

The PBS Express

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Philadelphia's Newsletter on Positive Behavior Support

Published by Public Citizens for Children and Youth with support from the Stoneleigh Center

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WHAT IS P.B.S.?

Positive Behavior Support (PBS) is a process of proactive school discipline where valued behaviors are taught, modeled, practiced and encouraged for all students and staff. PBS is a shift from more traditional models of discipline in schools, where behaviors are typically addressed only after they become problematic. PBS has gained national recognition as a way to foster a positive school climate. As a result, schools ex-

perience less disruptive behaviors and greater academic success.¹ School-wide PBS integrates determined outcomes, behavioral science, research-proven practices, and systems change as a way to prevent the development and intensifying of problem behaviors, thus maximizing academic success for all students.²

Some Key Features

- *Staff are responsible for teaching students how to act in ways that*

are appropriate, kind and safe across all school settings, such as the classroom, hallway, bathroom, cafeteria and recess yard.

- *When children are following the rules, there is a school-wide system in place to recognize and reward positive behaviors.*
- *There are a wide range of consequences available when students do not follow the rules.*
- *Data is kept on all students so their progress can be evaluated and future interventions can be planned.*



School-wide PBS is associated with decreased office referrals, increased instructional time, more efficient use of resources, increased school safety.

- U.S. Office of Special Education Programs Technical Assistance Center on School-Wide Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

A number of the primary features of PBS can be found in other disciplinary and behavioral health models. This includes **School-Wide Positive Behavior Supports (SWPBS)**

and School-Wide Effective Behavior Support (SWEBS). PBS is also referred to as a more evolved **Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)**, if SWEBS

sounds particularly familiar, that's because past initiatives in Philadelphia have mostly fallen under SWEBS. Single School Culture also calls for a positive behavior component.



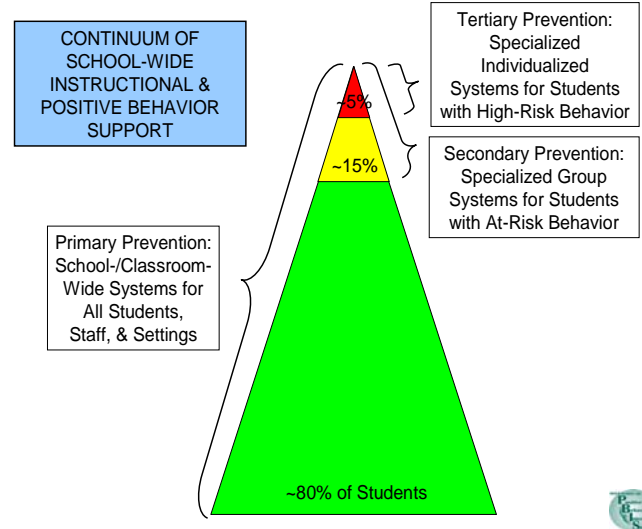
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Three levels of prevention

PBS has three levels of prevention. The universal system is designed to be effective in maintaining positive climate and preventing problem behavior for 80 – 90 percent of students. For students who continue to demonstrate at-risk behavioral problems (5-15 percent), specialized group interventions are designed at the secondary level (Tier 2) of

Prevention. A tertiary-level (Tier 3) of services is recommended for the 1 percent to 7 percent of students whose needs require higher levels of intervention and are considered to have high-risk behavior.



City-wide planning and support for positive behavior support

Because PBS seeks to create change within systems, implementation is both a process of working from the top down and from the bottom up, meaning that city-wide support and individual schools are key in driving the success associated with PBS.

In March 2008, **Public Citizens for Children and Youth (PCCY)**, the **School District of Philadelphia**,

and the **United Way** hosted a forum for PBS with more than 95 educators, behavioral health providers, representatives of government, philanthropy, and interested citizens who were eager to learn more about “growing” PBS in Philadelphia.

A multidisciplinary team emerged from that forum to assist in planning and implementing PBS in Philadelphia on a district-wide scale. Our

team now includes representatives from **PCCY, the School District, United Way, Devereux, the Office of the Mayor, the Education Law Center of Pennsylvania, as well as other educators and behavioral health experts who are dedicated to creating change in school climate.**

And elsewhere . . .

PBS has many participants

PBS is currently being implemented to some degree in 7,500 schools nationally.³ Some states and larger school districts have adopted broad policy in order to strengthen the likelihood of success and broaden its level of implementation. To see what is going on in these states and districts, check out their websites:

State-wide:

Illinois:

www.pbisillinois.org

Maryland:

www.pbismaryland.org

District-wide:

Los Angeles Unified School District: [http://notebook.lausd.net/portal/page?](http://notebook.lausd.net/portal/page?_pageid=33,911578&_dad=ptl&_schema=PTL_EP)

[_pageid=33,911578&_dad=ptl&_schema=PTL_EP](http://notebook.lausd.net/portal/page?_pageid=33,911578&_dad=ptl&_schema=PTL_EP)

New York City: <http://schools.nycenet.edu/D75/pbs/default.htm>

PBS produces results

With the support of school administrations and a high adherence to fidelity, PBS has been shown to produce results that benefit students, staff, and the overall climate of a school. Because data collection and review is a critical component of PBS, evidence of change should be easily accessible. Most schools choose to use a data entry program such as SWIS

(School-wide Information System) which is an affordable and time efficient way to compile data. Illinois PBIS recently released its end of the year report on PBIS initiatives across the state, and found the following characteristics for schools that *fully implemented* the process:

- Middle schools gained more instruction time
- Schools showed a

greater decline in office discipline referrals

- Schools scored higher results on standardized achievement tests
- Fewer suspensions were linked to schools who had fully implemented PBS
- Schools were able to focus on more students with higher needs.

See www.pbisillinois.org to access the full report.

EFFORTS IN PHILADELPHIA

Currently, there are at least 27 schools that have participated in PBS training in Philadelphia. These schools have received grants from the United States Department of Education and the Pennsylvania Department of Education. Additionally, the School District of Philadelphia's Office of Specialized Services has arranged professional devel-

opment for principals across the district to learn the critical components of PBS.

Philadelphia elementary and middle schools that have received grant-funded technical assistance and support in PBS between 2002-2007 are:

A.B. Day
Birney
Bryant
Carnell
Cayuga
Clemente
Dobson
F.S. Edmonds
H.R. Edmunds
Elkin
Finletter
Fulton
Hopkinson

Logan
Kearny
Kinsey
McCall
McKinley
Meehan
Pennypacker
Potter-Thomas
Rhoads
Rush
Sheppard
Stearne
Stetson
Wister

Spotlight On:

Isaac A. Sheppard Elementary School 120 W. Cambria Street, Philadelphia, PA 19133



PBS Program:

Sheppard Sense

Technical assistance and support provided through:

Devereux Center for Effective Schools

Sheppard Elementary is a K-4 school located in the Kensington neighborhood of Philadelphia. The school began the process of PBS training in October 2003. Sheppard was one of 11 Philadelphia schools that received a grant from the US Department of Education to develop and implement a PBS system. They have successfully maintained a school-wide prevention program since that time.

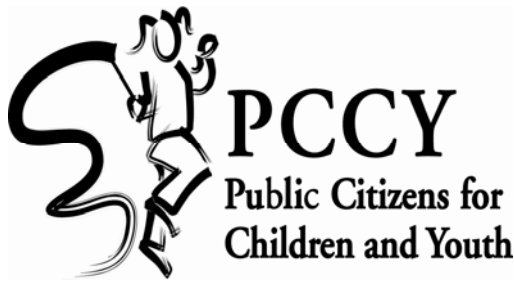
Sheppard Sense revolves around the following behavioral expectations for students to follow:

I'm Respectful, I'm Responsible, and I'm Doing My Best. Each expectation consists of rules that are taught through classroom lessons at the beginning of the school year. For example,

In the classroom setting, *Sheppard Sense* means...

- **I'm Respectful** = Use kind words
- **I'm Responsible** = Follow adult directions, raise hand to speak, and come to class prepared
- **I'm Doing My Best** = Work on assigned tasks

Sheppard's principal, James Otto, states that the universal, (primary) level of prevention, "works like a charm for 90 % of our kids." He believes PBS has helped the staff create an environment where children can feel happy and safe, which is especially important in a neighborhood challenged by high levels of drug activity and other types of crime. Mr. Otto is hoping to receive more training in PBS as well as more support from contracting social service providers, so that Sheppard can achieve full implementation of secondary and tertiary levels as well.



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"It has helped us maintain our positive learning climate and supported our outstanding achievement. We are proud to be the top performing school in our region and we believe SWEBS is an important part of our success.."
-School principal

Public Citizens for Children and Youth

Founded in 1980 as Philadelphia Citizens for Children and Youth, PCCY serves as the region's leading child advocacy organization and works to improve the lives and life chances of its children. Through thoughtful and informed advocacy, community education, targeted service projects and budget analysis, PCCY seeks to watch out and speak out for children and families. PCCY undertakes specific and focused projects in areas affecting the healthy growth and development of children, including after-school, child care, public education, child health, juvenile justice and child welfare. PCCY is a committed advocate and an independent watchdog for the well-being of children.

The **Stoneleigh Center** is supporting PBS in a major way by sponsoring a fellow at PCCY! Kelly Siegel, MSW, LCSW, joined PCCY in June 2008 as a Stoneleigh Center Junior Fellow. Kelly will be working with PCCY's education colleagues to help advance the implementation of PBS within the School District of Philadelphia. The Stoneleigh Center is a foundation established to help improve the well-being of children and youth through fellowship awards that support outstanding individuals whose work unites research, policy and practice. For more information, please visit www.stoneleighcenter.org

BIG NEWS!!!

The **United Way of Southeastern PA** has proposed a \$200,000 challenge grant to the School District of Philadelphia to begin implementation of PBS in groups of cohort schools across two regions of the District. Funding would go toward training and technical assistance for the participating schools, as well as for creating positions within the School District to help sustain PBS. We send a big **thank you to the United Way** for its support and commitment to change in Philadelphia schools!

For more information . . .

To find out more on citywide efforts to promote PBS throughout the School District of Philadelphia, or receive a copy of *The PBS Express*, contact PCCY at 215-563-5848, ext. 36. You can also find *The PBS Express* at www.pccy.org, under "Publications."

FOOTNOTES:

1—Devereux Center for Effective Schools

2—Sugai, G. & Horner, R. (2006). A promising approach for expanding and sustaining school-wide positive behavior support. *School Psychology Review*, 35, 245-259.

3— U.S. Office of Special Education Programs Technical Assistance Center on School-Wide Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports