

Positive, Proactive Approaches to Supporting Children With Disabilities

# Reducing Exclusionary Practices

## Overview

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Public early childhood programs, elementary, and secondary schools are responsible for meeting the needs of children with disabilities, which includes addressing their social, emotional, and behavioral needs. Far too often, positive and proactive approaches that focus on preventing interfering behavior are not part of a child's individualized education program (IEP). As a result, children with disabilities—particularly children with disabilities of color—are frequently subjected to exclusionary discipline, which removes them from their learning environment without focusing on how to best meet their unique behavioral needs. Schools and early childhood programs must understand how to protect the rights and needs of children with disabilities to ensure their disability-based behaviors are understood and that their IEPs are appropriately developed and effectively implemented to enable social, emotional, and academic success.

In July 2022, the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), published the guide [\*Positive, Proactive Approaches to Addressing the Needs of Children with Disabilities: A Guide for Stakeholders\*](#), which provides actions state educational agencies (SEAs), local educational agencies (LEAs), schools, early childhood programs, and educators can take to implement positive, proactive, and preventative practices that seek to better address a child's behavioral needs while decreasing the use of exclusionary discipline. These practices reinforce core pillars of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), including how addressing the behavioral needs of children with disabilities is part of IDEA's requirement to provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE) provided in the least restrictive environment (LRE), and the IEP as the vehicle for fulfilling this obligation. By implementing practices associated with these positive and proactive approaches, students with disabilities can be assured of access to an educational environment that is nondiscriminatory, supportive, positive, and nurturing for both their academic and behavioral development.

## OSEP Technical Assistance (TA) Center Resources

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The resources in the following tables can support schools and early childhood programs in implementing positive, proactive approaches to support and respond to children's behavioral needs more effectively. Following the resources is information about OSEP TA Centers that can provide additional information to support schools in implementing the practices described below.

## SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION

Resource	Description	Audience	Reference Citation
<b>Manifestation Determination in School Discipline</b>	This page provides information about the IDEA-mandated discipline procedure of “manifestation determination review,” which determines whether a child’s behavior that led to a disciplinary infraction is linked to his or her disability. The page includes who is involved, the scope of the review, and discussion of the different determinations and their implications for the child.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educators</li> <li>• School administrators</li> <li>• Local and district agencies</li> </ul>	Center for Parent Information and Resources (CPIR) (2022). <i>Manifestation determination in school discipline</i> . <a href="https://www.parentcenterhub.org/manifestation">https://www.parentcenterhub.org/manifestation</a>
<b>Manifest Determination Flow Chart</b>	This infographic illustrates the manifest determination process and options. It shows the various steps that can lead to a required manifest determination meeting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educators</li> <li>• School administrators</li> </ul>	Reese, M. (2021). <i>Manifest Determination Flow Chart</i> . Center for Appropriate Dispute Resolution in Education. <a href="https://www.cadeworks.org/sites/default/files/resources/ID-16%20Manifestation%20Determination%20Meeting%20Flowchart%20July%202021%20-%20checked%204.2022.pdf">https://www.cadeworks.org/sites/default/files/resources/ID-16%20Manifestation%20Determination%20Meeting%20Flowchart%20July%202021%20-%20checked%204.2022.pdf</a>
<b>Pyramid Model Program Leadership Team Guidance for Preventing the Use of Suspension and Expulsion and Promoting Equitable, Inclusive, and Culturally Responsive Practice</b>	This document provides program leadership teams with guidance to support their efforts to eliminate suspension and expulsion and promote equitable, inclusive, and culturally responsive practice in all early childhood settings, including public and private schools and childcare centers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local and district agencies</li> <li>• School administrators</li> </ul>	Smith, B. J., Dell, P., & Fox, L. (2018). <i>Pyramid Model Program Leadership Team guidance for preventing the use of suspension and expulsion and promoting equitable, inclusive, and culturally responsive practice</i> . National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations. <a href="https://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/docs/LeadershipTeam_Guidance_Programs.pdf">https://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/docs/LeadershipTeam_Guidance_Programs.pdf</a>
<b>Pyramid Model State Leadership Team Guidance for Preventing the Use of Suspension and Expulsion and Promoting Equitable, Inclusive, and Culturally Responsive Practice</b>	This document provides state leadership teams with guidance on how to prevent suspension and expulsion by integrating with existing efforts, including the Pyramid Model, Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS), and Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS), inclusion, and State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) efforts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• State and regional agencies</li> </ul>	Smith, B. J., Dell, P., & Fox, L. (2018). <i>Pyramid Model State Leadership Team guidance for preventing the use of suspension and expulsion and promoting equitable, inclusive, and culturally responsive practice</i> . National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations. <a href="https://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/docs/LeadershipTeam_Guidance_State.pdf">https://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/docs/LeadershipTeam_Guidance_State.pdf</a>
<b>What Works in Reducing Suspension and Disproportionality: The Pyramid Model</b>	In this webinar, panelists discuss their implementation of the Pyramid Model with a focus on addressing equity and eliminating the use of exclusionary discipline practices.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educators</li> </ul>	Allen, R., Lima, R., & Lofties, A. (2019). <i>What works in reducing suspensions and disproportionality: The Pyramid Model</i> [Webinar]. National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations. <a href="https://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/Training/Webinar/archive/2019/11-18/2019-11-18_Keeping-Children-in-School.html">https://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/Training/Webinar/archive/2019/11-18/2019-11-18_Keeping-Children-in-School.html</a>

## RESTRAINT AND SECLUSION

Resource	Description	Audience	Reference Citation
<b>Promoting Positive Discipline Approaches and Reducing Restraint and Seclusion: The American School for the Deaf's Model of Success</b>	This brief describes a school's transformation from using ineffective and punitive disciplinary practices to implementing effective and proactive responses to behavior by installing the Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support (PBIS) framework in a unique setting. Specifically, this demonstration highlights the work of the PBIS school leadership team at the American School for the Deaf (ASD) and describes ASD's use of PBIS strategies in alignment with the Six Core Strategies® to reduce their use of restraint and seclusion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educators</li> <li>• Health and related services providers</li> <li>• Local and district agencies</li> <li>• School administrators</li> <li>• State and regional agencies</li> </ul>	Wilson, K. V., Rhodes, C. E., Kern, L., & George, H. P. (2022). <i>Promoting positive discipline approaches and reducing restraint and seclusion: The American School for the Deaf's model of success</i> . Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports. <a href="https://www.pbis.org/resource/promoting-positive-discipline-approaches-and-reducing-restraint-and-seclusion-the-american-school-for-the-deafs-model-of-success">https://www.pbis.org/resource/promoting-positive-discipline-approaches-and-reducing-restraint-and-seclusion-the-american-school-for-the-deafs-model-of-success</a>
<b>Remote Instruction as Suspension: Concerns and Guidance</b>	Removing students from the classroom and placing them in remote instruction for their behavior is an emerging form of discipline. The purpose of this brief is to describe this form of discipline, examine its implications and potential negative impacts, and provide guiding principles for improving behavior through evidence-based approaches.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educators</li> <li>• Health and related services providers</li> <li>• Local and district agencies</li> <li>• School administrators</li> </ul>	McIntosh, K., von Ravensberg, H., Santiago-Rosario, M. R., & Chaparro, E. (2022). <i>Remote instruction as suspension: Concerns and guidance</i> . Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports. <a href="https://www.pbis.org/resource/remote-instruction-as-suspension-concerns-and-guidance">https://www.pbis.org/resource/remote-instruction-as-suspension-concerns-and-guidance</a>
<b>Restraint and Seclusion Alternatives in All U.S. States and Territories: A Review of Legislation and Policies</b>	This evaluation brief (a) describes methods of a systematic review of state policy and legislation on restraint and seclusion (b) summarizes how R/S is addressed in state policy and legislation, (c) discusses the extent to which policy and legislation emphasize alternatives to R/S, and (d) based on this review, provides considerations for preventing or reducing R/S, such as organizing a continuum of evidence-based prevention practices within a positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS) framework to address the use of R/S.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educators</li> <li>• Health and related services providers</li> <li>• Local and district agencies</li> <li>• Researchers</li> <li>• School administrators</li> <li>• State and regional agencies</li> </ul>	Kern, L., George, H. P., Hodnett, J., Evanovich, L. L., & Freeman, J. (2021). <i>Restraint and seclusion alternatives in all U.S. states and territories: A review of legislation and policies</i> . Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports. <a href="https://www.pbis.org/resource/restraint-and-seclusion-alternatives-in-all-us-states-and-territories-a-review-of-legislation-and-policies">https://www.pbis.org/resource/restraint-and-seclusion-alternatives-in-all-us-states-and-territories-a-review-of-legislation-and-policies</a>

## CULTURALLY AND LINGUISTICALLY RESPONSIVE PRACTICES

Resource	Description	Audience	Reference Citation
<b>Disproportionality in Special Education   IDEA Part B   Module 5</b>	<p>This Center for Parent Information and Resources (CPIR)-produced training module provides important context on disproportionality and its consequences, especially on students with disabilities. The module includes a trainer's guide, handouts for participants, and two PowerPoint slideshows, all downloadable. Trainers can use these materials to inform audiences about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• what IDEA requires states, districts, and schools to do to monitor for disproportionality in special education programs;</li> <li>• what happens in a state that finds significant disproportionality in the state or in any of its districts/LEAs; and</li> <li>• the corrective actions that must be taken.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educators</li> <li>• Researchers</li> <li>• School administrators</li> </ul>	<p>Center for Parent Information and Resources. (2020). <i>Disproportionality in special education   IDEA Part B   Module 5</i>.  <a href="https://www.parentcenterhub.org/disproportionality-in-special-education">https://www.parentcenterhub.org/disproportionality-in-special-education</a></p>
<b>Best Practices in Outreach</b>	<p>This CPIR resource page spotlights high-quality resources useful to Parent Centers and other groups working within diverse communities (e.g., Hispanic, African American, Native American, the foreign-born, or otherwise underserved, multicultural, or minority).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educators</li> <li>• School administrators</li> </ul>	<p>Center for Parent Information and Resources (2017). <i>Best practices in outreach</i>.  <a href="https://www.parentcenterhub.org/best-practices-in-outreach">https://www.parentcenterhub.org/best-practices-in-outreach</a></p>
<b>Buzz   Cultural Matters</b>	<p>This issue of CPIR's e-newsletter begins by connecting subscribers with a Glossary of Cultural Terms. It also announces the launching of the first two tiers of learning in CPIR's Native American Resource Collection (Native Culture and Background, and Outreach to Native Communities) and the webinar CPIR conducted about the resource collection.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educators</li> <li>• Researchers</li> <li>• School administrators</li> </ul>	<p>Center for Parent Information and Resources. (2020). <i>Buzz   Cultural matters</i>.  <a href="https://www.parentcenterhub.org/buzz-feb2020-issue1">https://www.parentcenterhub.org/buzz-feb2020-issue1</a></p>

## OSEP TA Centers

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- **Center for Parent Information and Resources (CPIR)** | CPIR provides universal technical assistance to the network of Parent Centers funded by OSEP. Among its priorities are: (a) providing Parent Centers with products and materials to support their work with families; (b) increasing Parent Centers' knowledge and capacity in specific domains; and (c) increasing the coordination of parent training efforts throughout the network. Among the products and services CPIR provides to the Parent Center network are: (a) its information-rich website in English and Spanish (called the Parent Center Hub); (b) a twice-monthly newsletter called the *Buzz from the Hub*; (c) the eLearning Hub, which features online, self-paced learning modules for all Parent Center staff as part of capacity building; (d) frequent webinars on high-priority topics; (e) national Parent Center capacity-building conferences; (f) private communication spaces where Parent Centers can share resources and collaborate with their colleagues (CentersConnect); and (g) coordination of annual data collection and reporting of Parent Center activities, training contacts, and services provided to families, professionals, and youth with disabilities.

<https://www.parentcenterhub.org>

**Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)** | The Center on PBIS was initially funded in 1998 and a new 5-year funding cycle launched in October 2018. The purpose of the new center is to improve the capacity of state educational agencies, LEAs, and schools to establish, scale up, and sustain the PBIS framework to (a) scale up Tier 2 and 3 systems to improve outcomes for students with or at-risk for disabilities, (b) enhance school climate and school safety, and (c) improve conditions for learning to promote the well-being of all students. The Center on PBIS is grounded in the values of comprehensive prevention, based on human-centered science, and implemented through collaborative partnerships, centered in equity, to improve social, emotional, behavioral, and academic outcomes.

<https://www.pbis.org>

- **IDEA Data Center (IDC)** | Provides TA to build the capacity of states and LEAs to collect, report, analyze, and use high-quality IDEA Part B data. IDC offers a full range of services and resources to support states' efforts to submit 616 (State Performance Plans and Annual Performance Reports or SPP/APR) data and 618 (or *EDFacts*) data that meet the U.S. Department of Education's data quality standards for accuracy, timeliness, and completeness. IDC also partners with States and LEAs to help them use these data to identify programmatic strengths as well as areas for improvement, including addressing root causes of poor performance and evaluating progress toward goals and desired outcomes.

<https://ideadata.org>

- **IRIS Center** | The IRIS Center develops and disseminates free, engaging online resources about evidence-based instructional and behavioral practices to support the education of all students, particularly struggling learners and those with disabilities. These resources, designed to bridge the research-to-practice gap, are intended for use in college teacher preparation programs, in professional development (PD) activities for practicing professionals, and by independent learners. The array of IRIS resources includes modules, case studies, fundamental skill sheets, information briefs, course/PD activities, a high-leverage practices alignment tool, and an online glossary of disability-related terms.

<https://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu>

- **National Center on Intensive Intervention (NCII)** | NCII is housed at the American Institutes for Research and works in conjunction with many of our nation's most distinguished data-based individualization (DBI) experts. The mission of the NCII is to build knowledge and capacity of state and local leaders, faculty and professional

development providers, educators, and other stakeholders to support implementation of intensive intervention for students with severe and persistent learning and/or social, emotional, or behavioral needs using DBI.

<https://intensiveintervention.org>

- **National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations (NCPMI)** | The mission of NCPMI is to improve and support the capacity of state systems and local programs to implement an early childhood multi-tiered system of support to improve the social, emotional, and behavioral outcomes of young children with, and at risk for, developmental disabilities or delays. The goals of the center are to assist states and programs in their implementation of sustainable systems for the implementation of the Pyramid Model for Promoting Social Emotional Competence in Infants and Young Children (Pyramid Model) within early intervention and early education programs, with a focus on promoting the social, emotional, and behavioral outcomes of young children birth to five, reducing the use of inappropriate discipline practices, promoting family engagement, using data for decision-making, integrating early childhood and infant mental health consultation and fostering inclusion.

<https://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/index.html>

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More information on positive, proactive approaches to supporting the behavioral needs of children with disabilities is available from the [U.S. Department of Education](#) and a companion [resource page](#), which includes an eight-part TA Resource Guide series and an archived video summarizing the Department's guidance and its main principles.

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This document contains resources collected from OSEP-funded technical assistance centers that are provided for the user's convenience to assist in implementation efforts. The inclusion of these materials is not intended to reflect their importance, nor is it intended to endorse any views expressed, or products or services offered. These materials may contain the views and recommendations of various subject-matter experts. The opinions expressed in any of these materials do not necessarily reflect the positions or policies of the U.S. Department of Education (Department). The Department does not control or guarantee the accuracy, relevance, timeliness, or completeness of any outside information included in these materials.

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