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EQUITY-FOCUSED PBIS IMPROVES DISPROPORTIONALITY IN DISCIPLINE

IMPROVED OUTCOMES FOR STUDENTS AND EDUCATORS

Implementation of MTSS/PBIS *with fidelity* has been shown to improve educational outcomes. Research[1,2,3] shows that implementing Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS):

- Improves achievement, attendance, emotional regulation, and school climate
- Decreases disruptive behavior, bullying, peer exclusion, and substance misuse
- Decreases educator stress and burn-out
- Allows LEAs to save money to focus on equity-focused PBIS[4]

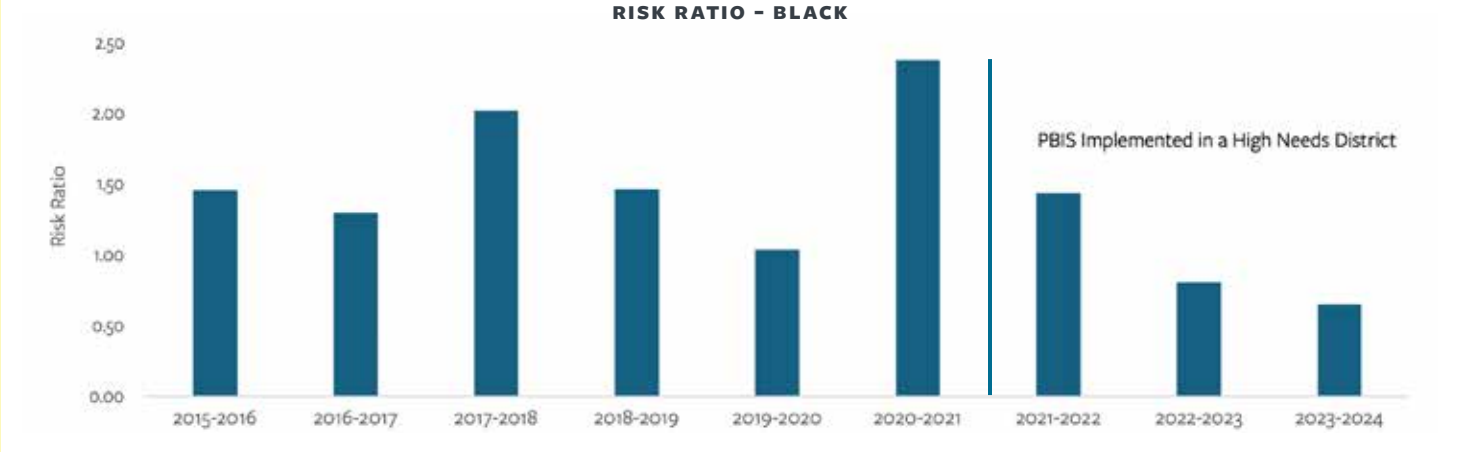
EQUITY-FOCUSED PBIS AND DISCIPLINE DISPROPORTIONALITY

Equity-focused PBIS has been shown in several studies to significantly reduce racial disproportionality in exclusionary discipline, including both descriptive[5,6] and a randomized control trial,[7] the gold standard for experimental research.

MASSACHUSETTS DISCIPLINE DISPROPORTIONALITY

Massachusetts Appleseed[8] provided information based on Massachusetts Department of Education data that showed that the discipline of Black and Hispanic students was approximately 2.5 the rate of White students during the SY 2021-2022.

A high-needs school district in Massachusetts received technical assistance in the implementation of equity-focused PBIS to reduce discipline disproportionality. A risk ratio measures the risk of a particular event happening in one group compared to the risk of the same event happening in another group. The graph below presents risk ratios for students in a high-needs school who have implemented PBIS with fidelity across all tiers. There is a decreasing trend as PBIS is implemented. In the school year 2023-2024, students identified as Black/African American have 0.65 times the risk of receiving at least one administrator-managed referral as all other students. This was less than the students identified as White, with 1.01 times the risk of receiving at least one administrator-managed referral as all other students. **Thus, this year, students identified as Black were less likely to receive at least one administrator-managed referral than students identified as White students, with the students identified as Black having four times less than state risk ratios of 2.5.**



[Over]

1] Santiago-Rosario, M. R., McIntosh, K., Izzard, S., Cohen-Lissman, D., & Calhoun, T. E. (2023). *Is Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) an evidence-based practice?* Center on PBIS. https://www.pbis.org/resource/is-school-wide-positive-behavior-support-an-evidence-based-practice

2] Bradshaw, C. P., Linwdstrom Johnson, S., Zhu, Y., & Pas, E. T. (2021). Scaling up behavioral health promotion efforts in Maryland: The economic benefit of positive behavioral interventions and supports. *School Psychology Review, 50*(1), 99–109. https://doi.org/10.1080/23729 66X.2020.1823797

3] Swain-Bradway, J., Lindstrom Johnson, S., Bradshaw, C., & McIntosh, K. (2017). *What are the economic costs of implementing SWPBIS in comparison to the benefits from reducing suspensions?* Center on PBIS. https://www.pbis.org/resource/what-are-the-economic-costs-of-implementing-swpbis-in-comparison-to-the-benefits-from-reducing-suspensions

4] May Institute. (2024). PBIS implementation in Massachusetts can save billions of LEA dollars.

5] McIntosh, K., Gion, C., & Bastable, E. (2018). Do schools implementing SWPBIS have decreased racial disproportionality in school discipline? OSEP TA Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports.

6] Vincent, C. G., Swain-Bradway, J., Tobin, T. J., & May, S. (2011). Disciplinary referrals for culturally and linguistically diverse students with and without disabilities: Patterns resulting from school-wide positive behavior support. *Exceptionality, 19*(3), 175-190

7] McIntosh, K., Girvan, E. J., Fairbanks Falcon, S., McDaniel, S. C., Smolkowski, K., Bastable, E., Santiago-Rosario, M. R., Izzard, S., Austin, S. C., Nese, R. N. T., & Baldy, T. S. (2021). An equity-focused PBIS approach reduces racial inequities in school discipline: A randomized controlled trial. *School Psychology, 36*(6), 433-444. https://doi.org/10.1037/spq0000466

8] https://appleseed.org/reports/school-discipline-data-dashboard/

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May Institute is a nonprofit organization that is a national leader in the field of applied behavior analysis and evidence-based interventions, serving autistic individuals and individuals with other developmental disabilities, brain injury, neurobehavioral disorders, and other special needs. Founded nearly 70 years ago, we provide a wide range of exceptional educational and rehabilitative services across the lifespan.

For more than 20 years, May Institute has been a national partner to the National Technical Assistance Center for PBIS. The Center has been funded by the U.S. Department of Education for the last 25 years to research and effectively disseminate the systems, data, and practices that are critically important in the implementation of MTSS/PBIS.

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