

DECISION GUIDE FOR BEHAVIORAL SUPPORTS PRESCHOOL TO GRADE 2



AT ALL POINTS DURING THIS PROCESS, SEEK TO UNDERSTAND THE CHILD'S BEHAVIOR. USE THIS TIP SHEET FOR QUESTIONS AND ACTIONS TO UNDERSTAND THE CHILD'S BEHAVIOR.

USING THE DECISION TREE AND ACCOMPANYING RESOURCES

This Decision Tree is designed to support preschool to grade 2 educators in taking appropriate and timely action when children are exhibiting unsafe or challenging behaviors. It includes both internal, immediate actions, and resources for outside referral and support. This Decision Tree should be used in conjunction with existing:

- School discipline policies
- Behavior policies in place in licensed child care settings
- Internal teams or support systems

One size does not fit all – students will vary in their experiences, coping strategies, social skills, and developmental understanding of expectations. Build a team, or access existing teams and systems (e.g., student support team, SRBI process), and connect to community resources (e.g., the Early Childhood Consultation Partnership-ECCP) to build program- or school-wide supports.

Decisions regarding the appropriate responses to challenging behavior are multifaceted and must take into account:

- the context in which the challenging behavior occurs;
- existing supports and policies;
- the many individual, cultural, social, developmental, and environmental factors; and
- the potential loss of instructional/classroom time for students.

In order to improve student emotional wellness, it is vital to develop a trusting relationship between families, children, and educators. Use the Key Strategies to Structure the Environment and Strengthen Relationships, and the Tips to Understand Child Behavior in conjunction with the Decision Tree. Video resources to support efforts to promote social and emotional competence and address challenging behavior can be found on the OEC webpage on [Supporting Young Children with Challenging Behavior](#).

While this guide focuses on children from preschool through grade 2, many of the strategies are appropriate for younger children. For more tips on supporting infants and toddlers with challenging behaviors, see this [Recommended Practices Guide](#) from the Center for Evidence-Based Practice: Young Child with Challenging Behavior.

KEY TERMS

BEHAVIOR PLAN

The action plan developed by the behavior supporting team, which outlines the specific steps to be used to promote the child's success, and participation in daily activities and routines.

From: <https://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/Pyramid/pbs/process.html>

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

The strategies used to promote positive behavior. Per CT Child Care Licensing Regulations, providers must use behavior management methods such as positive guidance, redirection, and setting clear limits that encourage children to develop self-control, self-discipline, and positive self-esteem, while also protecting them from harm to themselves or others.

BEHAVIOR POLICY

A policy required in regulation for licensed child care programs. Behavior policies typically include information about developmentally appropriate behavior management strategies used by the program, and the process used to respond to challenging or unsafe behavior.

BEHAVIOR SUPPORT TEAM

A team of the key stakeholders or individuals who are most involved in the child's life. This team should include the family and early educator, but also may include friends, other family members, therapists, and other instructional or administrative personnel. Team members collaborate in multiple ways in order to develop, implement, and monitor a child's support plan.

From: <https://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/Pyramid/pbs/process.html>

CHALLENGING BEHAVIOR

A behavior that is unsafe, destructive, or which poses a significant disruption for the other people in an environment or situation. Adults may find additional behaviors to be challenging for them based on their own cultural or personal perspective; therefore, it is important to reflect on personal bias and "hot buttons" when deciding if a behavior fits this definition.

CHILD FIND

A continuous process of public awareness activities, screening, and evaluation designed to locate, identify, and evaluate children with disabilities.

POSITIVE SCHOOL DISCIPLINE

School discipline addresses schoolwide, classroom, and individual student needs through broad prevention, targeted intervention, and social-emotional and behavioral development. Schools address challenging behaviors through a comprehensive systems approach (Multi-tiered System Supports, e.g., comprehensive and targeted supports), school-based diversion models, and restorative practices.

SAFETY PLAN

A Safety Plan is designed to provide special supervision to individual students. The plan should include specific interventions which target unsafe or potentially unsafe behavior. The goal is to minimize the risk of harm to the student or others.

SCREENING TOOL

A brief, simple procedure used to identify children who may be at risk for potential health, developmental, or social-emotional problems. It identifies children who may need additional evaluation in any of these areas.

STUDENT SUPPORT TEAM

Staff may decide to refer the student to a school-based team, often known as the Child Study Team (CST), Student Assistance Team (SAT), or Multi-tiered System Supports (MTSS). These teams are made up of a school administrator, teachers, and support services staff to help students with issues that are interfering with learning. This may be anything from difficulties in reading or math, emotional and/or behavioral challenges, etc. The team discusses the problem and works together to find a solution that will help students.