

# Introduction to Positive Behavior Supports

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The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) 2004 makes provisions for students being served in special education in regard to functional behavior assessments (FBA) and positive behavior support (PBS).

... `` **(D) SERVICES.--A child with a disability who is removed from the child's current placement under subparagraph (G) (irrespective of whether the behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the child's disability) or subparagraph (C) shall—**

``(i) *continue to receive educational services, as provided in section 612(a)(1), so as to enable the child to continue to participate in the general education curriculum, although in another setting, and to progress toward meeting the goals set out in the child's IEP; and*

``(ii) **receive, as appropriate, a functional behavioral assessment, behavioral intervention services and modifications, that are designed to address the behavior violation so that it does not recur.**

`` **(B) CONSIDERATION OF SPECIAL FACTORS.--The IEP Team shall--**

``(i) **in the case of a child whose behavior impedes the child's learning or that of others, consider the use of positive behavioral interventions and supports, and other strategies, to address that behavior.**

If a child's behavior impedes his or her learning or that of others (or can be readily anticipated to be repetitive), the individualized education program (IEP) team, in developing the child's IEP, must consider, as appropriate, strategies to address that behavior. This includes behavior that could violate a school code of conduct. Such strategies include, but are not limited to, the following: **functional behavioral assessment, positive behavioral interventions**, consultation, psychological services, support services, or reevaluation. A failure to consider appropriate strategies to address this behavior in developing and implementing the child's IEP would constitute a denial of a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to the child. In appropriate circumstances, the IEP team might determine that the child's behavior intervention plan (BIP) includes specific regular or alternative disciplinary measures, such as denial of certain privileges or short suspensions, that would result from particular infractions of school rules in addition to **positive behavior intervention supports (PBIS)** and strategies. Short suspensions that are being implemented in a manner that denies the child the ability to progress in the educational program would be considered a denial of a FAPE.

# What is Positive Behavioral Support (PBS) and Why is it Important?

Many people just want undesirable behaviors to go away, and they use aversive techniques thinking that will diminish the behavior.

PBS is a new way of thinking about behavior (based in research).

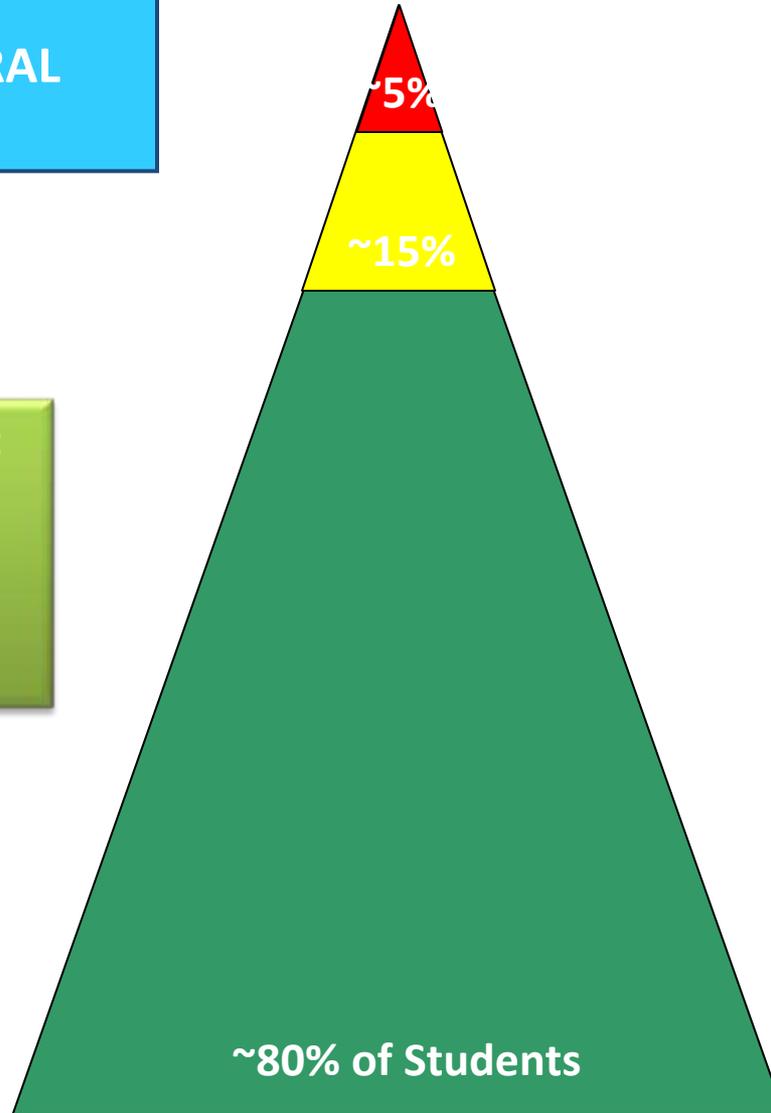
PBS broadens an intervention from only one approach – reducing challenging behaviors to encompassing multiple approaches: changing systems, altering environments, teaching skills, and appreciating positive behavior.

## The Three Tiers of PBIS

- In schools, **primary prevention** involves all students and adults within the school and is implemented across school settings. The goal is to create a positive social culture in which pro-social behaviors are explicitly taught and reinforced, and all adults respond to the occurrence of problem behavior in a consistent manner.
- **Secondary prevention** is intended to support students who have learning and/or life histories that put them at risk of engaging in more serious problem behavior. Strategies for secondary prevention address a child's needs before more intensive individualized supports are needed.
- **Tertiary prevention** is provided for a smaller number of students who need more individualized plans than primary and secondary prevention practices provide. Individualized and comprehensive plans address the unique needs of children who engage in serious problem behaviors.

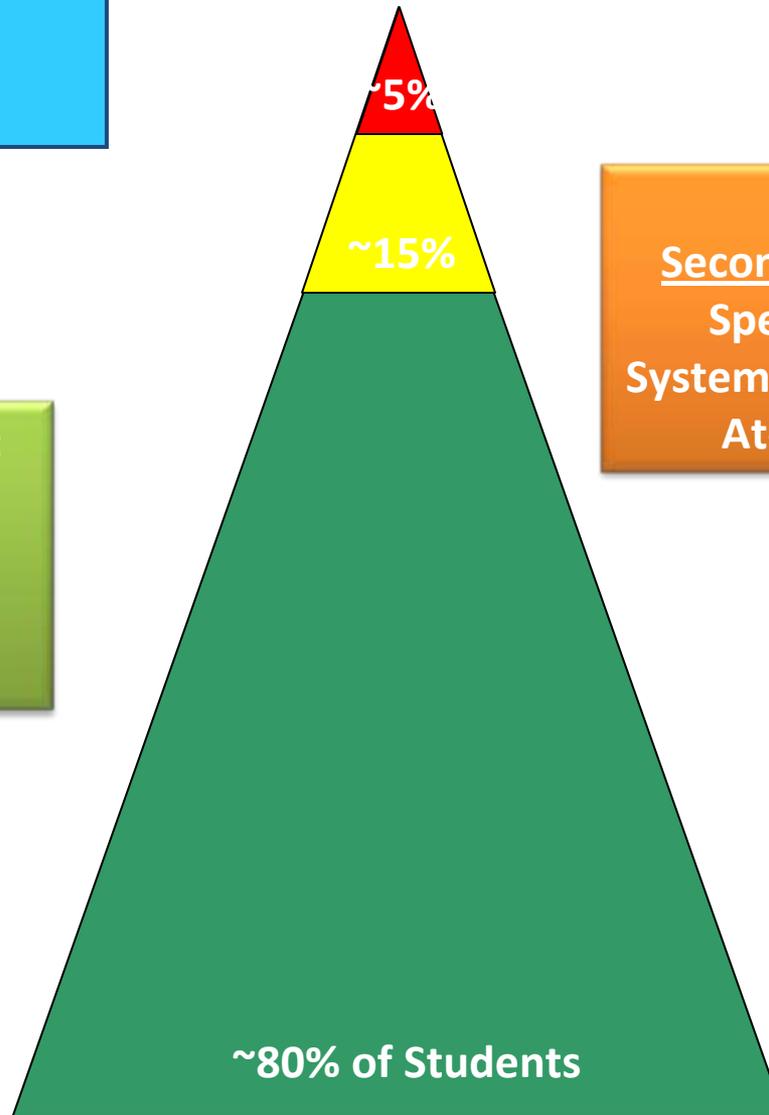
**CONTINUUM OF  
SCHOOL-WIDE  
EFFECTIVE BEHAVIORAL  
SUPPORT**

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



**CONTINUUM OF  
SCHOOL-WIDE  
POSITIVE BEHAVIOR  
SUPPORT**

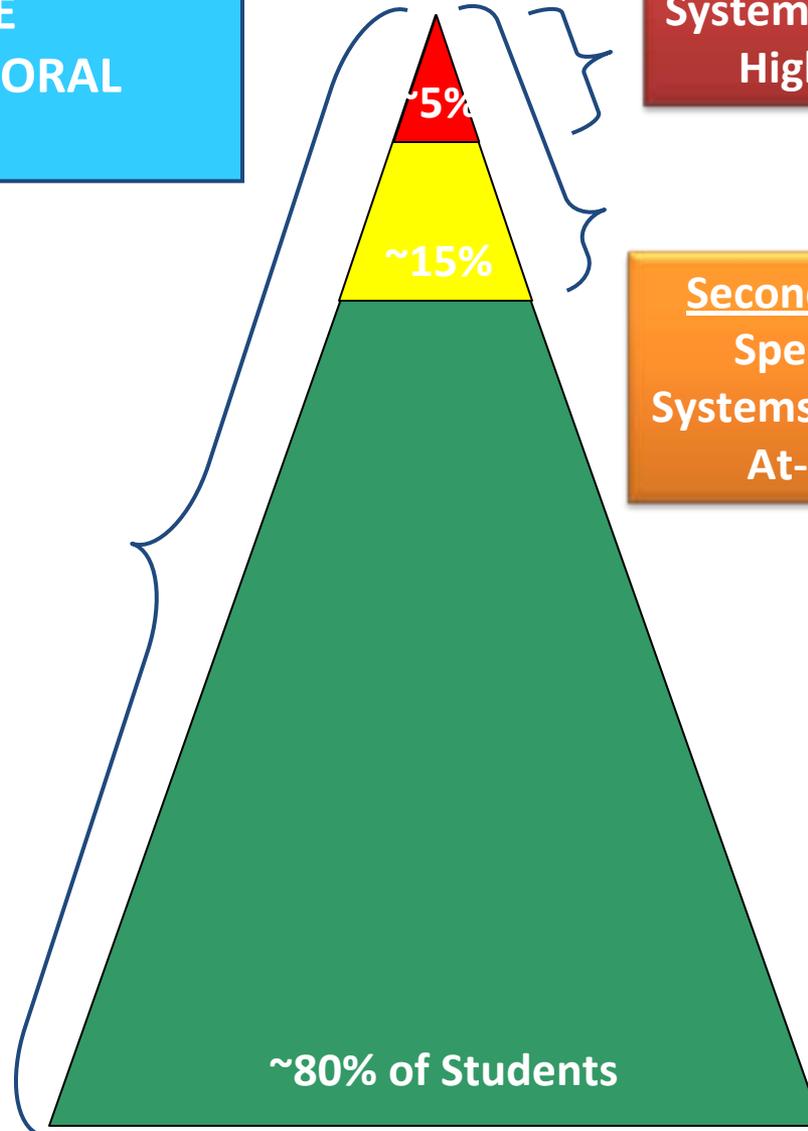
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Secondary Prevention:  
Specialized Group  
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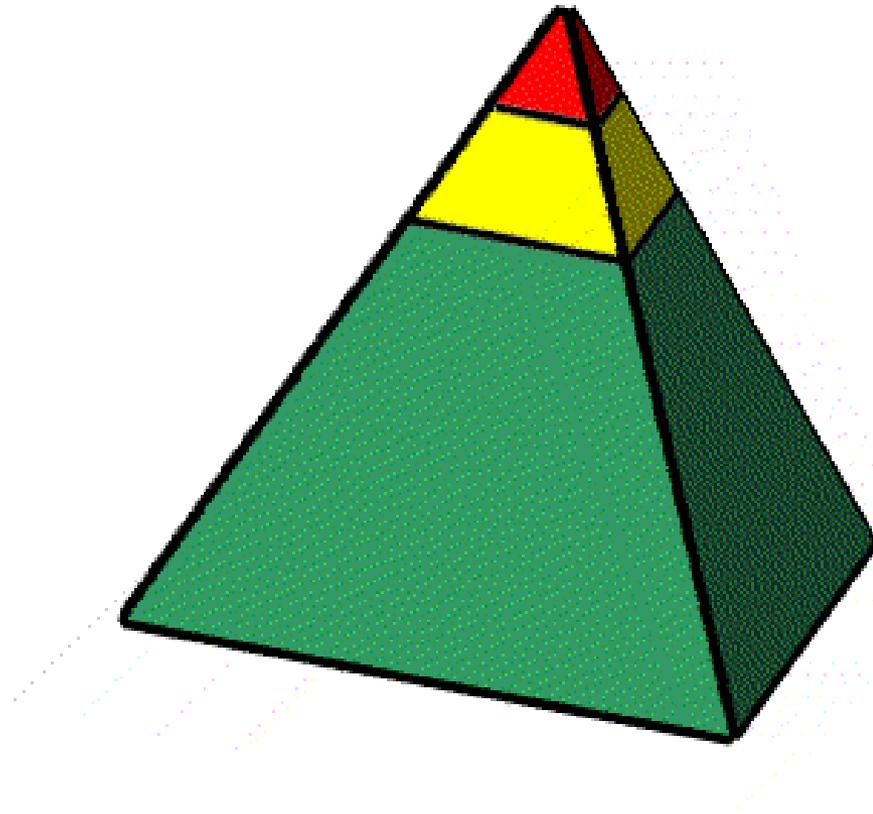
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Primary Prevention:  
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Tertiary Prevention:  
Individualized  
Systems for Students with  
High-Risk Behavior

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



Based on the work of Sugai & Horner 2005- Pyramid by Laura Riffel

# Assumptions underlying functional behavioral assessment

Behavior is learned and serves a specific purpose

What has the child learned is the payoff for this behavior?

Behavior is related to the context in which it occurs

Different context equals different behavior.

# **Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA)**

**FBA is a process for gathering information to understand the function (purpose) of behavior in order to write an effective intervention plan.**

James is embarrassed by his poor oral reading skills. Although his teacher is aware of his reading difficulties, she is mystified by his problem behavior. She views his behavior as unpredictable and does not understand why he is undeterred by her numerous referrals to the principal's office. After closer analysis, two important contributors are noted in regard to James' behavior.

First his problem behavior occurs most frequently in situations when he is expected to read out loud in a large-group setting. This environmental condition serves as a predictor, or antecedent, for James' problem behavior.

Second, when James is sent to the office for problem behavior, he escapes the embarrassment of stumbling through a reading passage in front of his peers.

Like many teenagers, James would rather have his friends believe he is a troublemaker than have them find out that he is a poor reader. In this case, the consequence of being sent to the office is rewarding to James.

In fact, James has learned that if he wants to get out of reading in front of the class, he must have a tantrum.

By looking for the antecedents and consequences that set up and maintain James' tantrums, his problem behavior becomes very predictable.

Understanding the functions, predictors, and consequences of problem behavior helps us to pinpoint and script the appropriate behavior interventions

# Steps involved in Functional Behavioral Assessment

1. Describe and verify the seriousness of the problem (target behavior).
2. Refine the definition of the problem (target) behavior.
3. Collect information on possible functions of the problem (target) behavior.
4. Analyze information.
5. Generate a hypothesis statement regarding probable function of problem (target) behavior.
6. Test the hypothesis statement regarding the function of the problem (target) behavior.

# Questions to Address When Planning a Functional Behavior Assessment

- How often does the target behavior occur & how long does it last?
- Where does the behavior typically occur/never occur?
- Who is present for the occurrence/nonoccurrence of the behavior?
- What is going on during the occurrence/nonoccurrence of the behavior?
- When is the behavior most likely/least likely to occur?
- How does the student react to the usual consequences that follow the behavior?

# Defining Target Behaviors

## Examples

- Hits others
- Crying
- Laying on the floor and refusing to move

## Non-Example

- Poor impulse control
- Angry, hostile, resentful
- Stubborn

# Collect and analyze information on possible functions of the target behavior

## **Record Review – considerations:**

- Diagnostic & medical records
- Look for side effects from current medications as some medications manifest behavioral outcomes
- Look at sleep patterns, food allergies, changes in home life
- Psychological information
- Educational assessments
- Is the child functioning two or three grade levels below or above the work they are being asked to complete?
- Is the child capable of understanding two or three step directions?

## Record Review – considerations continued:

- Social histories
- Is there a history of difficulties in certain situations?
- Developmental profiles
- Previous behavior programs
- Individual education plans
- Anecdotal records/incident reports/discipline summaries

# Possible Functions of the target behavior

## Positive Reinforcement

- Social attention
- Access to materials
- Sensory stimulation

## Negative Reinforcement

- Work
- Activities
- Sensory
- Pain reduction

What is the child trying to get or what is the child trying to get out of?

## **We also need to consider setting events:**

- Medical Concerns
  - sinus infections
  - medication side effects
  - sleep deprivation
- Activity Patterns
  - staying up late on a Wednesday night
  - behaviors occurring when in gymnasium
- Relationships with Others
  - antagonistic relationships
  - favorite person being absent

## **We will use data to analyze patterns.**

Under what circumstances or antecedent events is the target behavior most/least likely? WHEN? WHERE? WHAT? WHO? WHY?

What consequences or results predictably follow the problem behavior? WHAT DO THEY GET? WHAT DO THEY AVOID?

What broader issues are important influences on behavior?

## **Other Information:**

Times, activities, and individuals when behavior is most or least likely to occur

Conditions that are typically associated before or after the target behavior

Common setting events associated with the behavior

Other behaviors that may occur before or with the target behavior

# Once we collect the data and analyze it, we will be able to form a summary (hypothesis) statement

1. When this occurs...  
(Describe circumstances/antecedents)
2. The student does...  
(Describe target behavior)
3. To get/to avoid...  
(describe consequences)

## Summary Statement

When James is asked to read aloud ....

He swears at the teacher ...

And is sent to the office (saving face with his peer group)

The behavior intervention plan is built from the summary statement

# A good Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) includes the following:

## Proactive

- What environmental adjustments will be used to make the student's problem behavior unnecessary?

## Educative

- What behaviors (skills) will be taught to replace or meet the same function as the student's problem behavior and improve his or her ability to function more effectively?

## Effective

- How will consequences be managed to insure the student receives reinforcement for positive behavior, not problem behavior?

**Over time, plans will need to be adjusted as the student's needs and circumstances change....  
Or .....as we figure out the answers the child changes the test.**

For additional information on positive behavioral supports please visit the following websites:

**Dr. Laura Riffel :** [www.behaviordocor.org](http://www.behaviordocor.org)

**Association for Positive Behavior Supports:**  
[www.apbs.org](http://www.apbs.org)

**Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports:** [www.pbis.org](http://www.pbis.org)

**Center for Effective Collaboration and Practice:**  
[www.cecp.air.org](http://www.cecp.air.org)

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