National attention has been focused on violence prevention and the provision of appropriate educational and mental health services for children and adults at risk for or engaged in problem behavior, such as defiance, truancy, aggression and property destruction. Decades of research show that these individuals need safe, effective, and positive environments at school, at home, and in the community. Within such nurturing environments, children and adults are more likely to thrive socially, succeed academically, and become contributing members of society. To underscore the importance of promoting these outcomes, in October 2014, the U.S. Department of Education awarded more than $70 million in grants to create safe and effective learning environments in schools and increase community mental health services throughout the U.S. Most recently, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA, 2015) mentions the use of positive behavior support to improve student outcomes and school conditions for student learning.

Consistent with this initiative, the Association for Positive Behavior Support (APBS) will be holding The 13th International Conference on Positive Behavior Support in San Francisco, California March 23-26, 2016. This year’s conference is expected to bring in 1500 participants from over 12 countries. In addition to the United States, participants are expected from Australia, Canada, Hong Kong, Japan, the Netherlands and Saudi Arabia. The conference will include over one hundred fifty conference sessions, numerous pre and post conference workshops and over fifty poster presentations. The conference will provide professionals, family members and consumers with the latest research and practice on creating safe school and community environments for children and adults in which proactive, positive behavior supports are implemented to prevent problem behavior, to teach socially responsible behavior, and to promote academic achievement. Information regarding the APBS organization or the APBS conference can be found on the organization’s website www.apbs.org.

APBS is an international organization dedicated to improving the social behavior, academic achievement, and quality of life of children and adults who engage in problem behavior. Practitioners use evidence-based practices to build effective environments in which children and adults receive the structure, support and encouragement they need to reduce problem behavior, increase learning, and develop social-emotional skills. Interventions and supports aim to improve individuals’ health and safety, social relationships, school success and community participation. Twenty years of positive behavior support research has shown that skillful implementation by teachers, parents and community-based professionals helps individuals make meaningful progress toward these goals.
APBS is a multidisciplinary organization made up of professionals (e.g., teachers, researchers, administrators), family members, and consumers committed to the application of positive behavior support within the context of the school, family, and community. In schools, positive behavior supports are provided within evidence-based, multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS) that include: (a) universal, systems level support for the whole school; (b) targeted prevention for small groups of children and adults; and (c) intensive intervention for children and youth with complex needs for support.

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