

# Nebraska Early Childhood Pyramid Model for Supporting Social / Emotional Competence (EC-PBIS)

The NDE Offices of Early Childhood and Special Education are partnering with other agencies and organizations to bring the Pyramid Model to local early childhood programs throughout the state. This initiative acknowledges that the social-emotional-behavioral health and well-being of all young children is essential to their optimum development and success as a learner and throughout life. This initiative is a long-term endeavor to insure that early childhood leadership is fully committed to program-wide adoption, that all staff receive comprehensive professional development and ongoing supports of coaching, and that parents/families are engaged as partners.



## What is the Pyramid Model?

While many approaches and methods have been used in various early childhood settings to address young children, the "Pyramid Model" is an evidence-based model for "supporting social competence and preventing challenging behavior in young children." [National Association for the Education of Young Children, Young Children, July 2003]. The model approaches challenging behaviors of young children through a comprehensive and systematic process. The pyramid framework includes the following strata, beginning at the base with effective workforce and moving upward: 1) positive relationships with children, families, and colleagues; 2) classroom preventive practices; 3) social and emotional teaching strategies; and 4) intensive individualized interventions. The pyramid is inclusive of early childhood positive behavioral intervention and support strategies.

<http://www.vanderbilt.edu/csefel/index.html>

## Why the Pyramid Model?

Early childhood professionals and parents are confronted with difficult situations when responding to children's challenging behaviors. Through implementing the strategies of the Pyramid Model, preventative measures are emphasized. The pyramid emphasizes the need to view children's behavior challenges through building relationships, arranging environments and teaching social skills. Responses to children's behaviors are planned and intentional.

## For whom is the Pyramid Model intended?

The strategies of the Pyramid Model are for all early childhood care and education programs. The entire program does need to have a strong commitment to implementing the strategies program wide. They need to establish a team, create an implementation plan, schedule training, and develop strategies for including parents in the project.

## What do the categories of the Pyramid Model mean?

- **Effective Workforce** - At the base of the pyramid is the need for an effective workforce in the early childhood field. Think about this on a both a program level and an advocacy level. The need for better-trained staff is consistent throughout the United States.
- **Developing Nurturing and Responsive Relationships** - At the foundational level of the Center on Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning's Pyramid Model, we find nurturing and responsive relationships. Positive, nurturing, and responsive relationships are a central component in children's social, emotional, and cognitive development.

- High Quality Supportive Environments - At the foundational level of the Center on Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning's Pyramid Model, we also find high quality supportive environments. The environment includes room arrangement, equipment selection, open ended materials, predictable schedules, and routines.
- Targeted Social Emotional Supports - The next level of the pyramid is concerned with providing social supports for children. Intentionally teaching and practicing positive behavior in a systematic method is effective for all children.
- Intensive Intervention - There are a small number of children that need additional help to develop positive social and emotional skills. These children need intensive intervention through a functional behavior support plan.

## **How can an early childhood program implement the Pyramid Model?**

Implementing the strategies of the Pyramid Model is a commitment that is program wide. There are many things to take into account, including the existing status of the program.

## **Where do I find additional information?**

The Center on Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL) has developed a myriad of resources for implementing early childhood positive behavior support strategies within the framework to the Pyramid Model in early childhood settings. There are training modules to use with staff and parents, literacy extensions, briefs, additional resources and materials available for purchase. Visit the Center on Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning's website for information. <http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu/index.html>

In addition, the Technical Assistance Center on Social Emotional Intervention for Young Children (TACSEI) website is rich with resources and additional information. TACSEI takes the research that shows which practices improve the social and emotional outcomes for young children and creates resources to help decision-makers, caregivers, and service providers apply these best practices in the work they do every day. Most of these resources are available on their website to view, download, and use. The TACSEI website uses the Pyramid Model to provide a framework for addressing challenging behavior and promoting positive social and emotional competence. <http://www.challengingbehavior.org/>

## **What is happening in Nebraska?**

For training information, contact Teresa Berube at 402-471-4319 or [teresa.berube@nebraska.gov](mailto:teresa.berube@nebraska.gov).

## **What Nebraska Training Fits with the Pyramid Model?**

Many established trainings fit into the Pyramid Model. These are available through the professional development system in Nebraska. Contact the Early Childhood Training Center for more information.

*Early Childhood Training Center*

6949 South 110th St

Omaha, NE 68128

Fax: 402-557-6890

402-557-6892

<http://www.education.ne.gov/oec/ectc.html>

