# THE PYRAMID MODEL

RELATIONSHIPS AND ENVIRONMENT

Kim Sewell
Assistant Project Director
ksewell@gsu.edu

Sherry Howard
Project Director
showard@gsu.edu

The Pyramid Model is a framework for promoting emotional and social competence and strategies for preventing challenging behaviors for young children ages birth to 8 years of age. It also outlines a team approach to intervention for those few children who need individualized plans.
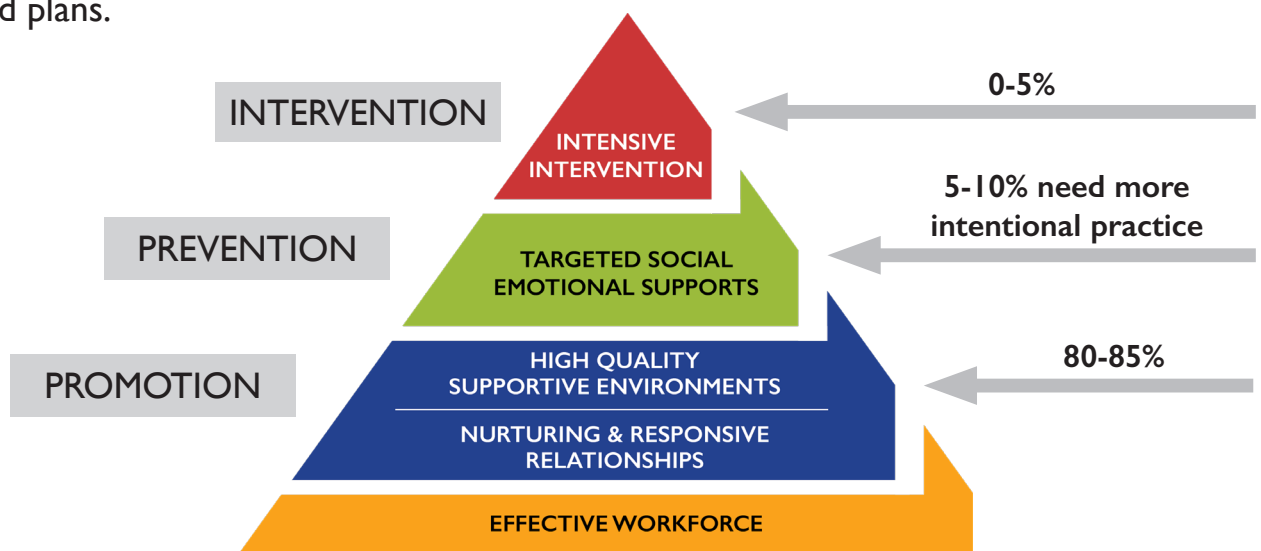
The relationships that we build with children, families and colleagues are the foundation of everything we do. It is important to build these relationships early on rather than waiting until there is a problem.

TEACHER-CHILD RELATIONSHIPS

Children learn and develop in the context of relationships that are responsive, consistent and nurturing. Children with the most challenging behaviors especially need these relationships, and yet their behaviors often prevent them from benefiting from those relationships.

Every interaction with each child is a deposit or a withdrawal.

DEPOSITS are strategies that build the child's self-esteem and build positive relationships.

WITHDRAWALS include demands or words that restrict and do not teach the child what to do. These include words such as No, Stop and Don't. Using a loud voice rather than calm and pleasant voice robs the relationship between you and the child and withdraws from the child emotional bank account.
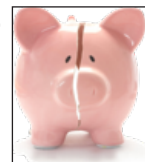
NOTICING

Immediate, positive and specific feedback builds a child's self esteem and promotes repeated appropriate behavior.

STRIVE FOR NOTICING:

1. Start with the child's name - - - "Caleb, you..."
2. Describe exactly what you see - - - "...picked up all of the markers on the floor."
3. Add a "tag" such as thank you - - - "That was a big help!"

> Consistency and predictability in the classroom environment contribute to appropriate behavior.

When children feel safe and feel a sense of belonging and predictability there is less chance that they will act out and more of a chance that they will follow regular routines and rules.

NOTES

Use children's names in greetings, songs, and chants.

Welcome Song
Tune: "A Hunting We will Go"
I'm glad I came to school
I'm glad I came to school
with all the other boys and girls
I'm glad I came to school
Jada will be here
Sebastian will be here
With all the other boys and girls
And we will all be here.

Clean Up Song
Tune: "Adams Family"
Time to clean up (snap, snap)
Time to clean up (snap, snap)
Time to clean up,
Time to clean up
Time to clean up
Anna is picking up blocks
Amal is putting things on the shelf
Stephen is cleaning the table
Our class is cleaning up

EXPECTATIONS AND RULES

EXPECTATIONS

- General ways you want children to act
- Will apply to all children across all settings

RULES

- Help clarify expectations for specific settings
- May only apply in certain settings

SCHEDULES, ROUTINES AND TRANSITIONS

SCHEDULES: Times and blocks of activities

ROUTINES: Consistent procedures about the way things are done

TRANSITIONS: Change of activity and/or location

- Routine visual cues help with independence and predictability.
- Creating a clear beginning, middle and end for each routine helps children regain control and reduces anxiety about what happens next.

PLAN FOR TRANSITIONS:

- Minimize the number of transitions that children experience by providing a waiting activity
- Provide a warning to prepare children for transitions.
- Teach children the expectations related to transitions.

TRANSITION GLOVE (5 minute cue)

5 Minutes to Clean Up
Tune: "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow"
Five more minutes to clean up,
Five more minutes to clean up,
Five more minutes to clean up,
We're cleaning with our friends

Continue as you pull off minutes from the glove:
Four more minutes to clean up…etc.

Wiggles Out for Quiet Time
Tune: "Jingle Bells"
Clap your hands, stomp your feet, Wiggle
all around.
Reach your hands high in the air
And now let's touch the ground.

Hold your hips, hold your head,
Give yourself a hug.
Sit right down, eyes to look
It's time to read a book.

PHYSICAL DESIGN

Well designed environments:

- Reduce likelihood of challenging child behavior
- Teach expectations of the learning environment
- Promote engagement and interaction with peers and adults
- Avoid overload
- Provide safe ways for children to practice physical skills in the classroom
- Provide a safe space or "get away space"
- Add visual cues

> Keeping it fresh and exciting is a sure way to keep children engaged and reduce behavior issues due to boredom.

Think about safety and flow
- Is there a clear entry to each area?
- Is there enough space to spread out and create?
- Are the centers inviting?
- Are children distributed throughout the room at center time?

Are materials:
- Labeled
- Rotated
- Highly engaging
- Relevant to children's needs, interests and lives
- Enough or too many
- Developmentally appropriate for all children

RESOURCES

Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning — http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu/

Conscious Discipline — www.consciousdiscipline.com

National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) — www.naeyc.org/

The National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations — https://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu

Off to a Good Start — bestpractices.gsu.edu/resources/otags

Parent Resources — http://www.floridaearlylearning.com/family-resources/preschoolers-learn/useful-resources

PBIS World — https://www.pbisworld.com/

Pyramid Model — www.pyramidmodel.org

Uncover the Roots of Challenging Behavior: Create Responsive Environments Where Young Children Thrive by Michelle Salcedo, M.Ed.

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