

## What is Positive Behavior Support?

The CSEFEL framework is based on Positive Behavior Support (PBS). Positive Behavior Support describes a process for addressing children's challenging behavior that is based on an understanding of the purpose of the behavior and a focus on teaching new skills to replace challenging behavior. Over the last 20 years, there has been an accumulation of evidence that the use of PBS can result in decreases in problem behavior and assisting individuals with challenging behavior and their families in achieving their desired lifestyle. Early applications of PBS focused on the development of behavior support plans to help children and adults who had challenging behavior. In the last 10 years, the implementation of PBS has expanded to include school-wide and program-wide applications. In school- and program-wide PBS, all of the staff work together to ensure that children understand behavior expectations, receive instruction in social skills, and those with the most persistent problem behavior receive individualized assistance.

Program-Wide PBS includes an exhaustive data collection mechanism to measure the effects of PBS interventions in management systems, classroom quality, disruptive behavior and the socio-emotional development of individual children.

“To promote the social, emotional and behavioral competence of Iowa’s young children, all early care, health and education providers in the state will provide services that embody the ‘pyramid model’ of positive behavior support.”

### Iowa Statewide PBS Planning Team Vision



**For more information on Iowa's Early Childhood Positive Behavior Support initiative visit:**

<http://www.iowa.gov/educate/>

Every child, beginning at birth, will be healthy and successful

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## Early Childhood Positive Behavior Support in Iowa

*An evidence-based approach to address challenging behaviors in young children*



A Partnership between the Center on Social Emotional Foundations for Early Learning, the Iowa Department of Education and the Statewide PBS Planning Team with representation from the Iowa Departments of Human Services and Public Health, Iowa State University, Area Education Agencies, Child Care Resources and Referral and Head Start and local school districts.

# Iowa Statewide Positive Behavior Support Initiative

## Background

In 2007, Iowa and the Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL) entered into a partnership agreement with the Iowa Department of Education to develop a **model for a statewide system** that builds effectively and efficiently on the PBS work currently being done in Iowa (i.e., school-wide PBS, program-wide PBS and PBS child care training) and includes trainers and training, coaching and technical assistance, system connectors and data management system.

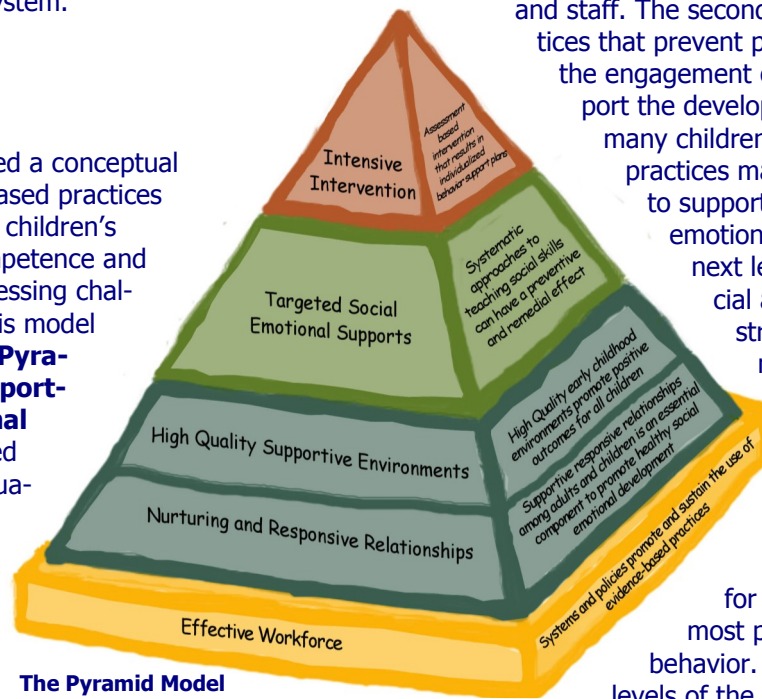
## Approach

CSEFEL has developed a conceptual model of evidence-based practices for promoting young children's social emotional competence and preventing and addressing challenging behavior. This model is referred to as the **Pyramid Model for Supporting Social Emotional Competence**. Based on five years of evaluation data, the Pyramid Model for Supporting Social Emotional Competence is a sound framework for early care and education systems. Extensive training materials, videos, and print resources developed by CSEFEL are being used in Iowa to support local communities and programs to implement the model.

## Iowa's PBS Initiative

The Iowa PBS initiative involves the adoption of new approaches for facilitating the development of children's social competence and addressing challenging behavior. This framework involves four levels of practices that represent prevention, promotion, and intervention.

The first two levels of the Pyramid describe practices that are essential for the prevention of challenging behaviors and the promotion of social competence in all children. At the foundation of the pyramid is the development of positive relationships with children, families, and staff. The second level is the use of practices that prevent problem behavior, support the engagement of all children, and support the development of social skills. For many children, these two levels of practices may be all that is needed to support their healthy social-emotional development. The next level of the pyramid, social and emotional teaching strategies, addresses the needs of these children. The top level of the pyramid includes the use of individualized behavior support interventions for children who have the most persistent challenging behavior. Even when all other levels of the pyramid are in place, there are children who will still need an individualized behavior support plan that includes prevention strategies, the instruction of replacement skills, and guidance on how to respond to problem behavior so that it is not maintained.



The Pyramid Model

## Addressing the Social and Emotional needs of young children

### WHO IS BEING SERVED?

- 30 Programs
- 221 Classrooms
- 3500 Children

### WHAT ARE THE RESULTS?

- **Reduce incidence of problem behaviors**  
Problem behaviors in early childhood programs implementing the PBS model have been reduced by two-thirds. The need for programs to take exceptional actions like dismissing or transferring children, requesting outside assistance or calling the family has been virtually eliminated.
- **Increase social skills, positive behaviors.**  
Iowa programs implementing PBS have shown a consistent increase in social skills. Percentage of children "at-risk" or with "significant" problems has been halved. Teacher perception data confirmed that program-wide expectations were owned by children ("It's their rules and they own it now").
- **Program quality improvements**  
Program quality measures have increased 32 percent for year-one sites and 46 percent for year-two sites. Studies from pilot sites using PBS in preschool settings show staff felt more confident in their own ability to address challenging behavior and less reliant on outside support.