EQUITY-FOCUSED IMPLEMENTATION SCIENCE: IMPROVING RACIAL INEQUITIES FOR STUDENTS WITH CHALLENGING BEHAVIOR

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WHO IS IN THE ROOM?

• Teachers?
• School administrators?
• School psychologists?
• Researchers or University Faculty?
• Students?
• Other?
LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Participants will:

1) explain racial inequity trends for students of color with Emotional and Behavioral Disorders (EBD) in schools.

2) define the goals of implementation science.

3) identify at least two ways equity-focused implementation science can be used to address racial inequities for students with EBD.

4) describe at least two examples of how implementation science can improve racial inequities through Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports.
AGENDA

• Overview of racial discipline inequities
• PBIS and discipline disparities
• Implementation Science
• Equity-focused PBIS implementation strategies
  • District
  • Building
  • Classroom
• Questions
RACIAL DISCIPLINE
DISPARITIES
In 2017-18, Black students received one or more in-school suspensions (31.4%) and one or more out-of-school suspensions (38.2%) at rates that were more than twice their share of total student enrollment (15.1%).

American Indian or Alaska Native students were slightly overrepresented as well.

EXPULSION DISPARITY

Expulsions with Educational Services
- White: 33.4%
- Black: 38.8%
- Hispanic or Latino: 22.1%
- Asian: 0.8%
- Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander: 0.2%
- American Indian or Alaska Native: 1.1%
- Two or More Races: 3.6%

Expulsions without Educational Services
- White: 40.5%
- Black: 33.3%
- Hispanic or Latino: 18.6%
- Asian: 0.9%
- Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander: 0.3%
- American Indian or Alaska Native: 1.8%
- Two or More Races: 4.6%

IMPACT OF EXCLUSIONARY DISCIPLINE

- Loss of academic instruction
- Loss of social opportunities
- Missed IEP services
- Increased risk of criminal justice involvement
- Increased risk of drop out
POSITIVE BEHAVIOR INTERVENTIONS AND SUPPORTS
(As relates to Racial Discipline Disparities)
POSITIVE BEHAVIOR INTERVENTIONS AND SUPPORTS: PBIS

- Disciplinary prevention
- MTSS framework integrating data, systems and practices
- Emphasizes effective implementation practices
  - Contextual fit
  - Effectiveness in applied settings
  - Data use for improvement
IMPACT OF PBIS ON DISCIPLINE

PBIS increases students' access to effective supports that improve their social-emotional, behavioral, and mental health functioning.

PBIS is associated with reduced exclusionary discipline for all students; however, disproportionately remains.

Inequitable implementation of PBIS strategies may be related to racial discipline disproportionality.

Implementation of PBIS may mitigate or enhance this disproportionality.
IMPLEMENTATION
SCIENCE
WHAT IS IMPLEMENTATION SCIENCE?

"...scientific study of methods and strategies that facilitate the uptake of evidence-based practice and research into regular use by practitioners"

University of Washington (2023)

• close the gap between what we know and what we do

• Integrate IS with PBIS research to address inequitable implementation of exclusionary discipline
RELEVANT KEY CONSTRUCTS

Implementation science is replete with theories, frameworks, and constructs. The following two constructs are relevant:

1. **Determinants of practice**: barriers of and facilitators to effective use of an intervention or practice (Flottorp et al., 2013)

2. **Implementation strategies**: methods or techniques used to enhance the adoption, implementation, and sustainability of an intervention or practice (Proctor et al., 2013, p. 140)
EQUITY-FOCUSED IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY FOR PBIS TO IMPACT RACIAL DISPARITIES IN EXCLUSIONARY DISCIPLINE

Determinants of practice: Ecological Approach
District, Building, Classroom
SISTER FRAMEWORK

Cook and colleagues (2019) adapted a set of implementation strategies for education. These strategies fall into 9 categories:

1. Use iterative and evaluative strategies (e.g., obtain student and family feedback)
2. Change infrastructure (e.g., develop local policy that supports implementation)
3. Provide interactive assistance (e.g., peer-assisted learning)
4. Adapt and tailor to context (e.g., promote adaptability)
5. Develop ‘stakeholder’ interrelationships (e.g., capture and share local knowledge)
6. Train and educate ‘stakeholders’ (e.g., conduct ongoing training)
7. Support clinicians (e.g., facilitate relay of intervention fidelity and student data to school personnel)
8. Engage consumers (e.g., involve students, family members, and other staff)
9. Use financial strategies (e.g., alter student or school personnel obligations to enhance participation in or delivery of new practice, respectively)
LOGIC MODEL

PROBLEM STATEMENT
Students of color with EBD experience inequitable education experiences and outcomes, particularly exclusionary practices (such as suspension, expulsion, and education in segregated settings). Implementation science can improve equitable implementation of SWPBIS, ultimately improving these inequitable outcomes for students of color with EBD.

OUTPUTS/STRATEGIES
Implementation Strategies: Intentional Equity Approach

DISTRICT IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES
1) Engage relevant and affected parties (especially families, students, and community members) in developing and sustaining SWPBIS practices so to reflect needs and values of all partners.
2) Incorporate accountability policies for disciplinary equity in administrator and teacher evaluation procedures.

BUILDING IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES
1) Adjust disciplinary practices based on demographically disaggregated data re: discipline.
2) Create action plan for cultural responsiveness by using Tiered Fidelity Inventory and the TFI Cultural Responsiveness Companion.

CLASSROOM IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES
1) Professional development training and performance feedback re: • Personal Identity Awareness • Implicit bias • Engaging instruction and classroom management
2) Incorporating Validation, Affirmation, Building, and Bridging practices into school wide and classroom PBIS implementation.

SHORT TERM OUTCOMES
Implementation of SWPBIS with fidelity and cultural responsiveness
Culturally responsive classrooms and classroom teachers

LONG TERM OUTCOMES
Improved equity re:
- Office Discipline Referrals
- Suspension
- Expulsion
 Increased access to classroom instruction

IMPACTS
Improved student equity in educational outcomes
- Increased Graduation rates
- Reduced involvement in criminal justice system

ASSUMPTIONS
Implementation of SWPBIS
EQUITY-FOCUSED PBIS IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

PBIS CULTURAL RESPONSIVENESS FIELD GUIDE: Resources for Trainers and Coaches

A 5-Point Intervention Approach for Enhancing Equity in School Discipline
Kent McIntosh, Erik J. Garvan, Robert H. Horner, Keith Smolkowski, & George Sugai

https://www.pbis.org/equity

Key Elements of Policies to Address Discipline Disproportionality: A Guide for District and School Teams
Amanda Green, Rhonda Nese, Kent McIntosh, Victor Nishicka, Bert Eliason, & Alondra Canizal Delabra

CENTERING EQUITY WITHIN THE PBIS FRAMEWORK: OVERVIEW AND EVIDENCE OF EFFECTIVENESS
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EQUITY-FOCUSED IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES: DISTRICT-LEVEL
ENGAGE RELEVANT AND AFFECTED GROUPS

Partnerships with students, families, and community partners is critical in ensuring contextual fit reflective of the school population, as well as any marginalized groups.

Supports representation and relevancy of school practices to the student home communities.

Increased student engagement, improved relationships, and reduced office discipline referrals.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Implementation Strategy</strong></th>
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<td>Engage relevant and affected parties (especially families, students, and community members) in developing and sustaining PBIS practices so to reflect needs and values of all partners.</td>
<td>• Engage consumers ○ Involve students, family members, and other staff</td>
<td>• Behavioral expectations, school culture, and school climate fit student needs</td>
<td>• Reduced ODRs  • Increased student engagement  • Improved relationships between students and teachers  • Increased praise and reinforcement</td>
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AREAS FOR FAMILY-SCHOOL COLLABORATION IN PBIS

Positive home-school relationships

- Visibly value cultural differences

Two-way communication

- Learn how your community communicates
- Phone calls, email, print newsletters, community events, text message

Shared decision-making

- Solicit input on district-wide goals
- Invite culturally representative groups to serve on leadership committees

(Minch et al., 2020; Weist et al. 2017; Wittle et al., 2021)
AREAS FOR FAMILY-SCHOOL COLLABORATION IN PBIS

Family voice for equitable discipline

- Reach out to families affected by disproportionate discipline
- How would they like to address the issue?

Training and support for family-school collaboration

- Provide communication PD for practitioners
- Provide community education events for families

Evaluation

- Consistent monitoring of district and schoolwide efforts to involve families

(Minch et al., 2020; Weist et al. 2017; Wittle et al., 2021)
CONSIDERATIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION: DATA COLLECTION

Monitor family involvement and disaggregate data by race/ethnic subgroups, grade levels, etc.

- This will help schools develop better, targeted communication strategies
- Can include follow-up opportunities for deeper dives into family preference

(Minch et al., 2020; Weist et al 2017; Wittle et al., 2021)
CONSIDERATIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION: PRIORITIZE RELATIONSHIP BUILDING

Prioritize relationship building prior to the school year

- District administration allocates time and resources for relationship building
- Cultivate empathy and increase buy-in for enhanced family/school partnerships
- Intentional focus on relationship building activities
- Proactive steps for families with greater indicators of risk

(Minch et al., 2020; Weist et al. 2017; Wittle et al., 2021)
CONSIDERATIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION: FOCUS ON OUTCOMES

Take a continuous improvement approach to family/school relationships

- Monitor disaggregated data across domains
- Solicit feedback from families affected by disproportionate discipline actions
- Utilize feedback & outcome data to revise plans

(Minch et al., 2020; Weist et al., 2017; Wittle et al., 2021)
EQUITY-FOCUSED IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES: BUILDING-LEVEL
ADJUST PRACTICES BASED ON DISAGGREGATED DISCIPLINE DATA

- review discipline data
  - inequities at the building level
  - focusing on system-level patterns (instead of focusing on individual students)

- identify problems and potential solutions

- changes in the building approach to disciplinary decisions can potentially reduce disparities
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| Adjust disciplinary practices based on demographically disaggregated data re: discipline. | • Use evaluative and iterative strategies  
  o Audit and provide feedback  
  o Develop and organize quality monitoring system | • Systems change at school and classroom level  
  • Interpretation of behavioral concerns at system level (vs student level) | • Reduced emphasis on individual student behavior  
  • Reduced ODRs  
  • Improved school and classroom disciplinary practices |
OPTIONS FOR DISAGGREGATING DATA

PBIS Apps

- Robust features cost money
- Lots of free resources and webinars

**SWIS Suite**
Three applications make up the suite—each aligns to a level of student support.

- **SWIS**: Use office discipline referral (ODR) data to know what’s happening school-wide.
- **CICO-SWIS**: Review Check-in Check-Out data for students enrolled in the Tier 2 intervention.
- **I-SWIS**: Customize data entry to monitor individual student support plans at Tier 3.

**PBIS Assessment**
A free tool to enter surveys like the TFI and the School Climate Survey, review survey data, and create action plans.

**PBIS Evaluation**
Combine PBIS Assessment and SWIS Suite data across multiple schools to get the district, region, or state summaries you need.
OPTIONS FOR DISAGGREGATING DATA

Free resources that do the same thing!
RESPONDING TO DISAGGREGATED DATA – QUESTIONS TEAMS SHOULD ASK

Question 1: Is there an inequity problem in our school?

- Review risk ratios
- Review referrals by ethnicity

(Payo-Simmons, 2020)
RESPONDING TO DISAGGREGATED DATA – QUESTIONS TEAMS SHOULD ASK

Question 2: What is it about our people, policies, and practices that contribute to this inequity?

- Review TFI data
- Stakeholder survey data

(Payno-Simmons, 2020)
Question 3: Which equitable practices can address this discipline inequity?

• Utilize the PBIS Cultural Responsiveness Field Guide

(Payno-Simmons, 2020)
RESPONDING TO DISAGGREGATED DATA – QUESTIONS TEAMS SHOULD ASK

Question 4: Did the equity strategy decrease our discipline disparity?

- Review TFI data, universal design, culturally responsive practice, stakeholder survey data, school climate data

(Payno-Simmons, 2020)
RESPONDING TO DISAGGREGATED DATA – QUESTIONS TEAMS SHOULD ASK

Question 5: Who is at the table when decisions are made about our school systems?

(Payno-Simmons, 2020)
EQUITY-FOCUSED IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES: CLASSROOM-LEVEL
PD TO ADDRESS IMPLICIT BIAS

Implicit bias—automatic associations that impact decisions due to assumptions

Subjective situations especially susceptible to implicit bias—Vulnerable Decision Points

PD to build teacher skills for managing their behavior during VDPs

Neutralizing routines (McIntosh et al., 2021)  Minimize impact of implicit bias

Reducing discipline referrals & disparities
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| Professional development training and performance feedback re: | • Train and educate stakeholders  
  ○ Conduct ongoing training  
  ○ Provide ongoing consultation/coaching  
  ○ Create a professional learning collaborative | • Teacher behavior  
  ○ Changes in reaction to behavior and referral patterns (especially re: subjective referrals) | • Reduced ODRs |
| • Strategies reduce impact of implicit bias | | | |
STRATEGIES FOR REDUCING IMPLICIT BIAS

ReACT: Racial equity through Assessing data for vulnerable decision points, Culturally responsive behavior strategies, Teaching about implicit bias and strategies to neutralize it

Trainer leads school personnel through
1. Learning about implicit bias
2. Examine discipline data
3. Implement a plan to address specific inequities

(McIntosh, Girvan, Fairbanks Falcon et al., 2021; McIntosh Girvan, McDaniel et al., 2021)
STRATEGIES FOR REDUCING IMPLICIT BIAS

Learn about implicit bias
  • What are your individual implicit biases?
  • What are the overall implicit biases of school personnel?

Learn your vulnerable decision points
  • Subjective student behavior (defiance, disrespect, disruption) in classrooms at the start of the day
  • When are you most likely to engage in reactive discipline?

Examine discipline data

(McIntosh, Girvan, Fairbanks Falcon et al., 2021; McIntosh Girvan, McDaniel et al., 2021)
STRATEGIES FOR REDUCING IMPLICIT BIAS

Neutralizing routines – a replacement behavior for snap—judgement to send a student out of the classroom

• Intended to slow down the decision-making process to allow conscious thought
• Includes a variety of strategies
  • TRY (Take a deep breath, Reflect on your emotions, respond in Youth’s best interest)
  • Develop if-then statements – (if a student is disrespectful, then I will handle it after class)

(McIntosh, Girvan, Fairbanks Falcon et al., 2021; McIntosh Girvan, McDaniel et al., 2021)
LEARN FROM THE BEST

An Equity-focused PBIS Approach for Increasing Racial Equity in School Discipline

Kent McIntosh
University of Oregon
LIMITATIONS

• All conceptual! The relationship between all the strategies, PBIS, and discipline disproportionality has not been empirically tested.

• The strategies in this presentation are not exhaustive…there are a lot of other options!

• Implementation of PBIS is just ONE way to reduce disproportionality in exclusionary discipline.
SUMMARY

• PBIS can reduce racial discipline disparities but is insufficient, alone, to address racial discipline disproportionality

• Intentional equity-focused implementation science strategies can be used to support discipline equity through strategies:
  • Utilizing family & community voice
  • Reviewing disaggregated data
  • Implicit bias training
QUESTIONS? AND KEY RESOURCES

Contact Kim Selders; seldersk@missouri.edu

https://www.pbis.org/equity

https://pbismissouri.org/equity/equity-resources/

Google Folder with resources here!