

Fast Facts

Emotional and Behavioral Disorders: Promoting Prevention and Positive Interventions in School Settings

What —

The CEEP Education Policy Brief, *Emotional and Behavioral Disorders: Promoting Prevention and Positive Interventions in School Settings*, by Paulo Tan, Potheini Vaiouli, and Theresa A. Ochoa, showcases a school district's endeavors in the implementation of positive behavior interventions and supports (PBIS) to provide an update on Indiana's progress to improve the learning climate in schools across the state, explores identification and intervention issues involving students with internalizing disorders within school settings, and examines the national debate and Indiana's policies on the use of physical restraints and seclusion in school settings.

Why —

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) called for educators to create a new paradigm in school environments through the addition of PBIS in 1997. Specifically, IDEA encourages schools to create and foster positive supports and prevent disruptive and violent student behaviors. Proactive and positive behavioral plans for students with disabilities focus on externalizing and disruptive student behaviors, but these fail to adequately address the needs of students who struggle from internalizing disorders such as anxiety and depression. Left unattended, internal struggles sometimes evolve into externalizing behaviors like bullying and physical violence. Schools must build capacity to design and implement interventions for externalizing and internalizing disabilities with the aim of reducing the subsequent need for implementing more restrictive measures such as seclusion and restraint practices.

How —

Policymakers, parents, educators, and the community need current information about PBIS efforts in Indiana, effective practices in identifying and providing services to students with internalizing disorders, and Indiana's policy on the use of physical restraints and seclusion.

Recommendations —

- Maintain funding for schools to allow them to promote the use of non-punitive responses to misbehavior.
- Extend the application of RTI as a framework of multi-tiered service delivery to students with internalizing emotional disorders and promote the collaboration between school personnel, social workers, and families to provide early intervention.
- Develop and adopt a statewide policy to regulate and monitor the use of physical restraints and seclusion in schools and collect data on these practices as a way of monitoring their effectiveness and safety.

To read this Education Policy Brief, go to:
<http://ceep.indiana.edu/>