The Teaching Pyramid: A Classroom Based Model for Addressing Social Emotional Development and Challenging Behavior in Preschool Children

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Work reported in this presentation was supported by the US Department of Education, National Center for Special Education Research, Institute of Education Sciences (Project Number R324A07212).
Setting the Context for Interventions in Preschool Classrooms

- Prevalence of challenging behavior in preschool children ranges from 5 – 33% depending on population
- Preschool children are three times more likely to be expelled than K-12 students
- Severe behavior issues in preschool predict later, more significant behavior problems
- Concerns about “pulling down” school wide approaches to preschool classrooms
- Teachers report:
  - Increases in challenging behavior in preschool classrooms
  - Challenging behavior as a significant training need
  - Challenging behavior negatively impacts their job satisfaction
Nurturing and Responsive Relationships

- Foundation of the pyramid
- Essential to healthy social development
- Includes relationships with children, families and team members
High Quality Environments

- Social and Physical Environments:
  - Well designed physical environments
  - Predictable schedules and routines (including transitions)
  - Engaging and developmentally appropriate activities
  - Visual cues
  - Positive guidance
    - Clear directions
    - Positive feedback
    - Redirection
Targeted Social Emotional Supports

Focus on:
- Developing social relationships
- Self-regulation
- Expressing and understanding emotions
- Problem solving

Explicit instruction
Increased opportunities for instruction, practice, feedback
Individualized Intensive Interventions

- Comprehensive interventions across all settings
- Assessment-based
- Collaborative team
- Development of a behavior support plan:
  - Prevention strategies
  - Teaching new skills
  - Adult responses
## Status of Teaching Pyramid Practices in EC Classrooms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>TPOT Study n=50</th>
<th>Efficacy Study n=18</th>
<th>Distance Coaching n=33</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Env Items</strong></td>
<td>Mean 6.0, Range 3-7</td>
<td>Mean 5.05, Range 3-6</td>
<td>Mean 6.34, Range 4-7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Red Flags</strong></td>
<td>Mean 3.0, Range 0-11</td>
<td>Mean 3.75, Range 1-10</td>
<td>Mean 2.13, Range 0-7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Percent Indicators</strong></td>
<td>39.1%, 14% to 73%</td>
<td>39.56%, 16% to 74%</td>
<td>39.87%, 14% to 66%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Coaching Teachers to Use Pyramid Practices

Range for TPOT Indicators: 0 - 118
Conclusions

- Ongoing coaching is necessary for teachers to implement practices with fidelity
- Changes in children’s challenging behavior and social skills are reported when Pyramid practices are implemented with fidelity
- Teachers report high levels of satisfaction with the intervention and outcomes