



IOWA BEHAVIORAL Alliance

...for positive behavior supports, dropout prevention, and mental health initiatives.

PBS Parent Involvement – An Iowa Value

Positive Behavior Support teams in Iowa have been developing plans and implementing strategies for parent involvement in PBS. Research shows that parent involvement in school programs increases the academic achievement and is a key factor in sustaining programs.

There is limited research that directly addresses issues of family life and family functioning as these considerations relate to processes of PBS. (Fox, Vaughn, Wyatte, Dunlap, 2002)

However, families have indicated a need for support that includes considerations of home routines and strategies for reducing stress that may trigger problem behavior. The principles of PBS can have a direct and positive impact on behaviors families identify as problem behaviors. Involving families in PBS efforts in schools can strengthen the home-school partnership and have an impact on behaviors in the home. Students have a better chance of succeeding academically and socially when parents and teachers understand each other's expectations and stay in touch with each other regarding these expectations. Defining behavioral expectations is at the center of PBS.

When the Sacred Heart PBS Leadership team in West Des Moines is discussing issues around behaviors, Julie Yungclas,

parent/family* representative can be heard commenting, "Here's what works with my kids." She brings the parent perspective to the planning and designing of the PBS program in their school. Rachele Bowers, Sacred Heart PBS coach, says the team spent a year preparing to implement PBS—attending trainings provided by Angelisa Braaksma and Brian McKeivitt through Heartland AEA 11 during the 2005-06 school year. Training included defining the expectations, identifying expectations by settings and developing teaching plans. Incorporating the parent perspective was an important part of the whole process.

Julie was an active member of the team in developing the reinforcement system. Students can use tickets earned for appropriate behavior to buy items from the PBS store. Julie coordinated with all the classroom parent volunteers to make the PBS store a traveling store that goes to the rooms every two weeks. Volunteer parents see the program in action and the results. Julie

shares information on PBS with parents by word of mouth talking informally at school functions and she is planning a presentation for Home and School (PTA). Brochures on PBS were distributed at parent/teacher conferences. Students and staff also wrote a paragraph about PBS and what it meant to them to share with parents at the conferences.

Parent Involvement from a Different Approach

Grinnell CSD (AEA 267) accesses family input through a non staff parent representative who serves on the local PBS Leadership Team and an

continued on page 3



The PBS Leadership Team at Sacred Heart School in West Des Moines meets in the 4th grade room after class. Team members (from left to right): Amy Vollstedt, technology; Rachele Bowers, coach/counselor; Beth Tracy, Student Support; Sue Bata, eighth grade; Linda Adamiak, first grade; Julie Yungclas, parent representative; Chris Robson, AEA school psychologist; and Tanya Richards, AEA school psychologist. Not visible: Eileen Rohwer, fourth grade; Jane Kinney, assistant principal; Amy Eischliman, fifth grade teacher and 2 student representatives (see article on page 2).

ALLIANCE update

Building the infrastructure through the AEs and school districts has been a major focus of the Alliance for 2006. Here is a recap of major events held this year:

- In January, training was held for School-wide Evaluation Tool (SET) observers from AEs and the Parent Educator Connection.
- In February, approximately 17 prospective coaches/trainers were trained by Rob Horner, from the OSEP's Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support Technical Assistance Center in Eugene, Oregon.
- In June, a meeting for prospective PBS schools (approximately 100 people, 15 teams) was held on the Drake campus with Rob Horner, from the OSEP's Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support Technical Assistance Center in Eugene, Oregon.
- In June, a statewide coaches meeting for over 100 coaches and team members was held on the Drake campus with Rob Horner, from the OSEP's Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support Technical Assistance Center in Eugene, Oregon.
- In September, over 450 PBS participants attended the 2nd annual Alliance conference.

- In September, 25 people were certified as School-wide Information System (SWIS) facilitators after completing training with Kelly Davis from Kentucky and Marla Dewhirst from Illinois.

- In October, regional trainings were held across the state to train teams in cohorts 3 and 4.

- In November, 24 new people attended a training to become School-wide Evaluation Tool (SET) observers.

- In November, 15 people attended prospective trainer/coach training with George Sugai from OSEP's Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support Technical Assistance Center.

- In November, approximately 20 PBS team members attended PBS training with George Sugai from OSEP's Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support Technical Assistance Center.

In addition, a training matrix was designed for PBS Trainers. The matrix identifies content, activities and outcomes for each level. We will be sharing this with AEs directors in the near future.

The net results of these efforts has been to truly build capacity in many AEs. We thank you for your collaboration.

Meaningful youth & community engagement

During the past summer, 4-H Youth Development Specialists with ISU Extension created three training modules and corresponding handouts related to integrating meaningful youth and community engagement within PBS frameworks.

The objective of the training modules is to assist PBS Coaches, PBS Leadership Teams, students, and community partners in identifying ways that youth

and community resources can be engaged in strengthening PBS concepts, strategies, and frameworks both within and beyond the school day.

The first training module examines the rationale for youth and community involvement. The second training module focuses on defining youth and community involvement within the PBS framework. The third training module emphasizes identifying strategies for meaningful youth and community engagement. The youth

and community involvement training modules are for use by Iowa PBS Trainers and 4-H Youth Development Specialists during statewide regional PBS trainings and for technical assistance site visits to individual PBS sites. If your PBS Leadership Team is interested in requesting a youth and/or community involvement technical assistance site visit by a 4-H Youth Development Specialist, please contact Deb Thomas at debra.thomas@drake.edu.



In addition to a parent representative, the Sacred Heart PBS Leadership team has two eighth grade students on the team. Will Heaston & Caitlyn Fuller provide valuable input regarding the best way to approach a problem from the student's perspective, why students are doing what they're doing and make suggestions on how to solve the problem. While this was their first time attending the PBS Leadership Team meeting, they were instrumental last year in helping to define behavior issues and develop positive reinforcements. At right, Jane Kinney, assistant principal.

advisory committee. The parent representative from the PBS Leadership team is also on the Partners in Education Committee, which is a community group sponsored through Grinnell Mutual Reinsurance. Having the parent/family representative participate on both committees helps provide a link between the PBS team and other committees. This provides the opportunity to collaborate on activities and support other initiatives. This group discusses and identifies ways to support PBS, bullying prevention, technology needs, fundraising and upcoming events. In addition, Grinnell has a Parent Advisory Committee comprised of some school staff and approximately 24 parents of Grinnell Middle School students. They meet monthly to review all programs at the school. Plans are underway to survey parents to determine the level of parent participation in PBS concepts in the home.

And Yet Another Approach

Webster City Middle School (AEA 8), in Webster City took a different approach. The PBS team recognized the valuable input that parents could provide regarding behaviors. At parent/teacher conferences, they asked for 2 family/parent volunteers from each grade level (8 parents total) to visit the school during the three busiest times of the day (before school, lunch hour and after school) to observe and respond to six questions:

1. Did you observe students being isolated from peers (sitting alone, etc)?
2. Did you observe groups of students who were intimidating to other students or adults?
3. Did you see many positive interactions between adults and students?
4. Did you observe respectful behavior by students (appropriate volume, hands to self, etc)?
5. Overall, did you perceive the atmosphere as safe and caring?
6. Suggestions for improvement?

Gary Janssen, associate principal, commented, "We were happy with the results. Overall, parents and the 8th grade student leaders who helped with this activity were impressed with the system/processes that we have in place for dealing with students during the three busiest times of the day. We were told we have a very inviting atmosphere. Several parents also said they would be willing to come back and help us again with other things."

"We have found that when we invite/ask parents to come in and do a specific task for us; they are more than willing." says Sara Trueblood, Webster City Middle School PBS coach. "Most parents can give us an hour or two when they can plan for it ahead of time. We have had much better luck with this than vaguely asking for parent volunteers. We could not function without the help of the parents in this school."

In Progress Story

Stacie Edmondson-Conrad is the parent/family representative on the McKinstry Elementary PBS Leadership Team in Waterloo. This year she is also the lead person for the local Community Parents and Staff Supporting Students (COMPASS), formerly the PTO. The team saw an opportunity to join the two operations to 1) increase parent involvement and 2) to get more parent involvement in PBS. As parents become more involved in the school, they can and will influence PBS. The McKinstry PBS Leadership Team has parent involvement in PBS as a priority for this school year. They are discussing ways to share information with parents about PBS and the positive results of PBS. Stacie is passionate about the concept that everyone in that school is part of one large family and we need everyone's participation and input to create an environment that is nurturing for all students. This clearly supports the principles of PBS.

**Family and parent are used interchangeably. Parent can also mean a primary caregiver, such as grandparent, aunt, uncle, neighbor, etc. Therefore, the term family is more inclusive or representative of who might be filling a parent's role.*

Fox, L., Vaughn, B., Wyatte, M., Dunlap, G. (2002). We can't expect other people to understand: Family perspectives on problem behavior. *EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN*, 68 (4), 437-450.

Another Idea:

A unique no cost reinforcer:

At Sacred Heart students could use their tickets to purchase the opportunity to read the announcements. Each day teachers submit the names of students who have exhibited positive behavior and the students' and teachers' names are read over the intercom.

Consider having your family representatives read the announcements. This would provide a great opportunity to have family members connect with PBS, students and teachers.

School-wide Evaluation Tool (SET) Results for Cohorts 3 & 4

Figure 1.

Cohort 4 SET Observation –
Expectation Taught Scores
and Mean Scores
2005- 2006

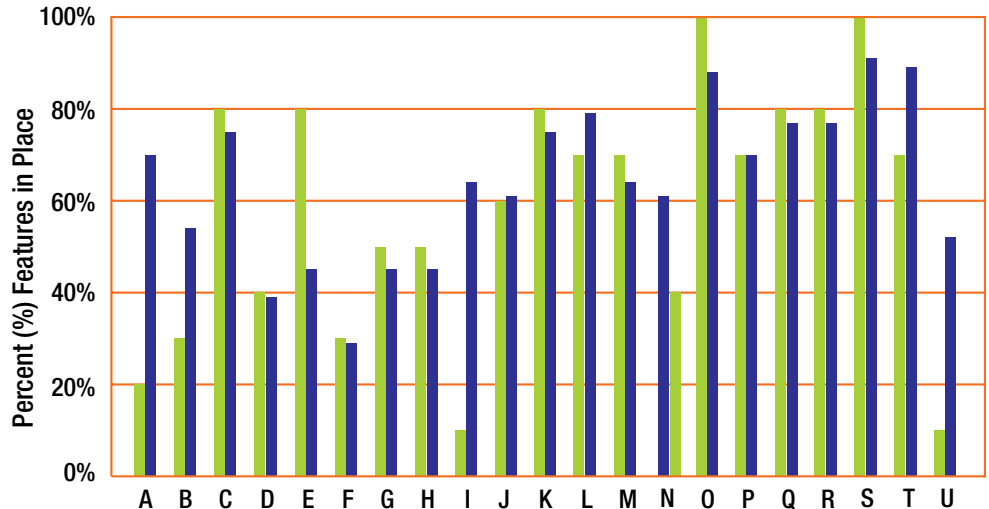


Figure 2.

Cohort 3 SET Observation –
Expectations Taught Scores
2004-2005 and 2005-2006

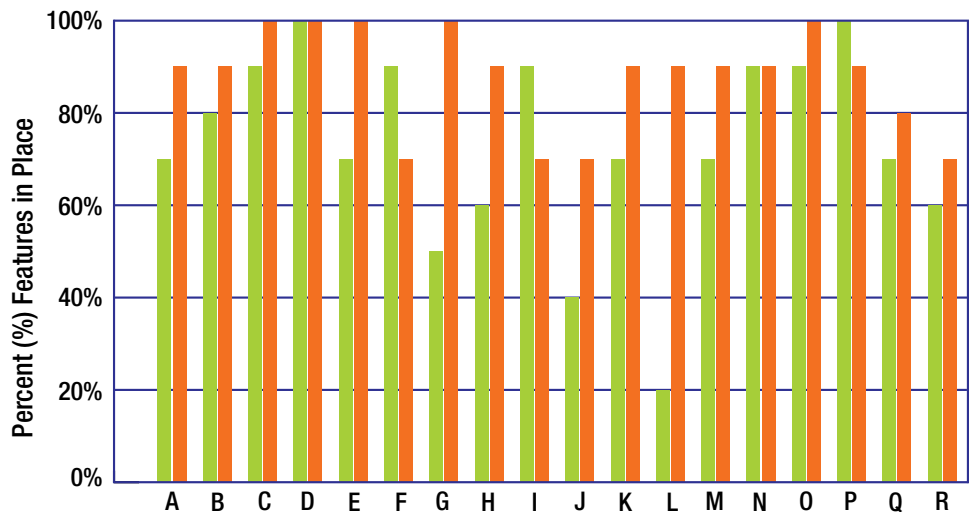
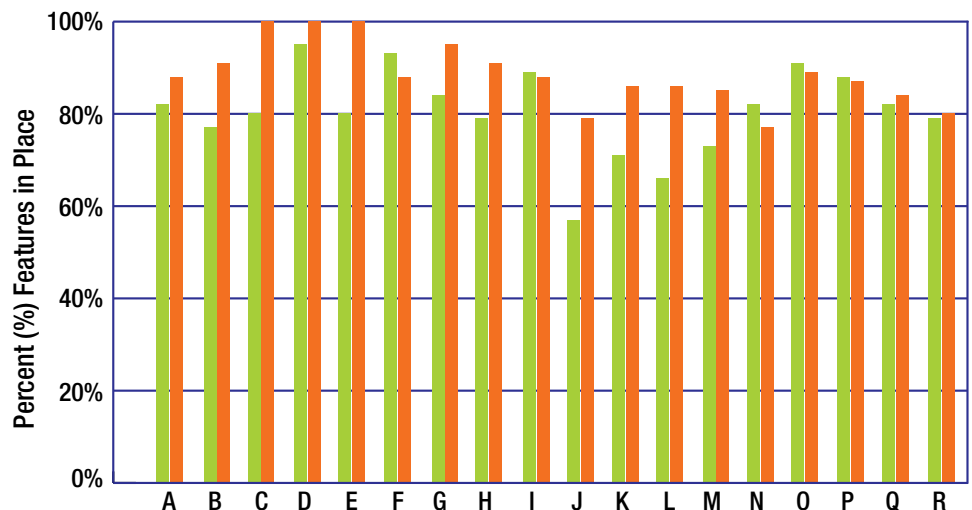


Figure 3.

Cohort 3 SET Observation –
Mean Scores
2004-2005 and 2005-2006



continued on page 5

ALLIANCE evaluation

1. What is the SET and why is SET administered?

SET stands for School-wide Evaluation Tool and it was developed at the University of Oregon. SET is a research-validated instrument to determine the degree to which schools are implementing school-wide PBS. Importantly, SET measures aspects of the school culture. SET is comprised of seven features: (a) expectations defined, (b) behavioral expectations taught, (c) acknowledgement procedures, (d) correction procedures, (e) monitoring and evaluation, (f) management, and (g) district level support. Whereas the school PBS teams themselves collect some types of data (Team Implementation Checklist [TIC], Office Discipline Referrals [ODRs]) to assess how well PBS is working, SET data are collected by an external observer.

2. When is SET done?

SET observers visit the schools once a year. Some schools are visited in the fall, but most schools are visited in the spring.

3. Who does the SET?

When the Alliance began their work in 2003, members of the evaluation team served as SET observers. As the number of schools grew, more individuals were trained. Presently we have Parent Coordinators from some AEAs, ISU 4-H youth specialists based across the state, and recently retired educators conducting these visits.

4. Can you describe the process?

After confirming a convenient time with the principal and coach, the SET observer spends 3-4 hours at the school. During this time, the observer first interviews the administrator (questions are sent out in advance), interviews 10 staff members and at least 15 students.

The observer also reviews documents which have been requested in advance. Finally the observer tours the building for signs of PBS implementation such as having their expectations posted in the hall. Data from one of more of these sources are used to compute a score for each feature.

Whereas the formal process is interesting, even more interesting are the informal comments. When asked what the PBS program meant to her, one fourth grader said that it “helped her see how to be and how not to be”.

5. Would you describe the training SET observers receive?

SET observers receive 4 hours of training, typically held once a year at the Resource Center in Des Moines. During this time, they are expected to reach acceptable levels of reliability before being assigned a site. In addition to this training, each observer accompanies an experienced observer prior to their first visit. The Alliance is hoping that more and more AEA staff will help with this aspect of the PBS work. We had 10 AEA staff members attending the Nov. 13, 2006 training.

6. What do the schools do with this information?

The entire process is collaborative. The Alliance sends the building principal and coach their results to be shared with all staff no later than two weeks after the visit. The Alliance is working on a SET-Technical Assistance model whereby we can review the findings and provide resources or assistance as indicated in a timely manner.

7. What does the Alliance do with this information?

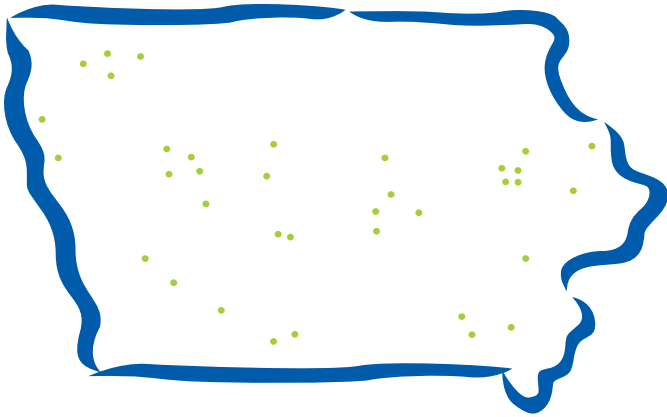
The Alliance views the SET data as extremely important. The SET findings tell us how well our training was prepared and delivered, what are the contextual factors that enhance or distract from PBS implementation progress, and many other relevant conclusions. The Alliance evaluation team compares the SET data with the TIC data. Most often the SET data are compared within a school rather than across schools. That is to say, the important information is not how School A compares with School B but rather how School A in year 1 compares with School A in year 2. In all these analyses, data are kept confidential and building names are not linked with the data when shared with others.

Alliance Coordinating Council Members

Mary Ellen BeckerSouthern Prairie AEA 15
Pat Carlson.....Iowa State University
Patrick Clancy.....School Administrators of Iowa
Cyndy EricksonDes Moines Public Schools
Mary Gannon.....Iowa Association of School Boards
Dave HigdonPolk County Health Services
Cindy LaugheadParent Educator Connection
Mary MohrhauserDepartment of Human Services
Dick Moore.....Child Advocacy Board
Iowa Collaboration for Youth Development
Ray MorleyDepartment of Education
Carla PetersonIowa State University
Lori ReynoldsIowa Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health
PLUS.....Project contacts (see right)

PBS SITES IN IOWA

For detailed information, visit our web site at
www.rc4alliance.org



Project Contacts

Iowa Department of Education

Web Site: www.state.ia.us/educate

Suana Wessendorf, Project Manager / 515-281-5447
suana.wessendorf@iowa.gov

Iowa Behavioral Alliance

Web Site: www.rc4alliance.org

Carl Smith, Co-Director / 515-294-0317 / csmith@iastate.edu
Marion Panyan, Co-Director / 515-271-3936 / marion.panyan@drake.edu
Deb Thomas, Training Coordinator / 515-271-1823 / debra.thomas@drake.edu
Mary Bartlow, Project Liaison / 515-271-4560 / mary.bartlow@drake.edu
Bob Perry, Office Manager/515-271-3936 / bob.perry@drake.edu

RISE

Mack Shelley, RISE Director / 515-294-9282 / mshelley@iastate.edu
Robin Galloway, Evaluation Coordinator / 641-430-1508 / rgal@iastate.edu

ISU, Extension 4-H Youth Development

Keli Tallman, State 4-H Youth Development Specialist / 515-294-0688
ktallman@iastate.edu

Iowa Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health

Lori Reynolds, Federation Director / 319-462-2187 / lori@iffcmh.org

Mental Health Initiative

Polly Nichols, Chair / 319-338-5704 / polly-nichols@uiowa.edu

Mark Your Calendar! Third Annual Iowa Behavioral Alliance Conference
October 1 & 2, 2007