

Running Head: Positive Behavioral Supports

School Wide Positive Behavioral Supports

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The Handbook of School Violence and School Safety:
From Research to Practice

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To prevent minor, as well as serious, antisocial behavior, educators are turning to a comprehensive and proactive approach to discipline commonly referred to as School Wide Positive Behavior Support (SWPBS) (Osher, Dwyer, & Jackson, 2002; Sprague & Golly, 2004; Gresham, Sugai, & Horner, 2001). SWPBS is based on the assumption that when faculty and staff in a school actively teach and acknowledge expected behavior, the proportion of students with serious behavior problems will be reduced and the school's overall climate will improve (Colvin, Kame'enui, & Sugai, 1993; Sugai & Horner, 2002; Sugai et al., 2000).

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The procedures that define SWPBS are organized around three main themes: Prevention; Multi-Tiered Support; and Data-based Decision Making. Investing in prevention of problem behavior involves (a) defining and teaching core behavioral expectations, (b) acknowledging and rewarding appropriate behavior (e.g., compliance to school rules, safe and respectful peer to peer interactions, academic effort/engagement), and (c) establishing a consistent continuum of consequences for problem behavior. The focus is on establishing a positive social climate in which behavioral expectations for students are highly predictable, directly taught, consistently acknowledged, and actively monitored.

Multi-tiered support is available beyond the prevention level for those students with at-risk and antisocial behavior. The greater the student's need for support the more intense the support provided. Within the SWPBS approach, emphasis has been on using the principles and procedures of behavior analysis as a foundation for defining behavioral challenges, completing functional behavioral assessments, and using these assessments, in conjunction with person-centered planning, to design effective and efficient procedures for addressing patterns of unacceptable behavior.

Data-based decision-making is a theme that is interwoven throughout SWPBS, and builds on the assumption that the faculty, staff, family and students will be most effective in the design of preventive and reactive supports if they have access to regular, accurate information about the behavior of students. The value of data for decision-making is emphasized for both the design of initial supports, and the on-going assessment and adaptation of support strategies. The SWPBS approach includes adoption of practical strategies for collecting, summarizing, reporting and using data on regular cycles.

Evidence suggests that sustained use of SWPBS practices can alter the trajectory of at-risk children toward destructive outcomes, and prevent the onset of risk behavior in typically developing children. It is expected that effective and sustained implementation of SWPBS will create a more responsive school climate that supports the twin goals of schooling for all children: *academic achievement* and *social development* (Horner, Sugai, Todd, & Lewis-Palmer, in press; Walker et al., 1996).

Implementing and sustaining an organized, school-wide system for behavior support and teaching social behavior is the foundation for effective prevention. In addition to the direct benefit it has on student behavior in school, such a system creates the context for school-based efforts to support effective parenting. When school personnel have a shared vision of the kind of social behavior they want to promote among students and a shared understanding of the type of social environment that is needed to achieve such behavior, they are in a position to inform and support families in creating the same kind of supportive environment at home. When educators are clear about how to use rules, positive reinforcement, and mild, consistent negative consequences to support behavioral development, they are better able to coordinate their efforts with those of parents. As a result, parents will know more about their children's behavior in

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school and will be able to provide the same supports and consequences that the school is providing.

As of 2005, over 2700 schools across the country are actively implementing SWPBS. These schools are reporting reductions in problem behavior, improved perceptions of school safety, and improved academic outcomes (Horner et al., in press). This chapter describes how to establish and implement a school-wide positive behavior support system. To first establish the context in which SWPBS is being adopted, we begin by framing the challenge that antisocial behavior presents in schools.

The Challenge of Antisocial Behavior in Schools

Schools in the United States are responding to increasingly serious problem behaviors (e.g., bullying, harassment, victimization, drug and alcohol abuse, the effects of family disruption, poverty) (Kingery, 1999). These problem behaviors, and their related challenges (the effects of family disruption, poverty) have created fears about the personal safety of students, teachers, parents, and community members that are very real and need to be addressed in every school.

While most schools in the U.S. are relatively safe places for children, youth, and the adults who teach and support them (U.S. Departments of Justice and Education, 1999, 2000), it also is true that some schools have serious antisocial behavior and violence problems. No school is immune from challenging behaviors and the potential for violence. They exist in every school and community, and they always will. The extent of the challenge will vary in intensity and frequency across schools, and the onset and development of antisocial behavior are associated with a variety of school, community, and family risk factors (Sprague, Walker, Sowards, Van Bloem, Eberhardt & Marshall, 2002; Walker & Sylwester, 1991). The challenge is to reduce the frequency and intensity of these problems, and sustain behavioral gains over time.

The social problems noted above compete directly with the instructional mission of schools. The result is decreased academic achievement and a lower quality of life for students and staff alike. The *National Educational Goals Panel Report* (U.S. Department of Education, 1998, 2000) lists five essential areas in which national school performance has declined: (a) reading achievement at grade 12 has decreased (Goal 3); (b) student drug use has increased (Goal 7); (c) sale of drugs at school in grades 8, 10, and 12 has increased; (d) threats and injuries to public school teachers have increased (Goal 7); and (e) more teachers are reporting that disruptions in their classroom interfere with their teaching (Goal 7). These outcomes illustrate the clear link between declining school climate, school violence, and academic achievement. It is not possible to achieve national educational goals and meaningful reform without addressing these disturbing conditions (Elias, Zins, Graczyk, & Weissberg, 2003).

School practices contribute to the problem. Many school practices contribute to the development and prevalence of antisocial behavior and the potential for violence. Because of the nearly exclusive emphasis on detecting individual child or youth characteristics that predict antisocial behavior and violence, many important systemic variables are often overlooked as contributors (Colvin, Kame'enui, & Sugai, 1993; Hawkins, Catalano, Kosterman, Abbott, & Hill, 1999); Mayer, 1995; Walker & Eaton-Walker, 2000; Walker et al., 1996). These include, among others:

1. ineffective instruction that results in academic failure;
2. failure to individualize instruction and support to adapt to individual differences (e.g., ethnic and cultural differences, gender, disability);
3. disagreement and inconsistency of implementation among staff members;

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4. lack of administrator involvement, leadership and support;
5. inconsistent and punitive classroom and behavior management practices;
6. unclear rules and expectations regarding appropriate behavior;
7. failure to reward compliance to school behavior expectations;
8. lack of opportunity to learn and practice prosocial interpersonal and self-management skills; and
9. failure to assist students from at-risk (e.g., poverty, racial/ethnic minority members) backgrounds to bond with the schooling process.

Common response to behavioral problems: Turn to office referrals, suspensions and expulsions! Often when a student misbehaves, the first line of response involves increasing monitoring and supervision of the student, restating rules, and delivering sanctions (e.g., referrals to the office, out of school suspension, and/or loss of privileges). The administrator may come to a point of frustration and attempt to establish a “bottom line” for disruptive students (usually referral or suspension). Unfortunately, these “get tough” responses produce immediate, short-lived relief for the school but do not facilitate the progress of the student who may already be disengaged from the schooling process.

Paradoxically, while punishment practices may appear to “work” in the short term, they may merely remove the student for a period of time, thus providing a brief respite. All too often, these practices also can lead some to assign exclusive responsibility for positive change to the student or family and thereby prevent meaningful school engagement and development of solutions. The use of sanctions, without an accompanying program of teaching and recognition for expected positive behavior, may merely displace the problem elsewhere (to the home or the community). There is little evidence of the long-term effect of these practices in reducing antisocial behavior (Irvin, Tobin, Sprague, Sugai, & Vincent, 2004; Skiba & Peterson, 1999). In fact, evidence suggests that schools using punishment practices alone promote more antisocial behavior than those with a firm, but fair discipline system (Mayer, 1995; Skiba & Peterson, 1999). Research shows clearly that schools using only punishment techniques tend to have increased rates of vandalism, aggression, truancy, and ultimately school dropout (Mayer, 1995).

For students with chronic problem behavior these negative practices are more likely to impair child-adult relationships and attachment to schooling rather than reduce the likelihood of problem behavior. Punishment alone, without a balance of support and efforts to restore school engagement, weakens academic outcomes and maintains the antisocial trajectory of at risk students. Instead, the discipline process should help students accept responsibility, place high value on academic engagement and achievement, teach alternative ways to behave, and focus on restoring a positive environment and social relationships in the school.

If not punishment, then what is the solution? Schools can serve as an ideal setting to organize efforts against the increasing problems of children and youth who display antisocial behavior patterns (Mayer, 1995; Sugai & Horner, 1994; Walker et al., 1996). This practice is sustained by a tendency to try to eliminate the presenting problem quickly by removing the student via suspension or expulsion, or fix a “within-child” deficit rather than focus on the administrative, teaching and management practices that either contribute to or reduce them (Tobin, Sugai, & Martin, 2000).

Conceptual Basis for School Wide Positive Behavior Supports

A solid research base exists to guide an analysis of the administrative, teaching, and management practices in a school and design alternatives to ineffective approaches. An important theme from this research is that no single intervention practice should be viewed as

meeting all the behavioral challenges in schools. Student behavior is complex and influenced by many variables within the school, within the family/community, and within the student. The behavior support strategies needed to establish a school-wide social culture need to be supplemented with classroom interventions and individualized supports for students with chronic and intense patterns of problem behavior. The range of student behavior support needs requires that *interventions target both school-wide and individual student support strategies*. Educators in today's schools and classrooms must be supported to adopt and sustain effective; cost-efficient practices in this regard (Gottfredson, 1997; Gottfredson, Gottfredson, & Czeh, 2000; Walker et al., 1996). A well-developed body of research evidence on school safety indicates that (a) early identification and intervention with at-risk children in schools is feasible; (b) the risk of dropping out of school, delinquency, violence and other adjustment problems is high unless these children are helped; (c) academic recovery is difficult if early intervention is not provided; and (d) universal interventions need to be combined with interventions targeted to specific problems (Gottfredson, 2001; Tolan, Gorman-Smith, & Henry, 2001). Effective schools have shared values regarding the school's mission and purpose, carry out multiple activities designed to promote prosocial behavior and connection to school traditions, and provide a caring nurturing social climate involving collegial relationships among adults and students (Bryk & Driscoll, 1988; Gottfredson, Gottfredson & Czeh, 2000; Scott & Eber, 2003).

Changing school climate is an essential element. The biggest challenge schools face is to enhance their overall capacity to create and sustain positive and behaviorally effective schools. Schools should provide school wide positive behavior supports at the point of school entry and continue implementing through high school (O'Donnell, Hawkins, Catalano, Abbott, & Day, 1995). It is never too late, nor never too early to support children and youth in our schools (Loeber & Farrington, 1998). Research indicates that schools can create establish clear expectations for learning and positive behavior, while providing firm but fair discipline. Students will be more motivated if they are in environments that are perceived as safe, positive and predictable. Increased motivation is associated with improved acquisition of skills that will be of value for years following formal education (Katz, 1997).

Thus, the challenge becomes how to give schools the capacity to adopt and sustain the processes, organizational structures, and systems that enable them to carry out these effective interventions (Gottfredson, Gottfredson, & Czeh, 2000). The problem for schools is not the lack of *effective* programs (those that work), but rather it is one of *efficacy* (helping typical schools adopt and carry out effective interventions).

Where to start: No Child Left Behind Principles of effectiveness. Education professionals may use the USDOE Office of Safe and Drug Free Schools "Principles of Effectiveness" as an organizing framework for planning and implementing whole-school approaches to safety and effectiveness. The principles recommend: (a) a local *needs assessment* of the risk and protective factors affecting the school, families, and the community (including the status of support systems); (b) establishment of *measurable goals and objectives* by the school that are integrated with school improvement planning; (c) selection of *research-based and research-validated curricula and interventions*; and (d) implementation of a comprehensive and *rigorous evaluation plan*, which includes evaluation of inputs (resources, staff, materials), outputs (actual costs, description of the process of implementation), outcomes (e.g., student behavior change), and impact (overall satisfaction with project products and outcomes). In the

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next section, School Wide PBS use and the Principles of Effectiveness as an organizing framework are introduced.

Implementing School-Wide, Positive Behavior Supports

School-Wide Positive Behavior Support (SWPBS) is a systems-based approach that promotes safe and orderly schools. Researchers at the University of Oregon (see Sprague, Sugai & Walker, 1998; Sprague, Walker, Golly et al., 2002; Sugai & Horner, 1999; Taylor-Greene et al., 1997, www.pbis.org) have field-tested the efficacy of SWPBS approaches in reducing school behavior problems and promoting a positive school climate. SWPBS is a multiple system approach to addressing the problems posed by students displaying antisocial behaviors and coping with challenging forms of student behavior. The key practices of SWPBS are:

- clear definitions of expected appropriate, positive behaviors are provided for students and staff members;
- clear definitions of problem behaviors and their consequences are defined for students and staff members;
- regularly scheduled instruction *and* assistance in desired positive social behaviors is provided that enables students to acquire the necessary skills for the desired behavior change;
- effective incentives and motivational systems are provided to encourage students to behave differently;
- staff commits to staying with the intervention over the long term and to monitor, support, coach, debrief, and provide booster lessons for students as necessary to maintain the achieved gains;
- staff receives training, feedback and coaching about effective implementation of the systems; and
- systems for measuring and monitoring the intervention's effectiveness are established and carried out.

Improving discipline is a priority. First, the improvement of school discipline should be one of the top school improvement goals. With competing resources and goals, if work in this area is not a priority, progress will be difficult.

Administrator leadership. Every school needs a principal committed to SWPBS leadership and participation. In the absence of administrative leadership and district support (e.g., policy, fiscal) it will be difficult to effect broad-based changes. Hallinger and Heck (1998) reviewed the evidence on the principal's contribution to school effectiveness. They concluded that principals exercise a measurable effect on schooling effectiveness and student achievement. Kam, Greenberg, and Walls (2003), reported that the ability of principals to initiate and sustain innovations in their schools is related to successful program implementation. The length of time administrators have spent in the school setting and the leadership characteristics they show in maintaining good relations with teachers, parents, school boards, site councils, and students also are positively related to successful implementation outcomes. Gottfredson et al. (2000) and Ingersoll (2001) showed that high levels of administrative support were also associated with reduced staff turnover.

Commitment to participate by all or "most" adults in the school. It is important to secure a commitment to implement the intervention by at least 80% of school staff. Some schools have chosen to use a "vote" to assess this level of commitment. We have found a few approaches that can move a group of colleagues toward program implementation (Embry, 2004).

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- *Talk about cost and benefit.* All adults involved need to know the costs (time, funds) and benefits of working to improve school discipline. For example, presentations by school leaders on the anticipated effects of program adoption (e.g., studies indicate that as discipline problems and referrals to the principal's office are dramatically reduced, teaching time is substantially increased [cites?]).
- *Emphasize the long-term benefits.* It also is useful to discuss the "higher good" of prevention and how much your colleagues value such outcomes as better academic achievement, prevention of alcohol, tobacco and other drug use, less teacher stress, etc. These discussions may prove to be more powerful and persuasive than simply appealing to authority or law (i.e., we have to do it!).
- *"Try before you buy."* School-wide PBS is comprised of many smaller techniques (reward systems, teaching rules; Embry, 2004) that can be promoted as trial products. You can ask innovators in your building to share their successes, or arrange visits to schools that have already adopted SWPBS practices.
- *"Go with the goers."* The practice is far more likely to be adopted if you recognize and support people who get on board early, as well as encourage those who are reluctant, or even resistant.

To begin your journey toward establishing a more effective school program, we recommend that you begin by completing the needs assessment presented in Figure 1 (we include only the school-wide section here). The "Assessing Behavior Support In Schools" survey developed by George Sugai and his colleagues (Sugai, Lewis-Palmer, Todd, & Horner, 2000; available for no charge at www.pbis.org) proscribes the essential features of SWPBS at the school-wide (Figure 1), common area, classroom, and individual student levels. The survey asks respondents to reflect on whether the practice is in place in their school and to choose which items are priorities for improvement. Your school behavior team will refer to these goals often, and modify them as indicated by a review of key data regarding effectiveness (e.g., office discipline referrals, rates of problem behavior on the playground).

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Select evidence-based practices. The School-Wide Behavioral Support (SWPBS) (Sprague, Sugai & Walker, 1998; Sugai & Horner, 1994) approach was developed at the University of Oregon and the National Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (www.pbis.org) (an Office of Special Education Programs funded research center). The goal of SWPBS is to facilitate the academic achievement and healthy social development of children and youth in a safe environment conducive to learning. SWPBS involves providing embedded and ongoing staff development and coaching aimed at improving school and classroom discipline and associated outcomes such as school violence, and alcohol, tobacco and other drug use.

SWPBS includes intervention techniques based on over 30 years of rigorous research regarding school discipline from education, public health, psychology, and criminology disciplines. SWPBS components address whole-school, common area, classroom, and individual student support practices and may be used in combination with other evidence-based prevention programs such as the Second Step Violence Prevention Curriculum (Committee for Children, 2002). Representative school team members are trained to develop and implement positive school rules, direct teaching of rules, positive reinforcement systems, data-based decision making at the school level, effective classroom management methods, curriculum adaptation to prevent problem behavior, and functional behavioral assessment and positive behavioral intervention plans. Teams are also coached to integrate SWPBS systems with other prevention

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programs to maximize effectiveness.

How is SWPBS implemented? The process for adopting and sustaining SWPBS revolves around a school team typically composed of 5-10 individuals that includes an administrator, representative faculty/staff, and local family/community members. While it may seem ideal to train all school staff all the time, it will rarely be feasible or sustainable to provide training at this level due to cost and logistical concerns. However, a representative group of adults, representing all school stakeholders (including students at the secondary level) can learn the key practices of SWPBS and set goals for improvement. The stakeholders can then function as leaders or coaches as they inform their groups of the team activities (for example, at staff or area meetings) and give support and encouragement during the improvement process. Increasingly, we see district- and state-wide initiatives supporting the dissemination of SWPBS training and coaching systems.

While participating in training, and after mastery of the basic material, it is recommended that school discipline teams (building administrator, representative teachers, and other stakeholders) meet approximately once per month to review training content as needed and to set up a regular process of reviewing and refining the school discipline plan (initial goals are developed during training) and other, school site-based activities. A format for these meetings should be specified and each meeting should last between 20-60 minutes.

Set and promote school wide expectations. A critical first task for the implementation team is to establish school-wide behavior rule teaching related to student-teacher compliance, peer-to-peer interaction, academic achievement, and academic study skills. Using the general framework of “safety,” “respect,” and “responsibility” and directly teaching lessons throughout the year to establish and maintain the patterns of behavior associated with these personal qualities is recommended. In addition, posting the rules publicly in posters, school newsletters, local media, announcements, assemblies, can be valuable..

Plan to recognize expected behavior and actively supervise students. The school will need to establish a consistent system of enforcement, monitoring, and positive reinforcement to enhance the effect of rule teaching and maintain patterns of desired student behavior. Reinforcement systems may include school-wide token economies in the form of “tickets” stating each school rule delivered by all adults in the building. These tokens are to be “backed up” with weekly drawings and rewards for the teachers as well. Each school should implement the procedures to fit their school improvement plan and specific discipline needs.

Define and effectively correct problem behaviors and their consequences for students and staff members. As stated earlier, schools using excessive sanctions experience greater levels of vandalism and other forms of misbehavior (Mayer, 1995; Skiba & Peterson, 1999). Positive reinforcement is more effective than punishment because it does not result in the type of counter-aggression and withdrawal (fight or flight) that punishment can produce and because it does not focus teachers’ attention on detecting and correcting rule violations.

Students should see rules applied fairly. When they feel that rules are unevenly applied, students are more likely to misbehave. Schools with clear rule and reward systems and business-like corrections and sanctions also experience fewer problems. These schools signal appropriate behavior for students and respond to misbehavior predictably. Students in such schools are clear about expected behavior and learn there are consequences for misbehavior. When rules are consistent, students develop a respect for rules and laws, and internalize beliefs that the system of governance works (Bryk & Driscoll, 1988; Gottfredson, 1987; Gottfredson, Gottfredson, & Hybl, 1993).

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Report data for active decision-making. The efficiency of team problem solving is enhanced by providing the team with data-based feedback to schools regarding their implementation of basic SWPBS practices (c.f. “Assessing Behavior Support in Schools” survey ; Figure 1) and the impact of implementation on problem behavior as indexed by discipline referral patterns (c.f. School-Wide Information System (SWIS); Sprague, Sugai, Horner, & Walker, 1999; Sugai, Sprague, Horner, & Walker, 2000; www.swis.org). The goal is to use highly efficient data systems that allow teams to ask (a) are we implementing evidence-based, SWPBS practices, and (b) are the practices having an effect on the behavior of students? Data on implementation of SWPBS practices typically are collected, summarized and reported quarterly, and data on student behavior are collected continuously, and reported to the school team weekly, the school faculty monthly, and the school district annually. Irvin et al., (in press) provide an evaluation documenting the value that regular access to student behavioral data has for typical school teams.

Examples of data collection and display tools for assessing implementation of SWPBS can be found on the internet at www.pbssurveys.org (Boland et al., 2004). Similarly, an example of a web-based information system designed to help school personnel to use office referral data to design schoolwide and individual student interventions is available at www.swis.org (May et al., 2000). It is anticipated that as school-wide systems become more common an increasing array of data collection options will become available to schools. A major focus for research on educational systems-change lies in the process, and impact of providing teachers, administrators, families and students with regular, accurate information for decision-making.

Implementing for Sustainability

Too often educational innovations, even effective innovations, have been implemented but not maintained (Latham, 1988). If SWPBS is to result in educational change at a scale of practical relevance, schools adopting SWPBS procedures will need to sustain the practices and benefits. An important feature of the SWPBS approach is inclusion of formal strategies for improving the likelihood of sustained implementation. These include (a) the development of training materials at each school that make it “easier” to implement from year to year, (b) the implementation of policies for using SWPBS, and reporting student data, and (c) the training of district-level “coaches” who are available to provide booster training for school teams, initial training for new faculty members, and help with problem solving around more intense challenges. The district coaching role is designed to help a school team sustain effective practices through periodic perturbations in the staffing, organization or fluctuation in student behavior. The issue of sustaining educational innovation is not unique to SWPBS, and remains a worthy focus for research.

What is the Evidence for SWPBS Effectiveness?

A number of researchers (see Embry & Flannery, 1994; Knoff & Batsche, 1995; Taylor-Green et al., 1997) have studied SWPBS practices. The effects of the program are documented in a series of studies implemented by researchers at the University of Oregon (Horner et al., in press; Metzler, Biglan, Rusby, & Sprague 2001; Sprague, Walker, Golly et al., 2002; Taylor-Greene et al., 1997, see also www.pbis.org for the latest research studies and reports). Studies have shown reductions in office discipline referrals of up to 50% per year, with continued improvement over a three-year period in schools that sustain the intervention (Irvin et al., 2004). In addition, school staff report greater satisfaction with their work, compared to schools that did not implement SWPBS. Comparison schools typically show increases or no change in office referrals, along with a general frustration with the school discipline program.

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In studies employing the SWPBS components, reductions in antisocial behavior (Sprague et al., 2002), vandalism (Mayer, 1995), aggression (Grossman et al., 1997; Lewis, Sugai, & Colvin, 1998), later delinquency (Kellam, Mayer, Rebok & Hawkins, 1998; O'Donnell et al., 1995), as well as alcohol, tobacco and other drug use (Biglan, Wang, & Walberg, 2003; O'Donnell et al., 1995) have been documented. Positive changes in protective factors such as academic achievement (Kellam et al., 1998; O'Donnell et al., 1995) and school engagement (O'Donnell et al., 1995) have been documented using a school-wide positive behavior support approach such as SWPBS in concert with other prevention interventions.

Conclusion

We have described a school-wide system for positive behavior support, and the implementation steps being used to build both a positive school-wide social culture, and the capacity to support individual students with more intense behavioral needs. The major messages are that (a) problem behavior in schools is both a significant social challenge and a barrier to effective learning, (b) traditional "get tough" strategies have not proven effective, (c) the foundation for all behavior support in schools begins with establishing a positive social culture by defining, teaching and rewarding appropriate behaviors, (d) additional behavior support procedures based on behavior analysis principles are needed for children with more intense behavior support needs, and (e) school personnel are demonstrating both the ability to collect and use quality improvement data systems, and the value of those systems for improving schools.

At this writing, randomized controlled research studies are in progress to examine the effects of SWPBS with greater precision and control. Current evaluation results, however, are encouraging. Schools throughout the country are demonstrating the ability to adopt SWPBS practices with fidelity (Horner, Todd, Lewis-Palmer, Irvin, Sugai & Boland, 2004; Horner et al., in press). When schools adopt SWPBS practices they are reporting reductions in problem behavior, improved perceptions of school safety, and improved academic performance. Recent Illinois evaluations also report that schools establishing a positive social climate are proving more effective in their implementation of individual, wrap-around support for students with high behavior support needs.

The overall picture is encouraging. Schools are able to improve, and to demonstrate that change is linked to valued student outcomes. If these gains are to become important at a national scale, additional research is needed to demonstrate experimentally controlled effects, strategies for improving efficiency, and strategies for supporting sustained implementation.

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Table 1.

What does School Wide PBS look like?

- Train and support a representative school team (20-30 hours of formal training)
 - Principal actively leads and facilitates the process
 - Take time to plan, coach and continuously improve
- Set and promote school wide expectations
 - Plan to teach expected behavior
 - Plan to recognize expected behavior and actively supervise
- Use performance-based data for active decision-making
 - Office discipline referral patterns (www.swis.org)
 - Discipline survey results
 - Changes in academic performance, attendance
 - Student safety surveys
- How do I know it's working?
 - Expected behaviors taught 20+ times/year
 - Students actively supervised in all school areas
 - Students acknowledged frequently for expected behavior
 - 4:1 positive : negative interactions
 - >80% students & adults can describe school-wide expectations
 - Safe, respectful, responsible

Figure 1: Sample needs assessment for planning and evaluating SWPBS

Effective Behavior Support (EBS) Survey
Assessing and Planning Behavior Support in Schools

Name of school _____ Date _____
 District _____ State _____

Person Completing the Survey:

- Administrator
- General Educator
- Educational/Teacher Assistant
- Special Educator
- Counselor
- Community member
- Parent/Family member
- School Psychologist
- Other _____

1. Complete the survey independently.
2. Schedule 20-30 minutes to complete the survey.
3. Base your rating on your individual experiences in the school. If you do not work in classrooms, answer questions that are applicable to you.

To assess behavior support, first evaluate the status of each system feature (i.e. *in place*, *partially in place*, *not in place*) (left hand side of survey). Next, examine each feature:

- a. “What is the current status of this feature (i.e. *in place*, *partially in place*, *not in place*)?”
- b. For those features rated as partially in place or not in place, “What is the priority for improvement for this feature (i.e., *high*, *medium*, *low*)?”

4. Return your completed survey to _____ by _____.

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SCHOOL-WIDE SYSTEMS

Current Status			Feature	Priority for Improvement		
In Place	Partial in Place	Not in Place		High	Med	Low
			School-wide is defined as involving all students, all staff, & all settings.			
			1. A small number (e.g. 3-5) of positively & clearly stated student expectations or rules are defined.			
			2. Expected student behaviors are taught directly.			
			3. Expected student behaviors are rewarded regularly.			
			4. Problem behaviors (failure to meet expected student behaviors) are defined clearly.			
			5. Consequences for problem behaviors are defined clearly.			
			6. Distinctions between office vs. classroom managed problem behaviors are clear.			
			7. Options exist to allow classroom instruction to continue when problem behavior occurs.			
			8. Procedures are in place to address emergency/dangerous situations.			
			9. A team exists for behavior support planning & problem solving.			
			10. School administrator is an active participant on the behavior support team.			
			11. Data on problem behavior patterns			

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Positive Behavioral Supports 18

Current Status			Feature	Priority for Improvement		
In Place	Partial in Place	Not in Place		High	Med	Low
			School-wide is defined as involving all students, all staff, & all settings.			
			are collected and summarized within an on-going system.			
			12. Patterns of student problem behavior are reported to teams and faculty for active decision-making on a regular basis (e.g. monthly).			
			13. School has formal strategies for informing families about expected student behaviors at school.			
			14. Booster training activities for students are developed, modified, & conducted based on school data.			
			15. School-wide behavior support team has a budget for (a) teaching students, (b) on-going rewards, and (c) annual staff planning.			
			16. All staff are involved directly and/or indirectly in school-wide interventions.			
			17. The school team has access to on-going training and support from district personnel.			
			18. The school is required by the district to report on the social climate, discipline level or student behavior at least annually.			

Name of School _____

Date _____

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Table 2.

Implications for Practice: What Educational Professionals Should Do to Enhance Social and Behavioral Competence in Schools?

- Systematically assess the nature, prevalence and effects of antisocial behavior in one's school, using office discipline referral patterns, and other sources of data.
 - Share the findings with members of the school community in order to raise awareness of the prevalence of antisocial behavior, thereby motivating school authorities to address the problem.
 - Develop clear goals and objectives for improving school discipline, well supported by the entire school community. This should include guidelines to help the school to identify, prevent and deal with incidents of problem behavior.
 - Consistently and continuously communicate, teach, and reward school-wide behavioral expectations (compliance to adult requests, positive peer and teacher interactions, and school effort).
 - Provide continuous and ongoing performance-based feedback to staff members regarding the type, location, time and referring staff persons of office discipline referrals and other indicators of problem behavior. Encourage shared problem solving and recognition of reductions or improvements.
-