Integrating Positive Behavior Support and Outcomes Data Into A School-Based Mental Health Program

The Bitterroot Valley Education Cooperative’s Comprehensive School and Community Treatment Program (CSCT) & The Montana Behavior Behavior Initiative (MBI)
Overview

- Description of agency and school based mental health program
- Role and relationship of school-wide positive behavior support (MBI) and our school-based mental health program
- Practices of our school based mental health program
- Using and managing data
- Challenges and Struggles
- Q&A / Conclusion
Special Education Co-op (Since 1980s)
- Provide services to 6 “rural” school districts in Montana
- Specialists, administrative support, training

Licensed Mental Health Agency (Since 1998)
- 8 teams Provide school-based mental health services (CSCT) to 5 districts
- CSCT team consist of a licensed therapist and a behavior consultant working full time in 1-2 schools

Also provide training, coaching and support with school-wide Positive behavior support through the MBI
Features of BVEC CSCT Program

- Focus on team approach to treatment and intervention
- Emphasis on integration of mental health services into actual environments (school, family and community)
- Strong emphasis on proactive evidence based practices
  - Cognitive behavioral therapy approaches
  - FBA and positive (non-aversive) behavior support
  - Skill instruction and development
  - Data and outcomes based decision making
Funding for CSCT?

- Billing - we bill for direct services
  - Medicaid
  - CHIP
  - Private Insurance
  - Sliding Fee
- Grants
- School match (Office space, supplies, technology)
- Very limited special education funds
The Montana Behavior Initiative (MBI)

- Montana’s School-wide positive behavior support initiative
- Over 400 participating schools
- Over 1500 attended annual MBI Summer Institute in last 2 years
- Affiliated with the PBIS national center
- Help Montana Schools develop and use systems, practices and data to implement the research based practices of positive behavior support at a school-wide level
- Blueprint, training, tools and on-going support
Designing School-Wide Systems for Student Success

**Academic Systems**

- **Intensive, Individual Interventions**
  - Individual Students
  - Assessment-based
  - High Intensity
  - 1-5%

- **Targeted Group Interventions**
  - Some students (at-risk)
  - High efficiency
  - Rapid response
  - 5-10%

- **Universal Interventions**
  - All students
  - Preventive, proactive
  - 80-90%

**Behavioral Systems**

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Research indicates that schools make greater academic gains when they build a school-wide positive social culture.

MBI is a process to organize staff and students to create a high likelihood of using effective practices to create a positive social culture.
MBI helps create:

- A Common Vision/Beliefs
- A Common Language
- A Common Experience
Science of behavior has taught us that students:

- Are **NOT** born with “bad behaviors”
- Do **NOT** learn new skills when presented contingent aversive consequences

**Do learn better ways of behaving by** being taught directly & receiving positive feedback

**...consider function**
DISCIPLINE STRATEGIES USED MOST OFTEN ARE AMONG ONES THAT DON’T WORK:

- Reviews of over 500 studies indicate that these are among the least effective responses to school behavior problems
  - Punishment
  - Exclusion
  - Talk therapy as an isolated intervention

Effective Practices Include …

- **Academic restructuring**
  - Define, teach, remind, recognize (reinforce), re-teach (correct) - Academic success for all

- **Social Skills Instruction**

- **Positive behavior strategies**
  - Function-based behavioral intervention

Supporting Social Competence &
Academic Achievement

4 MBI Elements

Supporting Staff Behavior
Supporting Student Behavior
Supporting Decision Making
5 School-wide Practices of MBI

- **Define** 3-5 Simple School-wide Expectations
- **Teach** Direct Instruction of expectations (teach to’s, lesson plans, etc.)
- **Remind** Clear In-the-Moment Reminders
- **Celebrate**
  - Daily recognition – Gotcha’s
  - Weekly/quarterly grade-level/whole school celebrations
- **Re-teach**
  - Classroom procedure for minor problem behaviors.
  - Office Discipline Referral for major problem behaviors
Implementation Areas

- **UNIVERSAL SCHOOL-WIDE**
  Affects ALL students, ALL staff, and ALL settings

- **UNIVERSAL CLASSROOM**
  Instructional settings which involve most staff and students
Implementation Areas

TARGETED GROUPS
Support systems to address the needs of students who do not meet school-wide expectations in one or more settings.
Implementation Areas

- **INDIVIDUAL STUDENT**
  Support systems to address individual student needs.
5 BVEC schools
(~4 years SWIS & Monthly MBI/PBIS team meetings)

Office Discipline Referrals Per Month
(5 BVEC Schools MBI & SWIS)

Average Referrals Per Month
MBI and BVEC CSCT Program

- 10 schools “high” implementation of MBI universals served by BVEC
- All 10 MBI schools using SWIS
- 4 of those 10 schools have been recognized by the state as MBI “Exemplar” award winners
- All 10 of those MBI schools have CSCT services
- BVEC CSCT philosophy and practices align closely with MBI
- Mental Health Program Administrator is also the MBI state assigned consultant for those 10 schools
School-Wide Systems for Student Success

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Ways School-wide Positive Behavior Support increases effectiveness of School Based Mental Health

- More appropriate referrals
- Increased acceptance of positive, skills based approaches to behavior change
- Fluency with data based decision making
- Increased consistency between specialized environments and other school settings (Environments support behavior change)
- Increased teaming - consistent approaches and procedures (Social skills, FBA, behavior plans)
- Better support for students “stepping down” from intensive individualized services
Ways School-based Mental Health Program Increases effectiveness of School-wide Positive Behavior Support

- Additional resources for intensive services for high needs students in the schools
- Additional mental health and behavioral expertise in the schools
- Social skills instructional groups for targeted students
- Increased communication with families about PBS
- Increased reinforcement of school-wide behavior expectations for high needs students
Limited data on effective school based mental health interventions

In a recent review of thousands of mental health initiatives, only 34 met reasonable standards of efficacy (Greenberg et al., 2001)

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy has been demonstrated to be effective, particularly with depression and anxiety
Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

- Development of relationship and rapport building
- Assess client’s perception of the problem and thoughts, feelings and actions that maintain it
- Identify individual strengths and resources
- Collaborate to develop an action plan while considering client’s readiness to change
- Implement and test new coping skills
- Evaluate and revise as needed
Key Elements
BVEC therapy emphasis

- Abstract psychological concepts are "operationalized" - description of behavior/s
- Focus on measurable therapy goals and outcomes
- Emphasis on the relationship between cognitive factors and behavior
- Help clients develop, practice and generalize functional skills and behaviors that lead to a more healthy, higher quality of life
In Progress...

- Increasing training and clinical skills of therapists in cognitive behavioral therapy
- Hire therapists trained or willing to be trained in this approach
- Looking into elements of DBT
- Coordinate therapy and goals with behavior intervention planning
BVEC CSCT
Evidence-based Practices

- Social Skills Groups (We use *Skillstreaming*)
  - Specific skills
  - Teach, practice, feedback….
  - Need to Help environments support new skills
    - Communication with school staff & parents
    - Strategies for school staff and parents to cue and reinforce skills
    - Need maintenance and generalization strategies included in social skills curriculum (Carter & Sugai 1989)
BVEC CSCT
Evidence-based Practices

- Functional Behavior Assessment and Multi-element Behavior Support Planning
  - FBA is a method of gathering information about situational events that predict and maintain problem behavior.
  - A process for gathering information that can be used to maximize effectiveness and efficiency of behavioral support.
  - Functional assessment is a process for looking at relationships between behavior and the environment.
FBA - Three Primary Outcomes:

1. **Observable and measurable description of the problem behavior/s**
2. **Identification of setting events or antecedents that predict when the behavior will and will not occur (Likelihoods)**
3. **Identification of the consequences that maintain the problem behavior (Function).**

We want to better understand the behavior from the students perspective.
Individualized Positive Behavior Support

- Based on assessment (Individualized FBA)
- Proactive - primary emphasis on prevention
- Includes skill building - Teaching behavior
- Data based decision making - accountability/outcomes
- Try to make problem behaviors unlikely and unnecessary for the student
A Context for PBS

- Behavior support is the redesign of environments, not the redesign of individuals.
  - Pay as much, or more, attention to what happens between problem behavior bouts as to what happens during instances of problem behavior. (Edward Carr)

- Positive Behavior Support plans define changes in the behavior of those who will implement the plan.
We are not going to “fix” mental illness with behavior intervention.

- Behavior plans can, as part of comprehensive treatment:
  - Increase “success” by changing environments to create a better “fit”
  - Decrease “need” and likelihood to engage in problem behavior by teaching alternatives
  - Help generalize treatment progress to natural environments
  - Increase quality of life and opportunities for individuals with emotional and behavioral disturbance.
BVEC Positive Behavior Support Model

- 4 Areas or Elements of Support
  - Setting Event and Antecedent Strategies
  - Behavioral Skill Development/Instruction
  - Incentive Strategies (Direct Strategies) (Reinforcement/Consequences)
  - Reactive Strategies - De-escalation, crises management & safety

*BVEC Model largely adapted from IABA model and Crone & Horner model*
## Combined Support Example

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Setting Event &amp; Antecedent Supports</th>
<th>Behavior Skills (Alternatives)</th>
<th>Reinforcement/Consequences</th>
<th>De-escalation &amp; crisis response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Take Meds at school with office supervision</td>
<td>Request a short break in the hall or Responsibility room Skills program to increase coping with criticism and correction Š Using a hierarchy of role plays and practice then practice in real settings with staff support</td>
<td>Reinforcement schedule for not engaging in Anger outbursts /Tantrums Š Start with 1/2 day intervals</td>
<td>Change topic Give him some space Separate from peers if peers are involved Direct him to the hall or the responsibility room until he can calm down After he has calmed down provide ※private※ assistance with task</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoid criticizing or directly correcting him in front of peers</td>
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Making Behavior Assessment & Intervention Realistic for School Based Teams

- Simplify and streamline - Focus on the basics

- Less time on initial assessment and more time on evaluation of response to interventions (data collection and use) - It's an ongoing evolving process - not THE PLAN

- Increase teaming (It's not a one person job)

- More flexible “continuum of service” (Level of behavior assessment and support = to level of need and response to intervention)
Overview of Team Process for BVEC Behavior Support

- Assessment - interviews, observations, review of information, etc - summarize into behavior pathway charts
- Use assessment info to brainstorm interventions for Antecedents, behavior skills, incentives/consequences, reactive strategies
- Select strategies for initial implementation
- Develop measurable short term and long term goals
- Develop evaluation/progress monitoring plan
- Continue to assess, modify and adjust

Forms largely adapted from *Building Positive Behavior Support Systems In Schools: Functional Behavior Assessment* - Crone & Horner
QuickTime™ and a decompressor are needed to see this picture.
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Managing and Using Outcome Data (Progress Monitoring)

- General Program Outcome Requirements
- Individual Student Outcomes
- BVEC School-based Mental Health Data and Record Keeping System - *Big Sistah*
Montana CSCT Outcome Requirements

- Attendance
- Referrals to higher level of care
- Law enforcement involvement
- Office discipline referrals
- Target behavior individualized to client

Program data is shared with school administrators every 90 Days
Cumulative Data

ODRs

Average per month

Baseline

Outcomes

ODRs
Cumulative Data

Target Behavior

Average per month

Baseline

Outcomes

Target Behavior
Cumulative Data

Law Enforcement Involvement

Average per month

Baseline

Outcomes

Law Enforcement Involvement
Cumulative Data

Referals to Higher Level Care

Average per month

Baseline

Outcomes

Referals to Higher Level Care
“Big Sistah”

- Web based record system specifically designed for our program and regulations

- Mental Health Assessments, treatment plans, behavior assessments, behavior plans, progress notes, billing units & outcome data
“Big Sistah” Advantages

- Oversight / Support to staff - transparency
- Remote immediate access to file content
- Consistency of files
- Data collection
- Data Representation - Graphs
- Integration of information

Big Sistah Demo
Program Challenges

- Funding
- "Buy in" - Systems Change
- Training
- Consistency / Turnover
- Data collection
- Academic outcomes / mental health outcomes
- Time
- Crisis Response and Prevention
- Direct Service and Paperwork
- Multi-agency coordination
Web Resources & Acknowledgement

  Montana Behavior Initiative

- [http://www.pbis.org](http://www.pbis.org)  
  Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports

  Institute for Applied Behavior Analysis

- [http://bvec-mt.org](http://bvec-mt.org)  
  Bitterroot Valley Education Cooperative
Other Resources

- Clinical Behavior Therapy - Goldfried & Davison
- Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions