Abstract

This chapter describes the features of a schoolwide system for positive behavior interventions and supports. Implementation steps are discussed to build both a positive schoolwide social culture, and the capacity to support individual students with more intense support needs. This chapter highlights that (a) problem behavior in schools is both a significant social challenge and a barrier to effective learning, (b) traditional “get tough” strategies have not proven effective, (c) the foundation for all behavior support in schools begins with establishing a positive social culture by defining, teaching and rewarding appropriate behaviors, (d) additional behavior support procedures based on behavior analysis principles are needed for children with more intense behavior support needs, and (e) school personnel are demonstrating both the ability to collect and use quality improvement data systems, and the value of those systems for improving schools.

To prevent minor, as well as serious, antisocial behavior, educators around the world are turning to a comprehensive and proactive approach to behavior management commonly referred to as School-Wide Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (SWPBIS; Simonsen, Sugai, & Negron, 2008; Sprague & Golly, 2004; Sugai & Horner, 2010). SWPBIS is based on the assumption that actively teaching and acknowledging expected behavior can change the extent to which students expect appropriate behavior from themselves and each other. When consistent expectations are established by all adults, the proportion of students with serious behavior problems will be reduced and the school’s overall social climate will improve (Bradshaw, Koth, Bevans, Ialongo & Leaf, 2008; Bradshaw, Koth, Thornton, & Leaf, 2009; Colvin, Kame’enui, & Sugai, 1993).
The procedures that define SWPBIS are organized around three main themes: prevention, multi-tiered support, and data-based decision making. Investing in prevention of problem behavior involves (a) defining and teaching a set of core behavioral expectations (e.g., be safe, respectful, responsible), (b) acknowledging and rewarding appropriate behavior (e.g., compliance to school rules, safe and respectful peer to peer interactions, and academic effort/engagement), (c) systematically supervising students in classrooms and common areas, and (d) establishing and implementing a consistent continuum of consequences for problem behavior. The focus is on establishing a positive social climate, in which behavioral expectations for students are highly predictable, directly taught, consistently acknowledged, and actively monitored.

Multi-tiered support is available beyond the prevention level for those students at-risk for, or engaging in, antisocial behavior. The greater the student’s need for support the more intense the support provided. Within the SWPBIS approach, emphasis has been on using the principles and procedures of applied behavior analysis as a foundation for defining the antecedents and maintaining consequences for behavioral problems and completing functional behavioral assessments to confirm these relationships. These assessments, in conjunction with person-centered planning (Eber et al., 2009), are used to design effective and efficient procedures for addressing patterns of unacceptable behavior.

Data-based decision making is a theme that is interwoven throughout SWPBIS, and builds on the assumption that staff members, family and students will be most effective in the design of preventive and reactive supports if they have access to regular, accurate information about the behavior of students. It is equally important to regularly assess adherence or fidelity to support plans, and to share those data with implementers. The value of data for decision making is emphasized for both the design of initial support systems, and the ongoing assessment and adaptation of support strategies (Sugai & Horner, 2009). The SWPBIS approach includes adoption of practical strategies for collecting, summarizing, reporting, and using behavioral and fidelity data on regular cycles.

Evidence suggests that high fidelity and sustained use of SWPBIS practices can alter the trajectory of at-risk children toward destructive outcomes, and prevent the onset of risk behavior in typically developing children. It is expected that effective and sustained implementation of SWPBIS will create a more responsive school climate that supports the twin goals of schooling for all children: academic achievement and positive social development (Walker, Ramsey, & Gresham, 2004; Zins, Weissberg, Wang, & Walberg, 2004).

Implementing and sustaining an organized, schoolwide system for providing behavior supports and teaching social behavior is the foundation for effective prevention efforts in schools. In addition to the direct benefit it has on student behavior in school, such a system creates the context for school-based efforts to support effective parenting (Dishion & Kavanagh, 2003; Metzler et al., 2008). When school personnel have a shared vision of the kind of social behavior and environment they want to promote, they are in a position to inform and collaborate with families in creating the same kind of supportive environment at home and in the community. When educators are clear about how to use rules, positive reinforcement, and mild, consistent negative consequences to support positive behavioral development, they are better able to coordinate their efforts with those of parents. As a result, parents will know more about their children’s behavior in school and will be able to provide the same types of supports and consequences that the school is providing. In the same manner, parents can provide valuable input regarding the features of support plans that are feasible and acceptable from their perspective.

As of 2010, over 13,300 schools across the country were actively implementing SWPBIS. These schools report reductions in problem behavior, improved perceptions of school safety, and improved academic outcomes (Bradshaw et al., 2008; Horner et al., 2009). This chapter
School-Wide Positive Behavioral Supports

describes how to establish and implement a schoolwide positive behavior intervention and support system, and outlines the research evidence supporting its adoption and implementation. To first establish the context in which SWPBIS is being adopted, we begin by framing the challenge that antisocial behavior presents in schools.

The Challenge of Antisocial Behavior in Schools

Growing numbers of children and youth are exposed to a host of risk factors such as poverty, abuse, neglect, criminal behavior or substance use by parents, harsh and inconsistent parenting practices, and limited exposure to language and reading prior to the beginning of their school careers (Patterson, Reid, & Dishion, 1992). As a result, the number of children and youth with aggressive, noncompliant, and acting-out behaviors in schools has been rising steadily (Loeber & Farrington, 2001). Many students are entering the public school system unprepared for the experience of schooling and often bring emerging antisocial behavior patterns with them. Antisocial behavior and high levels of aggression evidenced early in a child’s life are among the best predictors of academic failure and delinquency in later years (Patterson et al., 1992). If these students do not receive key support services and protective factors, it is unlikely that they will be able to get off this destructive path, if it has not been accomplished by the end of the primary grades (Biglan, Wang, & Walberg, 2003). Rather, these individuals will likely require continued behavioral supports and social and services (e.g., mental health, welfare, criminal justice) throughout their lives to reduce the ongoing harm they cause to themselves and others.

Antisocial behavior patterns compete directly with the instructional mission of schools. The result is decreased academic achievement and a lower quality of life for students and staff members alike (Metzler et al., 2008), illustrating the clear link that exists between antisocial behavior in the school, school violence, and academic achievement. It is not possible to achieve national educational goals and meaningful school reform without addressing these disturbing conditions in a comprehensive manner (Colvin et al., 1993; Elias et al., 1997). SWPBIS systems and practices must be a component of the mosaic of school, community and family mosaic prevention opportunities, and cannot address the entire scope of the problems described above.

Some School Practices Can Contribute to Antisocial Behaviors

Many school practices contribute to the development and prevalence of antisocial behavior and the potential for violence. Because of the historical emphasis on detecting individual child or youth characteristics that predict antisocial behavior and violence, many important systemic variables are often overlooked as contributors (Colvin et al., 1993; Hawkins, Catalano, Kosterman, Abbott, & Hill, 1999; Mayer, 1995; Walker et al., 1996). These include, among others:

1. ineffective instruction that results in academic failure;
2. failure to individualize instruction and behavior support to adapt to individual differences (e.g., ethnic and cultural differences, gender, disability);
3. lack of administrator involvement, leadership and support;
4. inconsistent and low quality implementation among staff members;
5. inconsistent and punitive classroom and behavior management practices;
6. lack of opportunity to learn and practice prosocial interpersonal and self-management skills; and
7. failure to assist students from at-risk (e.g., poverty, racial/ethnic minority members) backgrounds to bond and engage with the schooling process.
Common Response to Behavioral Problems: Exclude Students with Office Referrals, Suspensions, and Expulsions.

Often when a student misbehaves, the first line of response involves increasing monitoring and supervision of the student, restating rules, and delivering sanctions (e.g., referrals to the office, out of school suspension, and/or loss of privileges). Teachers or administrators may come to a point of frustration and attempt to establish a “bottom line” for disruptive students (usually out of class referrals, in or out of school suspensions, and expulsions). Unfortunately, these “get tough” responses produce immediate, short-lived relief for the classroom or school but do not facilitate the progress of the student who may already be disengaged from the schooling process.

Paradoxically, while punishment practices may appear to work in the short term, they may merely remove the student for a period of time, thus providing a brief respite but no real long term benefit for school personnel or the student. All too often, these practices also can lead school personnel to assign exclusive responsibility for behavioral change to the student or family and thereby prevent meaningful school engagement and development of solutions. The use of sanctions, without an accompanying program of teaching and recognition for expected positive behavior, may merely displace the problem elsewhere (to the home or the community). There is little evidence of the long-term effect of these practices in reducing antisocial behavior (Irvin, Tobin, Sprague, Sugai, & Vincent, 2004; Skiba & Peterson, 1999). In fact, evidence suggests that schools using punishment practices alone promote more antisocial behavior than those with a firm, but fair discipline system (Mayer, 1995; Skiba & Peterson, 1999). Research shows clearly that schools using only punishment techniques tend to have increased rates of vandalism, aggression, truancy, and ultimately school dropout (Mayer, 1995). In addition, these types of sanctions are disproportionately applied to students of minority status, which increasingly results in legal actions against schools, and school districts (Skiba et al., in press; Skiba & Rausch, 2006; Skiba, Michael, Nardo, & Peterson, 2002).

For students with chronic problem behavior these negative practices are more likely to impair child-adult relationships and attachment to schooling rather than reduce the likelihood of problem behavior (Walker et al., 2005). Punishment alone, without a balance of support and efforts to restore school engagement, weakens academic outcomes and maintains the antisocial trajectory of at risk students. Instead, the discipline process should help students accept responsibility, place high value on academic engagement and achievement, teach alternative ways to behave, and focus on restoring a positive environment and social relationships in the school.

If Not Punishment, Then What Is the Solution?

Research strongly suggests that if schools raise their level of achievement, behavior decreases; and if schools work to decrease behavior problems, academics improve (Hawkins, Catalano, Kosterman, Abbott, & Hill, 1999). So why not do both? Schools can serve as an ideal setting to organize efforts against the increasing problems of children and youth who display antisocial behavior patterns (Mayer, 1995; Sprague & Walker, 2005; Sugai & Horner, 1999). We next describe the conceptual and practical basis for this assertion.

Conceptual Basis for SWPBIS

A solid research base exists to guide an analysis of the administrative, teaching, and management practices in a school and design alternatives to ineffective approaches. An important theme from this research is that no single intervention practice should be viewed as meeting all of the behavioral challenges in schools. Student behavior is complex and influenced by many variables within the school, within the family/community, and within the student. The behavior sup-
port strategies needed to establish a schoolwide social culture need to be supplemented with classroom management interventions and individualized supports for students with chronic and intense patterns of problem behavior. The range of student behavior support needs requires that interventions target schoolwide, classroom and individual student support strategies. Educators in today’s schools must be supported with systematic professional development and ongoing coaching to adopt and sustain effective; cost-efficient practices in this regard (Gottfredson, 1997; Gottfredson, Gottfredson, & Czeh, 2000; Walker et al., 1996). A well-developed body of research evidence on school safety indicates that (a) early identification and intervention with at-risk children in schools is feasible; (b) the risk of dropping out of school, delinquency, violence, and other adjustment problems is high unless these children are helped; (c) academic recovery is difficult if early intervention is not provided; and (d) universal interventions need to be combined with interventions targeted to specific problems (Gottfredson, 2001; Osher, Bear, Sprague, & Doyle, 2010; Tolan, Gorman-Smith, & Henry, 2001). Effective schools have shared values regarding the school’s mission and purpose, carry out multiple activities designed to promote prosocial behavior and connection to school traditions, and provide a caring nurturing social climate involving collegial relationships among adults and students (Bryk & Driscoll, 1988; Gottfredson et al., 2000; Scott & Eber, 2003).

Changing School Climate Is an Essential Element

The biggest challenge schools face is to enhance their overall capacity to create and sustain positive and behaviorally effective schools. Schools should provide schoolwide positive behavior interventions and supports at the point of school entry and continue implementing through high school (O’Donnell, Hawkins, Catalano, Abbott, & Day, 1995). It is never too late, nor never too early, to support children and youth in our schools (Loeber & Farrington, 1998). Research indicates that schools can create establish clear expectations for learning and positive behavior, while providing firm but fair responses to problem behavior. Students will be more motivated if they are in environments that are perceived as safe, positive, predictable, and fair (Osher et al., 2010). Increased motivation is associated with improved acquisition of skills that will be of value for years following formal education (Katz, 1997).

Thus, the challenge becomes how to develop schools capacity to adopt and sustain the processes, organizational structures, and systems that enable them to carry out these effective interventions (Gottfredson et al., 2000; Fixsen, Naoom, Blase, Friedman, & Wallace, 2005). The problem for schools is not the lack of efficacious programs (those that work), but rather it is one of effectiveness (helping typical schools adopt and carry out proven interventions).

Where to Start: No Child Left Behind Principles of Effectiveness

Education professionals may use the USDOE Office of Safe and Drug Free Schools “Principles of Effectiveness” as an organizing framework for planning and implementing whole-school approaches to safety and effectiveness. The principles recommend: (a) a local needs assessment of the risk and protective factors affecting the school, families, and the community (including the status of support systems); (b) establishment of measurable goals and objectives by the school that are integrated with school improvement planning; (c) selection of scientifically-based and research-validated curricula and interventions; and (d) implementation of a comprehensive and rigorous evaluation plan, which includes evaluation of inputs (resources, staff, materials), outputs (actual costs, description of the process of implementation), outcomes (e.g., student behavior change), and impact (overall satisfaction with project products and outcomes). In the next section, SWPBIS implementation and the Principles of Effectiveness as an organizing framework are introduced.
Implementing SWPBIS

SWPBIS is a systems-based approach that promotes safe, healthy, and successful schools. Researchers at the University of Oregon (see Sprague, Sugai, & Walker, 1998; Sprague et al., 2002; Sugai & Horner, 1999; Taylor-Greene et al., 1997; www.pbis.org) have tested the feasibility and efficacy of SWPBIS approaches in reducing school behavior problems and promoting a positive school climate. SWPBIS is a multiple system approach to addressing the problems posed by students displaying antisocial behaviors and coping with challenging forms of student behavior. The key practices of SWPBIS are:

- clear definitions of expected appropriate, positive behaviors are provided for students and staff members;
- clear definitions of problem behaviors and their consequences are defined for students and staff members;
- regularly scheduled instruction and assistance in desired positive social behaviors is provided that enables students to acquire the necessary skills for the desired behavior change;
- effective incentives and motivational systems are provided to encourage students to behave differently;
- staff members commit to staying with the intervention over the long term and to monitor, support, coach, debrief, and provide booster lessons for students as necessary to maintain the achieved gains;
- staff members receive training, feedback and coaching about effective implementation of the systems; and
- systems for measuring and monitoring the intervention’s effectiveness are established and carried out.

The foundation for an effective and sustainable school discipline program is simple, but powerful when all the elements are in place (Sugai & Horner, 2002). We outline these foundation elements here.

Improving Discipline and School Climate Is a Top School Improvement Priority

First, the improvement of school discipline and climate should be one of the top school improvement goals. With competing resources and goals, if work in this area is not a priority, progress will be difficult. Schools also need assistance to quantify and make decisions about discipline and climate goals in the same manner as academic or attendance outcomes.

Administrator Leadership

Every school needs a principal committed to SWPBIS leadership and participation. In the absence of administrative leadership and district support (e.g., policy, fiscal) it will be difficult to effect broad-based changes. Hallinger and Heck (1998) reviewed the evidence on the principal’s contribution to school effectiveness. They concluded that principals exercise a measurable effect on schooling effectiveness and student achievement. Kam, Greenberg, and Walls (2003), reported that the ability of principals to initiate and sustain innovations in their schools is related to successful program implementation. The length of time administrators have spent in the school setting and the leadership characteristics they show in maintaining good relations with teachers, parents, school boards, site councils, and students also are positively related to successful implementation outcomes. Gottfredson et al. (2000) and Ingersoll (2001) found that high levels of administrative support were also associated with reduced staff member turnover.
Commitment to Participate by All or “Most” Adults in the School

It is important to secure a commitment to implement the intervention by at least 80% of school staff members. Some schools have chosen to use a “vote” to assess this level of commitment. Our experiences have revealed some approaches that can move a group of colleagues toward program implementation (Embry, 2004).

- **Talk about cost and benefit.** All adults involved need to know the costs (time, funds) and benefits (reduced behavior, increased teaching time) of working to improve school discipline. For example, presentations by school leaders on the anticipated effects of program adoption (e.g., studies indicate that as discipline problems and referrals to the principal’s office are dramatically reduced, teaching time is substantially increased (Scott & Barrett, 2004)).

- **Emphasize the long-term benefits.** It also is useful to discuss the “higher good” of prevention and how much your colleagues value such outcomes as better academic achievement, prevention of alcohol, tobacco and other drug use, less teacher stress, etc. These discussions may prove to be more powerful and persuasive than simply appealing to authority or law (i.e., we have to do it!).

- **“Try before you buy.”** SWPBIS is comprised of many smaller techniques (reward systems, teaching rules; Embry, 2004) that can be promoted as trial products. You can ask innovators in your building to share their successes, or arrange visits to schools that have already adopted SWPBIS practices with success.

- **“Go with the goers.”** The practice is far more likely to be adopted if you recognize and support people who get on board early, as well as encourage those who are reluctant, or even resistant (Rogers, 2002).

To begin the journey toward establishing a more effective behavior support program, it is optimal to begin by completing the needs assessment such as that presented in Figure 33.1 (only the schoolwide section is included herein). The Assessing Behavior Support In Schools survey developed by George Sugai and his colleagues (Sugai, Lewis-Palmer, Todd, & Horner, 2000; available for no charge at www.pbis.org) outlines the essential features of SWPBIS at the schoolwide (Figure 33.1), common area, classroom, and individual student levels. The survey asks respondents to reflect on whether the practice is in place in their school and to choose which items are priorities for improvement. The schoolwide behavior support team should refer to these goals often, and modify them as indicated by a review of key data regarding effectiveness (e.g., office discipline referrals, rates of problem behavior on the playground).

Select Evidence-Based Practices

The SWPBIS (Sprague et al., 1998; Sugai & Horner, 1994) approach was developed at the University of Oregon and the National Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (www.pbis.org, an Office of Special Education Programs funded research center). The goal of SWPBIS is to facilitate the academic achievement and healthy social development of children and youth in a safe environment conducive to learning. SWPBIS involves providing embedded and ongoing staff development and coaching aimed at improving school and classroom discipline and associated outcomes such as school violence, and alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use.

SWPBIS includes intervention techniques based on over 30 years of rigorous research regarding school discipline from education, public health, psychology, and criminology disciplines. SWPBIS components address whole-school, common area, classroom, and individual student support practices and may be used in combination with other evidence-based prevention programs such as the Second Step Violence Prevention Curriculum (Committee for Children,
Effective Behavior Support (EBS) Survey
Assessing and Planning Behavior Support in Schools

Name of school ____________________________________________ Date _____________
District __________________________________________________________________ State ____________

Person Completing the Survey:
• Administrator   • Special Educator  • Parent/Family member
• General Educator   • Counselor  • School Psychologist
• Educational/Teacher Assistant • Community member • Other

1. Complete the survey independently.
2. Schedule 20-30 minutes to complete the survey.
3. Base your rating on your individual experiences in the school. If you do not work in classrooms, answer questions that are applicable to you.

   To assess behavior support, first evaluate the status of each system feature (i.e. in place, partially in place, not in place) (left hand side of survey). Next, examine each feature:
   a. “What is the current status of this feature (i.e. in place, partially in place, not in place)?”
   b. For those features rated as partially in place or not in place, “What is the priority for improvement for this feature (i.e., high, medium, low)?”

4. Return your completed survey to _____________________________________________ by _____________

SCHOOL-WIDE SYSTEMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Current Status</th>
<th>Priority for Improvement</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In Place</td>
<td>Partial in Place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. A small number (e.g. 3-5) of positively &amp; clearly stated student expectations or rules are defined.</td>
<td>School-wide is defined as involving all students, all staff, &amp; all settings.</td>
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<td>2. Expected student behaviors are taught directly.</td>
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<td>3. Expected student behaviors are rewarded regularly.</td>
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<td>4. Problem behaviors (failure to meet expected student behaviors) are defined clearly.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Consequences for problem behaviors are defined clearly.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Distinctions between office vs. classroom managed problem behaviors are clear.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Options exist to allow classroom instruction to continue when problem behavior occurs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Procedures are in place to address emergency/dangerous situations.</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. A team exists for behavior support planning &amp; problem solving.</td>
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Figure 33.1 Sample needs assessment for planning and evaluating SWPBIS
Representative school team members are trained to develop and implement positive school rules, direct teaching of rules, positive reinforcement systems, data-based decision making at the school level, effective classroom management methods, curriculum adaptation to prevent problem behavior, and functional behavioral assessment and positive behavioral intervention plans. Teams are also coached to integrate SWPBIS systems with other prevention programs to maximize effectiveness.

How Is SWPBIS Implemented?

The process for adopting and sustaining SWPBIS revolves around a school team typically composed of 5–10 individuals that includes an administrator, representative faculty/staff, and local family/community members. While it may seem ideal to train all school staff members all the time, it will rarely be feasible or sustainable to provide training at this level due to cost and logistical concerns. However, a representative group of adults, representing all school stakeholders (including students at the secondary level) can learn the key practices of SWPBIS and set goals for improvement. The stakeholders can then function as leaders or coaches as they inform their

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Current Status</th>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Priority for Improvement</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In Place</td>
<td>10. School administrator is an active participant on the behavior support team.</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partial in Place</td>
<td>11. Data on problem behavior patterns are collected and summarized within an on-going system.</td>
<td>Med</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not in Place</td>
<td>12. Patterns of student problem behavior are reported to teams and faculty for active decision-making on a regular basis (e.g. monthly).</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>13. School has formal strategies for informing families about expected student behaviors at school.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>14. Booster training activities for students are developed, modified, &amp; conducted based on school data.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>15. School-wide behavior support team has a budget for (a) teaching students, (b) on-going rewards, and (c) annual staff planning.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>16. All staff is involved directly and/or indirectly in school-wide interventions.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>17. The school team has access to on-going training and support from district personnel.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>18. The school is required by the district to report on the social climate, discipline level or student behavior at least annually.</td>
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Name of School ___________________________________________________________ Date _________________

Figure 33.1 Continued
groups of the team activities (e.g., at staff or area meetings) and give support and encouragement during the improvement process. Increasingly, district- and statewide initiatives are supporting the dissemination of SWPBIS training and coaching systems.

While participating in training, and after mastery of the basic material, it is recommended that school discipline teams (building administrator, representative teachers, and other stakeholders) meet approximately once per month to review training content as needed and to set up a regular process of reviewing and refining the school discipline plan (initial goals are developed during training) and other, school site-based activities. A format for these meetings should be specified and each meeting should last between 20 to 60 minutes.

**Set and Promote Schoolwide Expectations**

A critical first task for the implementation team is to establish schoolwide behavior rule teaching related to student-teacher compliance, peer-to-peer interaction, academic achievement, and academic study skills. Using the general framework of “safety,” “respect,” and “responsibility,” and directly teaching lessons throughout the year to establish and maintain the patterns of behavior associated with these personal qualities is recommended. In addition, posting the rules publicly in posters, school newsletters, local media, announcements, and assemblies can be valuable.

**Plan to Recognize Expected Behavior and Actively Supervise Students**

The school will need to establish a consistent system of enforcement, monitoring, and positive reinforcement to enhance the effect of rule teaching and maintain patterns of desired student behavior. Reinforcement systems may include schoolwide token economies in the form of “tickets” stating each school rule delivered by all adults in the building. These tokens are to be backed up with weekly drawings and rewards for the teachers as well. Each school should implement the procedures to fit their school improvement plan and specific discipline needs.

**Table 33.1** What does School Wide PBS look like?

- Train and support a representative school team (20–30 hours of formal training)
  - Principal actively leads and facilitates the process
  - Take time to plan, coach, and continuously improve
- Set and promote school wide expectations
  - Plan to teach expected behavior
  - Plan to recognize expected behavior and actively supervise
- Use performance-based data for active decision-making
  - Office discipline referral patterns (www.swis.org)
  - Changes in academic performance, attendance
  - Student safety and climate surveys
- How do I know it’s working?
  - Expected behaviors taught or reviewed 20+ times/year
  - Students actively supervised in all school areas
  - Students acknowledged frequently for expected behavior
  - 4:1 positive : negative interactions
  - >80% students & adults can describe school-wide expectations
- Safe, respectful, responsible
Define and Effectively Correct Problem Behaviors and Their Consequences for Students and Staff Members

As stated earlier, schools using excessive sanctions experience greater levels of vandalism and other forms of misbehavior (Mayer, 1995; Skiba & Peterson, 1999). Positive reinforcement is more effective than punishment because it does not result in the type of counter-aggression and withdrawal (fight or flight) that punishment can produce and because it does not focus teachers’ attention on detecting and correcting rule violations.

Students should see rules applied fairly. When they feel that rules are unevenly applied, students are more likely to misbehave. Schools with clear rule and reward systems and business-like corrections and sanctions also experience fewer problems. These schools signal appropriate behavior for students and respond to misbehavior predictably. Students in such schools are clear about expected behavior and learn there are consequences for misbehavior. When rules are consistent, students develop a respect for rules and laws, and internalize beliefs that the system of governance works (Bryk & Driscoll, 1988; Gottfredson, 1987; Gottfredson, Gottfredson, & Hybl, 1993).

Report and Use Data for Active Decision Making

The efficiency of team problem solving is enhanced by providing the team with data-based feedback to schools regarding their implementation of basic SWPBIS practices (cf. Assessing Behavior Support in Schools survey; Figure 33.1) and the impact of implementation on problem behavior as indexed by discipline referral patterns (cf. School-Wide Information System [SWIS], www.swis.org; Sprague, Sugai, Horner, & Walker, 1999; Sugai, Sprague, Horner, & Walker, 2000). The goal is to use highly efficient data systems that allow teams to ask: (a) are we implementing evidence-based, SWPBIS practices, and (b) are the practices having an effect on the behavior of students? Data on implementation of SWPBIS practices typically are collected, summarized and reported quarterly, and data on student behavior are collected continuously, and reported to the school team weekly, the school faculty monthly, and the school district annually. Irvin et al. (in press) provide an evaluation documenting the value that regular access to student behavioral data has for typical school teams.

Examples of data collection and display tools for assessing implementation of SWPBIS can be found at www.pbssurveys.org (Boland et al., 2004). Similarly, an example of a web-based information system designed to help school personnel to use office referral data to design school-wide and individual student interventions is available at www.swis.org (May et al., 2000). It is anticipated that as schoolwide systems become more common an increasing array of data collection options will become available to schools. A major focus for research on educational systems-change lies in the process, and impact of providing teachers, administrators, families and students with regular, accurate information for decision making (Newton, Horner, Algozzine, Todd, & Algozzine, 2009).

Implementing for Sustainability

Too often educational innovations, even efficacious innovations, have been implemented but not maintained (Fixsen et al., 2005; Latham, 1988). If SWPBIS is to result in educational change at a scale of practical relevance, schools adopting these procedures will need to sustain the practices for multiple years. An important feature of the SWPBIS approach is inclusion of formal strategies for improving the likelihood of such sustained implementation. These include (a) the development of training materials at each school that make it easier to implement from year to year, (b) the implementation of policies for using SWPBIS, and reporting student data, and (c) the
training of district-level coaches who are available to provide booster training for school teams, initial training for new faculty members, and help with problem solving around more intense challenges. The district coaching role is designed to help a school team sustain effective practices through periodic perturbations in the staffing, organization, or fluctuation in student behavior. The issue of sustaining educational innovation is not unique to SWPBIS, and remains a worthy focus for research.

What Is the Evidence for SWPBIS Efficacy?

A number of researchers (see Embry & Flannery, 1994; Knoff & Batsche, 1995; Taylor-Green et al., 1997) have studied SWPBIS practices. The effects of the program are documented in a series of studies implemented by researchers at the University of Oregon (Horner et al., 2009; Metzler, Biglan, Rusby, & Sprague, 2001; Sprague et al., 2002; Taylor-Greene et al., 1997, see also www.pbis.org for the latest research studies and reports). Studies have shown reductions in office discipline referrals of up to 50% per year, with continued improvement over a three-year period in schools that sustain the intervention (Irvin et al., 2004). In addition, school staff report greater satisfaction with their work, compared to staff in schools that did not implement SWPBIS (Ross, Romer, Endrulat, & Horner, 2010). Comparison schools typically show increases or no change in office referrals, along with a general frustration with the school discipline program.

Randomized controlled trials indicate that implementation of SWPBIS is related to reduction in problem behavior, improved perception of safety, improved organizational health, and improved academic performance (Bradshaw et al., 2008; Horner et al., 2009; Horner et al., in press). In studies employing the SWPBIS components, reductions in antisocial behavior (Sprague et al., 2002), vandalism (Mayer, 1995), aggression (Grossman et al., 1997; Lewis, Sugai, & Colvin, 1998), later delinquency (Kellam, Mayer, Rebok, & Hawkins, 1998; O’Donnell et al., 1995), as well as alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use (Biglan, Wang, & Walberg, 2003; O’Donnell et al., 1995) have been documented. Positive changes in protective factors such as academic achievement (Kellam et al., 1998; O’Donnell et al., 1995) and school engagement (O’Donnell et al., 1995) have been documented using a schoolwide positive behavior support approach such as SWPBIS in concert with other prevention interventions.

Conclusion

This chapter describes a schoolwide system for positive behavior support, the implementation steps used to build both a positive schoolwide social culture, and the capacity to support indi-
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Individual students with more intense behavioral needs. The major messages are that (a) problem behavior in schools is both a significant social challenge and a barrier to effective learning, (b) traditional “get tough” strategies have not proven effective, (c) the foundation for all behavior support in schools begins with establishing a positive social culture by defining, teaching and rewarding appropriate behaviors, (d) additional behavior support procedures based on behavior analysis principles are needed for children with more intense behavior support needs, and (e) school personnel are demonstrating both the ability to collect and use quality improvement data systems, and the value of those systems for improving schools.

At this writing, randomized controlled research studies are in progress to examine the effects of SWPBIS with greater precision and control. Current evaluation results, however, are encouraging. Schools throughout the country are demonstrating the ability to adopt and implement SWPBIS practices with fidelity (Bradshaw et al., 2008; Horner et al., 2004; Horner, et al., 2009). When schools adopt SWPBIS practices they are reporting reductions in problem behavior, improved perceptions of school safety, and improved academic performance. Recent Illinois evaluations (Illinois PBIS Network, 2011) also report that schools establishing a positive social climate are proving more effective in their implementation of individual, wrap-around support for students with high behavior support needs.

The progress is encouraging. Schools are able to improve and to demonstrate that change is linked to valued student outcomes. If these gains are to become important at a national scale, additional research is needed to demonstrate experimentally controlled effects, strategies for improving efficiency, and strategies for supporting sustained implementation.

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