

# Tips for Parents: Incorporating Positive Behavior Support (PBS) into the IEP

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# Tips for Parents

## Incorporating Positive Behavior Support (PBS) into the IEP

### Preparing in Advance:

- Call the school personnel who schedules IEPs and discuss with him or her what you should expect during a conference
  - Ask for a written copy of the parental legal rights, if you don't already have this information
  - Ask that a functional behavior assessment (FBA) of your child's behavior be completed and the results shared with you prior to the meeting (see FBA Training Manual on [www.behaviordoc.org](http://www.behaviordoc.org) )
  - Ask about other evaluations to be discussed at the conference
    - What are the results?
    - Request copies before the meeting
  - Discuss your preferences for how the conference will be run
    - Time
    - Location
    - Date
  - Discuss whom you would like to be in attendance
    - Your child, if appropriate
    - Family members
    - Child advocate
    - Special education teachers
    - General education teachers
    - Physical and/or occupational therapists
    - Speech and language therapist
    - PE teacher/Adaptive PE teacher
    - Music education teacher or therapist
    - School psychologist
    - School administrator
    - Special education administrator
    - Peers (possibly for just part of the meeting)
    - Professionals from community agencies
- Reflect on your family's strengths
  - In what areas can you provide helpful suggestions for the IEP?
  - What support does your family need to address target behavior at home?
- Discuss the conference with your child
  - Consider his or her preferences for participation
  - Ask about concerns

- Ask about your child's accomplishments
- If your child will participate, plan with him or her and the coordinator the supports that will be needed for your child to have meaningful participation
- Arrange transportation and/or child care, if needed
- Consider whether it would be helpful to visit your child's classes and take notes
- Consider whether it would be helpful to visit possible future placements for your child prior to the conference
- Consider having a family conference to enable your family members to provide perspectives
  - Discuss results of evaluations
  - Discuss family and individual strengths
    - For example- Could an older sibling help with Math?
  - Discuss behavioral concerns and results of the functional behavior assessment
  - Discuss and list areas that the IEP should address
    - Prioritize those you wish to work on the most
    - Review previous IEPs
      - Make sure the new IEP does not repeat the same goals and objectives unless it is appropriate to do so
      - Review progress of the previous year
        - Identify factors that have contributed to gains
        - Identify factors that have contributed to setbacks/lack of progress
- Communicate with staff from any community agencies, related service providers, teachers, or family members who will not be able to attend the conference
  - Write down their perspectives
- Write out your agenda for the meeting and share it with the coordinator in advance
  - Meet with coordinator, if necessary, to plan an agenda

## Connecting and Getting Started

- Greet everyone
  - If anyone is new to you, write down his or her name and position
- Clarify the purpose of the conference
  - Review the agenda
  - Suggest any preferred changes to the agenda
- Review the time frame
  - Identify people who may have to come and go so you don't miss the opportunity to hear from them

## Sharing Visions, Great Expectations, and Strengths

- Share your child's and family's visions for the future
  - What are your child and family's great expectations?
  - On what child and family strengths can you build?
- Ask others on the team to share their visions of the most desirable future for your child
  - These should be based on your child's:
    - Strengths
    - Preferences
    - Needs

## Reviewing Formal Evaluation, FBA, and Current Levels of Performance

- Ask any questions you wrote down in advance about the evaluation results you received
- Ask for clarification of any terms that are new to you
- Discuss the evaluation procedures and test results
  - Ask if anyone disagrees with the results
  - Discuss why the results may or may not accurately reflect your child's daily performance
- Specify current levels of performance in all areas requiring specially designed instruction
- Discuss the FBA (Why is the target behavior happening?)
  - What happens before the behavior?
  - What happens after the behavior?
  - What has been the consequence or reward?
- What hypotheses were discovered in the FBA as to why the behavior is occurring?
  - How were hypotheses tested?
  - What were the results?
- Using the FBA, precisely describe the behavior that occurs in school and home

- Discuss how these target behaviors occur in each setting
  - Discuss similarities and differences
  - Discuss what might account for any differences
- Compare rewards and consequences in each setting
- Based on the findings of the FBA, discuss how PBS should be considered in the development of all components of the IEP
  - Brainstorm ways to incorporate PBS into:
    - Changing environments (school and home)
    - Altering daily routines
    - Teaching new skills
    - Ensuring rewards or consequences

### **Sharing Resources, Priorities, and Concerns**

- Ask the coordinator to list on a chart:
  - Visions of the group for your child, especially related to appropriate behavior
  - Strengths of your child, family, and school
  - Preferences of your child
  - Major behavioral, academic, and social concerns at home and school
    - Who will need support?
    - Who can give support?
    - Plan how everyone can share his or her expertise and resources to create a comprehensive support program
- Prioritize the list, encouraging team agreement

### **Developing Goals and Objectives**

- Help generate appropriate goals and objectives (in light of current levels of performance) for all academic subjects, nonacademic subjects, and extracurricular activities that you believe will require specially designed instruction and/or support
- Make sure these goals and objectives are consistent with:
  - Preferences
  - Visions
  - Strengths
  - Priorities
  - Consider:
    - Social relationships
    - Future educational goals
    - Future career goals
- Make sure the goals expand the positive contributions your child can make to:
  - Family
  - Friends

- Community
- School
- Clarify who is responsible for each goal and objective
- Ask how the goals and objectives will be generalized to other settings
- Determine how the objectives will be evaluated
  - What procedures will be used?
  - What schedule will be followed?
  - How will you be informed of progress?

### **Developing Behavior Intervention Plan**

- Identify target behavior using:
  - Observable, measurable, and clear descriptions of behaviors
    - Don't use words that cannot be measured and observed like:
      - Aggressive
      - Frustrated
    - Do use observable and measurable words like:
      - Hitting with hands
      - Screaming
      - Lying down on the floor
  - Identify behavior conditions as specifically as possible:
    - Where the behavior is likely to occur
      - Recess, snack table, circle etc.
      - Hallway, passing period, restroom
    - When the behavior is likely to occur
      - Before music, after eating, during math
    - Who is around when behavior occurs
      - Teachers, peers, paraprofessionals
- Write at least two objectives for every target behavior (more may be appropriate)
  - One objective should be written to decrease target behavior
  - One objective should be written to increase new desirable or socially acceptable behavior to replace the target behavior
- Identify criteria that will be used to measure success:
  - Frequency
  - Accuracy of response
  - Duration
- Identify timeline for:
  - Implementation
  - Monitoring progress
    - Data collection
      - Who and when
      - Materials for data collection
      - Types of data collection

- Demonstration of mastery

### **Determining Placement**

- Ensure that the placement is the least restrictive and most inclusive environment
  - Does the placement enable appropriate individualized instruction?
  - Will your child have access to the general curriculum and will modifications be included?
  - Will the school ensure peer tutoring, mentoring, or cooperative grouping when appropriate?
  - Will your child have a sense of belonging with peers with and without disabilities?
  - Will PBS be fully implemented in the placement?

### **Determining Supplementary Aids/ Services**

- Ensure that supplementary aids/services are appropriate in each of the following dimensions:
  - Physical dimension
    - Mobility of student
    - Room arrangement
    - Seating
  - Instructional dimension
    - Access to general curriculum
    - Class work and homework
    - Assistive technology
    - Instructional strategies
    - Skill acquisition, maintenance, and generalization
    - Test taking
    - Grading
  - Social and Behavioral Dimension
    - Positive behavior support
    - Self-management skills
    - Peer support
    - Friendships
  - Team Collaboration Dimension
    - Paraprofessional, part or full time
    - Resource room assistance
    - Consultation from specialist(s)
    - Training for any or all members of the team

### **Determining Related Services**

- Determine the related services needed to ensure educational progress, how often services will be provided, and who will provide each service:
  - speech-language pathology and audiology services;

- psychological services;
- physical and/or occupational therapy;
- recreation, including therapeutic recreation;
- counseling services, including rehabilitation counseling;
- orientation and mobility services;
- medical services for diagnostic or evaluation purposes;
- school health services;
- social work services in schools;
- parent counseling and training; and
- transportation. (§ 300.24).

### **Addressing Assessment Modifications**

- What is the rationale for modifying assessment or taking alternative assessment?
- Which tests are given at the current grade level?
  - Which tests will be modified?
    - State-wide assessments
    - District-level tests
  - What modifications will be made?
    - Reading of the directions
    - Reading of the test
    - Quiet room provided
    - Calculator provided
    - Shortened test time
    - Lengthened test time
    - Other
  - If your child is taking alternative assessments, what will be the format?
    - Paper portfolios
    - Electronic portfolio
    - Video tapes
    - Other

### **Addressing Grading**

- Consider the possibility of the following grading systems for measuring progress:
  - Anecdotal/descriptive and portfolio grading
  - Checklists/rating scales
  - Contract grading
  - IEP grading

- Level grading- Indicating what grade level and semester level on which a student is working, for example: Third grade, second semester work.
- Mastery level/criterion systems: For example assigning a goal and marking when the student reaches that goal, such as 80% mastery in five out of five trials.
- Multiple grading- grading on ability, effort, and achievement. Report cards can then include a listing of the three grades for each content area, or grades can be computed by weighting the three areas.
- Numeric/letter grades
- Pass/fail systems
- Progressive improvement grading- As student takes tests, participates in learning activities, and receives feedback and instruction based on his or her performance throughout the grading period. Performance on cumulative tests and learning activities during the final weeks of the grading period are used to establish the student's grades.

## **Concluding the Conference**

- Ask for a summary of the major decisions and follow-up tasks
  - Orally
  - In writing
- Clarify who is responsible for any follow-up tasks and a date by which each is to be accomplished
- Clarify how PBS will be implemented
- Ask for a date to review the IEP implementation
- Determine how you will communicate as a team
  - Daily notebook
  - E-mail
  - Phone calls
- Review how progress will be measured and information shared
- Express appreciation for the team collaboration in decision making
- Affirm how valuable this alliance is to you and your family

## References

- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C. § 1400 *et seq.* (1999); 34 C.F.R. § 300.24 *et seq.* (1999); 64 Fed. Reg. 12,406-12,672 (1999) (primary federal special education statute that provides funding and sets out substantive and procedural requirements for state and local special education programs).
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