

Putting Research to Work for Military Families



Focus:
Civilian

Use of Positive Behavior Support to Address the Challenging Behavior of Young Children within a Community Early Childhood Program

Blair, K.-S. C., Fox, L., & Lentini, R. (2010). Use of positive behavior support to address the challenging behavior of young children within a community early childhood program. *Topics in Early Childhood Special Education*, 30(2), 68-79.
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SUMMARY: Child assessments were utilized to evaluate the effects of an individualized positive behavior support (PBS) process in an early childhood classroom. The classroom engagement and problem behaviors of three children with diagnosed developmental disabilities were assessed prior to and following the PBS intervention. The PBS intervention was associated with a reduction in problem behaviors and increased engagement.

KEY FINDINGS:

- During center activity times and transition times of the intervention phase, children demonstrated an increase in engagement and a decrease in problem behavior, which were maintained through seven week follow-up.
- Teachers generalized the use of the PBS intervention strategies to activities/routines other than those specifically included in the training, with positive results (children showed increased engagement, decreased problem behavior).
- Behavior changes were maintained for two of the children who were moved to new classrooms.

IMPLICATIONS FOR MILITARY PROFESSIONALS:

Military professionals could:

- Attend trainings regarding ways to implement PBS into military specific programming
- Help develop modules regarding the importance of early intervention for problem behaviors among children to inform staff about early signs and resource available to military families

IMPLICATIONS FOR PROGRAMS:

Programs could:

- Continue to offer evidence-based programming to military parents and children coping with behavioral issues
- Educate military families about positive behavioral support and strategies to incorporate these skills into their own parenting practices

IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICIES:

Policies could:

- Recommend using PBS or other evidence-based interventions with children who exhibit problem behaviors, as these strategies have shown some positive results
- Encourage training for service providers working with military families regarding the use of PBS prevention and teaching strategies

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METHODS

- This was an intervention study using a concurrent, multiple-baseline design with three children to evaluate the effectiveness of individualized PBS procedures across different contexts within a community-based preschool program.
- Children were selected based on their persistent challenging behaviors in the classroom; children had a formal diagnosis (e.g., language developmental delay, ADHD, and pervasive developmental disorder).
- This study focused on civilian children.

PARTICIPANTS

- Three male children were included in this study.
- Two of the children were Black and one was Latino.
- The children were between the ages of three and four years old.

LIMITATIONS

- Without a comparison group, it is unclear whether the outcome is truly related to the intervention, or if other factors played a role.
- Only three male children from one early childhood program were included; therefore, results may not generalize to other children with behavioral issues.
- Constructs may have been confounded; for example, the interventions were implemented for each child while in the presence of the other children, it cannot be determined if one child's behavior change was in response to his or her individualized intervention or in response to another child's intervention.

AVENUES FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Future research could:

- Determine for whom, for which behavior problems, and in what context (e.g., military) PBS interventions are most effective and if the prevention and teaching strategies could be used to the benefit of all children
- Assess the effectiveness of individualized PBS interventions, specifically, assessing both intraindividual change and interindividual differences across contexts, with different populations, and over time
- Examine the generalizability of PBS intervention among children with different kinds of disabilities (e.g., developmental delay, ADHD, autism) as well as among children who display problem behaviors, but do not show a diagnosable disability

ASSESSING RESEARCH THAT WORKS



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