Strategies for Achieving Equity in School Discipline

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Overview of Today’s Session

1. Complete some **activities** to explore disproportionality in school discipline
2. Share an **intervention approach** for enhancing equity in school discipline

Handouts: [http://www.pbis.org](http://www.pbis.org)

Stroop Task:
A test of **automatic associations**

- Our brains are wired to look for patterns
- When we are forced to make quick decisions, we use our automatic associations to respond

Handouts: [http://www.pbis.org](http://www.pbis.org)
Warm Up Activity #3: Implicit Association Test

- [https://implicit.harvard.edu/](https://implicit.harvard.edu/)
- Uses beliefs (stereotypes) and evaluations (attitudes) associated with social groups
- Example: Gender-Career IAT
  - Tests automatic association of MEN more with CAREERS (work outside the home) and WOMEN more with FAMILY

What is implicit bias?

- Unconscious, automatic
- Generally **not** an indication of our beliefs and values
- We all have it (even those affected by it)
- Based on stereotypes
- More likely to influence:
  - Snap decisions
  - Decisions that are ambiguous

Implicit Attractiveness Bias
(Salter, Mixon, & King, 2012)

Implicit Height Bias
(Judge & Cable, 2004)

One inch of height is worth $789 per year in salary
Implicit Gender Bias
(Reuben et al., 2014)

Men were significantly more likely to choose men

Women were significantly more likely to choose men

What about other areas of implicit bias?

Implicit Bias and Race

“the challenge is not a small number of twisted white supremacists but something infinitely more subtle and complex: People who believe in equality but who act in ways that perpetuate bias and inequality.”

-Nicholas Kristof, *The New York Times*
Implicit Bias in Early Learning

(Gilliam et al., 2016)
Implicit Bias in Early Learning (Gilliam et al., 2016)

Disproportionality in Preschool Discipline (OCR, 2016)

- Black children represent 19% of preschool enrollment, but 47% of preschool suspensions.
- White children represent 41% of preschool enrollment, but 28% of preschool suspensions.

Track the eyes: Which students are teachers watching?

- Black boys: 42%
- Black girls: 10%
- White boys: 34%
- White girls: 13%

Preschool teachers tend to more closely observe blacks than whites, especially black boys, when challenging behaviors are expected.
Pop Quiz: What % of the Black population is incarcerated?

Disproportionality in School Discipline

Out of School Suspension Risk Index
2013-14 US Schools (n = 95,307)

Addressing Common Questions

“Isn't it all really about poverty?”

- Poverty plays a role, but racial disproportionality remains, even when controlling for poverty
  - Anyon et al., 2014
  - Skiba et al., 2002; 2005
  - Wallace et al., 2008

Race and Poverty
(Anyon et al., 2014)
No evidence of different base rates of behavior for any subgroups
- Bradshaw et al., 2010
- Losen & Skiba, 2010
- Skiba et al., 2014

“Aren’t Black boys just more violent?”
Addressing Common Questions

“Are you saying that all teachers are racist?”

- Our research indicates that disproportionality comes from unconscious bias – that we’re not even aware of.
  - Girvan et al., in press
  - Greenwald & Pettigrew, 2014
  - van den Bergh et al., 2010

If you’re aware...

...you’re halfway there.

A 5-point Intervention Approach to Enhance Equity in School Discipline

http://www.pbis.org/school/equity-pbis
5-point Intervention Approach

1. Collect, use, and report **disaggregated** discipline data
2. Implement a **behavior framework** that is preventive, multi-tiered, and culturally responsive
3. Use engaging **academic instruction** to reduce the opportunity (achievement) gap
4. Develop **policies** with accountability for disciplinary equity
5. Teach strategies to **neutralize implicit bias**

[http://www.pbis.org/school/equity-pbis](http://www.pbis.org/school/equity-pbis)

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**Culturally Responsive PBIS Implementation**

- Develop and revise school-wide systems with **active involvement** of families, students, and the community

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**Disproportionality in School Discipline: OCR 2013-14**

- Out of School Suspension Risk Index 2013-14
  - US Schools (n = 95,507) vs. Schools implementing PBIS (BOQ ≥ 70%, n = 886)

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**TEACHING MATRIX: C. Alton Lindsay Middle School**

**SCHOOL-WIDE BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arrival &amp; Dismissal</th>
<th>Hallway &amp; Transitions</th>
<th>Bathroom</th>
<th>Cafeteria</th>
<th>Classroom</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Walk directly to my designated area</em></td>
<td><em>Walk quietly in a single, straight, and silent line, so that others can continue learning and working</em></td>
<td><em>Keep hands, feet, and belongings to myself</em></td>
<td><em>Enter and exit with a pass or my teacher</em></td>
<td><em>Listen</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Talk, write, redirect, and keep</em></td>
<td><em>Walk to the right side of the hallway</em></td>
<td><em>Allow for the privacy of others</em></td>
<td><em>Throw away my trash and line up</em></td>
<td><em>Ask appropriately for help</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Keep hands, feet, and belongings to myself</em></td>
<td><em>Conservare supplies: 1 spout of soap, and 2 paper towels</em></td>
<td><em>Clean up after myself</em></td>
<td><em>Clean up after myself</em></td>
<td><em>Follow rules and procedures</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**SAFETY FIRST**

- **Work Together Respectfully:**
  - *Respect the space of others*
  - *Keep to your own business*
  - *Maintain a clean space and conversation*
  - *Be present and focused*

- **Accept Responsibility**
  - *Teachers will supervise groups of students at all times*
  - *Teachers will ensure that they know the location of all students*
  - *Teachers will stand by bathrooms to monitor: the noise and behavior from the hallway*

- **Guide Me**
  - *Teachers will enforce safety*
  - *Teachers will monitor students by being at their doors and in the hallways*
  - *Teachers will arrive on time and pick up students on time*
  - *Teachers will be prepared for class*

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**CULTIVATING RESPECT: PBIS COMMUNITY COMMITMENTS**

- *Understand and value* the role and place of each student
- *Show respect* for each other's differences
- *Demonstrate* a positive attitude and a growth mindset
Culturally Responsive Adaptation: Personal Matrix

- Aka “behavior dictionary”
- Tool to assist in “code-switching”
- The tweak:
  - Take school expectations and…
    - Add differences at home
    - Add differences in community

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expectation</th>
<th>At SCHOOL it looks like…</th>
<th>At HOME it looks like…</th>
<th>In my NEIGHBORHOOD it looks like…</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Be Safe</td>
<td>• Keep hands and feet to self&lt;br&gt;• Tell an adult if there is a problem</td>
<td>• Protect your friends and family&lt;br&gt;• Don’t talk back</td>
<td>• Stick up for your friends&lt;br&gt;• Don’t back down&lt;br&gt;• Look the other way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be Respectful</td>
<td>• Treat others how you want to be treated&lt;br&gt;• Include others&lt;br&gt;• Listen to adults</td>
<td>• Do exactly what adults tell you to do&lt;br&gt;• Don’t stand out&lt;br&gt;• Don’t bring shame</td>
<td>• Text back within 30 seconds&lt;br&gt;• Be nice to friends’ parents&lt;br&gt;• Share food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be Responsible</td>
<td>• Do my own work&lt;br&gt;• Personal best&lt;br&gt;• Follow directions&lt;br&gt;• Clean up messes</td>
<td>• Help your family out first&lt;br&gt;• Own your mistakes&lt;br&gt;• Share credit for successes</td>
<td>• Have each other’s backs&lt;br&gt;• Own your mistakes&lt;br&gt;• Check in about what to do</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Culturally Responsive PBIS Implementation

- Develop and revise school-wide systems with **active involvement** of families, students, and the community
- Use **regular student and family surveys** to assess acceptability and fit
5. How can we reduce implicit bias in our decision making?

What is a Vulnerable Decision Point (VDP)?

- A specific decision that is more vulnerable to effects of implicit bias
- Two parts:
  - Elements of the situation
  - The person’s decision state (internal state)

Situations: Options for Identifying VDPs

1. All ODR/suspension decisions (general self-instruction routine)
2. Identify specific VDPs
   a) Through national data
   b) Your own school or district data
   c) Your own personal VDPs
Using Discipline Data within SWPBIS to Identify and Address Disproportionality: A Guide for School Teams

This practice guide is one of a series of guides for enhancing equity in school discipline. The guides are based on a 5-point framework to address disproportionality developed by McDermott, Diener, Nieman, Stedrow, and Zgoba (2009). The practices include effective instruction, School-wide PBIS as a foundation for naturally responsive behavior support, using disaggregated discipline data, effective policy, and reducing bias in discipline decisions. This guide addresses one of the five practices.

The recommendations and guides are available at http://www.pbis.org/school/equity-pbis

Introduction
The purpose of the guide is to provide a framework for SWPBIS school teams in the context of disproportionality, e.g., "Office discipline referrals, suspensions, and other forms of school-based discipline." The guide will provide a framework and steps to identify and reduce disproportionality, matching data to determine solutions, and increasing the use of evidence-based practices to address disproportionality. Specific practices to address disproportionality are described in the rest of this section.

Audience
This guide is designed for school or district teams seeking to reduce racial and ethnic disproportionality in school discipline, regardless of whether they are implementing PBIS.

http://www.pbis.org/school/equity-pbis

SWIS Drill Down (www.swis.org)

Add demographic group of interest as a filter (click to "Include in Dataset").

Click each graph and compare to overall patterns.

Office Referrals by Problem Behavior

National SWIS Data (2011-12)

3,026,367 ODRs
6,269 schools
47 states, plus DC

Black

White

Office referrals by problem behavior.
Office Referrals by Time of Day

VDPs from national ODR data

- Subjective problem behavior
  - Defiance, Disrespect, Disruption
  - Major vs. minor

- Hallways
- Classrooms
- Afternoons

Decision States: Resource Depletion

(Girvan et al., 2014)

- As we become fatigued, our filters for appropriate behavior can be affected
- Effects of hunger (Gailliot et al., 2009)
- Decreases in willpower later in day
  - "The Morning Morality Effect" (Kouchaki & Smith, 2014)
  - Examples…

Resource Depletion in Action

(Dai et al., 2015)

- Handwashing compliance drops 8.7% over the course of a 12-hr shift
Resource Depletion in Action

- Outcomes of parole hearings (Danziger et al., 2011)

![Graph showing Proportion favorable decisions vs. Ordinal position with peaks labeled Judges' Snack Break and Judges' Lunch Break.]

Two-step Neutralizing Routine for **Staff**:

- When you see unwanted behavior, stop and ask yourself:
  1. Is this a VDP?
     - Situation
     - Decision state
  2. If so, use an agreed-upon alternative response

Neutralizing Routines for **Implicit Bias**

- Setting event: Lack of positive interactions with student
- Antecedent: Fatigue
- Behavior: Loud complaints about work (subjective behavior)
- Consequence: Student leaves class (Escape social interaction)
- Alternative Response: "See me after class."

What makes for a good neutralizing routine?

1. If-then statement
2. Brief
3. Clear steps
4. Doable
5. Interrupts the chain of events
Neutralizing Routine Examples

- If this is a VDP…,
  - Delay decision until I can think clearly
    - “See me after class/at the next break”
    - ask the student to reflect on their feelings/behavior
    - am I acting in line with my values?
  - Reframe the situation
    - “I love you, but that behavior is not ok”
    - “How do we do that at school?”
    - picture this student as a future doctor/lawyer
    - assume student’s best effort at getting needs met
    - respond as if the student was physically injured
  - Take care of yourself
    - take two deep breaths
    - recognize my upset feelings and let them go
    - model classwide cool-down strategy

Sample Neutralizing Routine

- TRY
  - Take a deep breath
  - Reflect on your emotions
  - Youth’s best interest
    - “Let’s TRY that again.”
    - “Let’s TRY it a different way.”
    - “Let’s TRY it how we do it at school.”

Classwide “Reset” Routine

- TRY for students
  - Take three deep breaths
  - Reflect on your emotions
  - You got this!
- Social-emotional Theme
  - Mistakes are part of the learning process
  - We won’t always do it right the first time
  - We can’t succeed unless we TRY

School Example

Urban K-8 School
Risk Indices

Referral Risk Index
Major, 2013-14

![Graph showing referral risk index by ethnicity.]  
- Black/White ODR Risk Ratio = 2.67

Drill Down: Phys. Aggression on Playground

Referral Risk Index (Ethnicity)

![Graph showing referral risk index by ethnicity and enrollment.]  
- Black/White ODR Risk Ratio = 4.5

The School PBIS Team’s Intervention

- ODRs and observations indicated differences in perceived basketball rules
- Team clarified rules for staff and students  
  - Aka “code-switching”
- Additional teaching, practice, and acknowledgement
- Monitor with disaggregated rates of ODRs

Progress over Time

Office Discipline Referrals Per Day Per 100 Students

![Graph showing office discipline referrals per day per 100 students over time.]  
(McIntosh, Ellwood, McCall, & Girvan, in press)
Big Ideas

- Thinking about and discussing solutions is the first step
- Pick a neutralizing routine and try it out
- Use your data to assess and monitor
  - If you don’t have the data you need at hand, advocate for it
- This is hard work – but you know how to do it!

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References


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