




SPR 18th Annual Meeting

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Location: Mt. Columbia (Grand Hyatt/3rd Floor)

Time of Presentation: Jun 02 1:15 PM - 2:45 PM

Category/Theme: Effectiveness Trials

Preventing Behavior Problems and Promoting a Positive School Climate through School-wide Positive Behavior Support

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The increasing concern about school violence and the impact of school climate on student behavior and academic performance has resulted in greater pressure to implement school-wide prevention programs. Positive Behavior Support (PBS; Horner & Sugai, 2002) is one such school-wide approach which is currently implemented in over 9,000 schools across the US. School-wide PBS applies behavioral, social learning, and organizational behavioral principles to create improved systems and procedures that promote positive change in student behavior by targeting staff behaviors. The three-tiered prevention model follows a public health approach, whereby two levels of targeted and selected programs are implemented to complement the universal school-wide components of the model. The PBS model is flexible and can be adapted to match the school context, and recent studies have documented its positive impacts on discipline problems and school organization. Given the increasing popularity of PBS and the extensive national network of schools implementing the model, there is an opportunity to implement and disseminate other evidence-based preventive interventions through school-wide PBS. A series of papers will be presented which address issues related to dissemination and implementation of PBS and related school-based prevention models. The first paper describes a state-wide initiative to implement the universal system of PBS, which has led to 2 randomized controlled trials of PBS in elementary schools. Findings will be presented from the trials, along with recent work which integrates PBS with the Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies (PATHS) social-emotional learning (SEL) curriculum and the PAX/Good Behavior Game. The second paper presents preliminary findings from a randomized controlled trial of PBS in 36 middle schools. This work highlights the significance of fidelity, and contrasts teacher-report measures with outside expert ratings of implementation quality. An overview of the observational and behavioral outcomes measures will also be presented and challenges conducting trials of school-wide interventions in middle schools will be addressed. The third paper will present a conceptual model for the integration of PBS and SEL curricula. An example of the integration of PBS and the Second Step SEL curriculum will be discussed. A national leader in school-based prevention research will serve as a discussant, thereby providing concluding comments, acknowledging strengths and limitations of the PBS approach to prevention, and highlighting implications of these studies for the next phase of school-based prevention research.

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