

SCHOOL-WIDE PBL

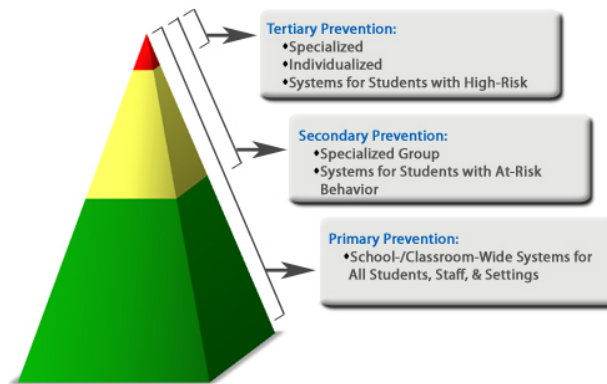
What is School-wide Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL)?

Numerous products are available for school personnel, which promise to erase targeted behaviours. Unfortunately, no magic wand single-handedly works to remove the barriers to learning that occur when behaviours are disrupting learning. The climate of each learning community is different; therefore, a one size fits all approach is less effective than interventions based on the needs of each school.

One of the foremost advances in school-wide discipline is the emphasis on school-wide systems of support that include proactive strategies for defining, teaching, and supporting appropriate student behaviours to create positive school environments. Instead of using a piecemeal approach of individual behavioural management plans, a continuum of positive behaviour support for all students within a school is implemented in areas including the classroom and non-classroom settings (such as hallways, buses, and restrooms). Positive behaviour support is an application of a behaviourally-based systems approach to enhance the capacity of schools, to design effective environments that improve the link between research-validated practices and schools. Attention is focused on creating and sustaining school-wide, classroom, and individual systems of support that improve outcomes for all students by decreasing targeted and increasing positive behaviours.

The following diagram illustrates the multi-level approach offered to all students in the school. These group depictions represent systems of support not children:

Continuum of School-Wide Instructional & Positive Behavior Support



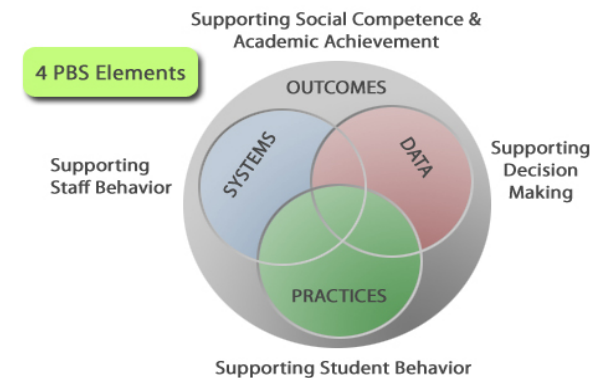
Why is it so important to focus on teaching positive social behaviours?

Frequently, the question is asked, "Why should I have to teach kids to be good? They already know what they are supposed to do. Why can I not just expect good behaviour?" In the infamous words of a TV personality, "How is that working out for you?"

In the past, school-wide discipline has focused mainly on reacting to specific student misbehaviour by implementing punishment-based strategies including reprimands, loss of privileges, office referrals, suspensions, and expulsions. Research has shown that the implementation of punishment, especially when it is used inconsistently and in the absence of other positive strategies, is ineffective. Introducing, modelling, and reinforcing positive social behaviour is an important step of a student's educational experience. Teaching behavioural expectations and rewarding students for following them is a much more positive approach than waiting for misbehaviour to occur before responding. The purpose of school-wide PBL is to establish a climate in which appropriate behaviour is the norm.

What is a systems approach in school-wide PBL?

An organization is a group of individuals who behave together to achieve a common goal. Systems are needed to support the collective use of best practices by individuals within the organisation. The school-wide PBL process emphasizes the creation of systems that support the adoption and durable implementation of evidence-based practices and procedures, and fit within on-going school reform efforts. An interactive approach that includes opportunities to correct and improve four key elements is used in school-wide PBL focusing on: 1) Outcomes, 2) Data, 3) Practices, and 4) Systems. The diagram below illustrates how these key elements work together to build a sustainable system:



- Outcomes: academic and behaviour targets that are endorsed and emphasized by students, families, and educators. (What is important to each particular learning community?)
- Practices: interventions and strategies that are evidence based. (How will you reach the goals?)
- Data: information that is used to identify status, need for change, and effects of interventions. (What data will you use to support your success or barriers?)

Frequently Asked Questions:

Does PBL work in all settings?

School-wide PBL has been effective in urban, rural, and suburban settings. The major components are:

1. Identify the expected behaviours,
2. Teach, model and practice what those behaviours look like, sound like, and feel like,
3. Specifically praise appropriate behaviour with private or public acknowledgement, and
4. Measure outcome data to determine successes and barriers to reaching the desired goals.

Do we have to eliminate other initiatives if we begin with School-wide PBL?

NO. Effective practices currently in place in the school can become part of the School-wide system. School-wide PBL will allow for consistency of these practices.

What are the steps involved in setting up a school-wide system of discipline?

An effective school-wide system of discipline or positive behavioural interventions and supports is only as good as the structures and processes that are in place to support their sustained use. When setting up a school-wide system of discipline or positive behavioural interventions and supports, the following steps should be followed:

1. Establish a school-wide leadership or behaviour support team to guide and direct the process. This team should be made up of an administrator, grade level representatives, support staff, and parents.
2. Secure administrator agreement of active support and participation.
3. Secure a commitment and agreement from at least 80% of the staff for active support and participation.

4. Conduct a self assessment of the current school-wide discipline system.
5. Create an implementation action plan that is based data based decision making.
6. Establish a way to collect office referral and other data on a regular basis to evaluate the effectiveness of school-wide PBL efforts.

What are the components of a comprehensive school-wide system of discipline or positive behavioural interventions and supports?

All effective school-wide systems have seven major components in common a) an agreed upon and common approach to discipline, b) a positive statement of purpose, c) a small number of positively stated expectations for all students and staff, d) procedures for teaching these expectations to students, e) a continuum of procedures for encouraging displays and maintenance of these expectations, f) a continuum of procedures for discouraging displays of rule-violating behaviour, and g) procedures for monitoring and evaluation the effectiveness of the discipline system on a regular and frequent basis.

How do we know if a school-wide system of discipline or positive behavioural interventions and supports is effective?

Many schools make the mistake implementing a school-wide system of discipline or positive behaviour support without monitoring its effectiveness on a regular and frequent basis. Regular monitoring and evaluation are needed to a) prevent ineffective practices from wasting time and resources, b) improve the efficiency and effectiveness of current procedures, c) eliminate elements of the system that are ineffective or inefficient, and d) make modifications before problem behaviour patterns become too durable and unmodifiable.

PBL is not:	PBL is:
...a canned program in a box for purchase.	a 3-5 year training commitment to address proactive systems changes in the "way schools do business."
...throwing out the baby with the bathwater.	a way of taking the great initiatives already in the school and tying them together into a framework that works toward a common language, practice, and consistent application of positive and negative reinforcement.
...being sickeningly sweet to children and giving them stickers.	teaching, modeling, practicing, and rewarding appropriate behaviour and having clear consequences for targeted behaviours.
...ignoring inappropriate behaviour.	achieving full consistent implementation of office discipline referrals. If it is not okay to swear in classroom "A", then it will not be okay to swear in classroom "B".
...something a bunch of people made up for the new pendulum to swing in the educational field.	is evidence based practices which adults use to respond to the interventions needed to address behavioural and academic competence for each and every student.
....a one shot training or "Spray and Pray" seminar.	this training is based on the needs of each educational unit; which is why the teams are requested to commit to a 3-5 year training schedule based on the unique needs of their school community. Teams also consist of a representative sample of the school.

