

The Pyramid Model/EC-PBIS: Preventing Bias, Suspensions and Expulsions in Early Childhood Settings

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- Patti Willardson, Director of Education, Bal Swan Children's Center



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Federal Joint Policy Statement

- Depts of ED and HHS issued a Joint Policy Statement about the scope and nature of the problem with recommendations and resources

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ecd/child-health-development/reducing-suspension-and-expulsion-practices>



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ED/HHS: What's the Issue?

- Expulsions and suspensions occur at high rates in EC
- The practice raises compliance questions with 504, ADA, IDEA, Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX
- Help with challenging behavior is #1 PD request in EC
- Families and Personnel are frustrated
- Classrooms disrupted
- Expulsion and suspension practices are associated with negative later school and life outcomes
- There are racial and gender disparities in these practices, young boys of color treated disproportionately



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ED/HHS Recommendations: Programs

- adopt preventive/promotional, developmentally appropriate practices
- develop policies re: exclusion is last resort
- collaborate with family re: the decision to exclude is "unanimous"; transition to new program and future plans for child
- provide training and support to teachers on promoting social emotional competence and preventing challenging behavior (EC PBIS); address staff stress
- Set goals and collect and analyze progress data



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ED/HHS Recommendations: State

- Develop and communicate expulsion and suspension policies
- Set goals for improvement, collect and analyze data
- Ensure EC workforce has strong knowledge base and skills that promote social emotional competence and prevent challenging behavior
- Adopt a statewide EC PBIS framework; plan, implement and sustain a PD system re: social, emotional behavior
- Track EC workforce professional development



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There is Good News!

- There are evidence-based practices to promote young children's social, emotional, behavioral outcomes
- There are effective models of intervention
- There are national resources and supports

*This issue is: how to implement the practices
at scale with fidelity*



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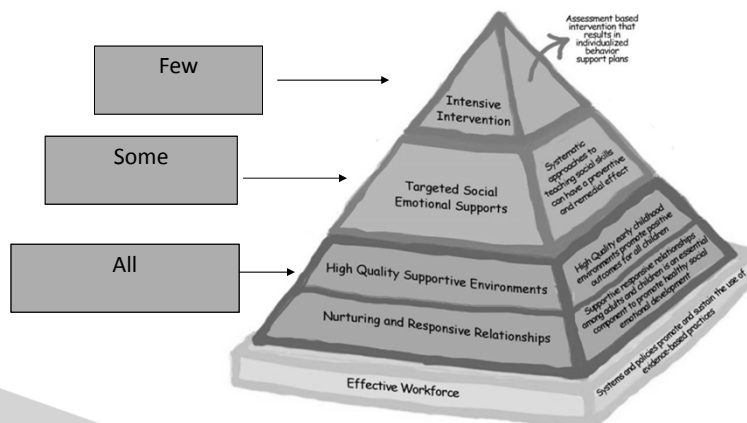
Features of Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (Dunlap & Fox, 2009)

- Emphasis on prevention
- Focus on supporting families and providers who work directly with children
- Implementation in children's natural environments (e.g., child care, community, home)
- Pyramid Model = Early Childhood PBIS



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The Pyramid Model: Promoting Social and Emotional Competence and Addressing Challenging Behavior



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Fully Developed Intervention

- Training materials
 - CSEFEL, TACSEI, ECMHC, NCQTL
- Implementation guides and materials
- Implementation Fidelity Tool
- TA: Pyramid Model Consortium



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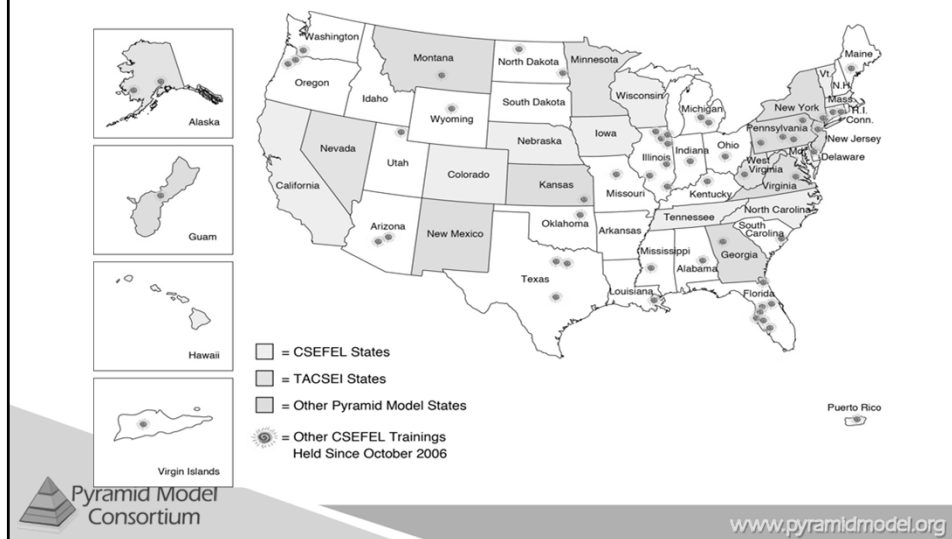
Lessons Learned from 12 Years of Work with States and Programs

- Fidelity matters
- Most social-emotional and behavioral issues are resolved when the first tier of the Pyramid is in place
- Families and providers need support around promotion and prevention
- Implementation of individualized PBIS is more efficient when first two tiers of the Pyramid are in place



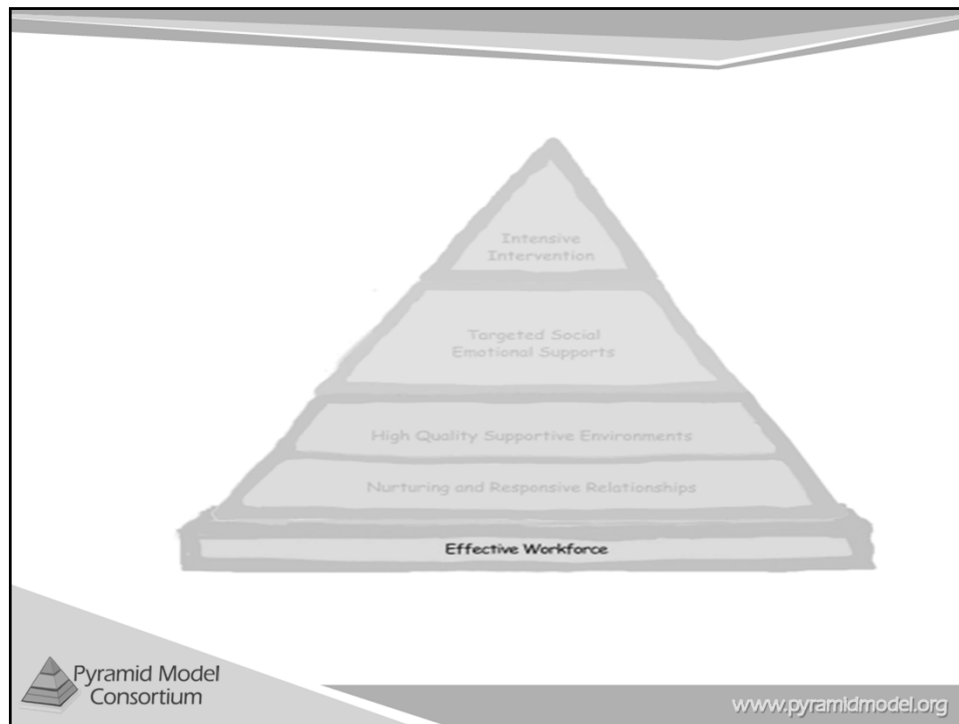
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Pyramid Statewide Systems Building (Since October 2006)



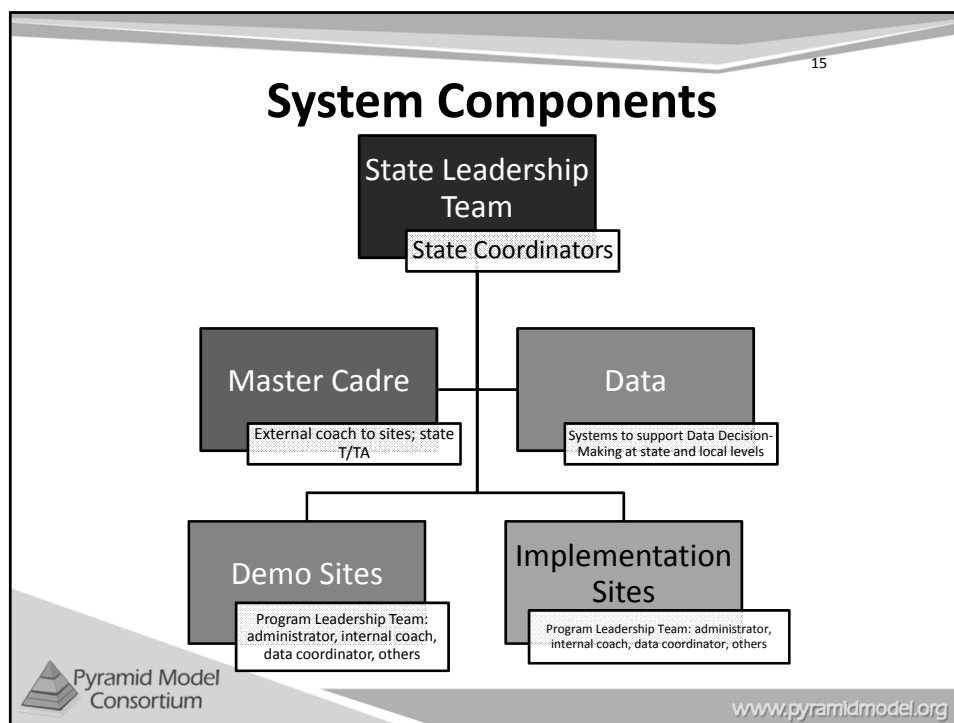
Lessons Learned

- Model of Implementation, Scale up and Sustainability
- Incorporates best practice from:
 - Systems Thinking
 - Implementation Science
 - Cross-Agency Collaborative Planning



Model for Installing, Sustaining and Scaling up the Pyramid Model: 4 components

1. **State Leadership Team** to plan and implement a sustainable, cross-agency, state infrastructure; develops sustainability and scale-up plans
2. **A Master Cadre of training and technical assistance (T/TA) professionals** that support high fidelity use of the Pyramid Model practices
3. **Implementation/Demonstration Sites** with Leadership Teams to demonstrate effectiveness of **Program Wide (PW) implementation** others; and help **scale-up to other implementation or expansion sites**
4. **Data/Evaluation and data feed-back systems** for data-based decision making at all levels, ensuring fidelity, demonstrating effectiveness, and making system recommendations



Resources

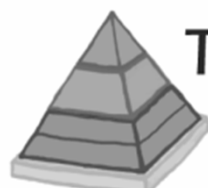


Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning
www.vanderbilt.edu/csefel/



Technical Assistance Center on Social Emotional Intervention
for Young Children
www.challengingbehavior.org

Pyramid Model Consortium www.pyramidmodel.org



The Pyramid Model Consortium

<http://www.pyramidmodel.org/>

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Briefs

A CLASSROOM-WIDE MODEL FOR PROMOTING Social Emotional Development & Addressing Challenging Behavior In Preschool Children

Principal Investigators: Mary Louise Hemmeter, Lisa Fox, Patricia Snyder, and James Diggle

July 2014

TEACHING PYRAMID RESEARCH PROJECT



UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA
UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS



UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS



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Background

Research in early education indicates that social-emotional competence is critical for children's readiness for school and early school adjustment. Early childhood educators encounter young children who demonstrate a range of social-emotional skills and varying needs for social and behavioral support. Early educators are challenged by how to support children with significant social-emotional and behavioral needs while also providing a developmentally appropriate and supportive learning context for all children.

The Pyramid Model (Fox, Dunlap, Hemmeter, Joseph, & Strain, 2005; Hemmeter, Chennedy, & Fox, 2006) is a prevention, promotion, and intervention framework early educators can use to promote young children's social and emotional development and prevent and address challenging behavior. The Pyramid Model organizes evidence-based practices that include universal prevention practices for all children, practices for children who need targeted social-emotional supports, and individualized behavior support practices for children with significant social skill deficits or persistent challenging behavior.

The Study
Researchers from the University of South Florida and Vanderbilt University conducted a randomized study examining the implementation of the Pyramid Model. Teachers were recruited from public preschool classrooms in Florida and Tennessee that served children with, at risk for, and without disabilities. A total of 60 teachers (20 intervention; 20 control) participated and were randomly assigned to condition. Data were collected on a total of 684 children in these classrooms (222 intervention; 222 control), including one-to-five target children per classroom who were identified as having behavioral challenges (14 intervention; 13 control).

Teachers in the intervention condition received training workshops, individualized coaching, and materials (i.e., implementation guides and classroom materials) related to the implementation of the Pyramid Model. Weekly coaching sessions took place for 16 weeks, consisting of in-class observation of teacher practice, debrief meetings, and email follow-up. Teachers in the control condition received the training workshops at the end of the school year.

This research project was supported by a grant from the National Science Foundation (NSF) to the University of South Florida (USF) and the University of Texas at Austin (UT). The research project was also supported by a grant from the National Science Foundation (NSF) to the University of South Florida (USF) and the University of Texas at Austin (UT).

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Implementing Positive Behavioral Intervention and Support: The Evidence-Base of the Pyramid Model for Supporting Social Emotional Competence in Infants and Young Children

Principal Investigators: Mary Louise Hemmeter, Lisa Fox, Patricia Snyder, and James Diggle

November, 2014

Lee Fox, & Mary Louise Hemmeter
Pyramid Model Consortium

The Pyramid Model for Supporting Social Emotional Competence in Infants and Young Children (Fox, Dunlap, Hemmeter, Joseph, & Strain, 2005) is a positive behavioral intervention and support framework early educators can use to promote young children's social and emotional development and prevent and address challenging behavior. The Pyramid Model (shown in figure 1) organizes evidence-based practices that include universal prevention practices for all children, practices for children who need targeted social-emotional supports, and individualized behavior support practices for children with significant social skill deficits or persistent challenging behavior. These practices are based on research focused on effective instruction for young children (National Research Council, 2001; Buckwalter, Vandenberg, Pianta, & Mashburn, 2010), strategies to promote child engagement and appropriate behavior (Chen et al., 2010; Cooney, Brown, & Oller, 2008), the promotion of children's social skills (Hemmeter, Odom, & McConnell, 2006; Vangalis et al., 2005), and the implementation of individualized assessment-based behavior support plans for children with the most severe behavior challenges (Cooney, Dunlap, Clarke, & Allen, 2005; Blair, Fox, & Levine, 2010; McLean-Parks & Nelson, 2006).

Pyramid Model practices were identified through a systematic review of the research on classroom promotion, prevention, and intervention practices that have been associated with positive social-emotional outcomes and decreases in challenging behavior in young children with and without disabilities (e.g., Dunlap et al., 2006; Howe & Hamilton, 1993; Walker et al., 1998; Williams, Swanson, Reid, & Hammond, 2004). This literature review was conducted by faculty associated with the Head Start and Child Care funded Center on Social Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (SEFEL) and the Office of Special Education Programs funded Center for Evidence-Based Practice for Young Children's Challenging Behavior initially in 2005, with updates in 2006 and 2010. The literature review resulted in identification of a set of practices aligned to the Pyramid Model levels to ensure a comprehensive three-tiered framework could be described, operationalized, and implemented (Hemmeter, Chennedy, & Fox, 2006). Table 1 shows the specific practices aligned with each level of the Pyramid Model and representative examples of the empirical literature that supports the practices.



Figure 1. Pyramid Model for Supporting Social Emotional Competence in Infants and Young Children

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Rosemarie Allen, University of Colorado Denver

Culturally Responsive Pyramid Model Practices



Foundation of the Pyramid Model

- Nurturing and Supportive Relationships
- High Quality Supportive Environment
- Culturally responsive practices are naturally embedded at the foundation of the Pyramid

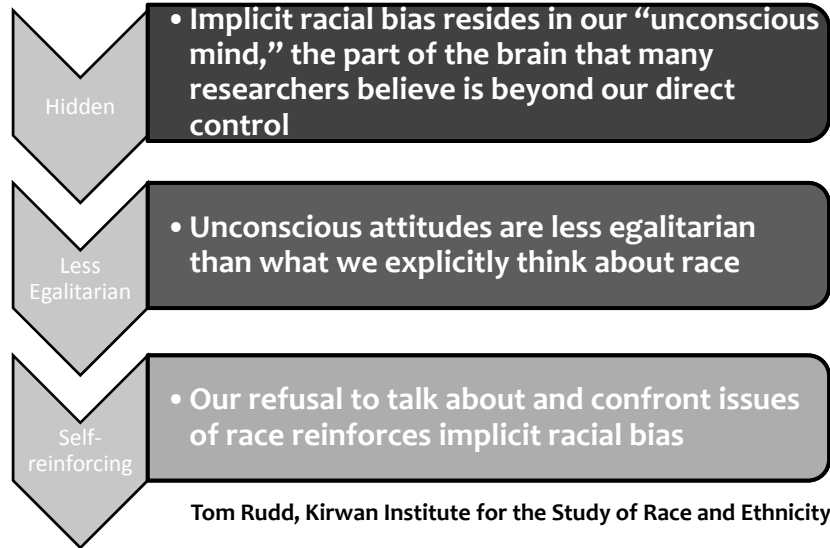
(Fox & Hemmeter, 2009; Hemmeter, Fox, Jack & Broyles, 2007).



It is a relationship-based model that requires the development of positive relationships at all levels (Fox & Hemmeter, 2014).

Walter Gilliam, national expert on preschool suspensions, explained: “I’ve never seen a suspension or expulsion where the teachers and parents knew and liked each other”.

Implicit Bias



Kirwan Institute Research

- **Implicit racial bias is one of the critical factors that promote racial and ethnic inequality in American society.**
- **It is important to understand the causes of implicit racial bias and intentionally work to bring it to the conscious level in order to mitigate the negative consequences**

Tom Rudd, Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity

Why Don't We Want to Talk About Race?

“We have become so politically correct that we don't know what to say and when to say it. We don't know what to say to anyone anymore.”

Lee Jones, Florida State University.



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- Racial Etiquette: Not polite to discuss that which makes us uncomfortable (Omi and Winant, 2002).

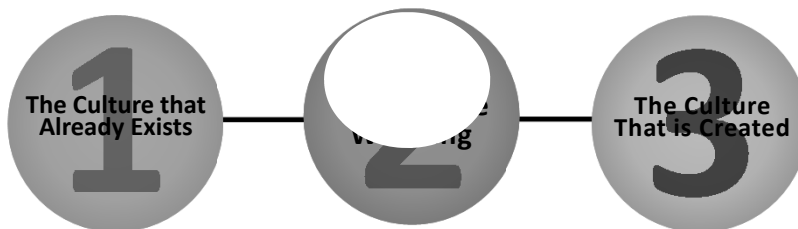
- Saying “We’re all the same”, or “I don’t see color” fails to acknowledge difference others experience (Harries, 2014).

Let's Pretend it doesn't exist!



- We cannot develop authentic relationships with children, families, and communities of color unless we are willing to talk about race!
- Talking about race opens the doors to effectively implementing culturally responsive and culturally sustaining practices.

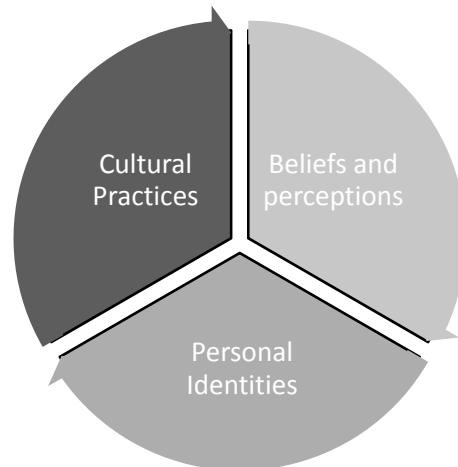
Elements Of Culture At School



We must be aware of our own cultural framework and context

Kozleski, (2010). Culturally Responsive Teaching Matters! Equity Alliance

The Cultural Background We Bring With Us:



Iceberg Theory of Culture

Beyond Culture, Edward T. Hall, 1976

The Iceberg

Beyond Culture, Edward T. Hall, 1976

The Surface: What we see:

- Dress
- Music
- Food

At the Line: Hidden Rules Sometimes Discussed:

- concepts of time,
- personal space,
- rules of conduct,
- facial expressions,
- nonverbal communication

Under the Surface: Unseen and rarely discussed:

- Habits & assumptions,
- understandings, values, judgments
- nature of friendships,
- tone of voice,
- attitude toward elders,
- concept of cleanliness,
- patterns of group decision-making,
- preference for competition or cooperation,
- problem-solving



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Culturally responsive practices places the child at the center of all teaching and learning

(Gay, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1994)





Culturally responsive practices affirm and sustain the cultural capital the child brings into the classroom environment.



Culturally responsive practitioners use the culture of the child as the foundation for teaching and learning.



Children's cultural identity is developed, fostered and embraced in culturally responsive classrooms.

(Gay, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1994)



Cultural congruence between the child's home and school is the cornerstone of culturally responsive practices (Joseph & Strain, 2010; Monroe, 2010).

Developing a child-centered, culturally relevant, affirming and supportive environment decreases the incidents of challenging behaviors in early childhood settings

(Bal, Thorius & Kozleski, 2012; Fox & Hemmeter, 2009; James, 2013; Powell, Dunlap & Fox, 2006).

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Seven Principles of Cultural Responsive Practice

- Students are honored in their cultural connections
- Teachers are personally culturally inviting
- Classroom is physically and culturally inviting
- Children's development and efforts are reinforced
- Strategies to meet the needs of unique cultural styles of the children
- Classroom management is caring and consistent
- Instruction is individual as well collective



Gary Howard, 7 Principles of Culturally Responsive Teaching. You Tube

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Principle One

"Kids get it, that we get them"



Gary Howard, 7 Principles of Culturally Responsive Teaching. You Tube

Principle One:

Students are honored in their cultural connections

- The children are represented in:
 - Content
 - Stories
 - People
 - Examples
 - Inclusion
 - Kids feel honored recognized and seen

Gary Howard, 7 Principles of Culturally Responsive Teaching. You Tube

Principle Two

"Kids get it, that we like them"



Principle 2

Teachers are personally culturally inviting

- Kids understand that we enjoy them and enjoy being with them
- There are personal connections to each student
- Teachers develop personal, meaningful, and positive relationships with each child

Gary Howard, 7 Principles of Culturally Responsive Teaching. You Tube

Principle Three

"School looks like me"



Principle 3

Classroom is physically and culturally inviting

- Children see themselves in the classroom
- Pictures, books, games, reflect the culture of the children
- The classroom is attractively displayed with learning materials that promote development in all domains, including the child's racial identity.

Gary Howard, 7 Principles of Culturally Responsive Teaching. You Tube

Principle Four

"Catch kids being good"



Principle 4

Children's development and efforts are reinforced

- Teachers see children from a strength-based lens
- Teachers look for and acknowledge the positive behaviors of children
- Children are perceived as smart and capable learners

Gary Howard, 7 Principles of Culturally Responsive Teaching. You Tube

Principle Five

"Singing in harmony with the kids song"



Principle 5

Adjusting instructional strategies to meet the needs of unique learning and cultural styles of the children

- Accommodating who the kids are, where they are, acknowledging the cultural capital they bring with them.

Principle Six

"Respect begins with
the teacher"



Gary Howard, 7 Principles of Culturally Responsive Teaching. You Tube

Principle 6

**Classroom management is
caring and consistent**

- Children are intentionally taught culturally appropriate prosocial skills
- Children are taught classroom expectations
- Rules are clear, implemented consistently, and reinforced regularly
- Guidance is instructive, not punitive

Principle Seven

"Student-Centered
Learning"



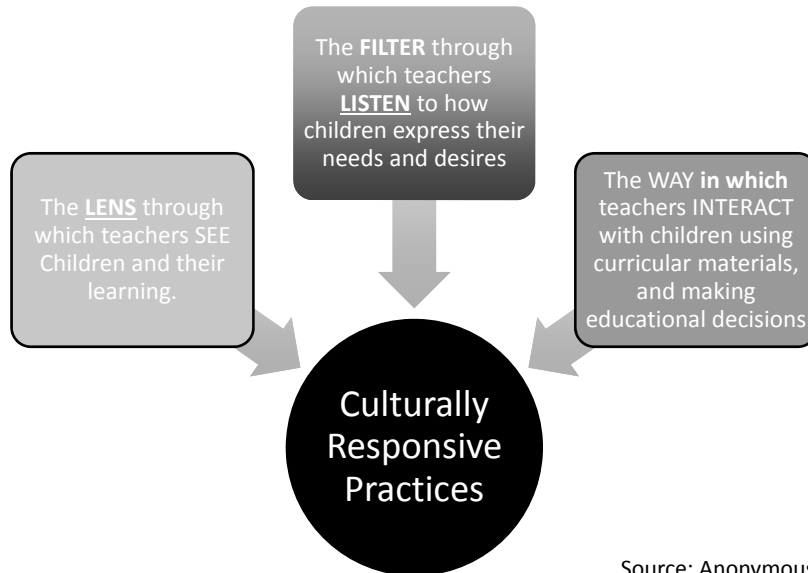
Gary Howard, 7 Principles of Culturally Responsive Teaching. You Tube

Principle Seven:

**Instruction is individual as well
collective**

- Cooperation skills are promoted
- Individual development is supported
- Peer-to-peer teaching and learning takes place

Culturally Responsive Teaching is...



Source: Anonymous 43

Effective implementation of culturally responsive practices requires professional development activities that include knowledge of:

- implicit bias and its impact on decision making,
- culturally responsive practices and how to implement the practices in the classroom,
- the role of critical reflection in challenging assumptions, as well as interpreting, understanding and reframing experiences

(Brookefield, 1995; Delpit, 2012; Gay, 2002; Mezirow, 2003).



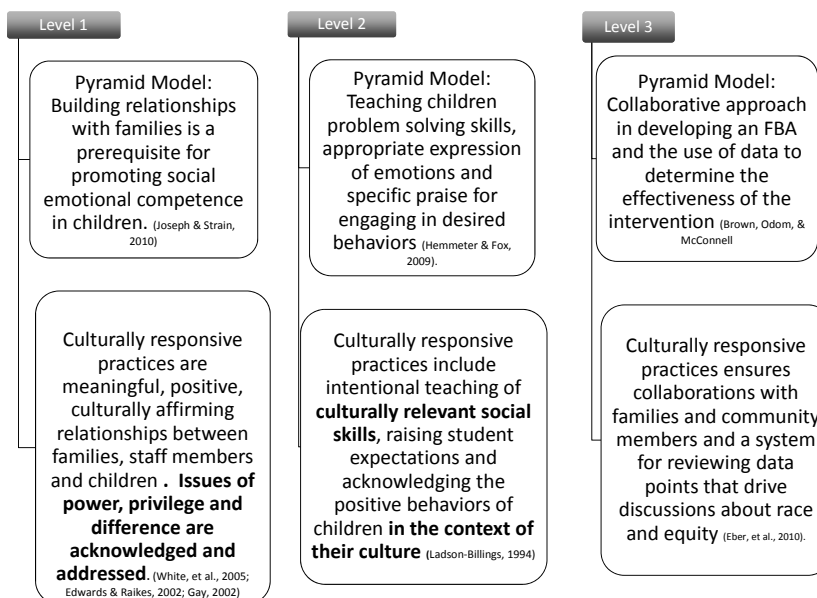


The Pyramid Model coupled with culturally responsive approaches reflects best practices for reducing racial disparities in preventing and addressing challenging behaviors and reducing preschool suspension.

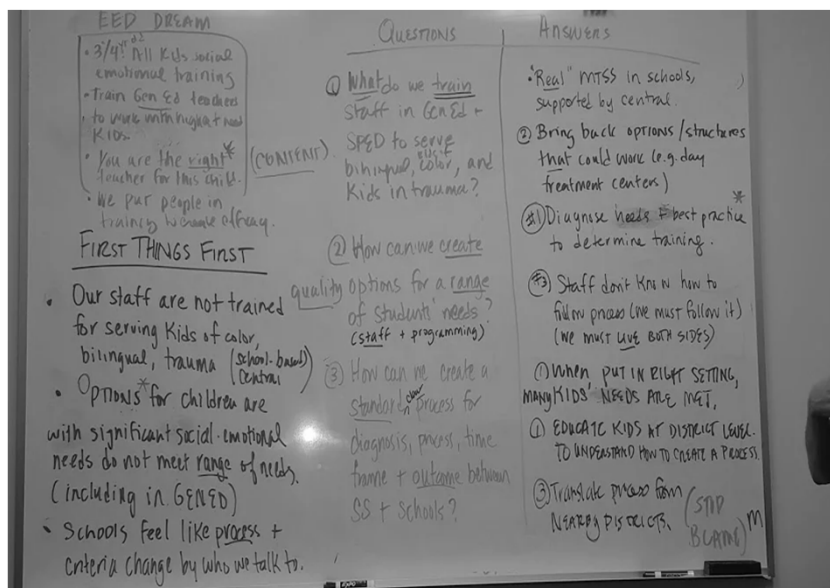


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Alignment of Culturally Responsive Practices and the Pyramid Model



11/6/2015 – Problem of Practice Meeting w/ EED Instructional Superintendents



Statement & Context of the Problem in DPS

- The Denver Plan 2020
 - Goal 1: Great Schools in Every Neighborhood
 - **Goal 2: A Foundation for Success in Schools**
 - Goal 3: Ready for College & Career
 - **Goal 4: Support for the Whole Child**
 - Goal 5: Close the Opportunity Gap
- Current state & implications for young children and social-emotional competence
- Increasing awareness of the problem
- Exposure of weak policies and inadequate systems to address problem

What does Preschool and Kindergarten Suspension and Expulsion Data in DPS tell us?



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New Policy Guidance on ECE Discipline in DPS

Early Childhood students (ages 3-5 years old) and Kindergarten students are beginning to gain self-understanding and self-regulation of their emotions in an expanded social context. It is essential that positive social and emotional behaviors are explicitly taught in the classroom and students are given scaffolded support to understand, practice and develop these skills. These aspects of development must be given the same level of focused attention and planning as is given to the development of children's literacy skills and understanding of mathematical concepts.

The overarching principle of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) states, "Above all we shall not harm children. We shall not participate in practices that are emotionally damaging."



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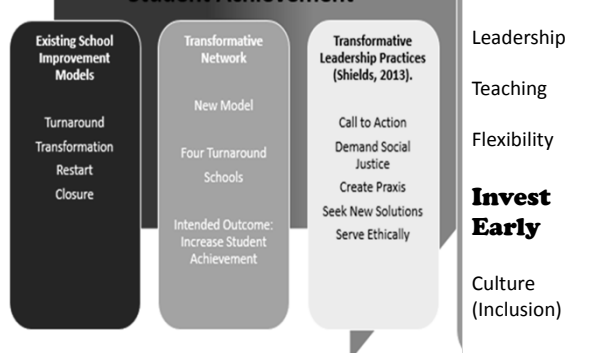
New Policy Highlights

- Prior to any out of school suspension involving an ECE/KG student, the principal is required to consult the appropriate Instructional Superintendent.
- School-initiated removals from the ECE/KG classroom to the home constitute a suspension and are to be done only through the school's disciplinary process.
- Teachers in ECE/KG classrooms should not call parents to ask them to pick up their ECE/KG students due to behavior concerns, as this constitutes an out-of-school suspension.
- All suspensions, whether in- or out-of-school, of an ECE/KG student are to be documented by the school leader responsible, in the same fashion as suspensions for elementary school students.
- Teachers in ECE/KG classrooms do not have the authority to initiate or authorize consideration of an expulsion from an ECE/KG classroom.



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Turnaround in the DPS Transformative Network



How are we Investing in Early Childhood Education?

Network Programming and Initiatives

- Guided Reading Plus
- Children's Literacy Initiative (CLI)
- **Kindergarten Readiness focused on Social-Emotional Competence & Inclusion (Pyramid Plus Pilot)**
- Personal Success Factors Pilot
- Personalized Learning Pilot (Imaginarium)
- **Network-wide re-envisioning of Center Based Special Education Programs - (Culture of Inclusion)**



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Pyramid Plus Approach in the Transformative Network



Forest Elementary

Partnership between the Colorado Center for Social Emotional Competence and Inclusion and Denver Public Schools



Discover a World of Opportunity™



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Bal Swan Children's Center

Founded in 1963, the Center was the first of its type in Colorado and twice chosen by the Colorado Department of Education for pilot projects to study educational programs for children with disabilities.

The Center set the benchmark by which all other fully inclusive preschools are measured throughout the state.



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Bal Swan Children's Center – 3 Cornerstones

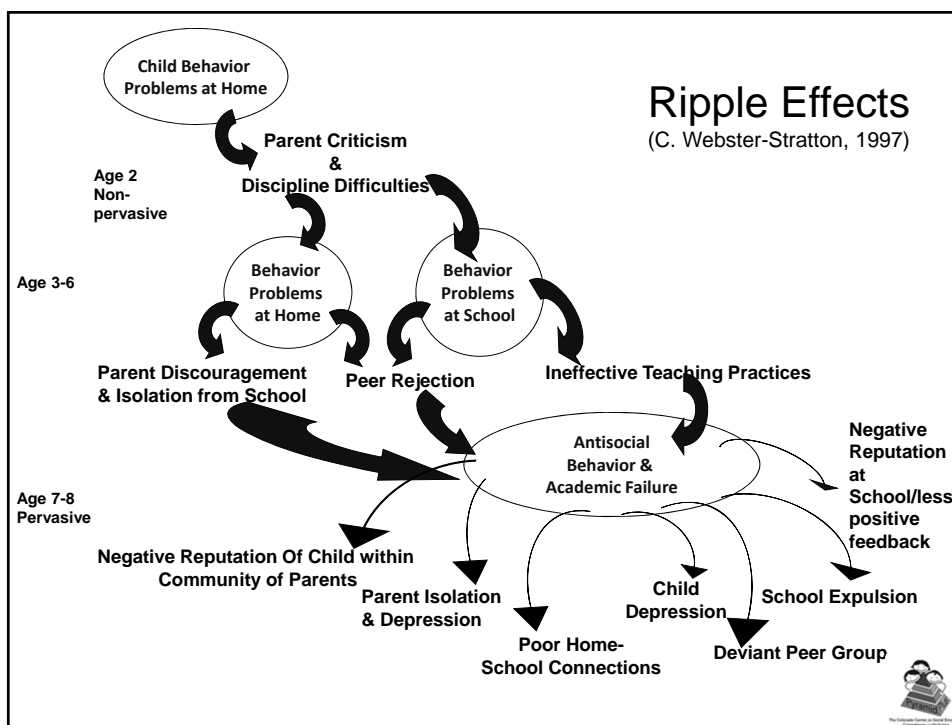
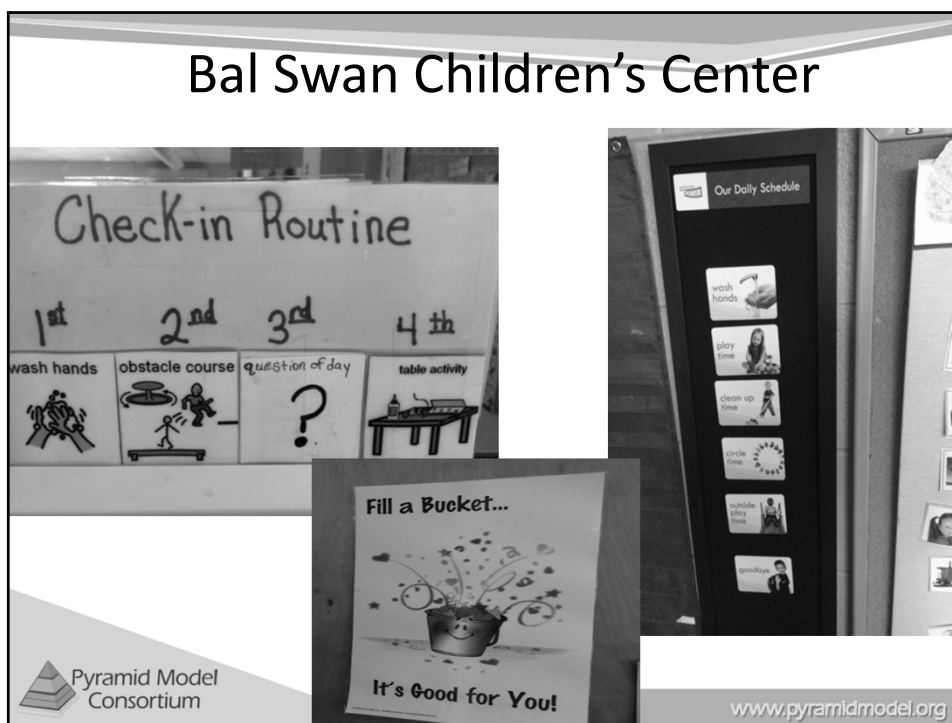
Inclusion

Interdisciplinary teaming

Individualized education, and



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