Participant Guide

Module 14 – “The Value of Inclusion – Challenges & Strategies”

A Special Thank You to:

PTSI staff developed this curriculum with input from Dr. Amy McCart, of the Department of Special Education at the University of Kansas. Dr. McCart has extensive experience working with students with disabilities and addressing problem behavior using Positive Behavioral Support.

Hearty Thanks to:

School Bus Drivers of Gwinnett County
Donna Owens, Ohio Coalition for the Education of Children with Disabilities
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“Let us be a proud nation that takes responsibility for all our children.” Judy Heumann
"The Value of Inclusion – Challenges and Strategies" is a training program for you – the school bus driver in Gwinnett County. Its purpose is to:

- Provide an overview of the past and current views of inclusion with an opportunity for discussion.
- Discuss the joys and challenges of inclusion for anyone involved in education - bus drivers in particular.
- Review some of the categories and characteristics of special needs students.
- Explain the principles of the Positive Behavioral Support philosophy and how it applies to the school bus environment.
- Review the recognition and discipline process.
- Create an individual plan for implementing PBS on your bus.
- Suggest resources for further reading or study.

“Let us be a proud nation that takes responsibility for all our children.” Judy Heumann
A few thoughts on disabilities:

The term “disability” is used to define a wide range of conditions. It may include paralysis, learning disabilities, cerebral palsy, mental retardation and other conditions. Having a disability may require major life modifications for the individual, or may require simple adaptations for daily life.

Historically, people with disabilities were seen as defective or abnormal. Individuals with disabilities were often not allowed to participate in mainstream society. Our cultural view has shifted in recent years. Today, State and Federal laws make it clear that people with disabilities have the same individual rights as individuals without disabilities. It is this shift in thinking that has changed the day-to-day dynamics of education including the bus ride.

We are not describing a small isolated group of people. The number of individuals in this country with disabilities is staggering. To discount the individuality, dignity, and contribution of this large group of people would be a great loss. As a society we would lose a great deal of energy, creativity and life by doing so.

You may be surprised by the following statistics:

- 48.9 million American people, or 19.4 percent of the non-institutionalized citizens have a disability

  - 24.1 million people have a severe disability
  - 34.2 million people or 17.5 percent, have a functional limitation

To illustrate how prevalent disabilities are:

- Almost 20.3 million families or 29% of all families have at least one family member with a disability

These families have students that attend your school, and ride your bus.
Access to a free, quality education was formally extended to children with disabilities with the passage in 1975 of landmark federal legislation now known as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Public schools across the country today serve more than 6 million children with a wide array of disabaling conditions.

A growing number of disabled children are now graduating from high school. Only three decades ago, these same children would have been isolated in separate institutions or simply kept at home, with little or no chance of ever becoming independent, productive, taxpaying citizens.

We can gain a greater comfort level by learning more about individual disabilities and their effects. Access to education cannot be denied for any individual based upon their disability.

Here are a few quotes on legislation (IDEA) from some of our country’s leaders:

“The great power of IDEA is that it brings people with disabilities into the heart of our communities and our schools, where we learn that disability does not divide us, but binds us together.” Senator Bill Frist

“The IDEA has been the driving force behind the simple idea that every American citizen is a person of dignity and worth, having a spirit and a soul, and having the right to develop to his or her full potential capacities.” President Clinton

“We have proven that promoting educational opportunity for our children with disabilities directly impacts their opportunity to live independent lives as contributing members of society.” Senator Jim Jeffords
Positive Behavioral Support (PBS)

“PBS is a package of strategies, not just one intervention, that focuses on teaching new skills, changing environments and preventing problem behavior from occurring.”
Amy McCart, Ph.D.

One aspect of PBS is positive reinforcement. If a child gets a reward for positive behavior, he or she is more likely to repeat it. When we focus on negative behavior, we are reinforcing or rewarding negative behavior, and it continues or increases.

You can use PBS with all children to achieve long-term positive, appropriate, and safe behavior. It’s possible to treat all the kids on your bus, regardless of their abilities, with encouragement and enthusiasm. All children respond well to positive messages and praise. The frequency of negative behaviors and disruptions should decrease using this method.

How Do I Implement PBS on my Bus?

You are teaching children new behavior skills. The emphasis is on prevention, understanding triggers of inappropriate behavior and setting up motivational systems.

Bus drivers are in the ideal position to teach children good behavior. Children are confined for a period of time on the bus. Travel time can be used to reinforce good behavior. Bus drivers can ask children questions like, “What do we mean by safe behavior?” then reward children for answering correctly. Bus drivers can encourage “behavior rap songs” and/or institute point systems for older children. Middle school children especially like motivational systems with prizes that are meaningful to them like McDonald’s certificates, pizza certificates or CD’s. Local merchants may be willing to donate these to the school. There may also be prizes that the school has available for driver use.

To implement PBS it’s important to have a clear set of expectations, communicate those expectations, and consistently reward students when they meet them. PBS is a proactive, rather than a reactive approach. Helping students to learn your expectations through clear consistent teaching is one way to encourage positive behavior.
Establishing expectations up front at the beginning of the school year is an ideal way to start out on the right foot. As the adult on the bus, you set the tone and climate for your students.

Communication with parents, teachers, and other school personnel is important in implementing PBS. All parties involved with the child may help identify the “triggers” of inappropriate and appropriate behavior. With ongoing communication, problem solving can take place so that the right environment is created for an individual student’s success.

When children do not know how to wash their hands  
We teach them  
When children do not know how to say the alphabet  
We teach them  
When children do not know how to cross the street  
We teach them  
When children do not know how to behave  
We teach them

Amy McCart, Ph.D. - adapted from Tom Herner - NASDE President

**Process for drivers to teach students new skills:**

- Communicate the expectations in a way students can understand  
- Teach one skill at a time - give an example  
- 3 to 5 rules generally are the maximum children can memorize and follow  
- Categorize rules in overall areas - for example - be safe, be respectful, be a friend, be responsible  
- Demonstrate the skill physically  
- Give examples and non-examples of the behavior  
- An example of being safe is sitting in your bus seat with your hands folded. A non-example of being safe is walking around the bus when its moving.
Of course, it's impossible to change the physical layout of a bus. It is possible, however, to assign seats, and/or provide alternative activities to students on the bus. Activities like singing or coloring, and age-appropriate word games including “In My Basket” or “Eye Spy” can keep students involved and less likely to engage in inappropriate behavior. Be sensitive to the abilities of students on your bus. Older students may be “in charge” of helping and guiding younger students.

It's important not to take inappropriate behavior personally. Recognize that children with disabilities may have challenging behavior. This is not your fault or a reflection of your skills and abilities. Understanding why those behaviors occur and how to address them will lead to better outcomes rather than blaming yourself or the child. Overall, strive to communicate the behavior you would like to see. It's far more effective.

**Notes:**
Strategies for Drivers

As A Role Model:

- Set a positive tone. Be an encourager. Smile!
- Model appropriate and respectful behavior
- Teach kindness
- Encourage children to be positive to one another
- Speak well of all your students regardless of their backgrounds
- Accept differences. Recognize that only a small part of us is visible on the surface. Our true essence is on the inside.

For Student Management:

- Learn and greet each student by name
- Assign seats at the beginning of the school year if allowed at your school
- Follow the bus rules students are expected to follow - no gum chewing, eating, etc.
- Demonstrate good driving skills and a consistent concern for safety. Children notice.
- Get to know your kids. Learn what motivates and excites them.
- Have high expectations and communicate them. You might say something such as, “I know you will be a good helper today.”
- Say four positive comments for every critical or corrective comment to a child
- Observe and identify the “triggers” of inappropriate behavior. Ask teachers for their input.
- Teach and show a child how to be friendly to another child. They may not yet have the language skills to express themselves well.
- Have students practice new behavior skills
- Have children monitor their own behavior. Ask, “How do you think it went today”?
- Praise and reward students who demonstrate appropriate behavior
➢ Consider simple age-appropriate “rewards” such as stickers, certificates, etc. or implementing a point system to earn a desirable prize.

What other ideas do you have for positive behavior reinforcement?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
**Small Group Activity – School Bus Rule**

With your small group, use PBS strategies to accomplish the following – discuss how you can teach a rule to children using PBS strategies – communicate it, demonstrate it, give examples and non-examples.

Identify a bus rule to teach to children.

Using PBS, how can you teach children this rule? (What do you say to a child?)

Give an example, and a non-example.

How can you demonstrate this to a child?
Small Group Activity – Rewards

A reward for appropriate behavior will reinforce and encourage appropriate behavior in children!

With your small group, use PBS strategies to discuss the following -

What ideas do you have for rewards?

__________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________

What has worked well for you in the past?

__________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________

What behavior will you reward?

__________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________
How Do I Handle A Referral for Appropriate or Inappropriate Behavior?

It is critically important to reinforce appropriate behavior. When we focus only on negative behavior, we get more negative behavior. It’s important to not overlook good behavior. We must reward appropriate behavior also, in order to reinforce and encourage good behavior. This may be different from what we are accustomed to, but it is actually quite easy, and more pleasant than constantly providing negative feedback.

Steps to follow for students with appropriate behavior:

- Let the student (or students) know when their behavior is appropriate. Point out that good behavior helps everyone to be safer.
- Praise privately if you feel the child will be embarrassed in front of their peers. Thank the child for his or her good behavior.
- Tell the child that they made a good choice.
- Make a courtesy call to the parent to let them know the child behaved well.
- Use the Student Recognition Notification Form (attachment) to communicate specifically what the child did well. It is designed to help the child feel good about his or her behavior and reinforce it.
- Talk with the child’s parent or teachers about the trigger(s) for good behavior.
**Steps to follow for students with inappropriate behavior:**

It’s important for students to know the consequences of inappropriate and unsafe behavior. Again, the emphasis should not be placed on punishment, but students should be informed when they do not behave well.

- Verbally remind children when and why their behavior is inappropriate and why it’s a safety issue
- Whenever possible, talk privately with the student so they are not embarrassed in front of their peers. Remind the child of your expectations.
- Remind the child of what you expect and that they *can* choose to change their behavior.
- Reassign the student’s bus seat
- Make a courtesy call to the parent. Don’t argue, remain professional, and pleasant. Don’t make generalizations about the child.
- Use the Parent Notification Form (attachment) to communicate minor offenses to parents
- Use the Bus Discipline Form (attachment) to notify the administrator of major offenses
**Small Group Activity: Two scenarios using PBS**

Your instructor will divide you up into two groups.

With your group, put PBS strategies to work in these two examples. In these scenarios, you will brainstorm how to address the issue in your example.

Half the small groups will do example one, and the other example two.

**Example one** - A child who doesn’t like going to school on Mondays refuses to get on the bus. As the driver, how can you help to facilitate the student traveling on your bus on Mondays?

**Example two** - A child becomes aggressive to another child on the bus. What do you do - both immediately and to address the behavior continually?

Answer the questions on the following page to help guide your discussion.

- Identify the trigger
- Communicate with others to resolve
- Identify prevention strategies.
- Provide rewards/reinforcement when the student makes good choices and behaves appropriately
- Maintain a positive focus
Small Group Activity - PBS Discussion Sheet

With your small group, use PBS to discuss the following points for your group’s example:

Describe the challenge:

_____________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________

Who else do you need to communicate with?

_____________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________

How can you use PBS to address this behavior? Identify possible prevention strategies:

_____________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________

What type of reward can you set up for appropriate behavior?

_____________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________

Other ideas?

_____________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________
**Tip for Drivers**

**Twenty Pennies Idea**

We might be discouraged by the number of times inappropriate behavior occurs on our buses, or we might feel tired of the need to correct students for their behavior. If we consciously work to provide more positive support and direction to students, we can begin to feel better about our work and the role we play.

Begin your day with twenty pennies in your left pocket. Every time you have a positive interaction with a student move one penny to your right pocket. This includes: when you teach an appropriate behavior skill, or when you praise or reward a student for good behavior. At the end of the day you will feel much better after all the pennies have been moved to your right pocket.

You will make a positive difference in the lives of children, and improve safety on your bus.

Amy McCart, Ph.D.

**Notes:**
**Review Activity** for Bus Driver Strategies

**Fill in the blank with the appropriate word:**

PBS is a system of strategies that includes __________ new skills, changing __________, and __________ problem behavior from occurring.

The best way to address student behavior is to __________ appropriate behavior, rather than wait until inappropriate behavior happens. To encourage continued appropriate behavior use ________________.

A ______________ routine is important for all children, but especially with children with special needs.

______________ about the children on your bus - their names, conditions, special needs, danger signs and any equipment they use.

It is important to remember that behind every success story there lies a journey in which someone provides commitment, hard work and humor. For Gwinnett’s children, that person is: __________.

**Find and circle the following words or phrases in the puzzle:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Be aware</th>
<th>Be positive</th>
<th>Communicate</th>
<th>Thank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrate</td>
<td>Give examples</td>
<td>Learn</td>
<td>Model</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stay Calm</td>
<td>Show</td>
<td>Reward</td>
<td>Teach</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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B E A W A R E E R C
E T Q S M N O Y U O
P O L O M O D E L M
O I W Q T C V A E M
S Z S L L P D B A U
I A T S S L E A R N
T E A C H E M C N I
I O Y E O C O I B C
V O C E W C N H B A
E B A U M B S Q X T
I B L P H I T A H E
J U M N O O R D X T
J X Z R E W A R D H
L C Z H V Z T D X A
G I V E A C E C H N
E X A M P L E S C K
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What are the Categories and Characteristics of Students with Disabilities?

Disabilities include cognitive, sensory, physical, emotional, adaptive and communication development. The signs and symptoms are complex. A guide for the wide range of disabilities, with implications and strategies for the driver is included as a handout to this training module. In many cases, a student’s disability may not be visually apparent. Never assume someone does not have a disability just because they do not look “disabled.”

Notes:
Being a Role Model

Communicate your expectations clearly. Let children know when they are meeting your expectations. Praise and reward children for good behavior. It will make their day, and result in more positive behavior. You set an example for the next generation. That's an important job!

“My plan”

Write down three things you will do differently to implement Positive Behavioral Support on your bus.

____________________________________

____________________________________

____________________________________

____________________________________

____________________________________

As a bus driver, you have the opportunity to make a difference in the life of a child. You are a role model, support person, cheerleader and guide for the young people you transport each day. Thoughtfully consider how you present yourself and treat others. Your words and deeds are noticed by children. Children will model their behavior after yours, whether things are going well or not going well.

“It is important to recognize that behind every success story, there lies a journey in which someone provides commitment, hard work, and humor to pave the way. For Gwinnett's children, that someone is you.”

adapted from Institute of Disability, University of New Hampshire
References & Resources

The Beach Center on Disability
http://www.beachcenter.org

U.S. Office of Special Education Programs
www.ed.gov/offices/osers/osep

The Federal Resource Center for Special Education
http://www.dssc.org/frc/about.htm

Institute for Community Inclusion
http://www.communityinclusion.org/about.html

National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities
http://www.nichcy.org

National Education Association
http://www.nea.org/specialed/
http://www.nea.org/esea/

NICHCY site for kids
http://www.nichcy.org/kids/index.htm

The Pacer Center
http://www.pacer.org/links/index.htm

PBS - Early Childhood
http://www.pbs.org/teachersourceprek2issues/602issue.shtm

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OSEP Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions & Support
http://www.pbis.org