

Preventing Suspensions, Keeping Kids i



PRESCHOOL CHILDREN ARE EXPELLED 3 TIMES MORE THAN K-12 GRADES COMBINED!

Using Culturally Responsive Practices to Prevent Suspensions

Culturally responsive practices show the most promise in addressing racial disproportionality in disciplinary actions (Han & Thomas, 2010). Cultural congruence between the child's home and school is the cornerstone of culturally responsive practices (Monroe, 2010). Developing a child-centered, culturally relevant, affirming, and supportive environment decreases the incidents of challenging behaviors in classroom settings (Bal, Thorius, & Kozleski, 2012).

Several states that have incorporated culturally responsive practices in SWPBIS models are experiencing success in decreasing the disproportionate number of children of color being suspended from school (Lane, 2011; Southern Poverty Law Center SPLC, 2010). These states have, (a) high fidelity use of PBIS, (b) district level support, (c) positive relationships between staff, children, and families, (d) families in decision-making positions in PBIS efforts, (e) regular discourse regarding race, bias, privilege, and power, and (f) a system for reviewing data points that drive discussions about race and equity (Eber et al., 2010).

The Pyramid Model for Supporting Social Emotional Competence in Infants and Young Children, coupled with culturally responsive approaches reflect best practices for reducing racial disparities, promoting social emotional competence, preventing and addressing challenging behaviors, and reducing preschool suspension (Allen, 2016).

Effective implementation of culturally responsive practices requires a transformation in the way teachers perceive and respond to the cultural norms of children of color (Gay, 2002).

Teachers must have access to transformative professional development activities that include knowledge of, (a) implicit bias and its impact on decision making, (b) culturally responsive practices and how to implement the practices in the classroom and, (c) the role of critical reflection in challenging assumptions, as well as interpreting, understanding and reframing experiences (Delpit, 2012).

Racial Disproportionality in Discipline Practices



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IMPROVING DISPROPORTIONAL PRACTICES



Professional Development

Addressing Implicit Bias

Issues of bias and deficit thinking must be addressed to balance the inequities in disciplinary practices. Implicit bias is defined as unconscious beliefs and stereotypes (Banks, Eberhardt & Ross, 2006). There is evidence that disproportionality in disciplinary practices is impacted by teachers' responses to perceived behaviors that are based on racial stereotypes and implicit bias (McIntosh, et al., 2015). Teachers who view African Americans as dangerous and difficult to control are more likely to use punitive disciplinary measures such as suspensions and expulsions (Monroe, 2005).

The Pyramid Model provides early childhood personnel with the tools to promote and enhance social emotional development in young children. The Center on the Social Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL) defines social-emotional development as the ability of children age birth to five to identify, experience and respond appropriately to a variety of emotions. Early childhood professionals use the Pyramid Model to promote social-emotional competence by intentionally teaching skills for expressing emotions, making friends, developing relationships with adults and other children, in the context of the child's family and community (Fox & Hemmeter, 2014).

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