

Research Highlights

Topic: Positive Behavior Support

Carr, E.G., Dunlap, G., Horner, R.H., Koegel, R.L., Turnbull, A.P., Sailor, W., Anderson, J., Albin, R.W., Koegel, L.K., & Fox, L. (2002). Positive behavior support: Evolution of an applied science. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions*, 4(1), 4-16.

BOTTOM LINE

Ten nationally known experts collectively wrote this article that describes the evolution of positive behavior support from strictly an applied behavior analysis approach to its current model including person centered outcomes and practices. The authors' propose that these new practices reflect a more general trend in social sciences and education away from pathology-based models to a new positive model that stresses personal competence and environmental integrity.

TIPS

- Embrace the evolution in thinking represented by positive behavior support as contrasted to applied behavior analysis.
- Recognize that quality of life is the desired outcome of PBS and that behavior change alone is insufficient.
- Seek proactivity in developing interventions to prevent problem behavior from occurring.
- Recognize that PBS requires implementation across multiple settings for individuals with significant challenges.
- Expand your knowledge of PBS and network with others who are committed to this approach.

KEY FINDINGS

- Positive behavior is a multi-component process, integrating key critical features including:
 - ◆ comprehensive life style change
 - ◆ life span perspective
 - ◆ ecological validity
 - ◆ stakeholder participation
 - ◆ social validity
 - ◆ systems change
 - ◆ flexibility with scientific practices
 - ◆ multiple theoretical perspectives
- Comprehensive lifestyle change not only affects the quality of life for the individual with disabilities, but their external and internal supports including family, peer relationships, community members, and others.
- A life span perspective is dynamic and continuous process of following personal changes and individual challenges that occur throughout the individual's lifetime.
- An individual's quality of life in community environments is central to ecological validity that requires nontraditional dimensions that are not necessarily congruent with strict experimental control.
- Social validity now has more of a presence in the course of proposed interventions as it is embedded in lifestyle changes, personal values, and ecological validity.
- Scientific practices need to entail additional evaluation measures including qualitative analysis, ratings, self-report, and inquiries to determine the effectiveness of multi-component interventions in community contexts.
- Multi-theoretical perspectives include social systems, reallocation of resources, and behavior changes within contexts and performance, that take into account cultural differences and family systems.
- Future changes in the evolution of positive behavior supports include:
 - ◆ assessment practices
 - ◆ intervention strategies
 - ◆ training
 - ◆ extension to new populations
- Future assessments will include information collected from stakeholder groups in school-wide settings with "user friendly" assessment tools that evaluate a wide spectrum of social behaviors.
- Future intervention strategies will shift from focusing on problems and difficulties to a positive focus that builds on an individual's strengths and builds on creating living environments that support his or her quality of life.

KEY FINDINGS cont.

- Future training must embed systems level intervention strategies within broader infrastructures and networks, and away from teaching a laundry list of skills.
- The extension of positive behavior support moves away from more traditional models that focus on pathology to a new model that is positive by increasing an individual's quality of life and preventing problem behaviors.

RELATED PUBLICATIONS

- Carr, E.G., Horner, R.H., Turnbull, A.P., Marquis, J., Magito-McLaughlin, D., McAtee, M.L., Smith, C.E., Anderson-Ryan, K., Ruef, M.B., & Doolabh, A. (1999). *Positive behavior support for people with developmental disabilities: A research synthesis*. Washington, DC: American Association on Mental Retardation.
- Knoster, T.P., Villa, R.A., & Thousand, J.S. (2000). A framework for thinking about systems change. In R.A. Villa & J.S. Thousand (Eds.), *Restructuring for caring and effective education* (pp. 93-198). Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes.
- Ruef, M.B., & Turnbull, A.P. (2002). The perspectives of individuals with cognitive disabilities and/or autism on their lives and their problem behavior. *Research and Practice for Persons with Severe Disabilities*, 27(2), 125-140.
- Sailor, W. (2002). Federal devolution policy, school/community partnerships, and inclusion: Some common themes. In W. Sailor (ed.), *Inclusive education and school/community partnerships*. New York: Teachers College Press.

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