



IEP TIPS

Positive Behavior Interventions & Supports

What is PBIS?

Positive behavior interventions & supports (PBIS) are strategies that help students achieve healthy, pro-social relationships with others. These strategies are usually evidence-based and can be incorporated throughout a student's IEP. The team uses PBIS to create a **positive and supportive learning environment**. A student doesn't require a behavior-related disability to benefit--everyone does better with PBIS in place.

Least Restrictive Environment

Students with disabilities are required to be educated to the greatest extent possible alongside their nondisabled peers. The safest and most reasonable placement for this is called a student's **Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)**. Schools should use PBIS before removing a student from the general education setting, where their nondisabled peers are educated. Doing so is called changing their LRE, or educational placement. Parents must be part of any conversation regarding LRE.

Examples

Instructional modifications:

Observe patterns of behavior related to academic frustrations and modify workload or differentiate instruction accordingly based upon student's tolerance levels.

Classroom modifications:

Minimize triggers by changing the environment (offer preferred seating, noise cancelling ear phones, sensory supports like fidget toys).

Clear expectations:

Consistent and clearly-defined rules across school settings that the student can understand and realistically follow.

Positive reinforcement: Reward system that is appealing to the student and developmentally-appropriate for them.

Visual supports: picture schedules, visual timers, social stories, choice boards, behavior cue cards, and decision trees.

Staff training:

Training for school staff in deescalation techniques to respond to student behavior. Further training specific to the student's disability may also be helpful.

Services:

Some students may benefit from Social Work, speech or occupational therapy, social skills groups, 1:1 educational assistance, or other services that incorporate use of PBIS.

Specific needs

PBIS that are included in an IEP should always be specific to the student's needs. This means that the IEP team should regularly collect data and examine it to determine if each PBIS strategy is working or not. The team should meet frequently enough to determine if the student's goals, accommodations, modifications, LRE, and services are producing the intended behavioral outcomes.

Functional Behavioral Assessments

Some students may need more support from their IEP team. A **Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA)** may be used to determine the cause of a student's challenging behaviors and how best to address them. An effective FBA focuses on identifying the **function** of a student's behavior, or what the student is trying to **achieve** or **avoid** by exhibiting the behavior.

FBA's rely on collecting and analyzing data about the behavior, including antecedents (what happens before the behavior), the behavior itself, and the consequences (what happens after the behavior). FBA's are compiled using data taken from student observations by behavioral specialists, teachers, therapists, parents, and others.

Behavior Intervention Plans

After conducting an FBA, the IEP team will meet to interpret the results. The team may decide that a **Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP)** is warranted to address the student's needs. A BIP is a written plan that documents how the team will teach and reinforce positive behaviors. Most BIPs select 1-2 **target behaviors** identified in the FBA. The team establishes a plan for how it will address those behaviors using a range of interventions such as breaks, sensory strategies, planned ignoring, rewards and more. The team may also develop a crisis plan in case behaviors escalate to an unsafe level. The BIP is an opportunity to shape positive behavior using input from the student and parents. The IEP team should regularly examine the effectiveness of a BIP and make changes as needed.

If a student has a BIP, they may have certain disciplinary protections (legal rights). Please see DRNM's *Disciplinary Protections for Students with Disabilities*.



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