

Enhancing Family-School Partnership within PBIS Q&A

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Question:

How do you make early intervention practical and motivate schools to do it in a system that relies on data to prove significant educational impact for a student to become eligible for interventions? ...especially given limited resources... (Jerri C.)

Answer:

As I understand the question, this is in response to my comment that PBIS focuses on prevention of and early intervention for challenging behavior. The focus has to be on building school capacity by providing ongoing training and coaching support at the district level (read: district-level initiatives and buy in are as critical as building admin support), and creatively reallocating staff time and roles (so that additional resources are not required).

Question: Was the data also disaggregated by race? For example, did you find white, API, Latinx, etc. parents were considered more engaged with the schools/teachers? Same with the hindering factors...was the data disaggregated by race to identify which families this is affecting more? (Lucas M.)

Answer:

No. Our sample was small and did not lend itself to this type of analysis.

Question:

I know the research focused on elementary schools, but is there some other research out there to support these and/or additional strategies at the secondary level? Thanks. (Colleen A.)

Answer:

The first reference below focuses on family engagement within elementary, middle and high schools implementing PBIS. The second article is not related to PBIS but does offer suggestions for increasing family engagement in middle and high schools.



- Baker, T. L., Wise, J., Kelley, G., & Skiba, R. J. (2016). Identifying barriers: Creating solutions to improve family engagement. *School Community Journal, 26*(2), 161-184.
- DeSpain, S. N., Conderman, G., & Gerzel-Short, L. (2018). Fostering family engagement in middle and secondary schools. *The Clearing House: A Journal of Educational Strategies, Issues and Ideas, 91*(6), 236-242.

Question Part 1:

Can you speak to how the teacher managed the regular communication strategy that existed in the school prior to beginning the study? As a teacher it is a challenge just to make sure I get CICO completed each day for my Tier 3 kids. (Harmony O.)

Question Part 2: What did the daily communication look like? That seems like a lot of work for teachers every day. (Jill P.)

Answer for Question Part 1 and 2:

This is in response to both this question and the previous:

To foster family engagement as part of their SWPBIS program, each of the schools in this study utilized daily teacher-family communication forms for all students that included campus school-wide behavioral expectations, information related to each student's behavior during the school day, and each school's hierarchy of consequences for addressing inappropriate behavior. These forms were embedded in the calendar/planner system the district used for students to record homework and other notes/reminders, and were sent home at the end of each school day with the expectation that they be read and signed by a family member, and returned to teaching staff the following day. In addition, administrators from each of the three schools reported that family members were regularly provided with information about SWPBIS and behavioral expectations during beginning of the year orientations and as part of the process for registering new students, at Parent Teacher Association (PTA) meetings, and in newsletters (translated in both English and Spanish) sent to all families. Schools A and C also reported having held parent information sessions specifically focused on teaching and acknowledging behavioral expectations in the home. (Excerpt from Strickland-Cohen & Kyzar, 2019)

Question:

So many families have experienced the phenomena around schools implementing initiatives and then informing families that this is what's happening. This contributes to the disempowerment of families, especially those who have, and continue to be marginalized. Is there something from your lens or from the research that speaks to the importance of engaging families and communities (stakeholders) BEFORE PBIS or other initiatives happen at the building or district level? (Jen C.)



Answer:

Engaging families in both the development and implementation of PBIS is recommended best practice and is included as part of published measures of implementation fidelity (see Tiered Fidelity Inventory; TFI). For schools that are already implementing, the inclusion of family's perspectives and actively taking those perspectives into account as part of continuous regeneration of PBIS practices is a way forward.

Question:

This is an amazing idea to engage parents right now for planning for next year, thank you for sharing. The feedback that was provided did you have fill in the blank options for parents or a ranking order with options? What platform did you use to get the survey out as well? (Amber T.)

Answer:

We conducted focus group interviews with families in which we asked general questions like, "Talk to us about positive experiences you've had in discussing your child's behavior with their teacher(s); what made these experiences positive? The data represent their unique ideas.

Question:

How did you outreach families who have a history of not responding back with school? Strategies? (Patricia J.)

Answer:

Consider "going to them." In the presentation several ideas for accomplishing this are discussed.

Question:

How does the daily communication tool compare to AVID's planner? (Seth P.)

Answer:

See description of daily communication tool and format above.

Question:

Were the focus groups conducted with interpreters? (Jen C.)

Answer:

Yes. In our case we had interpreters for family members who spoke Spanish.

Question:

Did the school develop a theory of action statement and plan to support their efforts with family engagement? (Luis E.)



Answer:

Yes. Prior to our study, family engagement was included as part of the district action plan. This, in fact, was what led to our study.

Question:

Great ideas! Seems like mostly for elementary schools. How about middle schools? (Susanne B.)

Answer:

Yes, our study was conducted specifically with families of elementary age students. See resources above re: middle schools.

Question:

Based on your research with this particular district and your knowledge and expertise, what is a suggestion that teachers across the country can do to support our families during this time of crisis? (Lori D.)

Answer:

In this time of crisis, not all families are in the same circumstances or need the same type of support. We need to consider how MTSS applies to families and provide materials and resources that suit families with a range of needs. Overall, I think that the best thing that we can do is to continue to reach out to families and provide them with resources with the clear message that "we are here to help" rather than "this is what we need you to do."

Question:

Our school struggles with family communication... Most families want phone calls or emails and teachers are finding it overwhelming to contact a list of parents each day. How do we stay in contact with families with their preferred method and not overload our teachers? Do we also include other adults in our building? Would you recommend weekly communication? (Rachael H.)

Answer:

The intervention that you use needs to be contextualized to match your resources. You offer a couple of nice suggestions here with creatively using staff time and decreasing the frequency to once per week (still well above what is typically provided). Also, identifying and using "preferred" modes of communication on a case-by-case basis may be more possible for families of students who require behavior support beyond Tier 1.

