Is School-wide Positive Behavior Support an “Evidence-Based Practice”?

Tim Lewis, Ph.D.
University of Missouri
OSEP Center on Positive Behavioral Intervention & Supports pbis.org
Missouri SW-PBS pbismissouri.org

School-wide Positive Behavior Support

• Problem solving framework
• Systematic implementation of evidence-based practices
• Layers in increasingly more intensive environmental supports to increase the likelihood students are academically, emotionally, and socially successful

U.S. Department of Education Center for Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports

• Originated at the University of Oregon late 1980s
• 20 years of federal funding
• Over 26,000 schools implementing with fidelity in the U.S.
• All 50 states & territories
• Over 30 country partnerships

SW-Positive Behavior Support

Outcomes

Social Competence & Academic Achievement
Supporting Staff Behavior
Supporting Student Behavior
Supporting Decision Making
Practices
Designing School-Wide Systems for Student Success

**Academic Systems**
- Intensive, Individual Interventions
- Targeted Group Interventions
- Universal Interventions

**Behavioral Systems**
- Intensive, Individual Interventions
- Targeted Group Interventions
- Universal Interventions

**Universal School-Wide Features**
- Clearly define expected behaviors (Rules)
  - All Settings
  - Classrooms
  - Procedures for teaching & practicing expected behaviors
- Acknowledge student mastery of social skills
  - Positive Specific Feedback
- Logic of PBS applied within response to problem behavior

**Tier II (small group)**
- Efficient and effective way to identify at-risk students
  - Screen
  - Data decision rules
  - Teacher referral
- Informal assessment process to match intervention to student need
  - Small group Social Skill Instruction
  - Self-management
  - Academic Support
  - Part of a continuum
Tier III (individualized support)

- When small group not sufficient
- When problem intense and chronic
- Driven by Functional Behavioral Assessment (Behavior intervention Plan)
- Connections to Mental Health and Community Agencies
- Part of a continuum

Parramatta High School

**Suspensions 2005-2013**

- Long Suspension
- Short Suspension
- Total Suspensions

**Student Attendance**

- 2005: 83%
- 2006: 88%
- 2007: 89%
- 2008: 88%
- 2009: 90%
- 2010: 92%
- 2011: 91%
- 2012: 90%
- 2013: 91%
Additional Impact of School-Wide PBS: Students on IEPs

- Schools implementing SW-PBS with fidelity have a lower mean percentage of students with IEPs.
- Students with IEPs attending schools participating in SW-PBS have a higher average attendance rate.
- On average, more students with disabilities spend 80% or more of their educational day in inclusive settings in schools participating in SW-PBS.

RCT & Group Design PBIS Studies

- Reduced major disciplinary infractions & aggressive behavior
- Improvement in concentration, prosocial behavior, & emotional regulation
- Improvements in academic achievement
- Enhanced perception of organizational health & safety rejection
- Reductions in teacher reported bullying behavior & peer rejection
- Improved school climate

Review of Randomized Control Trials

WWC Standards

Methodological Rigor
- Formation of treatment and control groups
- Consideration of confounding factors
- Identification of relevant and reliable outcome measures
- Evidence of low attrition
- Evidence of baseline equivalence

Evidence of Effects
- Direction of effect
- Magnitude of effect

Included Studies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trial</th>
<th>Cite</th>
<th>Setting</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Design</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Sprague et al., 2001</td>
<td>Pacific Northwest urban and suburban</td>
<td>N = 55 schools (27 tx elementary schools, 18 tx middle schools)</td>
<td>Quasi-experimental, non-equivalent group trial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Bradshaw, Koth, et al., 2008</td>
<td>Maryland rural and suburban</td>
<td>N = 37 schools (21 tx elementary schools)</td>
<td>Longitudinal group randomized effectiveness trial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Horner et al., 2009</td>
<td>Hawaii, Illinois NR</td>
<td>N = 63 schools (33 tx elementary schools)</td>
<td>Randomized, wait-list control effectiveness trial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Bradshaw et al., 2012</td>
<td>Maryland NR</td>
<td>N = 42 schools (20 tx elementary schools)</td>
<td>Randomized control trial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Ward &amp; Geron, 2013</td>
<td>NR</td>
<td>N = 53 schools (27 tx elementary schools)</td>
<td>Randomized, wait-list control trial</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Training Package Components

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trial</th>
<th>Initial Training</th>
<th>Technical Assistance</th>
<th>Booster Training</th>
<th>Coach Training</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>4-hour inservice on EBS model</td>
<td>8-hour inservice on Second Step curriculum</td>
<td>25-40 hours/school across 1 year</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2-day summer inservice on critical features of PBIS</td>
<td>6 self-directed planning days/month</td>
<td>Annual 2-day summer inservice</td>
<td>Initial 1-day inservice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>3-4 training events over 1 year on SWPBS practices</td>
<td>Monthly site visits from behavior coaches</td>
<td>Annual 2-day summer inservice</td>
<td>Initial 1-day inservice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>2-day inservice on core elements of PBIS/PbP</td>
<td>6,256 hours of on-site coaching across all schools for the duration of the study</td>
<td>Annual 1-day summer inservice</td>
<td>Bi-weekly supervision sessions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>7 days of training over the course of a year on Safe and Civil Schools procedures</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Outcome Measures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trial</th>
<th>Intervention</th>
<th>School Outcomes</th>
<th>Staff Outcomes</th>
<th>Student Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>School-wide</td>
<td>Safety Survey (SSS)</td>
<td>Oregon School Safety Survey (OSSS)</td>
<td>Second Step content knowledge tests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>SBF</td>
<td>School-wide</td>
<td>Oregon School Safety Survey (OSSS)</td>
<td>Second Step content knowledge tests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>SSB</td>
<td>Oregon School Safety Survey (OSSS)</td>
<td>Oregon School Safety Survey (OSSS)</td>
<td>Second Step content knowledge tests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>SBF</td>
<td>Oregon School Safety Survey (OSSS)</td>
<td>Oregon School Safety Survey (OSSS)</td>
<td>Second Step content knowledge tests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>SSB</td>
<td>Oregon School Safety Survey (OSSS)</td>
<td>Oregon School Safety Survey (OSSS)</td>
<td>Second Step content knowledge tests</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Principal Findings

- Training in SWPBIS v. implementation of SWPBIS
- Applicability of appraisal protocols
- Training in SWPBIS results in high fidelity implementation in elementary schools
- Generally positive outcomes
- State-level infrastructure may be necessary
- Limited generalizability given small number of studies