

South King County Discipline Coalition Parents' Guide to the OSPI Behavior Menu of Best Practices and Strategies

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Introduction

This is a guide to help you, the parent, understand best practices for discipline as presented by Washington State's Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) in their online booklet, *OSPI Behavior Menu of Best Practices and Strategies*. The Behavior menu, along with the menu for English Language Arts and Mathematics, can be found at <https://www.k12.wa.us/student-success/support-programs/learning-assistance-program-lap/menus-best-practices-strategies>.

Our hope is that this booklet helps you partner with schools to give your child(ren) the best possible educational outcome.

There are three rows of information for each category:

The first is OSPI School Recommendations in red. These excerpts are included here verbatim, taken from the section of *OSPI Discipline Menu of Best Practices and Strategies* called, "Student-Centered Practices and Strategies" beginning on page 38.

The second row, in blue, includes South King County Discipline Coalition recommendations on how you can partner with teachers, as well as explanation of some OSPI recommendations that may not be self explanatory.

The third row, in green, gives you ideas of how you can apply these best practices with your child at home.

The South King County Discipline Coalition's (SKCDC) mission is to end disproportionate discipline of students of color and interrupt the school to prison pipeline through anti-racist organizing, leadership development and advocacy strategies that center parents and youth directly affected. Our vision is that schools will shift away from exclusionary, punitive approaches to address student behavior, replacing them with restorative approaches that recognize the dignity and humanity of all and foster healthy, accountable relationships between schools, families, and the broader community. SKCDC defines success as developing parent and youth leadership and advocacy and supporting community-defined solutions to combat educational inequities experienced by youth and families of color. We will be successful by honoring and maintaining accountability to community. Consistent with SKCDC's commitment to centering parents and youth in decision-making.

Behavioral Health

Cultural Responsiveness

OPSI Recommendation for Schools

Develop culturally responsive behavioral health practices. Behavioral health prevention services, supports, and interventions need to be culturally relevant and sensitive to the family and students' culture.

Parents Partnering with Schools

Help teachers know what would be culturally responsive for your child. Discuss your goals for your child's behavior. For example, you may want your child to be obedient, to stand up against injustices, to advocate for their own needs, etc.

Brainstorm ideas with your child's teachers of how they can build trust in their relationship with your child.

Culturally responsive behavioral health practices include adjusting to children's cultural norms around eye contact, body language, and physical space during conversation.

Having children learn to talk about their feelings is a researched method of increasing children's emotional intelligence; however, in some cultures, discussing feelings is thought to take away the sacredness of a child's experience.

Applying It to Your Child at Home

Rather than naming your child's feelings for them, simply being a quiet, supportive presence with your child in times of distress or big emotion is equally, if not more effective. Here is a **video** on what **Circle of Security** calls "**Being with,**" a more universally effective way to respond to emotions: <https://vimeo.com/145329119>.

Behavioral Health, Basic Needs

OPSI Recommendation for Schools

Ensure basic needs (i.e. food, sleep, secure housing, etc.) are taken care of and consider the effects of poverty, scarcity, or inadequate nutrition on a student's behavior.

Parents Partnering with Schools

Identify basic needs your child may have at school. If your child does not eat lunch, drink water, or get enough fresh air and exercise, consider the effects these areas of lack may have on learning and behavior. Share your concerns with the teacher to devise a plan to ensure these basic needs are met.

Example: If your child is not eating lunch, find out why. Understanding the reason can help you problem-solve the issue. Perhaps the schedule is such that lunch is right before recess, and your child is in too much of a hurry to get to the fun. A solution might be to keep students in the lunchroom for a certain amount of time before they are allowed to leave.

Applying It to Your Child at Home

If you notice your child is cranky, irritable, or angers easily, consider whether body needs are not being met. Often, behavior problems stem from a lack of enough quality food or sleep.

Here are sleep recommendations from American Academy of Pediatrics:

- Infants 4 to 12 months - 12 to 16 hours of sleep every 24 hours (including naps).
- Children 1 to 2 years - 11 to 14 hours of sleep every 24 hours (including naps).
- Children 3 to 5 years - 10 to 13 hours of sleep every 24 hours (including naps).
- Children 6 to 12 years - 9 to 12 hours of sleep every 24 hours.
- Teens 13 to 18 years - 8 to 10 hours of sleep every 24 hours.

Behavioral Health, Stigma

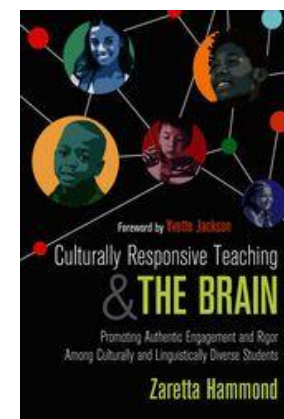
OPSI Recommendation for Schools

Consider the stigma associated with mental health diagnosis, identity and labeling and the differences/intersections between the impacts of trauma, mental health and special education. Support mental health literacy and destigmatizing by teaching students about their own brain functioning and development.

Parents Partnering with Schools

Before assigning a diagnosis, schools should try many different interventions to see if there is something that could be done to improve learning other than special education. Black and brown children are disproportionately diagnosed with mental health issues, suggesting that they are over-diagnosed with them.

Recommend culturally relevant learning practices such as learning through chant, art, music, story, and cognitive strategies. (See ***Culturally Responsive Teaching and The Brain: Promoting Authentic Engagement and Rigor Among Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students*** by Zaretta Hammond, Corwin, 2014.)



Applying It to Your Child at Home

Mental health services help children and adults with emotions that are overwhelming and scary. For children, good mental health therapists meet them on their terms by using play to relax and relate with them. For adults and children, a therapist becomes someone trusted who can hold a family's problems and support families through them.

Emotions can get in the way of doing what we want to do and being who we want to be. They can make us do things we are ashamed of, they can make us hurt people, and they can keep us from trying things that could make our lives better. Use mental health services to help your family overcome the effects of strong emotions in your lives.

Behavioral Health, Service Delivery

OPSI Recommendation for Schools

Enhance behavioral health service delivery to students by ensuring rapid response and regular follow-up to interventions.

Parents Partnering with Schools

Create a timeline with your child's teacher to check in with the school frequently to monitor agreed-upon interventions. Regular check-ins can ensure that interventions are being carried out as agreed upon. Regular check-ins can also help you know whether the interventions seem successful, and if they don't, how they might be tweaked/improved for your child.

An intervention based on behaviorist approaches (the use of consequences and rewards) should show itself to be effective within two to three weeks and should be altered if clear progress is not made in that time. A neurodevelopmental approach such as the safety-challenge-threat model on page 8 usually shows immediate results and should be altered if the behavior is not improved within a couple of days.

Applying It to Your Child at Home

Notice your child's mood at home. If your child seems sad, angry, or anxious a lot of the time, it can slow down your child's development. Talk with a school counselor about getting your child services to help them with their emotions. Look for a therapist who is a good match for your child. **Psychology Today** has a therapist resource service: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/therapists/wa/seattle>

If your child already has a diagnosis and you notice that they are more anxious, depressed, or angry than usual, meet with your child's counselor to get ideas about how to help your child at home.

Behavioral Health, Early Childhood Screening

OPSI Recommendation for Schools

Adopt early childhood mental health screening and consultation. Signs of potential behavioral health disorders can manifest early and children can benefit from early intervention. Keep in mind that pediatricians are often the initial providers of behavioral health services for children, rather than therapists or psychiatrists.

Parents Partnering with Schools

A screening can tell you whether your child should have an in-depth assessment that would qualify them for services.

Teachers and childcare workers see many children and have a good idea of what is typical. Your child's teacher can be a good resource for letting you know if your child needs screening for a mental health issue.

Contact your district's **Child Find** for more information:

<https://www.k12.wa.us/student-success/special-education/program-improvement/technical-assistance/child-find>

Applying It to Your Child at Home

If you have concerns about your child, screening is free in Washington State, and can lead to services that are also often free of charge. Services for young children have been shown to be so effective that children who receive services while young often do not need special education services when they reach school.

The link below will take you to **WithinReach**, a website with a developmental questionnaire (screening). Be sure and answer both questionnaires: the **ASQ3** and the **ASQ-SE2**.

<https://www.parenthelp123.org/child-development>

Behavioral Health, Learning Support for Behavior Violations

OPSI Recommendation for Schools

Administering sanctions or punitive consequences in response to behavioral violations is not an effective practice for responding to substance use or mental health concerns. Shift school policies and practices around smoking and vaping from a discipline issue to an opportunity to identify and provide supports.

Parents Partnering with Schools

Punitive consequences have negative effects on children. Instead of punishments, children need to have opportunities to regulate their emotions, reflect on their mistakes, and make amends for the harm they have done. Darker skinned children are suspended from school at higher rates than lighter skinned children, and this leads to children being fed into what is now called the preschool to prison pipeline.

Make sure that you have a copy of the school district disciplinary policies so that you know your rights to appeal any disciplinary action that you are not in agreement with. Agree on supports for your child that would prevent more suspensions.

If your child has disruptive behaviors or abuses drugs, look to the safety-challenge-threat model (see illustration on the right). Encourage school staff to put your child's emotional safety and trust in their adult-student relationship first.

Once your child feels *safe* with school staff, the child can be *challenged* to reflect and share ideas for interventions together with you and school staff. Help staff notice your child's feelings of *threat* in the relationship. Feelings of threat shuts down your child's ability to reflect on behaviors with adults.



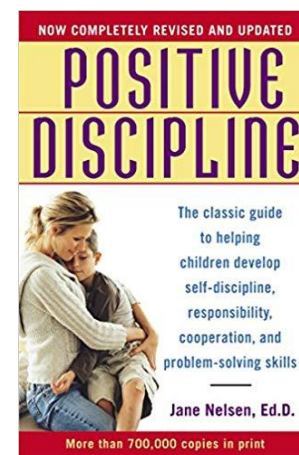
This is a cycle of prioritizing relational safety, introducing challenge when safety is achieved, monitoring the child's threat responses, and pulling back on challenge and increasing relational safety each time the child's threat response gets too high.

Applying It to Your Child at Home

Children learn best when they feel calm and alert. If your child looks frightened, angry, sad, or shut down when they get in trouble with you, know that they are not in a good position to learn a lesson.

Instead of criticizing or scolding a child for doing something wrong, try finding out what problem they were trying to solve with that behavior. Once that is understood, help your child think of better ways to get what they need. Responding supportively to behavior will build your child's problem-solving abilities and help them learn to get along with others while still meeting their own needs.

Positive Discipline: The Classic Guide to Helping Children Develop Self-Discipline, Responsibility, Cooperation, and Problem-Solving Skills by Jane Nelson, Ballantine Books, 2006 teaches parents a non-punitive approach to teaching social skills and improving behavior.



Children's behaviors and big emotions touch our hearts from our own childhood relationships with our parents. That is why we have such triggered responses to them. When you find yourself angry because of what your child has done, talk with a friend or therapist about the old memories that behavior might bring up for you. That can help clear those strong emotions so you can be there to help your child.

If your child is acting differently than usual, ask questions to find out if they are abusing drugs. Ask the school for resources if you find out they are.

Behavioral Health, Transitions

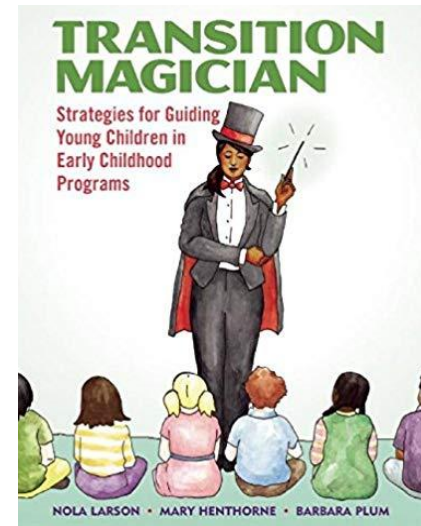
OPSI Recommendation for Schools

Coordinate interventions to facilitate students in transitioning through services and supports with minimal disruption to their daily routine, programs, and education.

Parents Partnering with Schools

Check to find out how well your child is returning to the classroom after receiving special services. When they return to the classroom, is your child assisted in getting up to speed with what the class is doing, and are they welcomed back in a way that makes them feel a part of the group? A sense of belonging in the classroom is important for many children's success in school.

Having a hard time transitioning between activities can be a sign that a child is experiencing more stress than is healthy. If your child does not transition well, they need support with both lowering their stress in general, and around this common challenge in schools and at home. The book, ***Transition Magician: Strategies for Guiding Young Children in Early Childhood Programs*** by Larson, Menthorne and Plum, Redleaf Press, 2002 is a resource for teachers in helping young children transition in smooth, less stressful ways. Many of the principles can also be used at home.



Applying It to Your Child at Home

Talk with your child about what is happening with their special services. Make sure they are receiving them. It is important that they understand the benefit of the services.

Behavioral Health, Service Coordination

OPSI Recommendation for Schools

Schools should help facilitate access to and coordination with community health services, including school-based services provided by community-based organizations. Behavioral health services should be coordinated between school and community providers whenever possible.

Parents Partnering with Schools

If your child is receiving counseling services with an outside agency, ensure that those services are happening consistently. Meet regularly with this counselor (perhaps monthly) to find out what you can do at home to support progress. Ensure that there is open communication between the community and school service providers so that everyone is working together for the best outcome for your child.

Applying It to Your Child at Home

Check with your child to make sure they feel counseling services are working for them. Your child should feel they can trust the counselor enough to talk about hard things, and they should enjoy being with the counselor.

Remember that when your child receives services, they may be alone with an adult that you may not know well. Check in with your child regularly to make sure they feel safe and comfortable with the adults they work with.

Behavioral Health, Including Primary Adults

OPSI Recommendation for Schools

Any intervention plan must include the primary adults and supports in the student's life.

Parents Partnering with Schools

Interventions should help your child learn new social and emotional skills. Be sure you are included in the process of deciding on behavior interventions and determining whether they are working. You should be given adequate advanced notice for any school-based meeting about your child.

Applying It to Your Child at Home

If it makes sense to you, follow through with the same plan at home. Alternatively, you might want your home to be a place where your child can relax and have looser expectations.

It was once believed that home and school expectations needed to be consistent. The thought was that if the rules at home were looser than the ones at school, the child would be confused and unable to be successful with the more demanding school environment.

More recent research suggests that human brains are quite flexible and can adapt to the expectations of different environments and relationships. Just as children can be bicultural when living in two separate cultures, they can adapt to different styles of parenting, coaching, teaching, etc. What can be helpful is to talk with your child about those differences so they can think about what it means to adjust to them.

Behavioral Health, Developmental Appropriateness

OPSI Recommendation for Schools

Supports and services at all grade levels must include developmentally appropriate content and strategies.

Parents Partnering with Schools

Check to ensure your child understands the intervention. Does your child know what the intervention is meant to achieve? Does your child feel they can be successful with the intervention? Work with your child's teacher to find interventions that fit their emotional needs, ability, learning style, culture, and personality. Include your child in discussions about what they feel would be most effective for them.

Applying It to Your Child at Home

Check with your child to make sure interventions feel encouraging and not discouraging. The human brain is far more motivated by encouragement than by discouragement.

Research-Based Behavior Support and Monitoring Practices

Multi-Tier Support System (MTSS)

OPSI School Recommendations

South King County Discipline Coalition Guide

Tier 1 Supports Include	Partnering to Build Behavior Supports
Establishing classroom rules, routines, and transition activities;	Does your child know the school rules and procedures? Are classroom and school routines predictable for your child? Does your child need support making transitions in the classroom and school?
Proximity or active supervision (scanning, escorting, and interacting) for students that may be off task and pre-correction prompts;	Does your child have daily friendly interaction with adults in the school? Does your child feel seen and cared about? If not, ask the school to identify an adult who would be willing to check in with your child regularly, just to see how they are doing and make a connection.
Increasing opportunities for students to respond during instructional lessons;	How often does your child respond to the teacher during lessons? Does your child raise their hand? If not, do they understand the lessons? Do they feel they will be called on if they raise their hand? If any answers concern you, let the teacher know.
Behavior-specific praise to recognize and reinforce appropriate behaviors;	Is your child getting positive feedback from the teacher? Is your child being recognized for tasks well done?

Research-Based Behavior Support and Monitoring, Multi-Tier Support System (MTSS) continued

Tier 1 Supports continued	Partnering to Build Behavior Supports continued
Optimizing conditions for learning in the classroom environment by adapting seating arrangements, visual supports, wall space, temperature, lighting, or noise levels;	Where does your child sit in the classroom? Is it in a place where your child feels included? Are they sitting near supportive peers? Can they see instructional materials easily? Are there any distractions in the classroom that your child may need reduced or to have breaks from?
Reinforcing target behaviors by providing individual incentives or group contingencies.	Does the class or school's reward system cause anxiety for your child? If so, talk with the teacher about alternative ways to teach behaviors. Reward systems are meant to motivate good behavior. It may be that your child is already motivated but does not have the ability to meet the teacher's expectations due to anxiety.
Implement a <u>tier 2 intervention</u> program for students who require additional support in meeting school-wide behavioral expectations. For example, students can check-in with assigned school personnel at multiple times during the school day regarding the student's behavior goals and daily interactions can be structured to intentionally create opportunities for positive adult attention, relationship-building, and instructional feedback on student's daily behavioral successes.	Who is a trusted adult that your child can check in with daily or at various times during the day at school? Who makes your child feel safe, seen, and important? This is a good person for your child to discuss their behavior plan with. If the school has concerns about your child's behaviors, ask the school for documentation about those behaviors. Find out what problem your child is trying to solve with those behaviors and see if you can think with your child about how to solve their problem in a better way.

Research-Based Behavior Support and Monitoring Practices, Multi-Tier Support System (MTSS) continued

Tier 1 Supports continued	Partnering to Build Behavior Supports continued
Establish data-based teams to regularly review student data (e.g. attendance, behavior, and academic indicators) to inform decision making processes. Identify students who need support and progress monitor students already identified. Develop exit criteria and a transition plan for student no longer needing additional support.	Is your child being blamed for their behavior? Or is the school taking a more proactive approach of identifying ways to prevent unwanted behavior by meeting your child's academic and emotional needs? Is the school teaching your child how to meet their own needs in constructive ways?
Create a daily behavior and/or academic report card to monitor student progress. Behavioral progress monitoring records are used by staff to provide students with specific feedback or instruction to monitor performance and develop skills.	Be sure the behavior report includes your child's point of view regarding reasons for the behavior, events leading up to the behavior, and any other pertinent information that may have contributed to your child's reasons for the behavior.
Have students develop routines and common language to assist with their communication skills regarding classroom behaviors (e.g. Stop. Think. Go.).	Stop. Think. Go. is a strategy that helps children stop and think before acting. Another strategy is to simply ask, "What is your plan?" Having a child explain this will help them slow down their actions and think about the best way to go about what they want to do. This strategy also gives you a chance to give the child your input.

Research-Based Behavior Support and Monitoring Practices, Multi-Tier Support System (MTSS) continued

Tier 1 Supports continued	Partnering to Build Behavior Supports continued
Students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and contexts benefit when school personnel actively strive to neutralize implicit bias in decision-making processes related to classroom behavioral expectations or behavior goals. Professional learning on classroom behavior strategies should focus on the role of implicit bias in observing, interpreting, and responding to student behavior. Otherwise, teachers and other school personnel risk labeling behaviors that are culturally appropriate as disruptive. Implementation of behavior support and monitoring practices involves ethical decision-making regarding which behaviors to change, who is responsible for changing them, and the norms that serve as a background for this behavior change. Therefore, schools must include families and community members, or organizations reflecting the cultural and ethnic makeup of the student body, in all decision-making. Schools must also consider language access needs—both how to reduce communication barriers and how to incorporate a student’s primary language into individualized plans.	Does your child’s school have an Equity Team? What anti-bias assessments and activities have they spearheaded? Do they include gender diversity in their definition of equity? Do they include disability? How accessible is this group, and who is available to address the following concerns: What school policies seem to go against your child’s, family’s and/or community’s cultural/identity norms? What evidence suggests that implicit bias may be at play? What is your child’s perspective on whether bias seems to affect the school’s discipline decisions? Has there been an effort to include your family’s primary language in your child’s behavior or education plan? What ideas can the Equity Team come up with to help solve problems of bias and discrimination when dealing with discipline at school? What timeline exists to work towards these solutions?

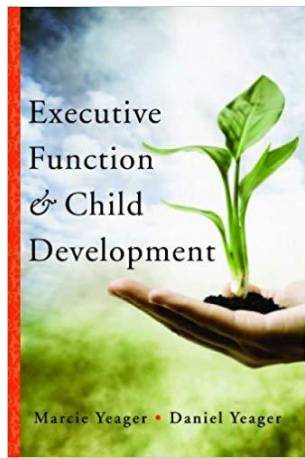
Research-Based Behavior Support and Monitoring Practices, Multi-Tier Support System (MTSS) continued

Tier 1 Supports continued	Partnering to Build Behavior Supports continued
Students who have been bullied or harassed, or who are at risk of being targets, could be vulnerable in behavior monitoring group-settings and would instead benefit from an individualized progress-monitoring plan. Also, be careful to distinguish between behavioral needs that warrant extra support and behavioral responses to bullying or other forms of harassment.	Monitor your child's interactions with peers to learn whether they are at risk for being a target. Ways to do this include the following: • Talk with your child daily about school, their friendships, and activities; • Monitor your child's use of cellular phones, social media, and interactive video games such as Fortnite; • Use parental controls whenever possible. Is your child's target behavior a defense against a perceived attack? Is your child's behavior due to not feeling safe at school? What might adults in the building do to increase your child's sense of safety? (Have a check-in person who your child can tell their worries to, have an adult supervise nearby where your child wants to play, make sure adults in your child's school know your child's name, suggest restorative justice procedures, etc.)
For students with autism and other neurodiversity in the classroom, establish predictable routines using visual supports and visual schedules. Use visual stories to support changes in routines.	Does your neurodiverse child know what to expect throughout the day? Are changes in routine communicated carefully and thoughtfully? Washington Autism Advocacy is an organization that provides advocates for families experiencing challenges with receiving appropriate services for their autistic children. They can be found at www.washingtonautismadvocacy.org

Research-Based Behavior Support and Monitoring Practices, Multi-Tier Support System (MTSS) continued

OSPI Recommended Antecedent Strategies for Schools	Partnering to Build Behavior Supports
Antecedent strategies are used before a challenging behavior occurs as a way to prevent problem behavior. It is important to remember that because these strategies do not teach a student a new or more appropriate skill, the effect of antecedent strategies may be temporary and often need to be combined with strategies that teach specific skills to students. This is especially true when a student's behavior is particularly challenging or if the student has limited ways to communicate.	Children's behaviors tend to be an indication of unmet needs. Rather than focusing on the child's behavior, school personnel should identify what may have caused the behavior (the child's need) and work towards prevention by helping the child get that need met. Children also need strategies to deal with their triggers, especially because adults will not always be able to meet the child's need. Events that lead up to behaviors are called antecedents. Strategies that focus on antecedents can eliminate unwanted behaviors. Below are some antecedent strategies:
• <u>Choice making</u> is a strategy that involves providing a student with several options before starting an activity where a student typically engages in challenging behavior. For example, a student might be offered a choice of materials that are needed for the task, a choice of components of the activity, or a choice of different activities when given directions to the task. For example, "Do you want to do multiplication or subtraction first?"	Behaviors may occur when your child has difficulty with an assignment because children need academic challenges that are within their developmental range. It could be that the assignment is not stimulating enough, or it may be too difficult or overwhelming. Ask the teacher whether the assignment is within the range of your child's abilities. If it is, ask the teacher to give the child choices around the assignment. Allowing a child to choose which task to complete first, whether to draw a picture first before writing the words, or whether to learn spelling words using flash cards or filling in letter blanks, could reduce your child's stress about it. Reducing stress can reduce stressful behaviors.

Research-Based Behavior Support and Monitoring Practices, Multi-Tier Support System (MTSS) continued

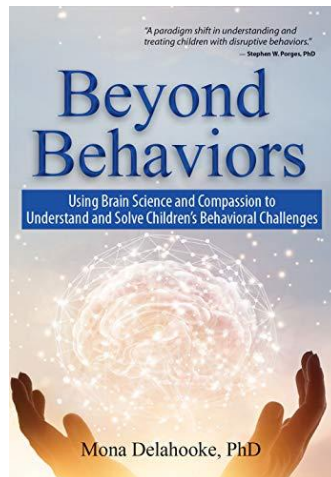
Tier 1 Supports continued	Partnering to Build Behavior Supports continued
• <i>High probability requests</i> is a way to encourage a student to build momentum through a series of short, easy requests that help a student engage in a specific behavior that they are not likely to complete.	If a task is overwhelming, a teacher can break it down into a sequence of smaller tasks and assign them one by one. Students can have a list of these smaller tasks that they check off as they complete them. For younger students, a task-chain can be created for multi-step tasks that occur regularly, such as morning routines when the child arrives to school. Here, a child or adult writes/draws each task on a strip of paper and staples these in order to make a chain. The final task is placed around the child's wrist, and as each task is completed, it is removed from the chain. The final link on the child's wrist can be a ticket to receive some sort of recognition in celebration for completing the sequence.  This idea comes from <i>Executive Function and Child Development</i> by Marcie and Daniel Yeager, Norton Professional Book, 2013.

Tier 1 Supports Include	Partnering to Build Behavior Supports
• <u>Using a pre-specified reinforcer</u> is a strategy that can help facilitate student completion of an activity or task. When using this strategy, a teacher states the reinforcer to be delivered prior to the completion of a task or activity in which a problem behavior occurs (e.g., “When you finish your journal writing, you can watch YouTube videos.”). To use this, first assess a student’s preferences and reinforcers. Identify a variety of reinforcers to offer the student so he/she does not get tired of a repeated reinforcer. Then, ensure the student knows what he/she has to do to get the reinforcer. Deliver the request by stating the reinforcer to be delivered when the request is completed. The student receives the reinforcer after completing the activity. It is important to remember that even though an item may be preferred, sometimes a student may not be willing to complete a task in order to obtain the item.	Celebrate completion of big assignments with your child. This does not need to happen every time, but celebrations of job completion puts a positive spin on school and classwork, and feeling good helps a child stay motivated. Another way children feel motivated is when they feel connected to adults. Eye contact, a reassuring touch on the shoulder, or a statement that shows your child they are noticed may only take seconds, yet these small gestures can help your child feel a sense of belonging and worth.
• <u>Preferred item as a distractor.</u> This strategy to reduce challenging behavior involves engaging a student in an activity or object to distract him/her from the event or situation where they typically have difficulty and engage in challenging behavior. For example, giving a student picture cards to look at while having to wait at an assembly, or letting a student listen to music (with headphones) while riding the bus.	If the antecedent, or event leading up to the behavior, is waiting or having to sit for too long, what would make it fun to do that, but also aid in learning? If the teacher is lecturing and your child does not do well with lectures, they might be able to play with a word find or crossword puzzle on the learning topic. When your child feels pressure building up, a basket of calming activities they can use to stay calm in the classroom could prevent that pressure from becoming overwhelming.

Research-Based Behavior Support and Monitoring Practices, Multi-Tier Support System (MTSS) continued

Tier 1 Supports continued	Partnering to Build Behavior Supports continued
• <u><i>Noncontingent reinforcement</i></u>. This strategy can be considered “enriching the environment” in a way that might prevent challenging behavior by reducing the value of the maintaining consequence and reducing the likelihood that the problem behavior will occur. To use this approach, the function, or reason, for a challenging behavior is identified, a baseline level of the behavior is determined, and then the teacher provides brief reinforcement (e.g., specific praise to the student, “nice job working on your assignment!”) on a planned schedule regardless of what the student is doing.	Often, children just want to feel seen. When they aren’t feeling seen, they get anxious, and may either withdraw or act out as a bid for connection. Noncontingent reinforcement means connecting with a child before the tension of needing connection builds up to a disruptive or disengaged behavior. With this strategy, the teacher schedules regular intervals of noticing the child and helping them feel seen and connected.
• <u><i>Collaborative activities</i></u>. This strategy involves sharing the responsibilities of a task or activity in which a student typically exhibits challenging behaviors. For example, a teacher might state, “If you will write three sentences, I will write three sentences.” To implement the collaborative activities approach, first identify the activity, then split the responsibilities of the task. Then, before the student engages in challenging behavior, present the task demand in a collaborative fashion. This intervention tends to be effective for students with challenging behavior that functions as a way to avoid an activity or to obtain attention.	Children crave relationship. When they can complete tasks in relationship, the connection with another helps them feel motivated to do it well. An example at home could be, “Let’s clean your room together. I’ll pick up the things on the floor while you work on cleaning off the desk and shelves. Next time, you can clean up the floor and I’ll clean the surfaces.” Another example could be with nightly reading, “I’ll read a page and then you read a page and we can have fun reading together.”

Research-Based Behavior Support and Monitoring Practices, Multi-Tier Support System (MTSS) continued

Tier 1 Supports continued	Partnering to Build Behavior Supports continued
In addition to choosing strategies that may prevent challenging behavior from occurring, teachers should be able to teach students specific skills that teach students alternative skills that either function as a “replacement” for the problem behavior or as a way to cope with, or tolerate, an unpleasant situation (Halle, Bambara, & Reichle, 2005).	Sometimes, the problem is that a child does not understand the expectation. Sometimes the child does not have the skills to meet the expectation. Rather than getting upset about a child’s disruptive behavior, adults can teach a child why a different way is preferred and how to meet the expectation.
Replacement skills are behaviors that help a student get their needs met by identifying the reasons (function) for the behavior and finding an alternative behavior that serves the same function as the challenging behavior but in a more socially acceptable way. Depending on the function of the challenging behavior, a replacement skill might result in the student accessing teacher or peer attention, delaying or stopping a task request, accessing a toy or tangible item, or receiving/avoiding sensory input. Because the skill is taught by also ensuring that challenging behavior is not inadvertently responded to, this strategy is sometimes called differential reinforcement.	When a child has a disruptive behavior, find out what problem the child was trying to solve with that behavior. Help the child come up with a better solution to their problem.  A book for more ideas on meeting children’s needs in response to challenging behaviors is <i>Beyond Behaviors: Using Brain Science and Compassion to Understand and Solve Children’s Behavioral Challenges</i> by Mona Delahooke, PESI Publishing, 2019.

Research-Based Behavior Support and Monitoring Practices, Multi-Tier Support System (MTSS) continued

Tier 1 Supports continued	Partnering to Build Behavior Supports continued
The replacement skill should provide the student with the same outcome provided by the challenging behavior. For example, if a student puts their head down when asked to complete a difficult academic assignment and as a result avoids, delays, or escapes the task, then the new replacement skill should provide this same outcome, or function but by using more acceptable ways to communicate. Replacement skills are particularly helpful for students who are learning to communicate effectively and may have a limited communicative repertoire.	Examples of replacement skills include the following: If a student leaves the classroom without permission, the adult helps the student notice when breaks are needed and creates a comfortable space in the classroom (perhaps a table with a blanket over it) to check out for a while. The teacher could schedule breaks. Perhaps an instructional assistant could come at certain times to take a brief walk with the child outside. If a student refuses to do what they are asked, an adult can find out what is problematic about the request, and can work with the child to come up with ideas for alternative ways to accomplish what is needed. For example, an academic task could be broken down into smaller tasks or changed to fit the child's ability level or interest. If a student fights with another child, an intervening adult can help that child communicate their message to the other child in a peaceful way, and stay to translate messages back and forth between the two children until a solution is found.

Research-Based Behavior Support and Monitoring Practices, Multi-Tier Support System (MTSS) continued

Tier 1 Supports continued	Partnering to Build Behavior Supports continued
Examples of replacement skills include: • Requesting or recruiting attention (the function is accessing attention) • Requesting help or assistance (the function is escaping a request or instruction) • Requesting a break (the function is escaping a request or instruction) • Rejecting a request (e.g., “No thank you”) (the function is escaping a request or instruction) • Requesting an item or activity (the function is accessing a “tangible”) • Requesting help to obtain an item or activity (the function is accessing a “tangible”)	Sometimes, a student may have tried to make requests for attention, a break, assistance, or some other need, and they were refused. Such requests may come at inconvenient times for a teacher or class. Students may need to learn appropriate ways to request what they need. Teachers may need to teach students more acceptable ways and times for making requests. They may also need to have various strategies: raising a hand, writing a note, sending a hand signal with an agreed upon meaning, etc.

Research-Based Behavior Support and Monitoring Practices, Multi-Tier Support System (MTSS) continued

Tier 1 Supports continued	Partnering to Build Behavior Supports continued
<i>Coping and tolerance skills</i> are useful when a student needs to participate in an activity that cannot be avoided, such as medical procedures or certain life skills or self-care skills. In addition, these skills can be used to help a student become more tolerant of using a replacement skill in ways that help ensure they are engaged in classroom and academic activities. Tolerance for delayed reinforcement is a strategy that can be useful for increasing the amount of work a student completes or extending the time that elapses before a student earns a reward. When using the strategy, a teacher provides a signal that indicates reinforcement is about to be delivered, based on the student showing an appropriate behavior. For example, a teacher might say “just one more minute” or “you’re almost done” to indicate that student will be able to leave a task or be provided a reinforcer. As the student is successful, the time is gradually increased.	Here is an exercise that teaches kids self-talk in order to gain perseverance in completing a task, or patience in waiting: 1) Ask your child, “What are you thinking when you are sitting and waiting for your turn? (Or sitting down to homework, or any other challenging activity?)” Write down the thoughts they have, one thought per small piece of paper. 2) Read the first thought aloud to the child, then hand the paper to the child. When the child receives the paper, they decide if the thought will help them with their patience or perseverance. If the thought is helpful, the child puts the paper in the “HELPS” pile. If the thought is not helpful, the child crumples up the paper and throws it away. 3) The adult and child brainstorm thoughts that would help the child with perseverance/patience. They put each idea on a piece of paper until there is a stack of 10 pieces of paper in the HELPS pile. 4) When the child is working on a task and seems to need support, the adult puts one of the slips of paper with a helpful thought on it in front of the child. The child reads the message aloud and sees if it helps with completing the task or waiting. If not, the adult gives the child another piece of paper for the child to read aloud, and continues this until the child feels successful. (Adapted from <i>Executive Function and Child Development</i> by Marcie and Daniel Yeager, Norton Professional Book, 2013)

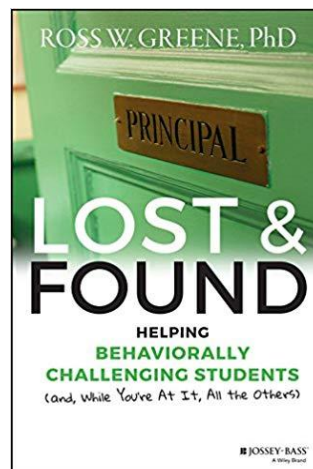
Research-Based Behavior Support and Monitoring Practices, Multi-Tier Support System (MTSS) continued

Tier 1 Supports continued	Partnering to Build Behavior Supports continued
There are several important considerations to keep in mind when teaching replacement skills: 1. Determine the function of (reason for) the behavior of concern first 2. Choose a skill that requires less effort (for the student) than the problem behavior 3. Create a clear list of teaching procedures for all adults to use when teaching the new skill 4. Identify powerful reinforcers to provide when the student engages in the new skill 5. Provide the reinforcer immediately after the student uses the new skill 6. Be consistent, and initially follow through with each student request every time 7. Be sure you no longer provide reinforcement for the problem behavior Replacement skills strategies should be considered a first step in helping the student. For example, requesting a break may be more socially acceptable than screaming, defiance, or aggression, but soon the student will need to	An alternative to this behaviorist approach to teaching replacement skills is collaborative problem solving: 1. Tell your child that you notice they are doing this behavior, then ask them about it. It might sound like, “I see you have been skipping your homework lately. What’s up?” 2. Listen. Your child might say, “It’s boring,” “It’s hard,” or, “I just want to play.” 3. Tell your child why the behavior is a problem from your perspective. It might sound like, “It’s important to me that you do your homework. Hard work is an important value in our family.” 4. Ask your child what other ways they might achieve their goal or solve their problem. You might ask, “How can you get through the boredom?” Or, “How can I help you solve the problem of your homework being too hard?” Or, “How can you do your homework and get enough play time in?” 5. Help your child brainstorm as many solutions as you can think of together, and once there is a good list, ask your child which they would like to try?

learn how to engage in the tasks appropriately and for longer periods.

6. Give it a finite amount of time, from a day to a week, and when the time is up, see what needs to be tweaked or changed about the plan to make it work.

(Adapted from Dr. Ross Greene's Collaborative and Proactive Solutions approach, **Lives in the Balance**, <https://www.livesinthebalance.org/about-cps>)



This approach can be found in this book, ***Lost and Found: Helping Behaviorally Challenging Students (and, While You're At It, All the Others)*** by Ross Greene, Jossey-Bass, 2016

Mentoring

Definition

OPSI Recommendation for Schools

Mentoring is defined as a relationship in which an experienced person (mentor) assists another, less-experienced person (mentee) in developing specific skills and knowledge that will enhance the mentee's growth.

Things to Consider for Your Child

According to MENTOR: The National Mentoring Partnership, children at risk who had a mentor were:

- 55% more likely to enroll in college.
- 52% less likely to skip school.
- 37% less likely to skip class.
- 78% more likely to volunteer regularly.
- 90% interested in becoming a mentor themselves.
- 130% more likely to hold leadership positions.

Youth who had a mentor also showed a better attitude towards school.

Regular meetings between mentor and student saw that youth were:

- 46% less likely to use drugs.
- 27% less likely to drink.
- 81% more likely to participate in extracurricular activities.

Youth also showed fewer depressive symptoms when they met regularly with their mentor.

(Boston University Community Center:
<http://www.bu.edu/csc/2016/03/15/siblings-spring-fling-2>

Mentoring, Practice

OSPI Recommendation for Schools

Practice Possibilities—Ideas to Consider When Planning

- Partner with local service organizations to establish adult-youth mentoring relationships that include service learning. For example, firefighters could mentor students while also teaching fire safety.
- Empower a group of students to identify potential mentors and develop a mentoring program.
- Develop mentoring in combination with school activities and student clubs.

Things to Consider for Your Child

Once your child has become successful with interventions, you might consider recommending them as a mentor for younger kids who have difficulty.

Mentoring Resources

OSPI-Suggested Resources—Tools for Planning

- Mentor Washington
- MENTOR: The National Mentoring Partnership
- National Mentoring Resource Center
- The Rhodes Lab: Center for Evidence-based Mentoring Mentoring 56
- University of Minnesota, Institute on Community Integration: Check & Connect Student Engagement Intervention
- Education Northwest: Institute for Youth Success, Mentor/Mentee Training and Relationship Support Resources, and Youth Mentoring Program Planning and Design Resources

Mentoring, Implementation

OPSI Recommendation for Schools

Strategies for Implementation—Success Factors to Consider When Planning

- Ensure mentoring relationships are clearly defined.
- Evaluate mentors' interpersonal sensitivity and capacity to build rapport with youth as well as families.
- Make mentoring programs available to students in grade levels throughout the district so students can benefit from a mentoring relationship during each stage of their development.
- Streamline processes for clearing volunteer mentors within school buildings.
- Identify potential mentoring resources for metropolitan as well as rural areas and, when necessary, develop a plan to deliver mentoring services in various locations.

Things to Consider for Your Child

Consider the following when choosing or approving a mentor for your child:

- A clearly defined relationship can prevent confusion about why the mentor is spending time with your child and what behavior is expected of both the mentor and your child.
- Your child's mentor should have good communication skills and be able to help your child feel safe and comfortable in their presence.
- Mentors should have background checks to support your child's safety.
- Often model students are chosen as peer mentors. Because we teach best what we have to learn, students who have made significant progress but still struggle with these skills from time to time can make excellent mentors as well.

Restorative Justice

Definition

OPSI Recommendation for Schools

In the context of the school system, restorative justice is a set of promising practices that include preventative as well as responsive strategies to create opportunities for social-emotional learning, foster a school-wide culture of relationship-based accountability, and provide alternatives to exclusionary discipline practices. Restorative justice is a broad term that refers to a philosophy or theory of justice and a variety of related practices such as circles, mediation, and conferencing. The focus of restorative justice is relational, rather than legal.

South King County Discipline Coalition Guide

Restorative justice is where victims, offenders, and community members meet to decide how to repair the harm done by a crime.

It emphasizes accountability, making amends, and, if they are open to it, facilitated meetings between victims, offenders, and others affected.

(Center for Justice and Reconciliation, restorativejustice.org)

Restorative Justice, Practice

OSPI Recommendations for Schools	South King County Discipline Coalition Guide
Practice Possibilities—Ideas to Consider When Planning • Institute talking circles into regular classroom scheduling to check in with students and build positive relationships. • Identify specific behaviors represented in exclusionary discipline data that can alternatively be referred to restorative justice practices and implement a plan accordingly. Consider what restorative strategies may address discipline disparities affecting specific populations. • Integrate restorative justice language into district discipline policies, office referral processes, and classroom pedagogy to encourage the systemic adoption of restorative practices. • Develop a district-wide restorative justice training program that can support consistent and frequent ongoing training for staff. A community partnership, such as with a local Dispute Resolution Center or Educational Service District, can support internal capacity building and service delivery.	• Talking circles are often called class meetings where students sit in a circle and work to solve problems together. This brings students a sense of belonging in the classroom and a feeling that their voice matters. • Restorative justice is appropriate for times when students are removed from class because of their behavior. • Look for restorative justice language in a school's discipline policy. If they do not have it, advocate for this through the school's Building Leadership Team or Equity Team. • King County Dispute Resolution Center provides mediation for the community. You may want to use them to help you advocate for the needs of your child in their school. The King County Dispute Resolution Center can be reached at (206) 443-9603.

OSPI Recommendations for Schools	South King County Discipline Coalition Guide
• Create restorative justice coordinator positions within school buildings to facilitate circles and conferences, manage data collection and evaluation processes, and collaborate with restorative justice partnerships. • Establish alternative spaces within the school building that can be used for intentional reflection, restorative interventions, and social-emotional learning or integrate such practices into already existent in-school suspension rooms. • Train a group of students to conduct peer mediations and promote restorative justice. • Partner with local law enforcement and juvenile courts to integrate restorative justice into diversion processes. One strategy could be to encourage the use of restitution based alternatives in lieu of legal penalties or fines.	• Find out whether your child’s school has a restorative justice coordinator who can answer your questions and field your concerns. • If your child’s school uses a suspension room, find out how it is used. It should feel not feel like a punishment to your child, but a place to relax and reflect. Young children should be accompanied in these rooms by a quiet supportive adult. (When a child needs to calm down, it is important that the accompanying adult not talk or talk very little during that time.) • Children who “fly off the handle” may not have developed the ability to self-regulate, or calm themselves when upset. To learn this skill, they need adults to co-regulate with them for some time before they can do it on their own. To co-regulate, adults need to either empathize with the child, sit quietly with them until they calm, or alternate between the two, depending on what the child shows that they need. Empathy Tools: Hold, Validate, Explore, Contain Hold: “Wow. I’m glad you told me about this problem.” Validate: “This sounds really hard to deal with.” Explore: “What about this has been hardest for you?” Contain: “I can see this needs more thought. How about we talk about it more after lunch?” Adapted from Facilitating Attuned Interactions, The Erikson Institute

Restorative Justice, Demographics

OSPI Recommendations for Schools	South King County Discipline Coalition Guide
Demographic Considerations—Student Factors to Consider When Planning • Students with disabilities, depending on the severity and type of disability, could benefit from the participation of a special education teacher or guardian in formal circles or conferences. Restorative Justice 63 • Students of color and their families, as populations most affected by the disproportionate consequences of exclusionary discipline practices, should be actively consulted and directly involved in restorative justice processes. • Students from indigenous communities with longstanding traditions of using restorative practices may wish to share examples from their culture, but may also be protective of specific knowledge and protocols. Respectfully acknowledge the rich history of restorative justice as practiced in indigenous cultures throughout the world, but avoid appropriating or decontextualizing specific indigenous practices. Building meaningful relations with local Tribes could benefit the restorative justice process.	Consider your child’s needs when engaging in restorative justice meetings: • Your child may need moral support when facing a victim or perpetrator in a restorative justice meeting. A trusted adult or peer should be able to accompany them. • You, along with your advocate, can help the school understand your child’s perspective of the behavior or the schools response to the behavior from a racial or cultural standpoint. • If you are from a culture that uses restorative practices, you should feel welcome to propose any of the traditions in your culture’s practice.

Restorative Justice, Implementation

OSPI Recommendations for Schools	South King County Discipline Coalition Guide
Strategies for Implementation—Success Factors to Consider When Planning • Eliminate any unnecessary zero-tolerance or punitive language from written documents and oral communication channels, as such messaging can impede restorative justice initiatives. • Guard against efforts to make restorative practices part of a punitive discipline process. Willing participation is a core component of restorative philosophies and practice. Incentivizing participation may be beneficial to the process but using coercive actions to elicit participation can be counterproductive. • For situations involving a clear victim and offender, take measures to prevent any further victimization or trauma and to ensure the victim's voice is heard in the process. • Adapt restorative programs to align with local cultural practices and student backgrounds. • Ensure school security personnel and any contracted school building personnel, especially school resource officers (SRO), participate in restorative justice trainings and are confident in using restorative questioning as de-escalation techniques. Restorative Justice 64 • Encourage students to engage not only as participants in restorative processes, but as agents of change for creating a positive school culture and improving school climate.	• Check your child's school discipline policy and advocate for the removal of wording that excludes or punishes children for behavior. • If your child's school invites your child into restorative justice procedures, be sure your child understands that it is voluntary, and that they feel comfortable telling their point of view and expressing their preferences and needs for resolution. • It is important that both victim and offender are clearly heard. When possible, offenders should be assisted in understanding their reasons for harming the other person. A plan should be created to help the offender build skills in meeting their objectives without harming others.

Social Skills Instruction

OSPI Recommendations for Schools

The purpose of providing social skills instruction is to increase students' social and emotional competencies. Social and emotional competencies are skills necessary for students to initiate and maintain appropriate social networks and friendships, meet the demands of both adults and peers, and readily adapt to changes in social environments. Washington's social-emotional learning (SEL) standards are self-awareness, self-management, self-efficacy, social awareness, social management, and social engagement.

South King County Discipline Coalition Guide

Instead of disciplining a child using punishment, adults can teach the skills children need in order to behave in socially acceptable ways.

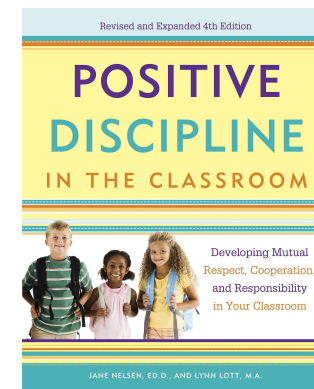
A place to begin is to build the child's awareness of their feelings, needs, and desires. Next, the child can build awareness of the feelings, needs and desires of the people around them. Finally, the child can learn specific skills in communicating with others.

Social Skills Instruction, Practice

Practice Possibilities—Ideas to Consider When Planning

- Teach students to recognize, understand, label, express, and regulate emotions. Provide explicit small group instruction on targeted social skills and integrate prosocial skill building into lessons across all content areas.
- Provide opportunities for staff to learn strategies for delivering social skills instruction when natural opportunities (teachable moments) arise to teach appropriate social behavior.
- Reinforce social skills through skits, role-playing, and drama performances to model social skills in classroom settings or school assemblies. Teach students to actively counteract bullying, discrimination, and inequalities.
- Develop a peer mentoring program that focuses on older students modeling, practicing, and reinforcing social skills with younger students.

- People are more open to cooperating when they feel cared about and heard. Supporting students in sharing how they feel and listening to those sharings accomplishes both, while it also builds students' skills in interpersonal communication.
- Using teachable moments can mean interrupting a lesson and taking everyone's time to focus on one child to give them support. It may be difficult for some teachers to see the benefits of this to the rest of the class, yet it is through real-life scenarios that social skills are taught best.
- ***Positive Discipline in the Classroom* by Jan Nelson, Harmony, 2013** provides protocols for how to have successful community-wide problem-solving role plays in classroom settings.



Social Skills Instruction, Demographics

Demographic Considerations—Student Factors to Consider When Planning

- Students who participate in extra-curricular activities or clubs could benefit from social skills instruction that corresponds with the social interactions that naturally occur while participating in those activities.
 - Elementary school students may derive more benefit from learning age-appropriate behaviors in group activities with their peers than through individual adult instruction.
 - Students from diverse cultural contexts and backgrounds could be supported better when social skills instruction is implemented along with professional learning for staff on implicit bias training. Staff should be trained in cultural competency so as not to interpret cultural differences as social skills deficits.
- Help your child and school staff identify social skills that your child needs to be successful with the activities they engage in.
 - Talk with the school counselor about ways they might teach the community the needed skills. It's likely that your child is not the only one who could benefit from this instruction.
 - Consider whether the social skills the school thinks are needed are actually cultural differences. If they are, you may want to change the language from “behavior expectations” to “cultural expectations” with your child and school staff.

Social Skills Instruction, Implementation

Strategies for Implementation—Success Factors to Consider When Planning

- Social skills instruction should be planned, focused, and integrated within teaching and learning activities whenever possible. Ensure social-emotional skills are generally promoted school-wide.
- Explicitly teach social skills without assuming students already know the skills. Even if they do, explicit instruction can reinforce appropriate social skills. Provide positive reinforcement when students demonstrate social-emotional competencies.
- Foster a school climate that embraces differences by modeling acceptance, empathy, and inclusive social interactions. Ensure appropriate levels of instruction and practice opportunities are provided for students to develop prosocial behaviors.
- Intentionally teach skills in natural settings where practical usage of social skills are most applicable.
- Ensure social skills instruction is culturally responsive. Provide professional learning to support educators' understanding of how cultural factors influence social behavior and the social environment.
- Include students in identifying social skills to promote prosocial behaviors that can be integrated within the building's school-wide positive-behavioral interventions and supports (SWPBIS) framework and school culture.

Often, children can identify social skills they would like help learning. Before children can feel safe enough to reflect on their goals, however, they need to feel safe enough in their relationships with adults to be able to reflect on them together. To achieve that safety, adults can welcome children's social mistakes as opportunities to learn rather than reasons to feel ashamed. To do this, adults can follow these steps:

- 1) Help the child identify the need they were trying to meet when using the behavior.
- 2) Reflect with the child about why their behavior might not have worked for them.
- 3) Reflect with the child about why the behavior may not have worked for others.
- 4) Brainstorm with the child (letting the child take the lead) on other behaviors they could use to either meet their need or get help in meeting their need.
- 5) Have the child choose an option and try it out for a short while.
- 6) Check back with the child to see how well it worked, whether it needs tweaking to work better, or if they would like to try another option.