The First International Conference on Positive Behavior Support

The First International Conference on Positive Behavior Support was held in Orlando on March 27-29, 2003. This was truly a landmark conference for professionals, researchers, family members, and consumers interested in the future of Positive Behavior Support. There were over 1300 registrants for the conference and over 70 sessions. Co-sponsors of the conference included the Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Positive Behavior Support, the Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports, and Florida’s Positive Behavior Support Project.

The conference offered a variety of opportunities for professional and personal growth in the form of presentations, poster sessions, topical interest groups, and skill-building workshops. The Florida Positive Behavior Support Project took an active role in the conference by sharing and presenting information on the following topics: school-wide positive behavior support, maximizing effectiveness in the classroom using positive behavior support, longitudinal studies in positive behavior support, utilizing web-based modules, teaming and collaboration, and person-centered planning.

Positive comments were received regarding the content and practicality of the material that was shared during the conference. In addition to the array of presentations offered at the conference, professionals from around the state were able to take part in a celebration of the much-anticipated formation of the Association for Positive Behavior Support during a conference reception.

Many of the participants commented that the conference was the best they had ever attended and that they could hardly wait for the next International Conference in Spring of 2005.

Volume 2, Summer Issue 2003

Director’s Note...

We hope that you have found some of the individual and school-wide positive behavior support activities that have been reported in this newsletter to be interesting and exciting. Florida’s Positive Behavior Support Project continues to try new approaches to meet the training and technical assistance needs of Florida’s districts and schools. Towards that end, we are in the process of developing web-based trainings for districts and school teams. Initially, our plan is to include four training modules focused on the individual support level on the following topics:

- collaborative teaming and person-centered planning
- functional behavior assessment
- curriculum and instruction
- positive behavior support plan development

These introductory modules are designed to provide team members with an awareness of how the positive behavior support process will proceed. Each module will take 1 to 1 ½ hours to complete and is designed to be educational and interactive. These initial training modules can be used by teams referring a student to the PBS Project or working with a student with their own district support. In fact, the PBS Project is planning to ask each team member involved in the PBS process to complete each module prior to a team meeting. We believe these modules will better prepare each team to participate in the activities that are essential to the success of the PBS process.

We know that scheduling training and meeting time is difficult for districts and schools. We believe that these short, web-based trainings will be accessible and economical for districts and may lead to an even more productive and efficient PBS process. Please look for these new training opportunities on our website at www.fmhi.usf.edu/cfs/dares/flipbs/.

Mission of Florida’s Positive Behavior Support

Increasing the capacity of Florida’s educators, families, and support organizations to address problem behaviors using Positive Behavior Support.

Inside this issue:

- Director’s Note
- PBS in Indian River County
- Tips for Teachers
- Classroom PBS in Dade County
- Hillsborough County Schools
- PBS International Conf...
J.A. Thompson Elementary School in Vero Beach, Florida is one of three schools currently implementing school-wide PBS in Indian River County. After reviewing the school’s discipline data from the previous year, it was evident that Thompson Elementary needed to improve its ability to manage student behavior in order to provide for the education, safety, and success of its children.

Thompson started the year off with three intensive days of teaching and practicing the newly adopted school-wide expectations. On each of the three days, students cycled through four stations where they learned to apply the school-wide expectations to each setting (i.e. classroom, hallway, recess, and cafeteria). Following the three days of training, one teacher said, “I just wanted to thank you for the training. All of your efforts and your hard work is really evident.” Another said, “It’s so nice to see all teachers so positive with their students.” Still another said the training was “very organized.”

The PBS team at Thompson also worked hard to redesign its school-wide reward system which now includes Tiger Tickets and Class Cash. Tiger Tickets are given to individual students for demonstrating desired behaviors and are used to purchase items from the school store.

Entire classes earn Class Cash when someone other than their teacher observes all of the students in that class demonstrating expected behaviors. Classes have an opportunity to earn a pizza party or ice cream social.

Teachers have reported that their kids love the program and are really working hard towards the Class Cash as a team. Staff report that “The Tiger Tickets work really well. The kids seem to really want to earn them.”

These are just a few of the exciting components that have helped make Thompson’s PBS system a success. With the school-wide PBS system, Thompson has successfully reduced its office discipline referrals by 74% from the previous year.

For more information or to schedule a site visit, please contact Greg Ern, School Psychologist/District PBS Coordinator at (772) 564-3264 or email at greg.ern@indian-river.k12.fl.us.

McDonald Elementary Schools are participating in the National Research and Demonstration Center on School-wide Positive Behavior Support. Cahoon, Egypt Lake and Three schools in Hillsborough County were recognized for outstanding achievement in teaching expectations and rules. McDonald Elementary Schools are participating in the National Research and Demonstration Center on School-wide Positive Behavior Support.

Dade County identified three schools (elementary, middle, and high) to be our pilot training sites for implementing classroom and positive behavior support. Within these three schools, we targeted all of the Severely Emotionally Disturbed/Emotionally Handicapped (SED/EH) programs. Teachers participated in three days of training that included initial classroom assessments prior to training, a team planning process, and various training activities that looked at classroom assessment, behavior support systems, data collection, curriculum and instruction, and monitoring and evaluation. The training content included activities that involved teamwork and collaboration among all staff. Many activities were hands-on and required the team to evaluate their current classroom against best practice. As a result, each team developed an action plan of strategies for proactive change.

Another important feature of the training was the curriculum and instruction component. This section provided teachers with a number of strategies for making curriculum adaptations for students and for delivery of instruction. Overall, the training series provided teachers with a number of positive strategies and solutions that could be implemented easily in the classroom.

Although the training is important, follow-through and technical support to teachers is critical for classroom success. District administrators for Dade County have been very helpful in providing follow-through for the activities and technical assistance to the training.

As a result of the Dade County training, the PBS Project has developed a three-day training module that specifically addresses maximizing positive behavior supports in the classroom. Our goal is to provide this training to schools that are already involved in the process of school-wide Positive Behavior Support.

For more information on Classroom Positive Behavior Support Training, please contact Florida’s Positive Behavior Support Project.

An Evening of Sharing Hillsborough County Schools Highlighted

Three schools in Hillsborough County were recognized for their achievements and implementation of school-wide positive behavior support. Cahoon, Egypt Lake and McDonald Elementary Schools are participating in the National Research and Demonstration Center on School-wide Behavior Support at USF’s Department of Child and Family Studies. The school’s goals were to implement effective and positive school wide disciplinary practices.

On January 30, 2003, the school’s staff and administrators attended a special recognition dinner. During the course of the evening, each of the schools shared highlights of their positive experience implementing school-wide positive behavior support programs.

Each school independently demonstrated remarkable strengths that were recognized with a framed certificate. Cahoon Elementary was recognized for outstanding achievement in implementing school wide incentives. Egypt Lake Elementary was recognized for outstanding achievement in teaching expectations and rules. McDonald Elementary was recognized for outstanding achievement in referral and data tracking procedures.

We congratulate these schools for their significant efforts and look forward to working with more Hillsborough County Schools in the future.

Tips for Teachers: Creative Incentive Ideas for Implementing School-wide PBS

1) Step up your school store!
   - Use marketing techniques to get students excited. Examples include:
     - Advertise items on the morning show, let students develop the ads
     - Rotate items to keep it fresh and add at least one new item each time
     - Place items on sale (especially those items that aren’t moving)
     - Put out seasonal items (e.g. valentines, holiday gifts)
     - Include “rummage sale” items donated by staff members.

2) Sometimes it's not about the stuff!
   - As an alternative to purchasing more stuff, provide students with an opportunity to purchase participation in an event or activity. Examples include:
     - Special guests from the community (cheerleaders, performers, sports/television personalities)
     - Karaoke dance
     - Field day

   - Student/faculty ball games
   - Seasonal craft making
   - Movie and popcorn
   - Special lunch with principal, teacher, and/or peer.

3) Don't forget the staff!
   - Incentive programs should include staff as well as students. Recognize and reward staff who are helping to make a difference in school-wide efforts. Examples include:
     - Public recognition (signs, announcements, etc.)
     - Participation in workshops or seminars
     - Gift certificates to restaurants
     - Principal teaching your class for a period or a day
     - Handwritten thank-you notes.

An Evening of Sharing Hillsborough County Schools Highlighted

Since expanding our area of training and technical assistance to include both individual students and entire schools, Florida’s Positive Behavior Support Project began to identify a need for more intensive classroom training and support. In December 2002, Florida’s PBS Project began working with Dade County Schools within the area of classroom positive behavior support.

Maximizing Effectiveness using Positive Behavior Supports in the Classroom

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