them know you are there to help and support them
- Help them gain the confidence they need



# Families

## Educate Families

- Help them understand their child's behavior
- Why do they engage in problem behavior?
- Fill them with knowledge and information



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# A View from the Classroom

## Introduction to the classroom

Challenges from a classroom perspective and impact on teachers

Program strengths to build on.  
Where we were on the pyramid



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# Shifting Paradigms

- Viewing problem behavior as communication
- Adopting a posture of prevention and support
- Framing time spent as an investment
- Seeking long term outcomes vs. quick fix
- Expecting problem behavior
- Fostering a shared perspective for classroom team



# Changes in our program due to collaboration

Collaboration helped us to increase the effectiveness at the top of the pyramid, and helps prevent unnecessary referrals and technical assistance

Empowered teachers with a ready toolkit

Supports staff retention

Never doubt that a small committed group of people can change things. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.

Margaret Mead



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# **Program-Wide Positive Behavior Support “Together We Can”**

Sharon Doubet



- Public school, 400+ children, ages Birth to 6
- 80 staff members
- Year-Around School
- Family Involvement
- Child care onsite
- Health Center
- Programs: Title I, ISBE Pre-K, Head Start, Special Education
- Family Support
- Professional Development Center
- Adult Education (GED)
- Foster Grandparents

# Our question: How can we support children as they develop social & emotional skills?



- Staff buy-in: Our staff felt this was the most needed area of development for our young students.
- When children are struggling with their behavior it affects their ability to learn to read and write!



# Our Goal....

We decided to  
develop a

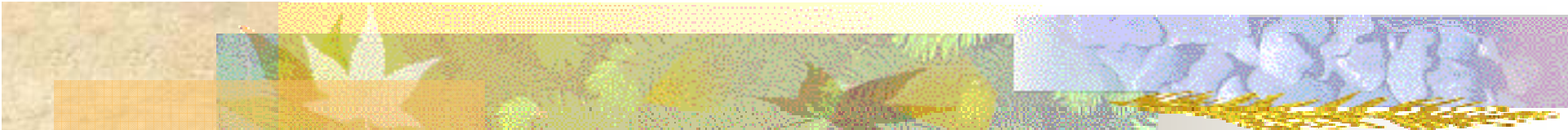
Program-Wide  
Positive  
Behavior  
Support  
Plan!



# Why did we want to develop a program-wide plan?

## **STAFF GOALS:**

- Increase time for instruction
- Positive interactions
- Staff feel supported
- Staff have clearly defined and systematic strategies
- Involve & support parents



# Our program-wide plan will focus on:

1. Promotion of positive social behavior
2. Prevention of challenging behavior
3. Provide individual supports for children with persistent challenging behavior

And so begins our journey.....



# Step 1: Secured Support for the Project



1. Administrative & Leadership Team
2. Ongoing support and participation of staff
3. Ongoing partnership with University of Illinois, CSEFEL
4. Include Special Ed. & Student Support
5. Collect and analyze data

# Step 2: Parent Involvement

Develop the plan

Parent Advisory

Kick-Off

Pamphlets



Parent Conferences

New Parent Sessions

Ongoing Workshops

Parent Handbook

Grandparents' Day

Home Visits



## Step 3: Staff Involvement



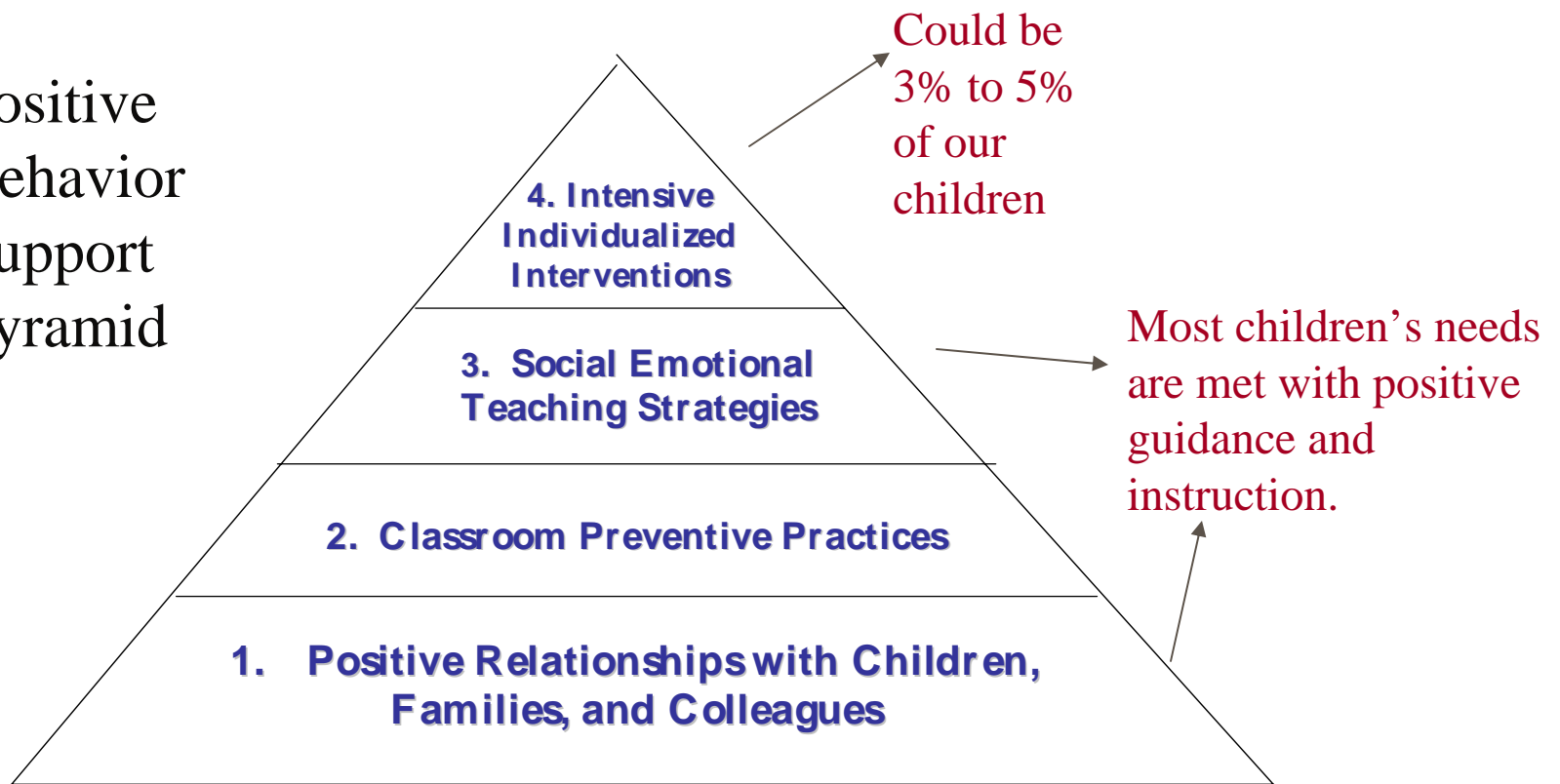
1. Develop the plan
2. Updates of the process at Staff Meetings
3. Staff Kick-Off
4. Ongoing Professional Development
5. Training for Behavior Support Facilitators



# Step 4: Education for ALL Staff

Series of workshops on the CSEFEL MODULES.

Positive  
Behavior  
Support  
Pyramid





## Step 5: Forming the Work Group

All staff were given the opportunity to volunteer for this work group

The 20 member group represents all roles in our school community

**WHY** did you want to participate?

To have a voice.

See it get done!

I wanted to be a part of change, not just a complainer.

I was encouraged by the idea of it being school wide.

# Responsibilities of the Work Group

- Commit to the process
- Be involved and active in ongoing discussions
- Be open to reaching consensus.
- Come up with a name!



THANK YOU for your time: Karen, Elizabeth, Mary Ann B., Anna, Colleen, Sharon, Gail, Elaine, Antoinette, Carolyn, Susan, Ann P., Linda, Timika, Mike, Tammy, Kathy, Jean, Nancy, Kathy W., Cathy W



Together  
We  
Can!  
Support  
Positive  
Behavior



## Step 6: Develop program-wide behavioral expectations.

### **Expectations: What?**

- Be Respectful
- Be Safe
- Be a Team Player

### **Settings: Where?**

- Playground
- Hall
- Classroom
- Bus



# Be Respectful –

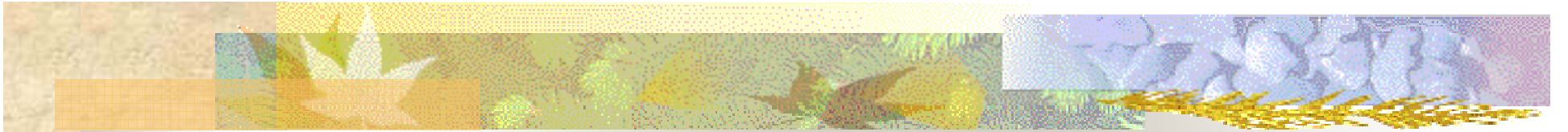
We respect ourselves and others when we are courteous, considerate, kind and appreciative of each other.



# Be Safe

We follow the rules for each learning environment.

We take care of ourselves, each other and our materials.





# Playground

Expectation	Playground
Be Respectful	Help each other Take care of our playground Take turns
Be Safe	Play safely Keep bikes on bike path Play where you can see your teacher Sit on bikes, roller racers and swings
Be a Team Player	Share outdoor toys Help park the bikes Work it out with words



# Halls

Expectation	Hall
Be Respectful	Use inside voices. Use helping hands.
Be Safe	Use walking feet. Stay together. Make sure the teacher knows where you are.
Be a Team Player	Help each other.



# Classroom

Expectation	Classroom	
Be Respectful	Share Be fair Listen to others	Be aware of others' feelings
Be Safe	Use walking feet Play safely Follow directions	Keep our room clean Tell the teacher where you are
Be a Team Player	Share ideas Help each other Work it out with words	




# Bus

Expectation	Bus
Be Respectful	Stay in your own space Take care of the bus
Be Safe	Stay with your teachers      Stay seated Use inside voices      Follow directions When buses are moving – stop, look & listen
Be a Team Player	Help others.



## Step 7: We will teach developmentally appropriate behavior expectations.

- The workgroup generated some “tips for teaching the expectations”.
- The whole school will work on the expectations in a coordinated way
- This includes custodians, bus drivers, kitchen & office staff, etc.




# Step 8: We will acknowledge positive behavior.

## A. Individual Classrooms

- Word/feelings wall
- Verbal, sign, “Thank you for...(expectation)”
- Class book

## B. Schoolwide Ideas

- Newsletter
- Use positive descriptive language



## Step 9: Ensure that prevention & promotion are in place.

- Orientate new staff
- Staff completes annual survey of current practices & training needs
- Plan professional development to support TWC!



## Step 10: Addressing Problem Behavior

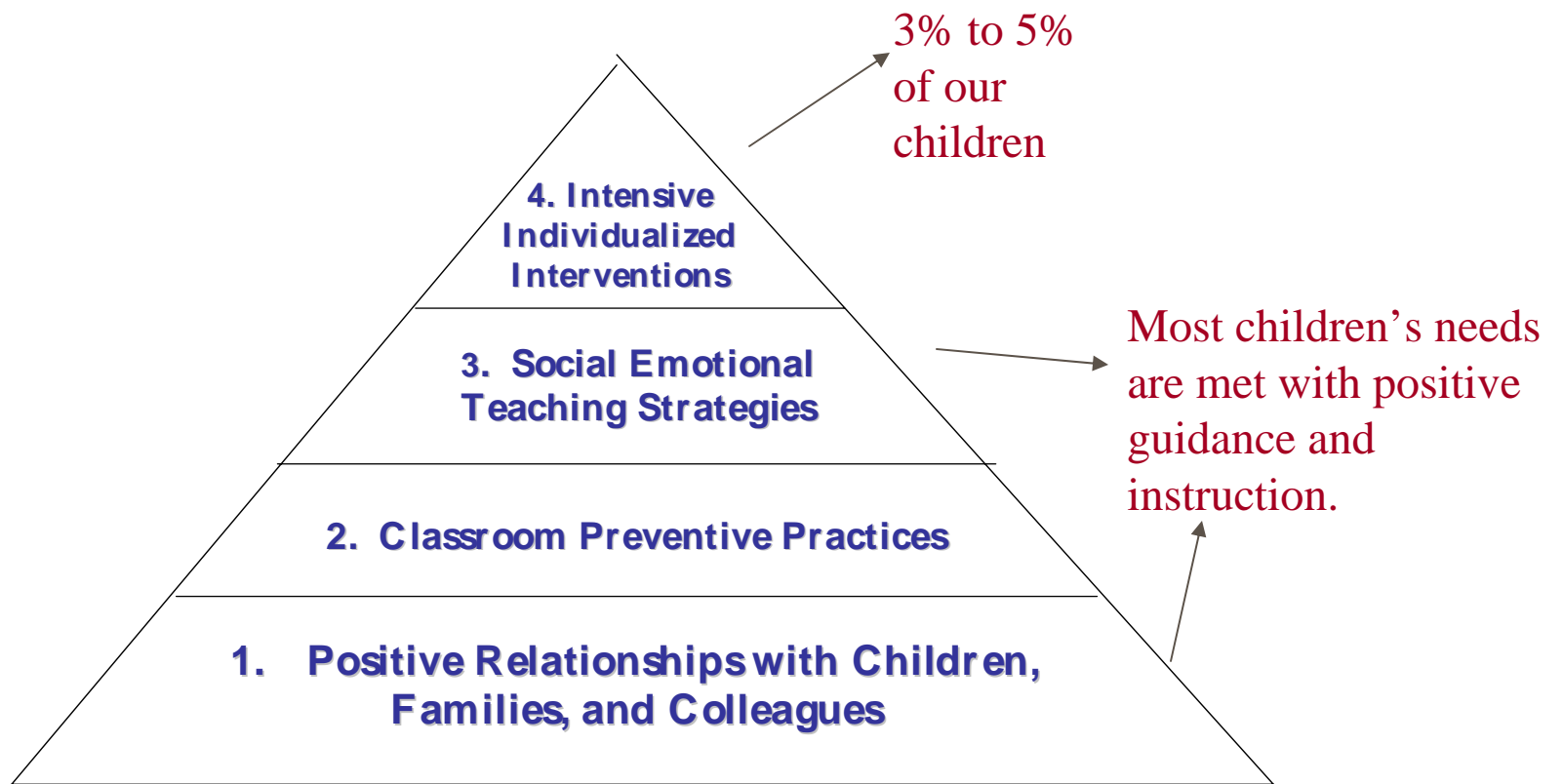
- ■ Some children will have persistent challenging behaviors and need more support
- If immediate help is needed in the classroom we have planned to have a support person come into the room.



## Some children need even more support....

1. We have a plan to work with a team of trained staff members and the parents to develop an individual behavior plan for that child.
2. Steps include observation, interviews, determine the meaning of the behavior (function), plan for teaching replacement skills, acknowledgement of positive behavior.


# Review the Pyramid of Positive Support



# Lessons we've learned

## about developing a program-wide plan.

1. Need to have a positive school climate in place.
2. On-going support over time is important.
3. Professional development.....ongoing.....
4. Recognize that it takes TIME to develop & implement a program-wide plan.
5. Developing the foundation was a long process. We wanted to skip to the top of the pyramid.
6. Time for discussion was VERY valuable.
7. This is a process, it continues to evolve.
8. Prepare for changes in leadership.
9. Plan for acknowledging staff.



**We can do it together we can  
Help each other with our plan  
Showing respect and taking turns  
Being good listeners is how we learn.**

**Together  
We Can!**

**CHORUS**

**We have to be safe and follow the rules  
Take care of each other and our school.  
No need to be sad or to shout,  
Together we can work it out!**

**CHORUS**

**Sharing ideas and being good readers  
Will help us to become great leaders.  
We can do it together we can.  
We have a mission and a plan.**

**CHORUS:**

**Sound off, “We can”**

**Sound off, “Do it”**

**Sound off, “We can**

**(Clap, clap) Do it!”**

