



ASSOCIATION FOR POSITIVE BEHAVIOR SUPPORT

Newsletter

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Association for
Positive Behavior
Support

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APBS President's Update Come See Our Improved Website

I encourage everyone who is interested in PBS to check out our new and improved website (<http://www.apbs.org>). It has a beautiful new look and is even more informative and helpful than ever! The APBS Website Committee has been working hard this past year to build a more user-friendly website for APBS. We are grateful to **Margaret Moore** and **Rachel Freeman** for chairing the committee and to all the committee members who have contributed, including:

- Craig Blum
- Shari Krishnan
- Sandra Laham
- Jennifer McFarland
- Kimberly Thier
- Bobbie Vaughn

The Website Committee also has worked hard to develop a policy and system of review regarding the content of the website so that information that is most relevant to APBS members can be posted in a timely fashion. This can be done by going to the Member Resource Log-In button on the front page of the website. The purpose of the APBS Members section is to increase opportunities for people to network, share information, and post important news. If you are a member of APBS, you can now learn about APBS Networks in your state, post information about yourself, advertise upcoming events in your region, and send job postings and invitations. Conference presentations will be available for those of

you who cannot attend the conference each year.

But there is a warning: The website is still incomplete! We are hoping that our members will send in information to post on the members' site. This is your chance to share your recommendations and information with your APBS colleagues!

Please send information for the website to Kristin Tate (tatekris@ku.edu).

Finally, don't forget to use the website to look for opportunities for networking in your area. We want members and colleagues to come together and develop a state or regional network of individuals who are interested in developing opportunities to collaborate or strategize around issues that are unique to the group. Take advantage of this opportunity and go to the APBS website (<http://www.apbs.org>), download the petition, and submit it to the Executive Director of APBS, Tim Knoster.

School-Wide Positive Behavior Support in Schools Struggling Academically

**Carie L. English and
Heather Peshak George**
University of South Florida

The challenges facing educators today continue to increase as academic standards become more stringent and student populations become more culturally and linguistically diverse. In addition, schools are confronted with an increasing need to

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("School-Wide Positive Behavior Support . . ." continued from p. 1)

maintain safe and orderly environments for a continually growing student population. As a result, schools turn to various programs or policies, such as zero-tolerance policies, character education programs, multicultural education, and proactive discipline systems. School-wide positive behavior support (SWPBS) is one such program that currently is being implemented in nearly 5,000 schools throughout the United States. SWPBS is a systems approach to enhance the capacity of schools to educate students in a positive and proactive environment. Supported by many years of research in applied behavior analysis, the premise of SWPBS is to focus on and teach pro-social behavior rather than to simply react to and punish inappropriate behavior. A SWPBS plan calls for educators to teach students how to behave and to acknowledge students for appropriate behavior on a regular basis. In addition, it emphasizes the use of function-based consequences for instances of inappropriate behavior.

As the number of schools successfully implementing SWPBS increases, many districts are increasing their capacity to implement SWPBS in all of their schools. Consequently, the issue of implementation in schools who are not meeting adequate yearly progress (AYP), as determined by the No Child Left Behind Act, has become evident. Successful implementation of SWPBS is dependent upon stable administrative support, faculty and staff buy-in, and a devoted, school-based team. Experiences in the state of Florida have shown that schools that are struggling academically tend to struggle with successful SWPBS implementation because they (1) show little interest in implementing SWPBS, or if interest is shown, (2) do not have stable administration, (3) do not have active administrative support on the team, (4) cannot get faculty buy-in, and (5) cannot get faculty to commit to being part of the team. Due to the increasing pressure for all schools to meet AYP, the Florida Department of Education has challenged the Florida Positive Behavior Support Project (FLPBS) to address this issue. As a result, SWPBS Plus was developed and is being piloted with one middle school and five high schools across three districts throughout Florida.

SWPBS Plus provides additional training, technical assistance, and on-site support to academically struggling schools to better prepare them for summer training. Specifically, a preparation process to assist schools with buy-in, team formation, training, and coaching prior to receiving the intensive SWPBS Training has been developed. SWPBS Plus aims to assist struggling schools in enhancing training outcomes in hopes of improving implementation efforts.

Once a school expresses interest in implementing SWPBS, several venues to secure buy-in and team formation are available to the school, depending on the needs of that school. These include, but are not limited to, faculty presentations, a school-wide action planning meeting, and targeting a specific setting or behavior within the school. After each step is complete, the school must survey the faculty to measure faculty buy-in. Only when the school has at least 80% of faculty buying into the process can the school go through summer training.

In addition to the above steps being implemented by the team, a FLPBS staff member spends time on the campus in building rapport with the faculty and students to better gauge how the school functions, to see what problems the school needs to address, and to demonstrate to faculty and students that the school is committed to this process and that the FLPBS Project is committed to assisting the school. In addition, the team and the coach receive additional training on behavior and the problem-solving process. As the school works to secure buy-in, the team also works with faculty, students, and families in identifying what each group believes should be recognized as the appropriate behavior and the appropriate consequence for inappropriate behavior in their school. Many school staff feel this is an essential element, given the diverse student populations of each of the schools. Several school administrators have expressed a need for a philosophical shift among faculty members on how they view and treat behavioral concerns demonstrated by minority students. As a result, information to assist faculty members on how to understand their students' behavior will be tied into several schools' SWPBS plans.

SWPBS Plus in High School

Located in one of the largest school districts in the United States, one participating high school has seen tremendous reductions in office discipline referrals (ODRs) since implementing SWPBS. Like many high schools in urban Florida, the school had not met adequate yearly progress since the inception of NCLB. Furthermore, the school grade given out by Florida, based on student performance on the state's yearly assessment, had fallen from a C to a D in each of the last four years. As a result of the academic pressures being felt at the school, little had been done to address behavior concerns on campus. The district identified the high school as a potential SWPBS school based on discipline data; furthermore, it identified the school as a candidate for SWPBS Plus based on the school's academic data. In conjunction with the Florida Positive Behavior Support Project (FLPBS), district staff presented information on SWPBS, as well as the school's

data, to the administrator. After a brief review of the data, particularly the ninth grade data, the administrator committed to implementing SWPBS.

The first step in the SWPBS Plus process was to form a team. The team began meeting with district PBS and FLPBS staff immediately. The team determined that the faculty and staff needed to hear a presentation by FLPBS staff to demonstrate not only the need for SWPBS but also the commitment by FLPBS staff to (a) work with the school staff in getting them prepared to implement and to (b) provide continued support following training to assist them in implementing the process. The presentation focused not only on what SWPBS was but also included the results of the “state of the school”; that is, what policies and procedures currently were being implemented within the ninth grade that might be contributing to the high rate of ODRs. In addition, the team surveyed staff, students, and parents on what behavior is expected at the school, as well as what items would be reinforcing to students. An anonymous survey indicated that more than 80% of the ninth-grade faculty and staff were willing to try SWPBS. Although others expressed concern, the administration and team were confident in moving forward.

After summer training, the school began implementation in the ninth grade with its 442 students, the majority of whom were male (59%). Furthermore, 58% of students were Caucasian, 27% African American, and 10% Hispanic. Finally, 53% of students received free or reduced lunch and 13% received special education services. The team developed expectations, a reward system, and a system to teach students the new SWPBS process. At the end of the first year of implementation, the school saw a reduction from 195 referrals per 100 students to 14 referrals per 100 students. That was a 93% reduction in ODRs for its ninth-grade community. Furthermore, staff, students, and parents expressed continued support for the SWPBS process. Thus, the school expanded the process to its tenth-grade students this school year and plans to continue to add the process to its eleventh and twelfth grades in the upcoming years. In addition, the school is awaiting the results of the 2007–2008 state assessment to learn if its hard work has resulted in academic improvements as well.

Summary

It is our hope that the SWPBS process will better prepare academically struggling schools to successfully implement SWPBS. Through the success of SWPBS, more students will be in class, resulting in a greater opportunity for them to learn. We also hope that schools will be-

gin to apply the problem-solving process used in SWPBS to academic concerns within their school, which in turn may result in better academic outcomes. As the schools continue to progress through the SWPBS Plus process and begin implementation, the impact of the process on the preparation and implementation phases of academically struggling schools will be seen.

Learning and Growing Chicago-Style

**Randall L. De Pry,
Lisa Bowman-Perrott, and Hank Bohanon**

The 5th Annual International Conference on Positive Behavior Support was by all measures a resounding success. Over 1,000 participants met in Chicago this past March to reflect on the theme “Expanding the World of PBS: Science, Values, and Vision.” One of the highlights of the conference was the unveiling of our new website (<http://www.apbs.org>). APBS members now have access to a “Members Resource” section that provides content that is only available to our members. Another new feature allows for the purchase or renewal of memberships online. Presentation Power Points have also been posted on the web site for those who were unable to attend the conference or missed a session of particular interest.

The conference provided a unique opportunity to learn, share, and network. One example of this occurred during our Student Forum session on Friday. Undergraduate and graduate students met and began a conversation about how they can increase student participation and representation in APBS activities, committees, and leadership. Since the conference, this group has developed action items and is moving forward with a number of activities that will enhance student participation and involvement in APBS. Your help in getting the word out to students who might benefit from participation with this group is greatly appreciated. For additional information, contact me at the e-mail address on the next page.

The 2009 International Conference on PBS will be held next year in Jacksonville, Florida (March 26–28); however, you don’t need to wait until next March to participate in learning, sharing, and networking opportunities. Continue your own professional development by staying current with research published in the *Journal of*

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Positive Behavior Interventions. Consider increasing your involvement in APBS by joining a committee or running for the board. At the local level, consider working within your own state, region, or province to create or join an existing APBS Network (see website for states that have networks or for guidelines on how to form a network). If you have additional ideas that you would like to share with the Membership Committee, please feel free to contact us at the e-mail addresses below. Finally, a special welcome is extended to those who joined APBS while attending the conference—thank you and welcome!

Randall L. De Pry (rdepry@uccs.edu)
 Lisa Bowman-Perrott (lbperrott@tamu.edu)
 Hank Bohanon (hbohano@luc.edu)

6th International Conference on Positive Behavior Support

The 6th International Conference on Positive Behavior Support is an international conference dedicated to promoting research-based strategies that combine applied behavior analysis and biomedical science with person-centered values and systems change to increase quality of life and decrease problem behaviors. The Association of Positive Behavior Support (APBS) is made up of professionals, family members, trainers, consumers, researchers, and administrators who are involved and interested in positive behavior support. For information regarding both the Association and the Conference, please visit the APBS website (<http://www.apbs.org>).

**Become an APBS member now!
 See website for details. Contact
 Randall De Pry (rdepry@uccs.edu) or Jennifer Zarcone
 (Jennifer_Zarcone@urmc.rochester.edu) for more
 information about the benefits of
 becoming a member.**

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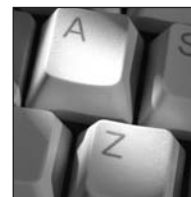
As one of your benefits of APBS membership, you are able to access the electronic version of the *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions* online. You will be able to view and search issues back to 1999.

Go to the SAGE website society member subscriptions activation page (<https://online.sagepub.com/cgi/activate/basic>). Enter your Your APBS Member Number in the appropriate field, select APBS from the drop-down menu, and click submit. Follow the instructions to complete your user set-up. Once complete, you can access JPBI online at the JPBI website (<http://jpbi.sagepub.com>). Please note, your online access begins with your first print issue. New members should wait to receive their first print issue before attempting to register for online access.

Another new feature is OnlineFirst, which posts online articles that have completed production ahead of print production. OnlineFirst is also available at SAGE's JPBI website (<http://jpbi.sagepub.com>).

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:

Carie English, (813) 974-1898
 or via e-mail (cenglish@fmhi.usf.edu)

STAY INFORMED!

Visit the website regularly for updates!

<http://www.apbs.org>