

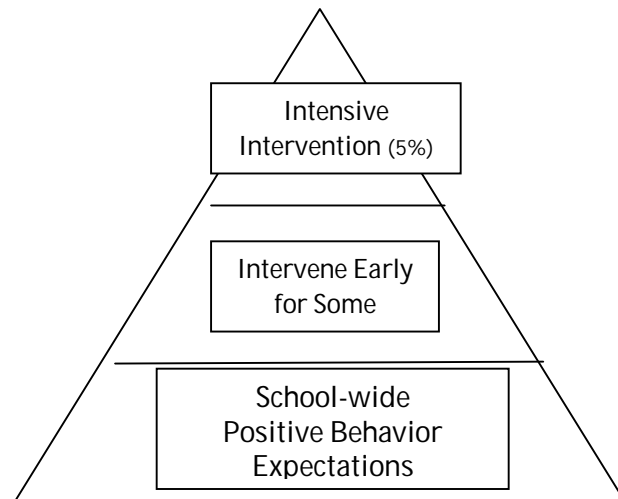
Texas Children's Mental Health Forum: Supporting Children & Youth in the Public School System

* September 15, 2009 * 9-11am *

9:00 am **Greetings and Introductions**
Stephany Bryan, Hogg Foundation for Mental Health

9:10 am **Recommendations from the School-to-Prison Pipeline report**
Erica Terrazas, Policy Analyst, Texas Appleseed

- This report, published in October 2007, is the result of the investigation of school discipline policies, what students are being referred, and the reasons for their referral
- Researched discretionary, non-violent offenses/referrals, as opposed to mandatory or violent offenses/referrals
- Students with discretionary, non-violent offenses/referrals have 2X the school drop-out rate
- Found that, all other risk factors held constant, students with discipline incidents are:
 - 23.4% more likely to enter the juvenile justice system, and
 - More likely to drop out of school if suspended repeatedly, expelled, retained one or more grades below, or frequently miss school
- Also found that:
 - 2% of all Texas students are referred to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP) each year,
 - African American and Special Education students, and to a lesser degree Latino students, are significantly overrepresented in DAEPs and discretionary referrals,
 - Students who attend DAEPs have greater risk for academic problems,
 - Where a child attends school, as opposed to the nature of the offense, is a greater predictor of a students' discipline referral, and
 - High recidivism and drop-out rates underscore failure of DAEPs
- Effective programs usually:
 - Target all students, though pay attention to poverty, language, etc.,
 - Use coordinated, research-based methods,
 - Provide adequate training and ongoing support to all staff, and
 - Involve teachers and parents
 - Incorporates Positive Behavioral Supports (PBS) Model:

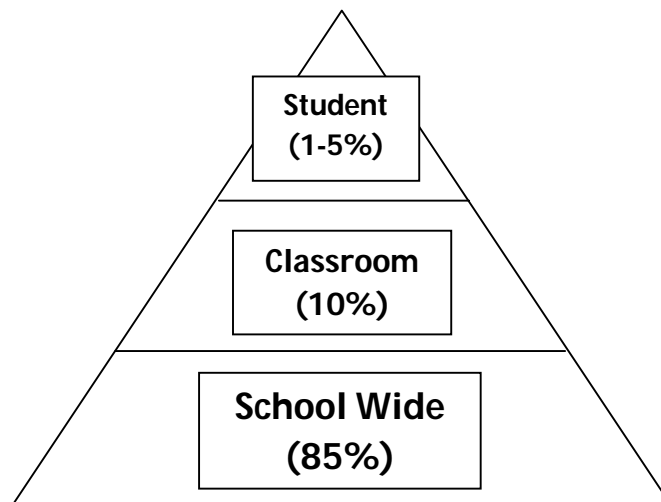


- Policy Recommendations:
 - District-wide – institute research-based discipline strategies, use PBS, increase teacher/staff training, formalize plans to monitor at-risk students, use transition planning, encourage parental involvement, improved oversight for In School Suspension (ISS) academics
 - State-wide – increased oversight of DAEPs, factor intent into disciplinary decisions (required for all school districts as of this session), cap suspensions, ensure compliance with federal laws, early parent notification, improve DAEP academic standards, create a bill of rights/responsibilities for parents
- Conclusion – school discipline system marks beginning of the school-to-prison pipeline
- **NOTE:**
 - Keep an eye out for the 2nd phase/report that will be published near the end of fall or beginning of winter 2009 which focuses on school ticketing and arrests
 - The findings are very similar to the first report's findings, that African American and Special Education students are disproportionately ticketed and arrested

9:40 am Positive Behavioral Support – An Austin Perspective

Jane Nethercut, AISD PBS Coordinator

- AISD is in its 5th year of implementing PBS; implementation involves a philosophical/paradigm shift among the ISD and the individual schools
- PBS is a process, not a program; it's a systemic approach to and a philosophical framework for changing the school environment and student behavior within it
 - Promotion of safe, disciplined schools through district plans, processes, and systems
 - Cannot assume that children come to school with the skills expected of them



- PBS intentions/hopes:
 - To promote academic achievement
 - To reduce disciplinary referrals and drop-out rates
- In AISD, schools self-selected, the ones that volunteered to participate were the ones the team worked with first; they were also the ones most in need, at risk of closing, etc.
 - In 2003, 3 campuses participated
 - In 2009, 81 campuses participated (there are 115-120 total campuses in AISD)

- PBS Coordinator and a team of PBS Program Specialists provide support to campuses, where there is a school-based team working on PBS
 - There are coaches at school-wide, classroom, and individualized/student levels
 - Each coach has 5 schools; 5 coaches at each level
- Requires:
 - Fidelity up front,
 - Authentic administrative engagement,
 - Campus buy-in (at least 80%),
 - Communication with external support,
 - The PBS teams are staff champions, and
 - Acceptance of initial spike in discipline referral rate,
- Results:
 - Improved student, faculty, and staff satisfaction,
 - Improved administrator perception of school safety, and
 - Improved academic gains

10:00 am The Austin Community Collaboration to Enhance Student Access (ACCESS)
Kemal Taskin, Austin ACCESS Project Facilitator

- 4-year Safe Schools / Healthy Students Grant Initiative awarded to AISD
- Internal Service Partners:
 - Dropout prevention specialist
 - Mendez Middle School
 - Counselor
 - Lucy Reed Elementary School
 - School-to-Community Liaisons (3)
 - Work with students transitioning from the juvenile justice system or from DAEPs back into their home campus
 - Positive Behavior Support Specialists (7)
 - Lead AISD in implementation of PBS
- External Service Partners:
 - Austin Child Guidance Center – Parenting with Love and Limits
 - Provides intensive therapy
 - 96 families served annually
 - Travis County MHMR – Therapeutic Services and Psychiatric Evaluations
 - IMPACT teams screen for extended care coordination
 - 60 cases annually
 - Any Baby Can – Nurse Family Partnership
 - Direct referrals from school nurses, home visitation, parent education
 - 12-18 pregnant girls annually
 - Safe Place – Expect Respect Groups for middle school boys
 - Boys experienced violence/abuse referred for group therapy
 - 164 boys served annually
- Youth-Service Mapping, found at www.ysm-austin.org, is a web-based information system designed to share information about services and supports for children and youth
 - Will provide information on available resources and
 - Will illuminate gaps and overlaps in services

10:30 am **Group Discussion**

- Texas Applesed – School-to-Prison Pipeline Report
 - Difficulty is that individual campuses and school districts are independent and can choose how to handle these cases, therefore there is great inconsistency across state
 - Must advocate at local school board level since they make policies for their district
 - Must also advocate for state-wide change at the legislature because TEA is only authorized to write the policies as directed by the state legislature; sweeping reform that affects ISDs across Texas must take place at the capitol
 - Note: There is stimulus funding for prevention and early intervention for schools that incorporates behavioral, social, emotional components

- AISD/PBS/ACCESS
 - Concern for sustainability – What will happen when the grant ends and funding disappears? Similar situation happened in Georgetown approximately 10 years ago with a similar grant, but when the funding concluded and with staff turnover, the program consequentially disappeared
 - Important items to promote sustainability:
 - Social marketing,
 - Local buy-in and funding,
 - School board buy-in,
 - Parental involvement
 - Must also advocate at the state legislature to encourage some sort of uniform requirement or mandate, which will ensure sustainability
 - Must have a comparable overlay for the 0-5 years age group to ensure that kids enter the school system healthy
 - Education system should establish partnerships with family doctors/pediatricians

- Dr. Lynda Frost, Hogg Foundation for Mental Health
Director of Planning and Programs
Seclusion and Restraint Reduction Leadership Group
 - Distributed handout including the executive summary of a GAO report on the use of seclusion and restraint in schools, letter requesting each chief state school officer to respond summarizing what they're doing to reduce the use of seclusion and restraint in schools, and part of the brochure
 - Extended invitation to everyone in the education community to come to the Seclusion and Restraint Reduction Leadership Group meetings

11:20 am **Group Announcements and Closing**

Josette Saxton, Texans Care for Children

- 2nd Monday of each month – Infant Mental Health meeting
- Monday, September 21, 2009 at 5:30pm – Austin City Hall releases ???
- Monday, September 28, 2009 at 8:30am – Task Force on Children with Special Needs
- Wednesday, September 30, 2009 at 8:30am – Council on Children & Families
- Thursday, October 15, 2009 at 12:00pm – Seclusion & Restraint Reduction Leadership Group meets at the Hogg Foundation for Mental Health