



Pyramid Model State Leadership Team Guidance

for Preventing the Use of Suspension and Expulsion and Promoting Equitable, Inclusive and Culturally Responsive Practice

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State Guide



ChallengingBehavior.org

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This product was developed by the Pyramid Equity Project of the Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports and the National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations (NCPMI). NCPMI is funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs through Cooperative Agreement #H326B170003. Opinions expressed herein are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the position of the US Department of Education, and such endorsements should not be inferred.

Pub. 03/29/23

Introduction

This guidance resource from the National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations (NCPMI) is for members of Pyramid Model State Leadership Teams (SLT) to support their efforts to eliminate suspension and expulsion and promote equitable, inclusive and culturally responsive practice in all early childhood settings including public and private schools and child care centers. The SLT should use this resource in conjunction with the State Benchmarks of Quality (BoQ)¹ to guide new policies and procedures, enhance current implementation efforts and steps, as well as assess current policies and systems. NCPMI has a companion document that provides guidance and resources for Program Leadership Teams (PLT)².

A goal of this resource is to support state agency personnel and SLTs in their efforts to prevent suspension and expulsion by integrating with existing efforts including Pyramid Model, Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS), Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS), inclusion and State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) efforts. The actions should build on and extend these current efforts. For instance, the Pyramid Model is a multi-tiered system of support focused on children's social, emotional and behavioral competence. Therefore, the Pyramid Model should be embedded in ongoing MTSS work in order to prevent suspension and expulsion through providing appropriate levels of support to children. Accordingly, as states engage in efforts to expand high quality inclusion, and to meet the federal recommendations for inclusion (HHS/ED, 2015)³, building inclusion policies and professional development should integrate with similar efforts targeted to eliminate suspension and expulsion as non-inclusionary practices.

This resource is organized around the Guiding Principles and Recommendations from the federal *Joint Policy Statement on Expulsion and Suspension Policies in Early Childhood Settings* (HHS/ED, 2014)⁴. The Pyramid

Model for Promoting Social Emotional Competence in Infants and Young Children (Pyramid Model) is specifically identified in the federal *Joint Policy Statement* as a tiered positive behavior intervention and support framework for early childhood and is a systems approach for supporting the social emotional and behavioral development of all children.

The **Guidance Tool** below has three columns. The first column describes the recommendations for State Action from the *Joint Policy Statement*; the second column provides the related State BoQ items, considerations and examples; and the third column lists resources related to the Pyramid Model and other resources.

The resource guide is driven by the same **guiding principles** outlined in the federal joint policy statement and the Department of Education's *Guiding Principles: A Resource Guide for Improving School Climate and Discipline*⁵:

- ▶ Create positive climates and focus on prevention
- ▶ Develop clear, appropriate and consistent expectations and consequences to address disruptive student behaviors, and
- ▶ Ensure fairness, equity and continuous improvement

Suggested Process for Pyramid Model State Leadership Teams

As in all Pyramid Model state work, cross agency collaboration is key and therefore, we suggest that the SLT establish several meetings specific to using their current Pyramid Model policy and professional development efforts to address suspension, expulsion and disproportionality. The following should be used to guide the discussion:

1 https://challengingbehavior.org/docs/BoQ_StateTeam.pdf

2 https://challengingbehavior.org/docs/LeadershipTeam_Guidance_Programs.pdf

3 <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/speced/guid/earlylearning/joint-statement-full-text.pdf>

4 <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/school-discipline/policy-statement-ece-expulsions-susensions.pdf>

5 <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/school-discipline/guiding-principles.pdf>

- The ED/HHS Joint Policy Statement⁶;
- State Benchmarks of Quality (BoQ)⁷;
- The Pyramid Model Behavior Incident Report System (BIRS) and BIRS data decision-making guide⁸;
- Related state level data.

The first step to organizing and developing policy and support to programs is to adopt clear, measurable definitions of suspension and expulsion. The BIRS is the tool Pyramid Model programs use for identifying behavior incidents, the response to the incident and the program follow-up. The definitions that NCPMI recommends are complementary to the BIRS definitions so that program data may be rolled up to the state for state decision making. The definitions used by NCPMI/BIRS are:

- **In School/Program Suspension.** The child is temporarily removed from classroom and/or class peers. Child is sent to some other part of the school/program (e.g., other classroom, director's office) for part of the day or multiple days in response to problem behavior. This includes when the child is removed from the classroom to spend extended time with administrator, counselor, behavior therapist or other adult.
- **Short Term Out-of-School/Program Suspension.** Child is sent home for some part of the school/program day in response to problem behavior.
- **Out-of-School/Program Suspension.** Child is not allowed to return to school/program for one or more days in response to problem behavior.

- For children with disabilities served under IDEA (with an IEP or IFSP): Out-of-school/program suspension is an instance in which a child is temporarily removed from his/her regular school/program to another setting (e.g., home, behavior center) for at least half a day in response to problem behavior. Out-of-school/program suspensions include both removals in which no individualized family service plan (IFSP) or individualized education program (IEP) services are provided because the removal is 10 days or less as well as removals in which the child continues to receive services according to his/her IFSP or IEP.

- **Expulsion/Dismissal.** Permanent dismissal of the child from the program in response to problem behavior. Does not include transition to another program, service or classroom (e.g., special education, transitional classroom, or therapeutic preschool program) deemed more appropriate for the child if done in collaboration with the family and the receiving classroom, program or service.

Once the SLT has adopted definitions, the following steps might be used to produce policy, guidance and support for programs:

1. Review the ED/HHS *Joint Policy Statement*⁹; and discuss 3 sections: 1) purpose, overview, and appendices; 2) recommendations for Early Childhood Programs; 3) recommendations for State Action. Discuss other federal and state guidance and resources pertinent to members of the SLT, e.g. HHS Child Care¹⁰; and Head Start¹¹

Additional resources:

- National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations (NCPMI)¹²
- NCPMI: Suspension and Expulsion in Early Childhood¹³
- Preventing Suspension and Expulsions in Early Childhood Settings: A Program Leader's Guide to Supporting All Children's Success¹⁴

6 <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/school-discipline/policy-statement-ece-expulsions-suspensions.pdf>

7 https://challengingbehavior.org/docs/BoQ_StateTeam.pdf

8 <https://challengingbehavior.org/implementation/data-decision-making/birs/>

9 <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/school-discipline/policy-statement-ece-expulsions-suspensions.pdf>

10 https://childcareta.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/public/expulsion_tool_revised_june_2018.pdf

11 <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/docs/policy-im/acf-im-hs-16-01-r.pdf>

12 <https://challengingbehavior.org/>

13 <https://challengingbehavior.org/pyramid-model/suspension-expulsion/>

14 <https://preventexpulsion.org>

2. Discuss all state related data from all agencies. Determine what data exists, given the adopted definitions that can be used for determining need for support to professionals and programs and to measure progress over time statewide. See the NCPMI data decision making tools¹⁵.
3. Use the State BoQ and this resource to determine how to embed efforts to eliminate suspension and expulsion within ongoing Pyramid Model work. In the **Guidance Tool** below, relevant State BoQ items have been listed with associated recommendations. The SLT discussion could include reading the BoQ item and discussing how it can be viewed as a strategy to promote the use of data to identify potential issues related to disciplinary action bias (including data on race, ethnicity, IEP status, and gender) and support personnel to: 1) recognize bias including implicit bias, and 2) increase equity, inclusiveness and culturally responsive practice. For instance, BoQ item #1 describes membership of the SLT, consider the membership of the SLT, does it have key stakeholders needed to address the issue?
4. Summarize the information from all of the discussions.
 - a. What are the strengths and resources; what are the gaps and areas of need?
 - b. Determine actions that need to be taken.
 - c. Prioritize those actions.
5. Develop an action plan based on the priorities agreed upon by the SLT. Describe actions related to: definitions, policies, professional development; data collection, analysis and use for decisions and tracking progress; awareness training and resources, etc. See the Effective Teaming Strategies¹⁶ document for action planning resources.

On the following page is the **Guidance Tool** that: 1) lists the *Federal Joint Policy Statement* State Action recommendations (<https://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/school-discipline/policy-statement-ece-expulsions-suspensions.pdf>); 2) lists the related State BoQ items and considerations and provides examples for using the Pyramid Model and, 3) provides resources and web links for Pyramid Model related resources, other resources and a space for adding state specific resources.

¹⁵ <https://challengingbehavior.org/implementation/data-decision-making/overview/>

¹⁶ http://ectacenter.org/~pdfs/sig2_6_effective_teaching_strategies.pdf

Pyramid Model Guidance Tool for Preventing the Use of Suspension and Expulsion and Promoting Equitable, Inclusive and Culturally Responsive Practice: State Guide

Federal Recommendations for State Actions
<https://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/school-discipline/policy-statement-ece-expulsions-suspensions.pdf>

Develop and Clearly Communicate Expulsion and Suspension Policies

- Establish statewide policies, applicable across settings, including publicly and privately funded early childhood programs, to promote children's social-emotional and behavioral health and eliminate or severely limit the use of expulsion, suspension, and other exclusionary discipline practices.
- Exclusionary measures should be used only as a last resort in extraordinary circumstances where there is a determination of a serious safety threat that cannot otherwise be reduced or eliminated by the provision of reasonable modifications, consistent with the second Guiding Principle.
- Should a situation arise where there is documented evidence that all possible interventions and supports recommended by a qualified professional have been exhausted and it has been determined that transitioning a child to another program is necessary for the well-being of the child or his or her peers, programs should take a series of documented steps to ensure a smooth transition into another setting that offers a rich social context and opportunities for interactions with socially competent peers so that children's learning and social skills practice is optimized in a natural environment.

Related Pyramid Model State BoQ Items, and Considerations and Examples

Related State BoQ Items:

1. The SLT has written criteria for membership which ensures broad representation from a range of stakeholders, programs, and agencies (e.g., early childhood special education, early intervention, higher education, Head Start, families, child care, mental health).
2. The SLT identifies and implements dissemination strategies to ensure that stakeholders are kept aware of activities and accomplishments.

Considerations:

Do state policies describe a goal of **promoting** children's social-emotional and behavioral health and **preventing** suspension and expulsion and require the use of a promotion, multi-tiered and evidence-based approach such as the Pyramid Model?

Do state policies describe what programs should be doing as well as what they should not be doing?

Do state policies clearly describe requirements under IDEA and other federal and state policies related to nondiscrimination and procedural safeguards for children with disabilities?

Resources

Pyramid Model Resources

NCPMI Website
<https://challengingbehavior.org/>

Pyramid Model Overview
<https://challengingbehavior.org/pyramid-model/overview/basics/>

Pyramid Model Overview: Tiers
<https://challengingbehavior.org/pyramid-model/overview/tiers/>

Implementation: Equity
<https://challengingbehavior.org/implementation/equity/overview/>

Linking the Pyramid Model and PBIS
<https://challengingbehavior.org/pyramid-model/behavior-intervention/pbis/>

Suspension and Expulsion in Early Childhood
<https://challengingbehavior.org/pyramid-model/suspension-expulsion/>

Suspension and Expulsion Resources
<http://www.pyramidmodel.org/resource/suspension-and-expulsion>

Implementation: Data Decision-Making
<https://challengingbehavior.org/implementation/data-decision-making/overview/>

- If the child has a disability and is receiving services under IDEA, the State must ensure that additional applicable procedural safeguards and requirements are met.
- The State is responsible for nondiscrimination on the basis of disability in its programs in compliance with Title II of the ADA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

These policies and procedures should be clearly communicated to all relevant parties, including programs, schools, families, community partners, and others.

Examples:

Programs implement approaches and practices that establish a positive and inclusive climate, promote all children's social emotional competence, prevent most challenging behavior and effectively address challenging behavior when it occurs. Programs adopt policies and practices that promote the use of data to identify potential issues related to disciplinary action bias (including data on race, ethnicity, IEP status, and gender) and that support personnel to: 1) recognize bias including implicit bias, and 2) increase equity, inclusiveness and culturally responsive practice. Programs do not engage in suspension or expulsion.

The Pyramid Model is a multi-tiered framework of evidence-based practices that 1) promotes social emotional competence, 2) prevents most challenging behaviors, and 3) addresses serious persistent challenging behavior through a team- and function-based approach. The Pyramid Model embeds culturally responsive practices and personnel development approaches to address implicit bias and disproportionate disciplinary practices.

Considerations:

Do state policies provide guidance to programs that describe clear steps and reporting in the event of a child's persistent challenging behavior?

Teaching Pyramid Infant-Toddler Observation Scale (TPITOS™) for Infant-Toddler Classrooms Set, Research Edition
<http://products.brookespublishing.com/The-Pyramid-Infant-Toddler-Observation-Scale-TPITOS-Set-Research-Edition-P1097.aspx>

Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool (TPOT™) for Preschool Classrooms
<https://www.brookespublishing.com/product/tpot>

Implementation: Family Engagement
<https://challengingbehavior.org/implementation/family-engagement/>

Other Resources

Out-of-School Suspension and Expulsion
<http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/131/3/e1000>

Standing Together Against Suspension & Expulsion in Early Childhood: Resources
<https://www.naeyc.org/standing-together-against-suspension-expulsion-early-childhood-resources>

Reducing Early Childhood Expulsion and Suspension Resources
<http://ectacenter.org/enotes/search/search-expulsion.asp>

Reducing Early Childhood Expulsion and Suspension
<http://ectacenter.org/topics/expulsion/expulsion.asp>

<p>Examples:</p> <p>Programs are trained in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ documenting efforts to implement the Pyramid Model with fidelity including using the Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool (TPOT) or The Pyramid Infant Toddler Observation Scale (TPITOS) data, coaching data, Program-Wide BoQ ratings and use of the BIRS. ▶ providing documentation in the case of severe challenging behavior; including developing and implementing an individualized behavior support plan and a record of data including documentation of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a functional assessment conducted • behavior support plan implemented with fidelity • fidelity of implementation data • progress monitoring data • plan evaluation and changes based on implementation fidelity and progress monitoring data. ▶ documenting joint decision making with the family to transition to another service or program. ▶ documenting community resources that are used to support direct service providers and families (e.g., early childhood mental health consultation, behavior support consultation) and the efforts the program engages in with the community to establish needed services. ▶ documenting transition between the transitioning and receiving program/service, including timely notification of family, family agreement, receiving program agreement, transfer of all records of successful strategies used with the child. 	<p>OSEP TA Center on Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports https://www.pbis.org</p> <p>Preventing Suspension and Expulsions in Early Childhood Settings https://preventexpulsion.org</p> <p>US Department of Education</p> <p>Laws and Guidance: School Climate and Discipline https://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/school-discipline/index.html</p> <p>Suspension & Expulsion in Preschool Development States: Policies and Practices https://pdg.grads360.org/#communities/pdc/documents/12062</p> <p>Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), US Department of Education</p> <p>Significant Disproportionality: Agenda https://osepideasthatwork.org/osep-meeting/significant-disproportionality?tab=agenda</p> <p>Significant Disproportionality: Resources https://osepideasthatwork.org/osep-meeting/significant-disproportionality?tab=resources</p> <p>OSEP Policy Documents Regarding the Education of Infants, Toddlers, Children and Youth with Disabilities https://www2.ed.gov/policy/speced/guid/idea/letters/revpolicy/tpstudis.html</p>
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Considerations:

Do state policies establish incentives and recognition for high fidelity implementation of the Pyramid Model and for programs that use data to identify potential issues related to disciplinary action bias (including data on race, ethnicity, IEP status, and gender) and that support personnel to: 1) recognize bias including implicit bias, and 2) increase equity, inclusiveness and culturally responsive practice?

Does the SLT build in feedback loops for programs to communicate their challenges as well as their successes?

Examples:

The SLT at least annually brings representatives of Pyramid Model programs together to share challenges and solutions to addressing challenging behavior, discipline practices, suspension and expulsion, implicit bias, equity, inclusion and culturally responsive practices.

The SLT identifies one member or a group of members to respond to questions from Pyramid Model programs about policies, professional development and resources for eliminating suspension and expulsion and promoting equity, inclusion and culturally responsive practice.

The SLT meets regularly with Program Coaches to support their efforts to guide programs in eliminating suspension and expulsion and promoting equity, inclusion and culturally responsive practice.

US Health and Human Services

Reducing Suspension and Expulsion Practices in Early Childhood Settings
<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ecd/child-health-development/reducing-suspension-and-expulsion-practices>

Building a Comprehensive State Policy Strategy to Prevent Expulsion from Early Learning Settings
https://childcareta.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/public/expulsion_tool_revised_june_2018.pdf

Administration for Children and Families Memorandum: Expulsion and Suspension Policy Statement
<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/docs/policy-im/acf-im-hs-16-01-r.pdf>

Add State Resources Here

Federal Recommendations for State Actions
<https://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/school-discipline/policy-statement-ece-expulsions-suspensions.pdf>

Set Goals and Analyze Data to Assess Progress

- Collect and analyze statewide data on expulsions, suspensions, and other exclusionary discipline practices.
- Coordinate data systems across early childhood programs.
- Track information on early childhood workforce professional development or continuing education, access to behavioral or mental health specialists, investments and effects of prevention efforts, and expulsion and suspension from early childhood programs.
- Systems should also align with K-12 data systems.
- Develop roadmaps to eliminating expulsion and suspension, informed by goals and data-driven progress monitoring. Goals may differ across States, but examples may include:
 - Incorporate basic training on social-emotional and behavioral health in State entry-level credentials in one year; ensure 50% of community colleges and universities incorporate social emotional and behavioral health, with guidance on real-world applicability, in teacher preparation programs in two years.

Related Pyramid Model State BoQ Items, and Considerations and Examples

Related State BoQ Items:

11. SLT develops an action plan that includes objectives related to all critical elements of the benchmarks. The action plan guides the work groups, if necessary. The action plan has both short- and long-term objectives.
21. The SLT develops an annual written report on the progress and outcome data and distributes it to programs, funders, and policy makers.
24. The EBPs align with the goals and objectives of each agency represented on the SLT.
36. The SLT establishes a statewide network of professional-development (PD) experts to build and sustain high-fidelity implementation to serve as Program Coaches and to support Practitioner Coaches.
41. The SLT employs a technical-assistance plan for ongoing support and resources for the Program Coaches, demonstration sites, implementation sites and communities to ensure high-fidelity implementation and sustainability. Such support includes planning for turn-over and succession of key individuals.
44. All programs, communities, and Program Coaches submit the data agreed upon in their respective MOUs.

Resources

Pyramid Model Resources

Implementation: Data Decision-Making
<https://challengingbehavior.org/implementation/data-decision-making/>

Program-Wide Implementation
<https://challengingbehavior.org/implementation/program-wide/resources/>

Other Resources

Using Data to Reduce Suspension and Expulsion of Young Children
<https://dasycenter.org/using-data-to-reduce-suspension-and-expulsion-of-young-children/>

COS Process Professional Development
<http://ectacenter.org/eco/pages/cospd.asp>

PBIS Evaluation
<https://www.pbis.org/evaluation>

US Department of Education

Civil Rights Data Collection - Data Snapshot: School Discipline
<https://ocrdata.ed.gov/downloads/crdc-school-discipline-snapshot.pdf>

U.S. Department of Education Releases 2015-16 Civil Rights Data Collection
<https://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/us-department-education-releases-2015-16-civil-rights-data-collection>

- Ensure that 25% of programs have access to early childhood mental health consultant within one year; ensure that 50% of programs have access to early childhood mental health consultant within two years; ensure that 100% of programs have access to mental health consultant within three years;
- Reduce the number of total suspensions and expulsions statewide by 25% within one year; 50% within two years; and 75% in three years.

45. Training, materials, and support are available to Program Coaches, programs, and communities on what data to collect, why, and how to use the data for making decisions for improving outcomes for children, providers, programs, and communities as well as how to submit the data.

46. A process is in place for programs and communities to enter and summarize the data elements above as well as training on how to use the data for program improvement.

47. A process is in place for the SLT to access the data or summaries of the data described above. The SLT uses these data as part of their action plan for regular evaluation as well as the annual evaluation report.

48. The SLT annually prepares an evaluation report that describes: a) the extent to which program- and community-wide high-fidelity adoption is being implemented, sustained, and scaled-up; b) the impact of program-wide implementation and/or community-wide implementation on child, provider, and program outcomes; and c) the impact of training and coaching. The SLT uses the evaluation report for their own progress monitoring and planning as well as for providing a public report on outcomes.

49. The SLT provides a public celebration of outcomes and accomplishments annually.

Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), US Department of Education

IDEA Part B Discipline Data Collection Questions and Answers
https://www.idealdata.org/sites/default/files/media/documents/2017-09/discipline_data_qa_04-03-17_v2.pdf

Add State Resources Here

	<p>Considerations:</p> <p>Do state policies and procedures outline data needed from programs on suspension and expulsion as well as efforts to promote equity, inclusion and culturally responsive practice and how the data will be collected, e.g. samples, aggregations, etc.?</p> <p>Do state policies outline the data information and how it will be used to make decisions such as targeting supports to improve program practices?</p> <p>Do state policies establish a goal of and milestones for zero suspension and expulsion?</p> <p>Do state policies commit to providing training and technical assistance to programs in the use of the Pyramid Model, Pyramid Model BIRS, implicit bias, inclusive and culturally responsive practice training?</p> <p>Are suspension/expulsion data disaggregate by demographics such as race, ethnicity, gender and IEP status?</p>	
	<p>Examples:</p> <p>Programs use the Program-wide BoQ, TPOT and TPITOS to establish and track fidelity to the Pyramid Model.</p> <p>Data is collected by the state twice a year on BIRS data from a sample of programs on the number of suspensions and expulsions (including data on race, ethnicity, IEP status, and gender). All data is available on request.</p> <p>Training and support in the Pyramid Model, the BIRS, implicit bias, inclusion and culturally responsive practice is offered to all programs.</p>	

Federal Recommendations for State Actions
<https://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/school-discipline/policy-statement-ece-expulsions-suspensions.pdf>

Invest in Workforce Preparation and Development

► States have a significant role to play in ensuring that the early childhood workforce has a strong knowledge base and skills, and access to behavioral specialists or mental health consultants, to prevent expulsion, suspension, and other exclusionary discipline practices. The Child Care and Development Block Grant of 2014 directs States to use a percentage of funds on activities that enhance the quality of child care programs. Among the list of allowable quality enhancement activities are behavioral management strategies and training that promotes positive social-emotional development and reduces challenging behaviors and expulsion practices. States can strengthen their workforce through a variety of mechanisms, including:

- State Entry-Level Credentials: Many States have established early childhood development credentials for entry-level providers and teachers. By including practice-based professional development in State entry-level credentials, focused on enhancing teacher and provider skills in promoting children's social-emotional and behavioral health and capacity to identify and eliminate biases, States can ensure that new providers, teachers, and support staff have the skills to appropriately support all children, enabling them to play an important role in eliminating expulsion and suspension.

Related Pyramid Model State BoQ Items, and Considerations and Examples

Related State BoQ Items:

29. The SLT makes training opportunities related to the EBPs available for families.
35. The SLT develops statewide capacity (funding, staffing) for training and supporting new Program and Community Leadership Teams and Program Coaches in the high fidelity adoption and implementation process while continuing to support the high fidelity of the original implementation and demonstration programs.
36. The SLT establishes a statewide network of professional-development (PD) experts to build and sustain high-fidelity implementation to serve as Program Coaches and to support Practitioner Coaches.
37. The SLT develops an identification process, recruitment and acceptance criteria, and MOUs for Program Coaches.
38. The SLT develops statewide EBPs training capacity that includes providing ongoing training and support for Program Coaches who, in turn, train and support community and program staff and Leadership Teams.

Resources

Pyramid Model Resources

Linking the Pyramid Model and PBIS
<https://challengingbehavior.org/pyramid-model/behavior-intervention/pbs/>

Suspension and Expulsion in Early Childhood
<https://challengingbehavior.org/pyramid-model/suspension-expulsion/>

Culturally Responsive Practices to Reduce Implicit Bias, Disproportionality, Suspension & Expulsion
<https://challengingbehavior.org/document/culturally-responsive-practices-to-reduce-implicit-bias-disproportionality-suspension-expulsion/>

Let's Talk Webinar Series
<https://challengingbehavior.org/training/webinars/recorded-webinars/>

Program-Wide Implementation
<https://challengingbehavior.org/implementation/program-wide/overview/>

Practical Strategies for Implementing the Pyramid Model
<https://challengingbehavior.org/implementation/program-wide/practical-strategies/>

Implementation: Practice-Based Coaching (PBC)
<https://challengingbehavior.org/implementation/coaching/pbc/>

Implementation: Equity
<https://challengingbehavior.org/implementation/equity/overview/>

- Higher Education: States can work with their local institutions of higher education, including universities and community colleges, to ensure that a strong component of teacher preparation, including coursework and student teaching/internships, includes social-emotional and behavioral health promotion and self-reflection capacity to identify and eliminate biases.
- Statewide Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation: States can leverage Federal, State, and private funding to implement statewide early childhood mental health consultation systems so that all early learning programs have access to a knowledgeable early childhood mental health consultant. Several States have funded early childhood mental health consultation systems, and the results of several evaluations of these systems using a variety of evaluative methods indicate strong effectiveness. The *What Works* publication (2009) outlines several successful statewide systems of early childhood mental health consultation that can serve as models or roadmaps for States interested in developing or expanding their mental health consultation efforts (Appendix 1 of the federal *Joint Policy Statement on Expulsion and Suspension Policies in Early Childhood Settings*).
- State Endorsements for Infant, Early Childhood, and Family Mental Health Specialists: Some States have invested in endorsements that recognize a set of knowledge, skills, and competencies in infant and early childhood mental health. In providing a standard set of competencies, these endorsements help ensure a high-quality mental health workforce equipped with the skills to work with very young children and the adults who care for them.

39. The SLT creates and puts in place a quality assurance mechanism (e.g., certification, approval) to ensure that Program Coaches are able to provide training in the EBPs accurately and effectively; and that Practitioner Coaches are able to coach practitioners to implementation fidelity resulting in success for children, families and providers.
40. The SLT implements a plan ensuring that programs and communities statewide have access to Program Coaches, including necessary resources and on-site coaching that result in high-fidelity implementation and sustainability of EBPs.
41. The SLT employs a technical-assistance plan for ongoing support and resources for the Program Coaches, demonstration sites, implementation sites and communities to ensure high-fidelity implementation and sustainability. Such support includes planning for turn-over and succession of key individuals.
42. A Program Coach is available to meet at least twice a month with each emerging Program Leadership Team (emerging teams are teams that have not met the high-fidelity implementation criteria) face to face or by distance.
43. A Program Coach is available to meet at least monthly by distance and quarterly face to face with Program Leadership Teams who have been implementing the EBPs for at least one year with high fidelity.

Implementation: Family Engagement
<https://challengingbehavior.org/implementation/family-engagement/>

Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation
<https://challengingbehavior.org/implementation/early-childhood-mental-health-consultation/>

Training: Modules and Kits for Trainers
<https://challengingbehavior.org/training/for-trainers/modules/>

Evidence-Based Practices
<https://challengingbehavior.org/pyramid-model/evidence-based-practices/>

Pyramid Model: Inclusion
<https://challengingbehavior.org/pyramid-model/inclusion/overview/>

Teaching Tools for Young Children with Challenging Behavior
<https://challengingbehavior.org/pyramid-model/behavior-intervention/teaching-tools/>

Other Resources

Statement from NAEYC on Implicit Bias Research
<https://www.naeyc.org/about-us/press-releases/statement-naeyc-implicit-bias-research>

Understanding Implicit Bias
<http://kirwaninstitute.osu.edu/research/understanding-implicit-bias>

Addressing Implicit Bias in the Early Childhood System
https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/ecd/addressing_implicit_bias_in_the_early_childhood_system.pdf

- Statewide Models of Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS): States can adopt a PBIS framework. Through this, they can plan, implement and sustain a professional development system to enhance the knowledge and skills of the early childhood workforce in meeting the social-emotional and behavioral health needs of young children in inclusive and natural environments. (Appendix 2 of the federal *Joint Policy Statement on Expulsion and Suspension Policies in Early Childhood Settings* contains information on program-wide models of positive behavior interventions and supports [including the Pyramid Model]).
- Career Pathways: States can build early childhood career pathways that incorporate progressively advanced capacity in social-emotional and behavioral health promotion and self-reflection to identify and eliminate biases at each step in the career ladder. As with other knowledge and skills, students should demonstrate competencies in such content areas prior to advancement to the next step in their career.

Considerations:

Is the SLT established to develop and implement a professional development system across agencies to ensure that the Pyramid Model is being implemented effectively and with fidelity?

Does the SLT guide the system to support all ECE programs in implementing the practices and in data collection on the practices, program improvement and suspension and expulsion?

Do state policies and procedures outline a professional development system that: 1) provides training on the Pyramid Model, 2) training on implicit bias, inclusive and culturally responsive practices, 3) provides an external Program Coach to all programs implementing the Pyramid Model to assist the program leadership team in: data collection and use, internal practice based coaching, training, 4) family engagement, and 5) collecting information and data on fidelity of practice and program implementation?

Examples:

All programs provide training and coaching in the Pyramid Model practices.

Programs that implement the Pyramid Model program-wide are provided an external Program Coach.

Data provided by the program on fidelity of practice and program implementation as well as data on suspension and expulsions is used by the state to identify topics and audiences for further support, training and technical assistance.

System Framework for Part C & Section 619: Personnel/Workforce
<http://ectacenter.org/sysframe/component-personnel.asp>

COS Process Professional Development
<http://ectacenter.org/eco/pages/cospd.asp>

Center for Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation
<https://www.ecmhc.org/index.html>

OSEP TA Center on Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports
<https://www.pbis.org>

The Early Childhood Personnel Center
<https://ecpcta.org>

US Department of Education

Early Learning
<https://www2.ed.gov/about/initiatives/ed/earlylearning/index.html?src=rn>

Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), US Department of Education

Resources for State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG) Grantees
<https://osepideasthatwork.org/resources-grantees/program-areas/state-personnel-development-grant-program>

Federal Recommendations for State Actions
<https://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/school-discipline/policy-statement-ece-expulsions-suspensions.pdf>

Establish and Implement Policies Regarding Program Quality

Several factors related to the overall quality of early care and education programs are predictive of expulsion, suspension, and other exclusionary discipline practices. These quality factors should be targeted by States to both increase overall quality of early learning services and reduce or eliminate expulsions, suspensions, and other exclusionary discipline practices. For example, staff qualifications should be high and professional development should be provided on an ongoing basis, including professional development that addresses social-emotional and behavioral development and exclusionary discipline practices. Programs should adhere to group sizes and child/adult ratios no greater than those recommended in the National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education's Stepping Stones to Caring for Our Children. Teachers should use developmentally appropriate, culturally and linguistically responsive practices and evidence-based curricula and create learning environments aligned with the State early learning and development standards. Children should have access to comprehensive services and individual accommodations and supports as needed. Health and safety standards should be implemented and programs should be evaluated to ensure continuous improvement.

Related Pyramid Model State BoQ Items, and Considerations and Examples

Related State BoQ Items:

14. The SLT action plan includes strategies for institutionalizing and embedding EBPs into state infra-structures such as Quality Rating Systems and Early Learning Guidelines, etc.
31. The State SLT develops mechanisms for family members to provide feedback at least annually on the quality of the EBPs experienced by their children.

Considerations:

Do state policies and procedures define program quality with a focus on social emotional competence, equity, appropriate discipline practices, inclusive and culturally responsive practice?

Do state policies and procedures define a tiered approach to quality to ensure quality indicators address all children including children who need specific supports?

Examples:

Quality indicators include implementation of the Pyramid Model practices to address children's social emotional competence.

Quality indicators address the need to reduce/eliminate implicit bias, suspension/expulsion and promote inclusive and culturally responsive practices.

Resources

Pyramid Model Resources

Pyramid Model: Inclusion
<https://challengingbehavior.org/pyramid-model/inclusion/overview/>

Other Resources

System Framework for Part C & Section 619: Accountability & Quality Improvement
<http://ectacenter.org/sysframe/component-accountability.asp>

Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS)
<http://ectacenter.org/topics/quality/QRIS.asp>

National Resource Center For Health and Safety In Child Care and Early Education
<http://nrckids.org>

Add State Resources Here

The Pyramid Model and fidelity and equity indicators are embedded throughout the QRIS system.

Programs are recognized and incentivized to reach higher levels of fidelity with Pyramid Model implementation and to reduce and eliminate the use of suspension and expulsion.

Quality Rating systems recognize the Pyramid Model as a tiered model of evidence-based practices that addresses the social emotional and behavioral needs of all children. The Pyramid Model practices incorporate practices contained in NAEYC and DEC recommended practices. Additionally, the Pyramid Model and data collection system specifically and explicitly addresses suspension, expulsion, implicit bias and equity.