BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION PLAN

If your child exhibits behaviors that impede his or her own learning or that of other students, a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) will be incorporated into your child’s Individualized Education Program (IEP). In some states, including Pennsylvania, the BIP is called a Positive Behavior Support plan (PBS).

The BIP must be individualized to your child. Prior to developing the plan, a trained professional (sometimes a behavior analyst, but often a teacher or guidance counselor who has received training) will conduct a Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) of your child. An FBA is considered an evaluation and requires a parent’s consent to occur. It involves the collection of data, observations, and information in order to develop a clear understanding of the relationship of events and circumstances that trigger and maintain problem behavior.

Based on the information collected, a BIP will be designed which will include recommendations for how to change the problem behavior and replace it with more acceptable behavior. The BIP should include evidence-based interventions (ones that are based in research). The interventions and techniques must be the least intrusive possible to deal with the behaviors in question. These strategies will likely include positive reinforcers for desired behaviors. The reason Pennsylvania and other states call the BIP a Positive Behavior Support plan is to emphasize that the plan should be based on interventions that will teach more appropriate behaviors and positively reinforce these new skills. Punitive strategies are strictly regulated and often are not incorporated into these plans as they do not assist “teaching” new skills.

There may be times, however, when a child’s behavior necessitates the use of restrictive measures. These can range from prohibiting a child from taking part in an activity to physical restraints. Physical restraints should be used only as a last resort when the behaviors are a danger to the student or others in the school.
Each state has its own laws regulating when seclusion and restraints can be used. The federal government has urged states to revisit their laws to ensure that students are not unnecessarily and inappropriately restrained or secluded. Most states allow an IEP team, with the parents’ consent, to include restraints in a child’s BIP, at least for a limited period of time, particularly if the child is being taught appropriate skills to replace the problem behavior. If a child is a clear and present danger to him or herself or to others, most states allow schools to use restraints if other less restrictive methods to control behavior will not work. When restraints are used, many states require schools to inform the parents and/or hold an IEP team meeting to review the BIP and to assess whether another FBA is needed.

Related Articles:

- [Applied Behavior Analysis](#)
- [Functional Behavior Assessment: What Is It?](#)
- [The Importance of Data in Measuring Progress](#)
- [Evidence Based Practices](#)

Additional Resources:

- [Positive Behavior Support and Limitations on the Use of Restraints in Pennsylvania](#)
- [Basic Education Circular on the Use of Restraints for Students with Disabilities in Pennsylvania](#)
- [Summary of Seclusion and Restraint Statutes in the United States](#)
- [Functional Behavioral Assessment in Pennsylvania Schools](#)