



ASSOCIATION FOR POSITIVE BEHAVIOR SUPPORT

# Newsletter

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Association for  
Positive Behavior  
Support

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## APBS Board Update

APBS is now in its fourth year of existence and, for the first time, is operating with a new executive committee. All officers of the board are new to their roles, though each has served for at least one year on the APBS board. Having served as treasurer for the first 3 years, Glen Dunlap is the new president; Jennifer Zarcone is the new vice president; Cynthia Anderson is treasurer; and Rachel Freeman is the secretary.

In July, the entire APBS board met for an intensive, full-day planning retreat in Chicago. The purpose was to review the overall mission and goals of APBS, examine the current status and organizational structure, and develop new short- and long-term plans. Many ideas were exchanged and a clear commitment emerged to continue the development of an organization that is responsive to the needs and ambitions of the membership.

We anticipate that our next conference, in Boston on March 8–10 of 2007, will be even more successful. So don't forget that the conference Call for Papers is on the Web site ([www.apbs.org](http://www.apbs.org)) with a due date of September 15. As always, we look forward to your participation with the conference.

## Program-wide Positive Behavior Support: Early Stages and Next Steps

**Andy Frey**  
**University of Louisville**

The current knowledge base regarding intervention approaches that support social development for young children is promising (e.g., Serna et al., 2002) but limited. Many leading researchers in early childhood education have advocated for the use of Program-wide Positive Behavior Support (PWPBS) to support the social development of young children (e.g., Buschbacher & Fox, 2003). This approach is endorsed by multiple disciplines (e.g., special education, social work, psychology) and is particularly relevant to early childhood interventions. PWPBS is also supported by evidence suggesting that School-wide Positive Behavior Support provides effective processes and procedures for reducing the incidence of problem behavior in K–12 settings (Horner & Sugai, 2000; Walker et al., 1996). This article highlights the early stages of positive behavior support in early childhood settings (PWPBS), and focuses on some of the likely next steps to build upon these efforts.

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Two projects funded by the Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (*Center for evidence-based practice: Young children with challenging behavior*, 2006; *Center for Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning*, 2006) have advanced the emerging conceptualization of PWPBS, creating a modified continuum of behavior support in early childhood settings that includes four levels: 1) positive relationships with children, families, and colleagues; 2) creating supportive environments; 3) curriculum/instruction; and 4) individualized interventions. These projects have also provided support to numerous early childhood centers to implement PWPBS; created free, user-friendly training modules; and identified best practices for promoting social and emotional competency in young children (See <http://www.csefel.uiuc.edu/> and <http://challengingbehavior.fmhi.usf.edu/index.html>). Several recent PWPBS initiatives have demonstrated successful implementation of the model in early childhood settings. For example, The Valeska-Hinton Early Childhood Program in Peoria Illinois and the SEK-CAP Head Start program in Kansas reported successful implementation of PWPBS with assistance from the Center for the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning and The Center on Evidence-Based Practices: Young Children with Challenging Behavior (Dunlap & Fox, 2005; Hemmeter, Fox, Broyles, Burke, Jack, & Doubet, 2005; Quesenberry & Hemmeter, 2005). Additionally, the New Hampshire Center for Effective Behavioral Interventions and Supports has provided technical support and consultation for PWPBS efforts in 39 sites, including five of the six Head Start programs in the state (Muscott, Mann, Lapointe, & Lane, 2005)

At this point, what is needed is formative evaluations of PWPBS in diverse settings and summative evaluations examining the relation between implementation efforts and desired outcomes. As far as formative evaluations are concerned, a better understanding of what program and teacher characteristics facilitate or serve as

barriers to implementing PWPBS in early childhood settings is needed. Prior to engaging in summative evaluations, reliable and valid instruments to evaluate interventionists' competencies and adherence to PWPBS processes and procedures in early childhood settings are needed. Some have recently been created but require field testing and validation. For example, The Center for Social Emotional Foundations for Early Learning created the Inventory for Practices to Promote Social Development, which is designed as a self-report or observation tool. Horner, Benedict, and Todd (2006), as well as researchers at the University of Missouri-Columbia (B. Beckner, personal communication, August 11, 2006) have modified the School-Wide Evaluation Tool (SET, Horner et al., 2005). Additionally, Frey, Lingo, and Young (2006) have revised the Effective Behavior Support Survey (Sugai, Todd, & Horner, 2000) for use in early childhood. Finally, Muscott et al. (2005) revised the School Wide Information System (Horner & Todd, 2005), a web-based software program to store and organize office discipline referrals. While all of these instruments may have practical value, their reliability and validity have not yet been established.

The next phase of research should also focus on the social validity and promise of PWPBS. It should be noted that focusing primarily on reducing problem behavior will be insufficient for several reasons. First, problematic behavior is more difficult to operationalize in early childhood settings as some "problematic behavior" is developmentally appropriate (e.g., biting, hitting, and crying). Additionally, PWPBS uses suspensions and office referrals as dependent variables, neither of which are relevant in early childhood settings. Second, researchers must find ways to measure school readiness outcomes, both social and academic, for PWPBS to be perceived as a valuable process in early childhood education.

Once valid instruments to measure implementation fidelity are identified and PWPBS is determined socially valid by key stakeholders,

early childhood programs will need to demonstrate the ability to implement PWPBS with high levels of fidelity for several years and produce outcome data that determines the efficacy and effectiveness of PWPBS. Although many of these requirements are in place for SWPBS, they are just beginning to appear in the development of PWPBS (Frey, Faith, Elliot, & Royer, 2006). After these requirements have been satisfied, PWPBS will need to undergo another phase of research, one that employs randomized clinical trials to evaluate the efficacy of the approach. While the implementation of PWPBS is in the early stages of development, much has been learned from years of successful implementation of SWPBS in K–12 settings. Although much research is needed to assess PWPBS implementation, efficacy, and effectiveness, there appears to be a growing body of evidence to suggest that professionals in early childhood education settings are open to this approach and that positive behavior support promotes school success for children with learning and behavior problems. As PWPBS increases in popularity, which seems likely given its rate of adoption and emerging evidence base at the K–12 level, it will be important to establish a number of elements now considered requirements for efficacy research.

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## Membership Column – Family Members Needed!

At the last APBS conference, the membership committee noted that the majority of people attending the conference identified themselves as “professionals,” with the primary group being school-related individuals (such as teachers, administrators, and school psychologists). One group that we were sorely missing was parent and family members of individuals who are in need of behavioral support. As part of our mission, we are hoping to attract

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more individuals who characterize themselves primarily as parents or family members so that we can hear from them about their issues and concerns and how their needs can be met by our organization. Families can receive a reduced rate on an APBS membership.

There are several resources available to families who want to know more about PBS and related services. A good place to start is the PBIS Web site (<http://www.pbis.org>). They have a Web page specifically developed for families. The Kansas Institute for Positive Behavior Support (<http://www.kipbs.org>) also lists several resources for families. Just look under the Online Library section for resources. The Colorado Department of Education also has information for families (<http://www.cde.state.co.us/pbs/parentinvolvement.asp>). There are also several agencies around the country that can specifically provide services for families, so check with your local service agencies and schools as well.

In closing, we ask you to encourage families to attend the conference. Family members who attend the APBS conference could benefit in several ways. First, they will have access to state of the art information and resources. Second, they will have the opportunity to interact with experts in the field and to ask questions and share knowledge. Third, participants can meet other family members and share stories and information.

As members of APBS, we can encourage family involvement in several ways. First, we could encourage families to attend the conference and give us their feedback on important issues. Another way is to have family-oriented presentations and panels at the conference. We hope you will consider submitting a family-oriented presentation to APBS. If you do so, make sure that your target audience (families) is clear so that the conference committee can highlight it. Also, if you have specific suggestions for topics of interest to families, please contact either of us and we will pass them on to the conference planning committee. Finally, we hope to appeal to families more through newsletters (like this one), Web sites, and family organizations. If you have additional suggestions, we would love to hear them! Please feel free to contact either of us.

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## Promote Membership in APBS

You can help the Association for Positive Behavior Support by handing out flyers about [apbs.org](http://apbs.org) and encouraging people to become members. There are many ways to share information with others about the Association for PBS:

- Share this issue of the journal and newsletter with a friend (enclose a membership form from our Web site).
- Add APBS membership forms to your hand-out packets for workshops and conference presentations.
- In your presentations, add a slide promoting APBS; it is the only organization dedicated to positive behavior support.

**[www.apbs.org](http://www.apbs.org)**

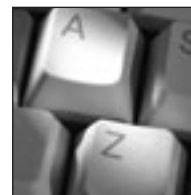
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### APBS Newsletter

Please consider contributing to the APBS Newsletter. The newsletter is a mechanism for sharing perspectives on PBS. Please consider submitting:



- Innovative Applications
- Member Perspectives
- Training Events & Workshops
- Resources and Materials
- Success Stories

If you would like to submit to the newsletter, please contact:

**Cindy Anderson**, (541) 346-2671

or via email ([canders@uoregon.edu](mailto:canders@uoregon.edu))