CHAPTER 13

Schoolwide Positive Behavior Support

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On the whole, schools are good places. They are the most familiar and among the most influential of our public institutions. On any given school day, nearly 25% of the U.S. population is attending, teaching, or administering schools (Tyack, 2001). The history of schools, however, is marked by shifting expectations and ever-changing practices. Today parents and school boards expect schools to (1) deliver improved academic performance, (2) build social competence, and (3) ensure safety. They are being asked to do more with less and to do it quickly. Schools also are expected to be successful with a wider range of children. Children in schools today

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come with a wide range of skills and from an increasing array of cultural, financial, and social contexts (Fuchs & Fuchs, 1994). Children with disabilities and children with problem behaviors are part of this diversity.

This chapter addresses the challenges posed by students with problem behaviors, and the emerging approach to school discipline represented by schoolwide positive behavior support (PBS). The thesis of this chapter is that traditional, "get-tough" approaches to discipline do not address the needs of modern schools (Skiba, 2002). As the expectations for schools have evolved, the need has developed for a broader, more proactive approach to addressing the wide array of behavioral challenges now present in our schools. Schoolwide PBS represents a practical response to this need. It emphasizes prevention of problem behavior, active instruction of adaptive skills, a continuum of consequences for problem behavior, assessment-based interventions for children with the most intractable problem behaviors, the implementation of organizational systems to support effective behavioral practices, and the use of information to guide decision making. We describe in this chapter (1) the need for a new approach to discipline, (2) the research foundation for schoolwide PBS, (3) an overview of schoolwide PBS procedures, (4) the empirical support for this approach, and (5) implications for future research and school reform.

THE NEED FOR A NEW APPROACH TO DISCIPLINE IN SCHOOLS

Aggression, bullying, insubordination, disruption, vandalism, noncompliance, withdrawal and truancy continue to be major concerns in schools (Dwyer, Osher, & Warger, 1998; Shinn, Stoner, & Walker, 2002). In fact, problem behavior has been among the top concerns of educators for over 20 years (Horner, Diemer, & Brazeau, 1992; Rose & Gallup, 1998). Skiba and Peterson (2000) report that not only is antisocial behavior increasing, but it is directly hindering academic achievement. These findings are consistent with the U.S. Surgeon General's recent report documenting that although major crime by youth is in decline, the rate of disruptive and defiant behavior has risen (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2001).

The traditional responses to problem behavior in schools have been punishment and exclusion (Gottfredson, Gottfredson, & Hybl, 1993; Tolan & Guerra, 1994). Children engaging in problem behaviors receive reprimands, loss of privileges, office discipline referrals, detentions, suspensions, Saturday school, and expulsions. This approach emphasizes reducing our "tolerance" for antisocial behavior, and removing children who fail to respond to reprimands, detentions, and office discipline referrals. The
assumption is that reactive, get-tough responses will deter future occurrences of problem behavior; teach and encourage students to engage in prosocial, adaptive behavior; or simply remove disruptive students so that others can benefit. Students who maintain patterns of problem behavior are referred to alternative education programs, placed in special education, or simply expelled. However, the focus on "zero-tolerance" policies has been ineffective (Skiba, 2002). Although short-lived reductions in problem behavior have been noted (McCord, 1995; Patterson, Reid, & Dishion, 1992), Mayer and his colleagues (Mayer, 1995; Mayer & Butterworth, 1979; Mayer, Butterworth, Nafpaktitis, & Sulzer-Azaroff, 1983) describe the overall effects of toughened school discipline as increases in vandalism, truancy, tardiness, and aggression. In effect, when schools are made more aversive, the result is more disruptive behavior. This evidence does not argue against the use of clear, consistent consequences for problem behavior, but it indicates that reactive consequences alone will not result in safe and orderly schools, especially for students who present the most severe problem behavior challenges. An alternative approach is needed.

THE FOUNDATION FOR SCHOOLWIDE PBS

PBS is the integration of valued outcomes, behavioral and biomedical science, empirically validated procedures, and systems change to enhance quality of life and minimize/prevent problem behaviors (Carr et al., 2002; Sugai, Horner, et al., 2000). The foundation for schoolwide PBS lies in the application of these features to the whole school context in an effort to prevent, as well as change, patterns of problem behavior.

Historically, behavior support in schools has been reserved for those students who demonstrate problem behaviors (Sugai & Horner, 2002). But if schools are to meet current challenges, an expanded focus on preventive, as well as reactive, behavior support will be needed. Walker and his colleagues (Walker et al., 1996; Walker & Shinn, 2002) offer a prevention model of behavior support adapted from public health efforts that integrates intensive behavior support for individual students with prevention efforts for all students (Larson, 1994; National Research Council & Institute of Medicine, 1999; Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000). The overall design of this model, as depicted in Figure 13.1, involves a three-tiered approach. The initial tier focuses on primary prevention, targets all children, involves all adults, applies to all settings, and covers all times. The aim is to actively teach appropriate behavior, and through this preventive instruction to build a coherent social culture that is predictable and reinforcing, yet quickly responsive to problem behavior. The primary prevention effort assumes that all children need behavior support (Evertson & Emmer, 1982;
Every child entering school should receive clear instruction on what is acceptable and unacceptable, and ongoing recognition when he or she engages in appropriate behavior.

The secondary prevention tier in the prevention model focuses on children who are at risk for problem behavior, but for whom intensive, individualized intervention is not necessary. The emphasis in secondary prevention is on increasing the intensity of behavior support for students who need more than primary prevention. These students have histories of problem behavior associated with academic failure, limited family and community supports, disabilities, membership in deviant peer groups, health-related complications, poverty, and so forth. These students also have limited access to the protective supports that are needed to buffer them against these risk factors—for example, special education, health and medical care, welfare support, preschool and child care, and stable family support (Gresham, Sugai, Horner, Quinn, & McInerney, 1998; Walker, Colvin, & Ramsey, 1995; Walker & Shinn, 2002). Children with high risk factors are less likely to respond to primary prevention efforts and remain at risk for developing durable patterns of problem behavior unless they receive additional assistance. A growing number of secondary-level interventions are demonstrating change in student behavior, both socially and academically (Crone, Horner, & Hawken, 2004; Davies & McLaughlin, 1989; Dougherty & Dougherty, 1977; Hawken & Horner, 2003; Leach & Byrne, ...
The tertiary prevention tier of the prevention model is reserved for children with the most intense behavior support needs. These students typically receive individualized, comprehensive supports, as described in this book. The design of intensive, individual behavior supports has been the most durable focus of research efforts (Eber & Nelson, 1997; Scott & Eber, 2003). Results are encouraging; they suggest that when individualized planning is blended with functional assessment, comprehensive support plan design, adequate personnel and resources, and active use of data for decision making, impressive changes can be observed in the behavior of children (Carr et al., 1999; Didden, Duker, & Korzilius, 1997; Ingram, 2002; O’Neill et al., 1997; Todd, Horner, Sugai, & Sprague, 1999).

To date, the three-tiered prevention model has been a heuristic offered by Walker and his colleagues to guide the design of behavior support in schools and to emphasize the need for multiple behavior intervention efforts (i.e., primary prevention with the whole school; secondary prevention with smaller groups of at-risk children; and intensive, individualized intervention with selected students). As indicated in Figure 13.1, it is estimated that approximately 80% of students in a school will respond to primary prevention efforts, and their behavior will remain within social norms; an additional 15% will respond to secondary prevention efforts; and a final 5% will require the intensive, individualized interventions associated with the tertiary level of prevention (Sugai & Horner, 1994).

Office discipline referrals have been identified as a useful form of information to describe the disciplinary status of a school within the three-tiered model, because the data are generally available in schools and reflect the overall status of problem behavior (Irvin, Tobin, Sprague, Sugai, & Vincent, 2004; Sugai, Sprague, Horner, & Walker, 2000; Tobin, Sugai, & Colvin, 2000). Office discipline referral data are especially useful if they are contextualized—that is, if (1) how they are used in a schoolwide system is clearly and operationally defined; (2) definitions of problem behavior are mutually exclusive and comprehensive; (3) agreements exist about what constitutes an office discipline referral; (4) formal and efficient systems are in place for collecting, storing, summarizing, and reporting the data; and (5) overt processes are in place for regular and systematic evaluation and action planning. Recently, Sugai (2002) reported descriptive office discipline referral data supporting the validity of the three-tiered model. These data are provided in Figure 13.2 and display the average proportion of students with different rates of office discipline referrals for the 2002–2003 school year for 321 elementary schools from 13 states, as reported through the School-Wide Information System (SWIS; May et al., 2000). Schools

included in this database had at least 1 year of data, received training on the features of useful and informative systems for managing and using office discipline referral data, and had at least some schoolwide PBS practices in place.

A total of over 143,400 office discipline referrals were recorded. Each school reported the percentage of enrolled students with 0–1 office discipline referrals, the percentage of students with 2–5 referrals, and the percentage with 6 or more referrals. The means across the 321 schools indicated that on average, 87% (SD = 10) of students had 0-1 office discipline referrals, 9% (SD = 6) had 2–5 referrals, and 4% (SD = 5) had 6+ referrals. These patterns suggest that the three-tiered model may have applications to understanding what prevention-based approaches might look like in schools. The contributions of the three-tiered prevention model for school discipline design have been (1) recognition that behavior support needs to include a schoolwide component; and (2) appreciation that investment in primary prevention efforts will both decrease the proportion of students who need more intense support, and increase the likelihood of successful intervention with those students receiving tertiary prevention support (Colvin, Kame'enui, & Sugai, 1993; Epstein et al., 1993; Nelson, Colvin, & Smith, 1996; Taylor-Greene et al., 1997).

Taken together, a growing body of research offers guidance for responding to violence and disruption in schools. The foremost message is that punishment and exclusion are ineffective if they are not paired with prevention efforts (Gottfredson, Karweit, & Gottfredson, 1989; Mayer, 1995; Tolan & Guerra, 1994). The companion message is that a combination of primary, secondary and tertiary prevention of problem behavior through schoolwide PBS can make a substantive difference (Chapman &
Schoolwide Positive Behavior Support blends four key elements: *outcomes*, *practices*, *systems*, and *data use* (see Figure 13.3) (Sugai & Horner, 2002). The first feature (and the foundation) of schoolwide PBS is a focus on *student outcomes*. Schools are expected to be safe environments where students learn the academic and social skills needed for life in our society. The basic goals of any system of schoolwide PBS must be to provide the behavioral assistance needed to achieve these outcomes. Schools should be able to define measurable standards for student achievement, social behavior, and safety. The academic standards that now drive school reform will not be achieved without also attending to the behavioral climate of schools.

The second feature of schoolwide PBS is the use of *research-validated practices*. These include the curriculum, classroom management, instructional procedures, rewards, and contingencies that are used on a daily basis to build and sustain student competence. In other words practices are what teachers use to build and influence student behavior, and are the grist of classroom and behavior management efforts (Alberto & Troutman, 2003; Heward, Heron, Hill, & Trap-Porter, 1984; Jensen, Sloane, & Young,

**FIGURE 13.3.** Four defining elements of schoolwide PBS.
Schoolwide PBS is based on practices that have evidence supporting their impact on student behavior. Schools often are criticized for adopting a practice without careful consideration or empirical documentation that the practice is (1) related to change in valued student outcomes, (2) efficient and feasible, (3) cost-effective, or (4) based on sound educational/behavioral theory (Carnine, 1997; Peters & Heron, 1993). Schoolwide PBS is defined in part by the adoption of research-validated practices that are tied to those outcomes most important for students.

The third feature of schoolwide PBS is an emphasis on the systems needed to sustain effective practices. These are the policies, staffing patterns, budgets, team structures, administrative leadership, operating routines, staff training, and action plans that affect the behavior of adults in schools. We believe that systems are essential for the sustained use of effective practices. All too often, educational innovations are implemented in schools only to be replaced by something "new" the next year (Latham, 1988). Schoolwide PBS includes attention to the systems that we hypothesize are needed to implement and sustain research-validated practices.

The fourth defining feature of schoolwide PBS is the active collection and use of data for decision making. Gilbert (1978) argues that no strategy is more efficient for producing change in an organization than the active collection and reporting of information about valued outcomes. Within schools, data should be collected about the academic performance, social competence, and safety of children. The data should be collected continuously and reported to the faculty, administration, teams, families, and students on a regular basis. Of greatest importance, the information should be used to make decisions on how to improve the school (Gilbert & Gilbert, 1992).

**PRACTICES AND SYSTEMS FOR PRIMARY PREVENTION**

Other chapters in this book address the detailed procedures (functional behavioral assessment, intervention design, implementation, and adaptation) that are used to provide individualized PBS. The emphasis in this chapter is on the primary prevention elements (those applicable to all students, all staff, all times, and all locations) within the larger schoolwide PBS approach.

Schoolwide discipline efforts have been advocated and studied since schools began. The primary prevention efforts within schoolwide PBS borrow from and build on this strong store of knowledge and advice (Colvin,
Sugai, & Kame'enui, 1994; Comer, 1985; Gottfredson, 1987; Gottfredson, Gottfredson, & Skroban, 1996; Knoff, 2002; Mayer et al., 1983; Sprick & Nolet, 1991; Sulzer-Azaroff & Mayer, 1994; Weissberg et al., 1989). From this literature, five practices and six systems variables emerge as important for effective and sustained implementation of schoolwide PBS efforts (see Table 13.1).

**Practices**

In schools that are behaviorally successful, the environment is predictable, positive, and consistent. Children know the behavioral expectations of the school, receive instruction on how to be behaviorally successful, and are acknowledged and supported in their efforts to apply that instruction. Problem behaviors are strongly discouraged. Consistent consequences for misbehavior are delivered. But active instruction and behavior support, not the delivery of negative consequences, are viewed as the primary strategies for changing student behavior. The specific practices used to achieve primary prevention within schoolwide PBS follow.

**Define Schoolwide Behavioral Expectations**

The first practice is to identify five or fewer, brief, positively stated behavioral expectations that are presented in a memorable format and posted throughout the school. These expectations should capture the major social values of the school and reflect the language of the local community. The behavioral expectations are the big concepts that guide the behavioral curriculum and social standards of the school. Behavioral expectations adopted in schools from Maryland to Hawaii include examples such as: "Be respectful," "Be responsible," "Be kind," "Do your best," "Follow directions."

**TABLE 13.1. Practices and Systems of Primary Prevention within Schoolwide PBS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practices</th>
<th>Systems</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Define expectations</td>
<td>Team-based implementation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teach expectations</td>
<td>Administrative leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitor and encourage expected behaviors</td>
<td>Documented commitment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prevent and discourage problem behaviors</td>
<td>Adequate personnel and time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collect and use data for decision making</td>
<td>Budgeted support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Information system</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Behavioral expectations are always defined in positive terms. A common error is to define behavioral expectations in terms of what not to do (e.g., no hats in class, no running in the hall, no bullying). The number of problem behaviors we would like children to avoid is large and unwieldy. When the core positive behavioral expectations are defined, all problem behaviors become examples of not following the, positive expectations. For instance, bullying behavior is an example of not being respectful; dropping trash in the hall is an example of not being responsible. Defining the desired behavioral expectations makes the development of appropriate behavior, rather than the suppression of an infinite array of undesirable behaviors, the focus of discipline efforts.

Defining schoolwide behavioral expectations, however, is more than building a list that goes in the school discipline handbook. Students are expected to know and practice the schoolwide behavioral expectations. The expectations should be posted in at least 80% of the public spaces in the school and regularly reviewed as themes relevant throughout the school day. In one elementary school, the three behavioral expectations were "Be respectful," "Be responsible," and "Be safe." To help children remember the expectations, the staff presented the expectations as the "Three B's" and used a bumblebee motif in displays and presentations. In a middle school, the staff identified five behavioral expectations and presented them to the students as the "High Five" (Taylor-Greene et al., 1999). The goal is to arrange displays of schoolwide positive expectations, so that any individual can identify the behavioral expectations within 5 minutes of entering the school.

Teach the Behavioral Expectations

As is true of all educational concepts, the schoolwide three to five behavioral expectations will become relevant only if they are tied to very concrete behaviors and actively taught in practical contexts. Learning the expectation to "be respectful," for example, will not change student behavior until that concept is tied to specific behaviors. The teaching of behavioral expectations occurs differently at different age levels and in different parts of the country. Some middle schools, for example, teach behavioral expectations during the first 1–2 days of school. Students rotate through stations in the school to learn how the behavioral expectations apply for the classroom, cafeteria, gym, hallway, or bus area. In elementary schools, the training of behavioral expectations may occur through an initial assembly and then in classroom cohorts through multiple 15- to 20-minute sessions spread over the first 4–6 weeks of schools. In addition, behavioral expectations may be revisited periodically throughout the school year.
Effective curricula for teaching behavioral expectations have the following main features: (1) opportunities and schedules for teaching across multiple locations in the school, (2) presentations of appropriate behavior contrasted with inappropriate behavior examples, and (3) the opportunity for all students to perform or practice appropriate behavior and be acknowledged for correct performance.

Designing the curriculum for teaching behavioral expectations is typically a task organized by the faculty team responsible for schoolwide discipline, and completed by the whole faculty. Elsewhere, we (Horner, Sugai, Lewis-Palmer, & Todd, 2001) have described one effective process in which the team builds a matrix with behavioral expectations on one side and school locations on the other (see Figure 13.4). In each cell of the matrix, the faculty identifies the one or two specific appropriate behaviors that would be representative and important to the context or culture of the school, and that best illustrate the expectation in a specific setting. For example, one faculty selected "raising your hand before speaking" as the best example of being respectful in class. Another identified "wearing appropriate shoes" as the best example of being responsible in the gym. A third faculty identified "waiting behind the red line" as the best example of being safe in the bus area. The list of "best examples" for a specific location (e.g., cafeteria) becomes the curriculum for teaching the behavioral expec-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classroom</th>
<th>Gym</th>
<th>Hallway</th>
<th>Playground</th>
<th>Bus area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Be safe</td>
<td>Follow directions</td>
<td>Follow directions</td>
<td>Walk Open doors slowly</td>
<td>Go up ladders and down slides</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be respectful</td>
<td>Raise your hand to talk Hands and feet to self</td>
<td>Follow rules of the game Return equipment at bell</td>
<td>Hands and feet to self</td>
<td>One-minute rule for sharing equipment Wait for your turn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be responsible</td>
<td>Bring books and pencil to class Do homework</td>
<td>Participate wear appropriate shoe!</td>
<td>Keep books, belongings, and litter off floor</td>
<td>Stay within the recess area</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FIGURE 13.4. A curriculum matrix for teaching schoolwide behavioral expectations.
tations in that location. The teaching is done by taking the children to that location; reviewing the big behavioral expectations (the main concepts); and then teaching the concepts by (1) showing the best example(s) of doing it the "right way," and then (2) contrasting that with an example of how not to behave. The contrasting, or "negative," examples allow teachers to define what is not being respectful or responsible. Negative examples are always presented as a contrast to doing things the correct way (see Becker, Engelmann, & Thomas, 1975, or Engelmann & Carnine, 1982, for a review of using negative teaching examples). Instructional sessions always end by students having an opportunity to perform appropriately, and receiving feedback and recognition for correct performance. An example of the teaching plan format is provided in Figure 13.5.

Instruction on behavioral expectations has been successful when a person can stop random students in the hall, ask them whether they know the expectations, and find that at least 80% of the students can name both the expectation and what it means for a specific location.

Monitor and Encourage Performance of Expected Behaviors

The old adage that one should never teach something that is not reviewed and rewarded on a regular basis is just as true for behavioral expectations as it is for identifying the subject of a sentence or applying the Pythagorean theorem. In schools that are behaviorally successful, every adult carries an ongoing obligation to acknowledge appropriate student behavior. This acknowledgment should be provided in multiple forms; in classrooms, as well as in hallways and playgrounds; and by secretaries, custodians, educational assistants, and administrators, as well as teachers. Acknowledging appropriate behavior may take the form of tangible rewards or simple verbal statements. Regardless of the medium by which it is carried, the students should receive the message that their behavior is valued and appreciated. The message is of importance; the method of extending this message should be appropriate to the developmental level of the students and the culture of the school.

The development of organized strategies for acknowledging appropriate student behavior is at the heart of creating a positive school environment, but it is a controversial topic. Some teachers and administrators express concern that formal systems of reward will tarnish behavioral expectations and leave students only willing to behave appropriately if they are promised rewards. Published texts, workshops, and credible research have emphasized the possibility that unnecessary rewards may have a damaging effect on building the self-guided motivation we all seek. However, Cameron and her colleagues (Cameron, 2002; Cameron, Banko, & Pierce, 2001; Cameron & Pierce,


### Teaching Schoolwide Behavioral Expectations

Given: A location and three to five schoolwide expectations.

1. Review schoolwide expectations (labels and definitions).

2. Review rationale for expectations.

3. What do those expectations "mean" in this location?
   a. Positive examples (correct ways to behave — from matrix)
      -
      -
      -
   b. Negative examples (to provide precision to the rules)
      -
      -

4. Provide an activity that allows practice of appropriate behaviors.

5. Reward appropriate behavior.

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**FIGURE 13.5.** Teaching plan format.
provide a compelling review of the research foundation for these concerns, which presents a different picture. They find that although concern over the use of rewards provides great substance for media events, it is a poor foundation for policy and action. In fact, their meta-analysis documents that (1) rewarding students for appropriate behavior is likely to facilitate, not hinder, their performance of desirable behaviors in later contexts; and (2) the far greater danger is the creation of school environments with low rates of positive feedback from adults. In essence, children in our schools are at greater risk of being underrewarded than overrewarded. Designing classroom and school settings to ensure that there are frequent and compelling rewards for appropriate academic and social behavior is a critical feature of successful schools.

The design of strategies for acknowledging appropriate student behavior should fit the age level of the students and provide predictable as well as unexpected rewards, tangible as well as social rewards, small as well as substantive rewards, and frequent as well as infrequent rewards. The goal is to create a positive environment where children have a high rate of positive contacts with adults, where adults are consistently reminding students that appropriate behavior is valued, and where students view the setting as behaviorally predictable and positive. In other words, the goal is to provide students with (1) a clear and predictable road map for social success, (2) the training and support to follow that map, and (3) immediate and clear feedback when they deviate from the successful path.

A school can claim to have an effective system for acknowledging behavioral expectations if at any time at least 80% of students interviewed indicate that they have received some form of recognition for behaving appropriately within the previous 10 school days.

**Prevent and Discourage Problem Behaviors**

A clear, fair, consistently applied continuum of consequences for problem behaviors is appropriate and important (Darch & Kame'enui, 2004). This continuum should include distinct and operational definitions of "minor" and "major" problem behaviors, as well as appropriate consequences that vary in intensity and are linked to the severity of the minor and major problem behaviors. Most schools have a list of the problem behaviors that result in negative consequences from adults. Those schools that are most effective clarify which problem behaviors should be managed in class and which should result in an office discipline referral. They also have clear problem behavior definitions that are operational, mutually exclusive and exhaustive, so staff and faculty are able to be consistent. Finally, they use information about patterns of problem behavior to guide decisions about school discipline.
The major messages are these: (1) Build a continuum of consequences that are clear, fair, and easy to administer; (2) instruct the students early in the school year about appropriate behavior, as well as the consequences for inappropriate behavior; (3) implement the consequences with consistency; (4) do not ignore escalating problem behavior; and (5) above all else, do not expect negative consequences to result in substantive change in behavior patterns. The purposes of consequences for problem behavior are to (1) maintain safety, (2) prevent inappropriate behavior from escalating, (3) prevent inappropriate behavior from being rewarded, (4) provide a clear message to the student (and observers) that his or her behavior is unacceptable, and (5) allow instruction and normal activity in the school to move forward.

For 80% of students in most schools, instruction on behavioral expectations, and use of low-intensity consequences for misbehavior, will be sufficient to maintain appropriate behavior. For the 5–15% of students who are at greater risk for problem behavior, negative consequences will often be ineffective. In some cases, consequences that are intended to be negative (e.g., being sent to the office) will function as rewards for the student; in other cases, the complex contingencies that maintain problem behavior (including those from home and peers) will be unaffected by the school consequences. For these students, formal intervention, active instruction, and a more comprehensive response to their behavioral needs will be required to produce a functional effect (Walker et al., 1995). In many ways, the system of negative consequences for problem behavior is designed to "keep the lid on" and allow the school day to move forward. Real behavior change is unlikely to result from a simple system of negative consequences.

Collect and Use Data for Decision Making

The fifth practice for schoolwide primary prevention is the efficient gathering and use of data for decision making (Horner, Sugai, & Todd, 2001). Collecting information that will allow evaluation and ongoing self-improvement is among the most professional of educational activities. Schools are ever-changing environments. If change is to be guided by a commitment to student outcomes, efficiency, and sound documentation, then a reliable system for gathering and using data is essential (Carnine, 1992, 1995, 1997).

Effective primary prevention requires that the school faculty, the school team, individual teachers, administrators, and related service personnel have information about student behavior. The most common unit for summary of behavioral data is that of the individual student. If Jason is identified as having problems, then a record is developed to assess his attendance, grades, office referrals, suspensions, and so forth. Within a primary
prevention approach, the faculty and schoolwide team will also regularly review the behavior patterns for the whole school. At least every 2 weeks, the schoolwide team should review the frequency of office discipline referrals organized (1) per day and per month, (2) per type of problem behavior, (3) per location in the school, (4) per time of day, and (5) per child. The information reviewed by the team should be as recent as 48 hours old, accurate, and displayed in graphic form rather than via a table of numbers. An emerging set of evaluation reports suggests that with accurate and timely data, schoolwide teams perceive improved effectiveness in identifying problem patterns early, as well as in developing practical and effective strategies for supporting appropriate student behavior and decreasing problem behavior (Ingram, Horner, & Todd, 2002). Efficient systems for gathering, summarizing, and reporting office discipline referral information are available in web-based information systems (May et al., 2000; www.swis.org), as well as through a growing array of district-based management systems.

The central messages are these: (1) Effective, schoolwide behavior support involves gathering and using data about the whole school; (2) the data need not be rigorous research data, but can be summaries of the data typically collected in schools; (3) the data should be reviewed regularly (weekly, monthly) by the team, administration, and staff; and (4) most importantly, the data should be used for active decision making. Decisions about adoption of new behavior support programs, continued use of existing programs, and allocation of staff time to change behavior support efforts should be guided by local information. The challenge of designing a positive social culture is an ever-evolving process. Efficient gathering and use of information for decision making is a key tool for navigating this process successfully.

**Systems to Support and Sustain Effective Practices**

Schoolwide PBS emphasizes the organizational systems needed to support implementation and sustained use of effective practices. Too often, effective practices are introduced without the systems-level support needed to carry them forward. Schools that have been successful in implementing the three tiers of schoolwide PBS have incorporated the following system features.

**Team-Based Implementation**

A schoolwide effort requires the active involvement and design of a local school team. The schoolwide team is typically composed of five to nine individuals who represent the administration, the teaching faculty, and
related service personnel. Where appropriate, including parent, student, and neighborhood representatives can be helpful in establishing a community voice and securing commitments. The team will then benefit from the multiple perspectives and creative problem solving of these groups. The key features of team-based implementation are that the schoolwide team (1) operates with effective procedures (e.g., agenda, scheduled meeting dates, action planning, meeting minutes); (2) invests in building the common vision, terminology, and experience that allow the individuals to function as a team; and (3) gathers, reports, and uses outcome data for continuous development and improvement of the behavior support efforts in the school.

**Administrative Leadership**

Schoolwide PBS efforts require the clear and consistent support of the school administration. This must involve not just statements of support, but active participation on the behavior support or school climate team. The role of senior administrators in school buildings is not well appreciated. The principal and vice-principal can shape the level of opportunity for innovation and development (Colvin & Sprick, 1996). Participation by administrators gives the team authority in making decisions related to personnel and budget, as well as scheduling, integrating, and prioritizing multiple initiatives.

**Documented Commitment**

*Commitment* to use schoolwide PBS begins with commitment to the education of all children, including those with problem behavior. As such, the first level of documented commitment is agreement about a common purpose or mission statement for the school. This statement should express a belief about the importance of academic excellence, effective teaching practices, developing character and social competence, and contribution to building a caring and productive community. In addition, improving the behavioral climate of the school should be (1) ranked as one of the top three goals for the school, (2) supported by at least 80% of the faculty, and (3) given at least 3 years to be fully implemented.

Efforts at school reform often ignore the value of establishing broad commitment to the goals of, vision of, and need for a reform before moving to define specific activities: No action-planning process should be initiated without a thorough assessment of what is in place and what needs to be improved. Similarly, clear and measurable outcomes should be identified that reflect the conclusions from the assessment and serve as the basis for evaluating implementation progress.
Adequate Personnel and Time

A major trend in schools across the United States over the past 10 years has been a reduction in the number of adults per pupil. This reduction can affect allocation and quality of instructional time; number of opportunities to respond; quantity and quality of interactions among teachers, students, and parents; and other factors that have an impact on the school and classroom climate and on academic outcomes. Teacher, staff, and administrator minutes are precious. The natural response to the growing expectations and dwindling hours of adult time is to cut the time allocated to all activities.

To implement schoolwide PBS successfully, a team needs to meet at least every other week to review data and make programmatic decisions. The meeting needs to last at least 45 minutes and be a regular, valued part of school operations. Although the amount of time needed to implement and sustain schoolwide PBS efforts will differ from school to school, a clear systems feature of successful schools has been the investment in precious adult time to organize and manage the schoolwide effort. Kame'enui and Carnine (2002) indicate that schools must learn to "work smarter, not more." This translates into the following recommendations: (1) Prioritize, (2) invest in a few (two or three) initiatives at a time, (3) adopt practices and strategies that have a proven record of achieving desired outcomes, and (4) monitor implementation continuously and directly to enable timely improvements and enhancements.

Budgeted Support

Schoolwide PBS is an investment in the improved educational experience of children and the efficient use of teacher/staff time. This investment, however, will require funding for at least the following: (1) development of the team, (2) time for the faculty to build the schoolwide training curriculum, (3) support for preparing staff for implementation (staff development), and (4) materials and rewards for acknowledging appropriate student behavior.

Information System

Just as a key practice for schoolwide PBS is the use of information for decision making, a key systems variable is the development of an efficient information system to deliver those data. One of the responsibilities of the team and administration within a school is to devise an inexpensive strategy for gathering, summarizing, and using behavioral information. An array of computer applications is becoming available to enter and organize data. In general, the system needs to allow easy data entry; to permit access to graphic displays of schoolwide (as well as individual student) data; and to
provide teams, faculty, and administrators with accurate and recent data (i.e., no more than 48 hours old).

THE EFFECTS OF SCHOOLWIDE PBS

We have presented the rationale and foundation of schoolwide PBS. We also have reviewed the major practices and systems for primary prevention within the schoolwide PBS approach. An important concern, however, is the extent to which these practices and systems are already being used by schools and are associated with changes in student problem behavior and student academic performance. Research efforts are in progress to provide rigorous experimental analysis of these questions. For the present, we are left with encouraging, descriptive, small-scale studies that help us respond to common questions.

How Can a Team Determine Whether a School Is Using Schoolwide PBS?

In an effort to help schoolwide teams examine the extent to which they are using schoolwide PBS practices, two instruments have been developed. The Effective Behavior Support Self-Assessment Survey (EBS Self-Assessment) is a four-part survey used by schoolwide teams and whole faculties to self-evaluate the extent to which PBS practices are used at the schoolwide, classroom, and individual-student levels (Todd et al., 1999). The School-wide Evaluation Tool (SET) is a more rigorous, 28-item research tool administered on site by an external reviewer to document use of schoolwide primary prevention practices and systems. For example, to assess whether behavioral expectations have been defined, the observer reviews written documents and then looks to see whether the expectations are posted in public locations throughout the school. To assess whether students have been taught the behavioral expectations, the observer reviews teaching curriculum materials and asks a sample of students to identify the expectations. To assess whether a viable information system is being used, the observer reviews current data reports and the minutes of meetings in which data were used for active decision making. The SET produces a total score and seven subscale scores for elements such as "behavioral expectations taught," "appropriate behavior rewarded," and "information used for decision making." A school is considered to be using schoolwide PBS when the SET results indicate both a total score of 80% and a "behavioral expectations taught" subscale score of 80%. The reliability and validity of the SET have been examined and found acceptable (Horner et al., 2004).
The SET has been used to assess the status of schoolwide PBS efforts in schools before and after technical support was provided. Of interest is the fact that across a total of 61 schools in Hawaii (n = 29) and Illinois (n = 32) that were self-selected to receive technical assistance in schoolwide PBS, none were found to meet the SET implementation criteria prior to receiving support (mean total SET score = 36). These data suggest (but do not prove) that schoolwide PBS practices may not be an active part of many schools, and that an appropriate focus of school improvement plans may be to self-evaluate the extent to which schoolwide PBS is being used.

Can Typical Schools Make the Changes Needed to Adopt Schoolwide PBS?

A related concern must be the extent to which schools are able to adopt schoolwide PBS. It is one thing to demonstrate that procedures are effective, and another to demonstrate that they can be adopted with fidelity in typical school contexts. This is a concern of special importance when schoolwide systems are advocated. Figure 13.6 provides descriptive results from 22 schools in an Oregon school district that has been using schoolwide PBS for over 5 years. Elementary and middle schools in the district were self-selected to receive technical assistance to adopt schoolwide PBS procedures. As part of the process, each school received a SET evaluation prior to receiving technical assistance and was reassessed at least a year after technical assistance was provided. The data indicate that the 22
Schools scored an average of 53.9 (total) on the SET prior to receiving support and an average of 91.5 a year after receiving support. These results were not collected within the context of an experimental design, and no attribution can be made about the link between technical support and change in SET scores. The data do, however, document that at least some typical schools are capable of implementing the schoolwide PBS practices.

**Does Implementation of Schoolwide PBS Practices and Systems Affect Student Problem Behavior?**

Schools adopting schoolwide PBS typically use conventional, educational outcome measures to assess student impact. Changes in rates of office discipline referrals, attendance, suspensions, and expulsions are often used as indices of improvement. It is important to note, however, that each of these measures is affected not only by student behavior, but by adult decision making and the overall management systems within a school. With these caveats, there remains agreement that reduction in the student behaviors leading to office discipline referrals, suspensions, and expulsions is generally desirable. A strong argument can be made that office discipline referrals are important and useful indicators of the social health of a school (Irvin et al., 2004).

Schools providing pre–post information about adoption of schoolwide PBS are reporting 20–60% reductions in office discipline referrals and suspensions following full implementation (Lohrman-O'Rourke et al., 2000; Luiselli, Putnam & Sunderland, 2002; Sadler, 2000; Taylor-Greene & Kartub, 2000; Taylor-Greene et al., 1997). Figure 13.7 provides pre–post office discipline referral results from four elementary schools and three middle schools in Oregon that met schoolwide PBS implementation criteria between the academic years 1999–2000 and 2001–2002. Each school demonstrated reductions in its rate of office discipline referrals per 100 students following implementation of schoolwide behavioral expectations. On average, the seven schools reported a 45% reduction in office discipline referrals from the year prior to implementation to the year immediately following implementation. The three schools reporting a second year of implementation demonstrated sustained improvement.

The documentation of sustained effects is of special importance. The history of educational reform is characterized by brief innovations that fade after 1-2 years (Latham, 1988). The emphasis on schoolwide systems is intended to promote durable change, and initial results suggest that durable change is possible. In Elmira, Oregon, Fern Ridge Middle School (grades 6, 7, 8), under the leadership of Susan Taylor-Greene, has been using schoolwide PBS since the 1995–1996 school year. The rate of office disci-
pline referrals per 100 students per year for the period 1994–2002 is provided in Figure 13.8. These data document a >40% reduction in office discipline referrals during the initial year of schoolwide PBS adoption, and sustained effects (65% reduction in office discipline referrals) over 7 years of continued implementation.

A more detailed analysis of the effects of schoolwide PBS on the behavior of students has been compiled by research reports provided by Cushing (2000), Smith (2000), and Todd (2002). Lisa Cushing developed
a direct observation measure of student social behavior to assess the rate of problem behavior and the conditional probability of different social consequences for problem behavior in schools (Cushing, Horner, & Barrier, 2003). Smith used this measure to collect ongoing social behavior data at the same time that the SET was used to assess the extent to which schools were implementing schoolwide PBS procedures. A result from these efforts allows comparison of direct observation rates of problem behavior collected in cafeterias and hallways for five middle schools. Data were collected twice in the spring prior to training in schoolwide PBS (pre), and again in the Fall and Spring of the following year when schoolwide PBS procedures were being used (post). Figure 13.9 provides the results from this comparison, demonstrating reduction in the rate of observed problem behavior as schools adopted schoolwide PBS. These results suggest that changes in office discipline referral rates reported by each of these schools were associated with real changes in the rates of problem behaviors observed in various settings of the schools (e.g., hallways, cafeteria).

**Are Schoolwide PBS Practices Related to Change in Student Academic Performance?**

The primary mission of schools is to help children acquire academic skills. Although considerable debate remains about the most appropriate way to assess academic performance, a concern relevant to the present chapter is
whether improvement in student social behavior is related to improvement in academic performance (Barriga et al., 2002). Research examining the relationship between problem behavior and academic gains has demonstrated inverse relationships between (1) aggression and academic achievement (Williams & McGee, 1994), and (2) attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) symptoms and academic gains (Faraone et al., 1993). The association between schoolwide social culture and academic gains has been of special interest in elementary schools, where intense emphasis has been placed on the development of literacy skills in early grades. Kellam, Mayer, Rebok, and Hawkins (1998) report results from a randomized control group analysis examining the effects of schoolwide PBS on reading achievement for children in early grades. Their results indicate that introduction of research-validated reading interventions in behaviorally chaotic classrooms was not associated with improved reading performance. Only when the same reading interventions were linked with schoolwide PBS were significant academic gains obtained. The basic message is that academic and behavioral supports must be intertwined. Children will not learn to read by being taught social skills, but they also will not learn to read if a good curriculum is delivered in a classroom that is disruptive and disorganized. Effective education involves a solid behavioral foundation, an empirically validated curriculum, and sound instruction.

Recent descriptive data support the value of combining academic and behavior support practices (Watson, 2003). One school district in Oregon that uses schoolwide PBS has 19 elementary schools, all of which were implementing an approved, phonics-based reading program. Between the 1997–1998 and 2001–2002 academic years, 13 of these schools chose to adopt and use schoolwide PBS. The schools were not randomly assigned, and no experimental design was employed. Watson compared the percentage of third graders who met the state reading standards in each school for 1997-1998 with those meeting the same standards in 2001–2002. The changes in percentages of students meeting the state reading standards over this time period for the 13 schools adopting schoolwide PBS are provided in the top panel of Figure 13.10. The similar change scores for the 6 schools that did not adopt schoolwide PBS are provided in the lower panel of Figure 13.10.

It is important to recognize that the data provided by Watson are purely descriptive and could be associated with a range of variables. They do, however, provide documentation of changes consistent with those patterns reported by Kellam et al. (1998). Combining behavior support and effective instruction may be an important theme for school reform in the United States. Further, controlled analysis of the combined value of academic and behavioral supports is needed.
SUMMARY

Schoolwide PBS is an approach to school discipline that incorporates specific practices and systems designed to produce socially important and sustained improvement in the behavioral culture of a school. The approach is based on a three-tiered model of prevention that incorporates different levels of support, depending on the need a student exhibits. The application of PBS at the whole-school level is now occurring throughout the United States. Preliminary, descriptive information suggests that schools are able to implement the approach when they receive appropriate technical assistance; that once the practices and systems are implemented, they endure; and that these practices and systems are associated with socially important improvements in children’s behavioral and academic gains.

FIGURE 13.10. Changes in the percentages of students meeting state reading criteria for third grade in elementary schools from academic year 1997–1998 to academic year 2001–2002. Thirteen schools (top panel) adopted and used schoolwide PBS during this period, and 6 schools (bottom panel) did not.
PBS is the emerging rubric for addressing problem behavior in school, home, community, and work contexts. Chapters in this text focus appropriately on the role of PBS for improving behavior support for individuals. The present chapter extends this message to a larger scale. Support for individuals is essential, but insufficient if PBS is to have broad social impact for all students. We suggest here that extending the logic of PBS to larger social systems (e.g., schools) is both feasible and necessary if the benefits of this approach are to become an integrated part of our society.

REFERENCES


