

Promising Practices for Supporting Youth in BC Schools



What is Promising Practices?

This newsletter is a new resource for teachers and parents who want to learn about strategies to support positive outcomes in BC schools.

Our goals

To share information about effective and efficient practices that support positive school environments for all students in BC. We want to provide teachers with tools to improve support for students and create a better link between practice and research.

What's inside

You will find tips and examples of strategies that teachers in BC schools use to prevent and address common challenges. These strategies have been chosen because they are both practical to implement and have been shown to work in BC.

Want a simple and effective way to increase positive school-home communication? See page 7 to find out more about using Positive Parent Postcards!

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a place of mind

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

SCHOOL-WIDE POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR SUPPORT (PBS)

WHAT IS PBS?

School-wide PBS is a systems approach for establishing the social culture and environment needed for schools to achieve both social and academic success for all students.

In PBS, all students are taught the school's expectations, routines in and out of the classroom, and are acknowledged for doing things "the right way." An instructional approach to discipline is used to encourage self-management and problem-solving skills.

GOALS OF PBS

The goals of School-wide PBS are to teach students social responsibility, prevent the development of problem behaviour, and to improve the academic performance of students through development of a **positive, safe, and culturally responsive** school culture.

SPOTLIGHT ON A SCHOOL

A common PBS practice is creating 3 to 5 positively stated expectations for behaviour. Expectations are often taught using an acronym that makes it fun and easy for students to remember.

Bernard Elementary in Chilliwack, BC has been implementing PBS for over 10 years. They use the acronym **SPARK** for their school's expectations:

Safety

Peace

Positive Attitude

Respect

Kindness

Using common language for expectations across the school can help students learn social responsibility and build a positive, consistent school culture.

PBS includes the following systems:

Universal Systems

All students are provided with support by teaching school expectations and arranging the environment to encourage social responsibility.

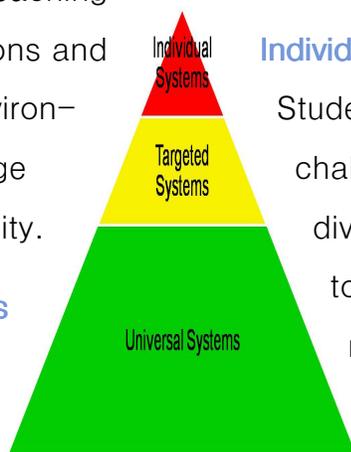
Targeted Systems

Students at risk for challenges

are provided with the additional support needed to be successful.

Individual Systems

Students with significant challenges receive individualized support to teach skills to meet students' basic needs.



PBS IN BC

BC has a long history of PBS in its schools, with the first schools implementing PBS over 15 years ago. Since that time, over 10,000 schools have started implementing PBS across the globe, making BC a front-runner in implementation.

The **Making Connections Conference**, held each November in Richmond, BC, brings together international experts and school teams from across BC to share and learn about new strategies for supporting students.



FOR MORE INFORMATION:

To find out more about PBS in BC, including examples from BC schools, free downloadable materials, and info about the **Making Connections** conference, visit

<http://bcpbs.wordpress.com/>

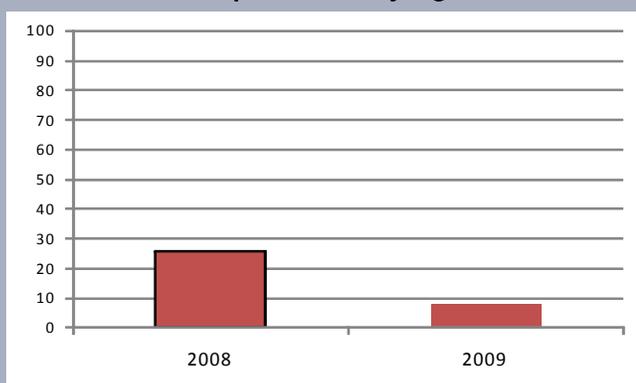
Stay tuned for future issues of **Promising Practices** to read about teaching expectations and PBS in secondary schools!

ONE SCHOOL'S STORY...

Kay Bingham Elementary in Kamloops, BC had some pieces of PBS in place in 2007–08 and reached full implementation in 2008–09. The school PBS team used systems to teach and acknowledge appropriate behaviour, changing the school culture.

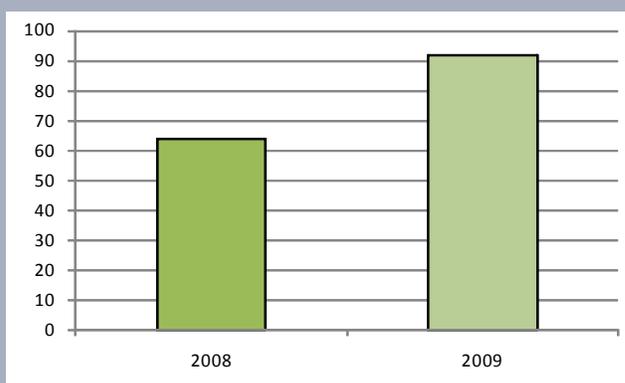
There was an over 50% reduction in office discipline referrals, from 518 in 2007–08 to 252 in 2008–09. In addition, there was a decrease in suspensions and bullying. With a safer and more positive environment, academic achievement also improved.

Reported Bullying



Percent of Grade 4 students who responded “Many times” or “All of the time” to the question, “At school, are you bullied, teased, or picked on?”

Reading Comprehension



Percent of Grade 4 students meeting or exceeding expectations in Reading Comprehension on the Foundational Skills Assessment.



OUTCOMES OF PBS

A range of research shows the benefits of PBS for students and teachers. PBS has been shown to decrease problem behaviour and suspensions. PBS has also been shown to improve academic achievement and relationships between teachers. For more information on this research, please visit <http://pbis.org>.

GETTING STARTED WITH PBS

If you would like to implement PBS in your school, here are some things to do to get started:

Contact district administrators: Find out whether there is already district support for implementing PBS, including startup support and district coaching. If not, they may be interested in supporting your efforts as a pilot school.

Find a partner school: Ask around to find a nearby school that is currently implementing PBS or has support in place for PBS. A partner school is a great resource for support and guidance in your implementation efforts.

Establish commitment: Talk to an administrator who will become actively involved in implementing PBS. Build buy-in from the majority of the staff by listening to concerns and identifying how PBS can lead to a shared vision and valued outcomes for students.

Establish a team: Gather a school team to implement PBS in your school. Ensure that the team is representative (including teachers from different grade levels, support staff, and an administrator). The team can meet monthly to create and follow an action plan for implementation.

Create school-wide expectations: Identify 3 to 5 school-wide expectations that are positively stated. Get input from students and parents to create expectations that are valued by everyone.

Next steps: Once these steps are in place, next steps include creating a matrix that defines what the school-wide expectations “look like” in specific settings around the school (including classrooms, hallways, washrooms, and playgrounds), teaching expectations to students, and creating systems to acknowledge students for prosocial behaviour.

For more information: The Team Implementation Checklist, a step-by-step guide for initial implementation, is available for free at <http://bcpbs.wordpress.com/evaluation>.

Arriving at the Same Page: Building A Shared School-wide Vision

True school-wide change can't be forced by one person—it takes the collaborative effort of the staff as a whole. The best way to move forward together is to start with a shared vision. Once that shared vision is formed, goals and the steps to meet those goals will come much more easily. Here are some tips for visioning work with staff:

Connect with Core Values

Devote time each year to discuss why you are teachers. One common activity is to ask each person to brainstorm what they think students should leave school having learned. It can be easy to forget these goals in the endless stream of stress and busywork that can consume the teaching day. But by listing core goals for students, it can be easier to reconnect with core values and identify what steps are needed to get them there.

Focus on a Few Key Goals

Once those core values are identified, turn them into a small number of important goals, possibly for your school plan. And to meet those goals, it is important to identify what to stop doing to make room for the key ones.

Identify What's Working

Use a brief staff survey to identify what effective practices are already in place and what to prioritize for next steps. The PBS Self-Assessment Survey is a free tool (<http://bcpbs.wordpress.com/evaluation>) that includes a rating of which strategies are in place and which are high priority for getting in place. In addition, see page 6 for a way to map the practices in your school.

Listen to All Voices

Some opposition can be expected with any change, and it is important to listen to the concerns and ideas of everyone. Those voices (from staff, students, and community members) can help change strategies to fit with student needs and the school culture.

Seek Commitment

Take an actual vote on implementing change. See the sample secret ballot below. Make sure people know that a "yes" means a commitment to a 3 to 5 year period of implementation. If the support is below 80%, stop and identify what components 80% of staff can support and start change there.

Positive Behaviour Support Ballot

PBS is a systems approach that is implemented in BC schools to assist in building a positive school culture, teaching social responsibility and improving school safety. Based on the information we have discussed:

- I think our school should implement PBS next year. I understand that this a commitment to a collaborative, 3 to 5 year process of implementation.
- I do not think that we should implement PBS next year. Here are my concerns:

CREATING A SCHOOL-WIDE SUPPORT MAP

This activity helps school teams see what support (systems, programs, strategies) for students is in place at each tier of the triangle and gaps that need to be addressed.

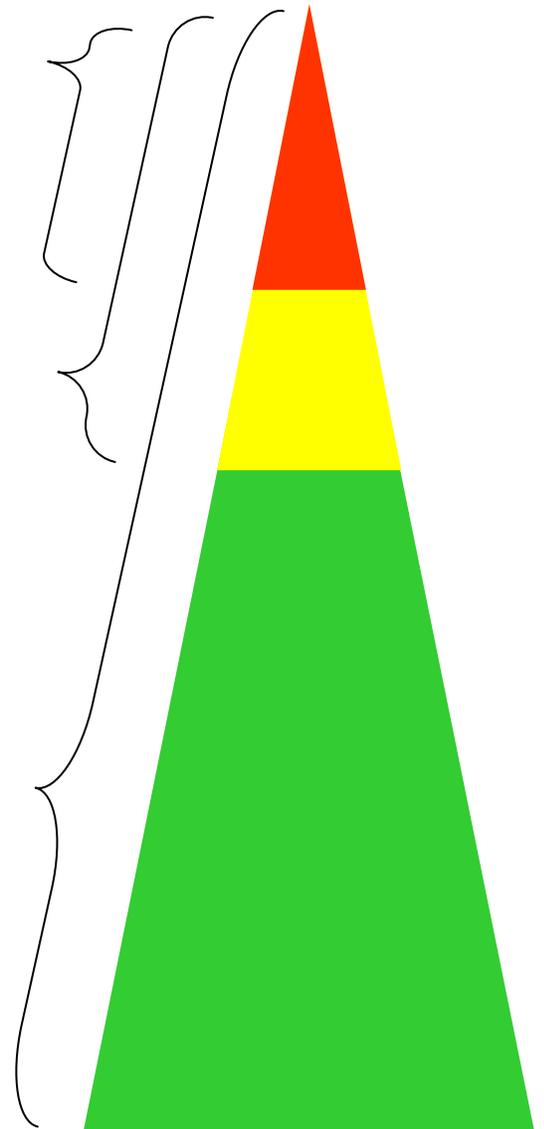
1. **Write in the support (systems, programs, strategies) provided at each tier.**
2. **Write in how your school identifies what level of support each student needs.**
3. **Use the information to guide decision making.** Where are there gaps in support or assessment? Are there tiers with too many programs? Identify the priorities for action planning.

INTENSIVE SUPPORT (Few)

TARGETED SUPPORT (Some)

SCHOOL-WIDE SUPPORT (All)

SCREENING AND MONITORING (How we identify what level of support students need)



Tips for Tomorrow

Tips for Tomorrow is a section for teachers that provides simple, practical, and low-cost strategies for you to use in your classroom...as soon as tomorrow!

Positive Parent Postcards

If you want to increase the positive communication between school and home, try "Positive Parent Postcards"

1. Make blank, pre-addressed postcards for every student in your class (or school).
2. When you see a student doing well, send a quick note home to the student's parents that describes what he or she did.
3. Send a postcard home for each student over the course of the year! The stack of cards will tell you who still needs one sent.





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Promising Practices is a publication of the University of British Columbia, with support from the BC Representative for Children and Youth.

Our mission is to provide educators and parents with positive approaches that have been shown to work in creating positive school environments, preventing challenging behaviour and supporting students who are at-risk for challenges.

We welcome your comments and ideas for future newsletter articles at:

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COMING IN THE NEXT ISSUE:

We'll focus on strategies for teaching school-wide expectations, with examples from BC teachers, and share resources on enhancing the Individual Education Planning (IEP) process for students, families and teachers.