



PBIS and the Pyramid Model: Same Science, Different Contexts

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National Center for
**Pyramid Model
INNOVATIONS**

ChallengingBehavior.org

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Our Discussion

- PBIS and Pyramid - how they are aligned
- Addressing Misperceptions and Challenges
- Participant Questions and Illustrations from your Work
- Steps for Leaders to Promote Alignment



PBIS and Pyramid as Aligned System

8/5/20, 11:33 AM Center on PBIS | Early Childhood PBIS

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Early Childhood PBIS

You might know PBIS in early childhood settings as Early Childhood Program-Wide Positive Behavior Support (PW-PBS) or Program-Wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support (PW-PBIS). It is often referred to as the Pyramid Model. This model provides a framework of evidence-based practices to promote the social-emotional competence of all children, address the social-emotional and behavioral needs of children who are at risk, and develop supports for children with persistent social, emotional, or behavioral concerns.

What is Early Childhood PBIS?

Early childhood PBIS refers to PBIS implementation within early childhood settings - The Pyramid Model. The Pyramid Model is a multi-tiered framework with a continuum of evidence-based practices to promote expected behaviors, prevent problem behaviors, and intervene when students need more support. This model addresses the needs and contexts unique to programs serving infants, toddlers and preschoolers, including children in public school early childhood classrooms. It includes the practices, procedures, and data collection measures appropriate for young children and their families.

Why Address Early Childhood PBIS?

The Pyramid Model ensures programs attend to both the implementation of evidence-based practices and develop the infrastructure to sustain these efforts. Children have better social skills and less problem behavior in Pyramid Model classrooms. Practitioners are able to implement Pyramid Model practices better when they receive training and evidence-based coaching. (2) According to the Technical Assistance Center on Social and Emotional Interventions, programs using this approach experience the following:

<https://www.pbis.org/early-childhood-pbis>

8/5/20, 11:33 AM Linking the Pyramid Model and PBIS - National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations

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Linking the Pyramid Model and PBIS

Some help with terminology...

School-Wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (SW-PBIS) refers to the implementation of a multi-tiered approach to social, emotional and behavior support within schools. Like SW-PBIS, the Pyramid Model is a multi-tiered framework comprised of a continuum of evidence-based practices that are organized in three-tiered continuum of promotion, prevention, and intervention. However, the Pyramid Model is uniquely designed to address the needs and contexts of programs among infants, toddlers and preschoolers including children in public school early childhood classrooms and early childhood care and education programs in the community.

The implementation of the Pyramid Model within early childhood programs is often referred to as Early Childhood Program-Wide Positive Behavior Support (PW-PBS) or Program-Wide Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PW-PBIS). When schools are implementing PBIS and want to include preschool classrooms, they may use the Pyramid Model to define the practices appropriate for use with young children and their families.

The bottom line...

The Pyramid Model provides the framework of practices for the implementation of PBIS within early childhood classrooms and programs.

When schools are implementing PBIS, the Pyramid Model is used within early education classrooms to guide the implementation of promotion, prevention, and intervention practices.

Related Resources

<https://files.eric.gov/fulltext/ED584948.pdf>

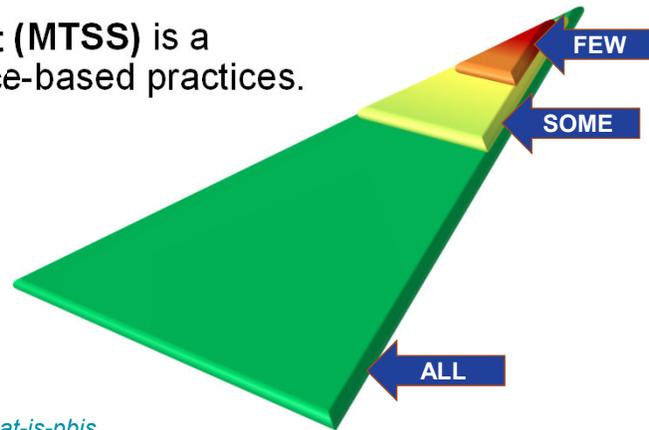


PBIS as an MTSS

Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) is a framework for organizing evidence-based practices.

PBIS is a widely implemented and evidence-based **MTSS framework** for supporting students' social, emotional, behavioral, and academic success.

<https://www.pbis.org/pbis/what-is-pbis>



Define the Framework for All: PBIS Essential Elements

*“PBIS organizes evidence-based and culturally-relevant **practices** supporting all students across the continuum, invests in **systems** supporting high fidelity implementation of all staff, and uses **data** supporting decision making for continuous improvement to achieve valued and **equitable outcomes**.”*



PBIS Outcomes

- Improves student engagement, achievement, attendance, emotional regulation, and school climate
- Decreases disruptive behavior, bullying and peer exclusion, racial inequities, and substance misuse
- Decreases educator stress and burnout
- Improve student and adult mental health and well-being

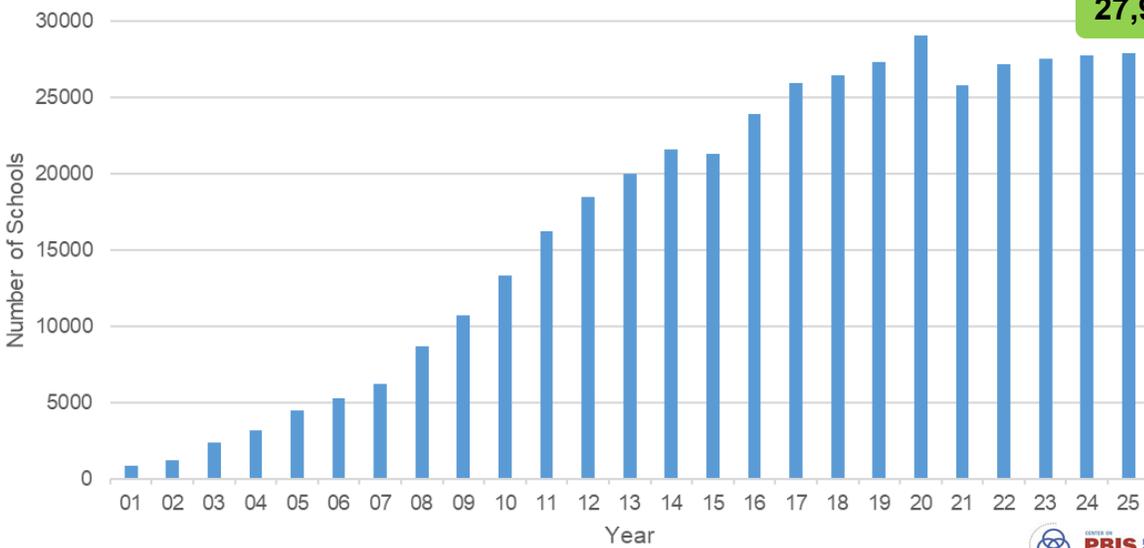


<https://www.pbis.org/pbis/why-implement-pbis>

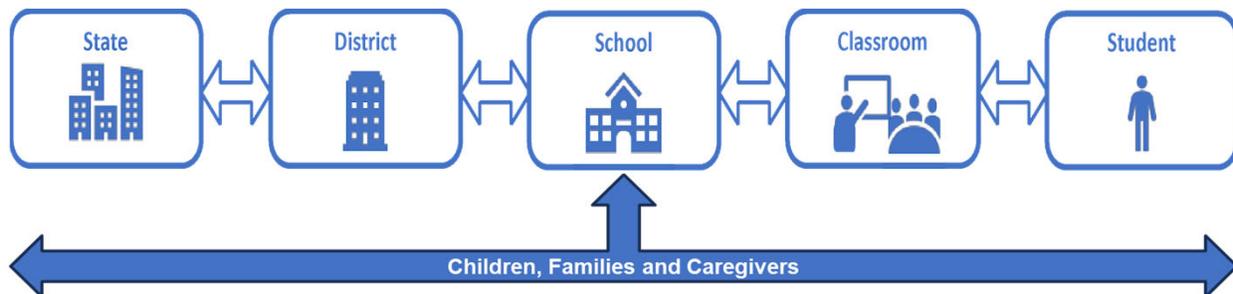
<https://www.pbis.org/resource-type/policy-briefs>



U.S. Schools Using PBIS (August 2025)



PBIS Implementation Cascade



<https://www.pbis.org/resource/pbis-implementation-blueprint>

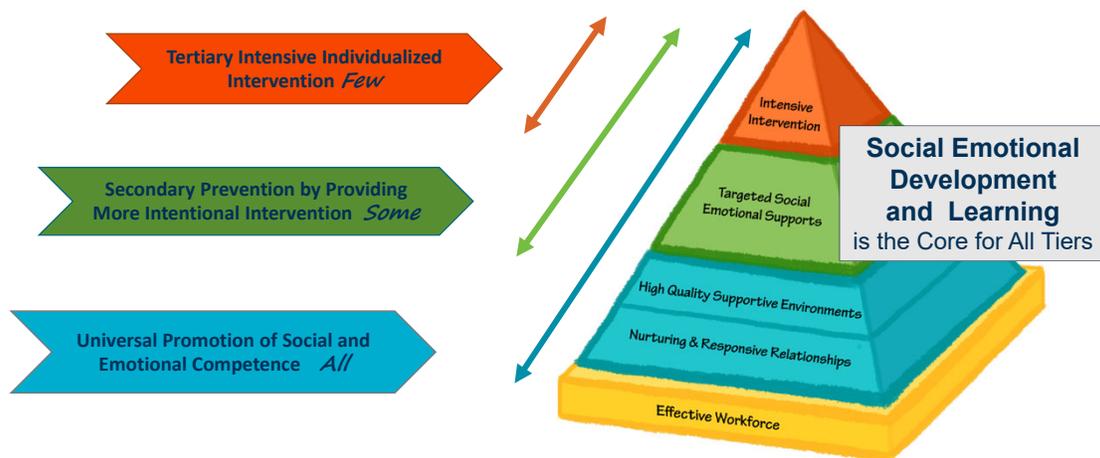


Early Childhood, Different Context

- Developmental age
- Family engagement
- Early intervention and coaching of caregivers
- Learning in the context of play and natural routines
- Strategies for reinforcement
- Social, emotional, and behavioral skills are the foci
- Meltdowns are expected



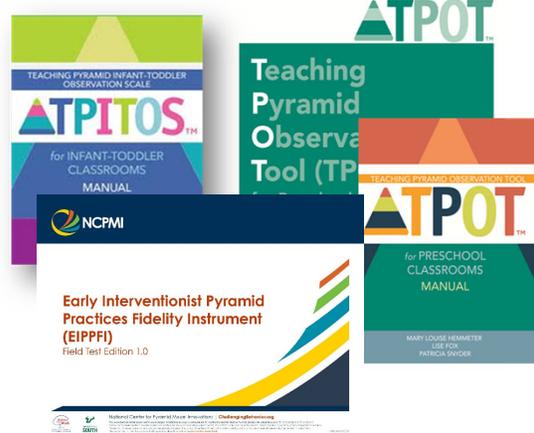
Pyramid Model for Promoting Social and Emotional Competence in Infants and Young Children



Pyramid Model as Early Childhood PBIS

- Evidence-based interventions - **Practices**
- Tiered continuum of supports - **Systems**
- Data-Informed problem solving and decision-making – **Data**
- Promotion, Prevention, Intervention Focus to Support Each and Every Child - **Outcomes**

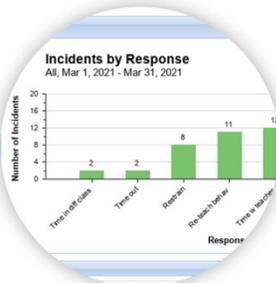
Evidence-Based Practitioner Coaching



EC-SWIS: Early Childhood Version

The power of SWIS designed with Pre-k programs in mind.

- Language throughout the app is tailored for early childhood.
- Early Childhood specific reports included.
- Closely monitor behaviors happening program-wide all the way down to the individual child.
- Integrate seamlessly with CICO-SWIS and I-SWIS.



Click image to enlarge

<https://pbisapps.org>



EC-SWIS/BIRS

The Behavior Incident Report System (BIRS)

What is a Behavior Incident Report (BIR)?
A Behavior Incident Report form is used for teachers to record serious behavior incidents and performance information around the following factors:
 • Problem Behavior
 • Antecedents
 • Contexts Involved
 • Incident Information
 • Response
 • Administrator Follow-Up
 • Dual Language Learner

Data System
The BIRS uses an Excel spreadsheet to track and summarize behavior incidents. A Program Summary is generated containing known charts and tables specific to program-level data, making it easy for programs to view and analyze data on monthly basis. Classroom level and individual child charts and tables are also provided. In addition, users can analyze data further by sub-groups on the BIR forms (i.e., Problem Behavior, Antecedents, Contexts Involved, Possible Interventions, Response, and Administrator Follow-Up). The data system includes built-in filters giving the user the ability to narrow down data sets.

How are the data used?
The Leadership Team of a program uses BIR data to make data-based decisions related to the support of teachers, children, and the program. The team uses the data to summarize and highlight critical data and focus on the "yarns" and "needs" in the program, classroom, or individual child level. The summarized data are used to:
 • Identify training needs
 • Enhance professional development
 • Inform other programmatic changes (e.g., programmatic schedule, program-wide operational or resource equity)

Why use the BIRS?
By entering BIR data, leadership teams can improve the quality of data-based decision-making and action planning. Data-based decision-making (DBDM) is a critical skill that is essential for the success of a program. The BIR system allows for behavior patterns to be defined as generic data and for behavior trends to "flag" when data, giving more information about specific concerns related to overall program-wide and classroom patterns. BIR data reflective of all that are on the same program to identify potential issues of discipline, discipline incidents, children's behavior patterns, and use prior data to guide action planning for the upcoming year.

To access the BIRS system, go to:
<https://ec.pbisapps.org/index.html>

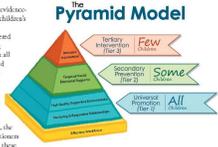
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Implementing Tier 2 and 3



Tier 2 and the Pyramid Model

The Pyramid Model is a framework of evidence-based practices for promoting young children's social and emotional development. The Pyramid Model builds upon a recent public health approach by identifying three levels of support: universal practices that all children need to develop social, emotional, and behavioral skills; targeted instruction for children who require additional support beyond universal practices and individualized, intensive intervention for children with persistent challenging behaviors that have not responded to universal and targeted supports. As a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS), the Pyramid Model guides early childhood practitioners and programs in systematically implementing these practices to prevent challenging behaviors in children and promote their social, emotional, and behavioral growth.



In the Pyramid Model, universal support, or Tier 1, is provided to all children through practices focused on building nurturing and responsive relationships and creating environments that promote connection, engagement, and social-emotional learning. At Tier 1, intentional social-emotional instruction is provided to all children as part of the high-quality early childhood program. Tier 2, the prevention level of the MTSS, includes targeted teaching and instruction strategies to address the social, emotional, and behavioral skill development needs of children who require additional support or focused instruction beyond universal practices. The provision of Tier 2 is reliant on a strong foundation of universal practices. When universal practices are not fully implemented, it can lead to the over-identification of children who appear to need Tier 2 supports. In the Pyramid Model, Tier 2 instruction is provided to children who have significant social-emotional or behavioral challenges and require a

comprehensive, assessment-based support plan. Success with Tier 3 intervention is also dependent on the provision of strong Tier 1 and 2 supports.

In an MTSS, the term "intensive" refers to specific, evidence-based strategies and instruction provided to children who need additional skill development to succeed in the classroom. The term "support" refers to comprehensive resources, strategies, and systems designed to promote the development and well-being of children.

This document provides Pyramid Model leadership teams and practitioners with guidance on developing and implementing Tier 2 within the Pyramid Model. This guidance includes information on leading the development of Tier 2 interventions, processes for identifying children who would benefit from Tier 2 practices, evidence-based strategies and interventions to use at Tier 2, considerations for progress monitoring, and the importance of professional development and coaching to support the use of effective Tier 2 practices.

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for Early Childhood Programs



<https://challengingbehavior.org/resources/>

Young Children are Served in a Mixed Delivery System



Leadership Teaming

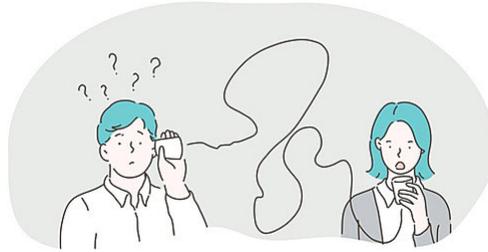


- Early Care and Education Programs
- Head Start Centers
- Early Intervention Provider Agencies or Programs
-through SW PBIS Teams that include early educators

Why Align?

- Shared message on the science of what works
- Partnerships that lead to increased visibility and political investment
- Strengthening local, state, and national initiatives to eliminate the use of exclusionary practices
- Shared messages for family engagement as children transition from early intervention/early childhood to school
- Partnerships that lead to community-wide investment
- Use of promotion and prevention practices that enhance academic outcomes

Conversation about Misperceptions



Aligning PBIS and Pyramid Model

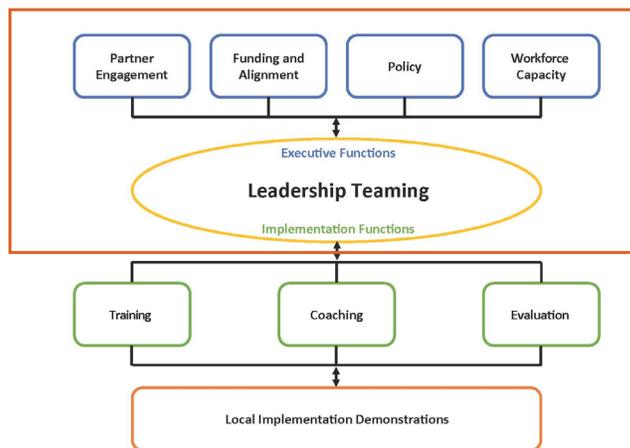


Figure 7. Leadership team functions of systems implementation across contexts.

<https://www.pbis.org/resource/pbis-implementation-blueprint>

Next Steps for State & District Leaders

• Leadership Team

- State or district leadership teaming for aligned initiative (MTSS, SEB promotion and intervention, School Climate)

• Partner Engagement

- Conversations to share implementation and outcome illustrations, and what might be gained from alignment
- Establish a workgroup to begin the alignment initiative
- Presentation pitch to district leaders for outcomes gained from alignment

• Funding and Alignment

- Identify initiatives with similar goals
- Consider braided funding for public preschool, Part B, mental health
- Identify existing resources that can contribute (e.g., dollars, activities, personnel)



More Steps

• Policy

- Identify policies that are aligned in shared focus on prevention, preventing expulsion, and social-emotional and behavioral skill development

• Workforce Capacity

- Professional development opportunities for school leaders from different departments (early childhood, school mental health, MTSS) to explore shared perspectives
- Pilot efforts within eager districts that have preschool classrooms within high fidelity PBIS school programs
- Develop training and technical assistance plan for aligned implementation demonstration schools or districts



Additional Steps

- **Training**
 - Training to District and School Leadership Teams
 - Training to Classroom Personnel
- **Coaching**
 - Implementation coaching for district and school leadership teams
 - Guidance for coaching of classroom personnel
- **Evaluation**
 - Identification of the relevant evaluation questions to be addressed
 - Identifying evaluation and data decision-making tools to be used for implementation and outcomes



Questions?

Use the
Q&A panel
to submit your
questions.



Thank You!



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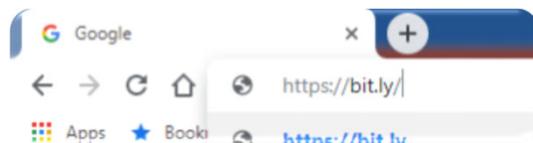
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The National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations

The goal of the National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations (NCPMI) is to assist states and programs in their implementation of sustainable systems for the implementation of the Pyramid Model for Supporting Social Emotional Competence in Infants and Young Children (PM-ICYC). PM-ICYC is a research-based early childhood education program with a focus on promoting the social, emotional, and behavioral outcomes of young children. NCPMI is focused on advancing the use of appropriate discipline practices, promoting family engagement, and teacher decision-making, integrating early childhood and infant mental health consultation and coaching practices.

News to the Pyramid Model?

