

# Positive Behavior Support: An Individualized Approach for Addressing Challenging Behavior



Project funded by the Child Care and Head Start Bureaus in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services



## What Works Brief Training Kit #10

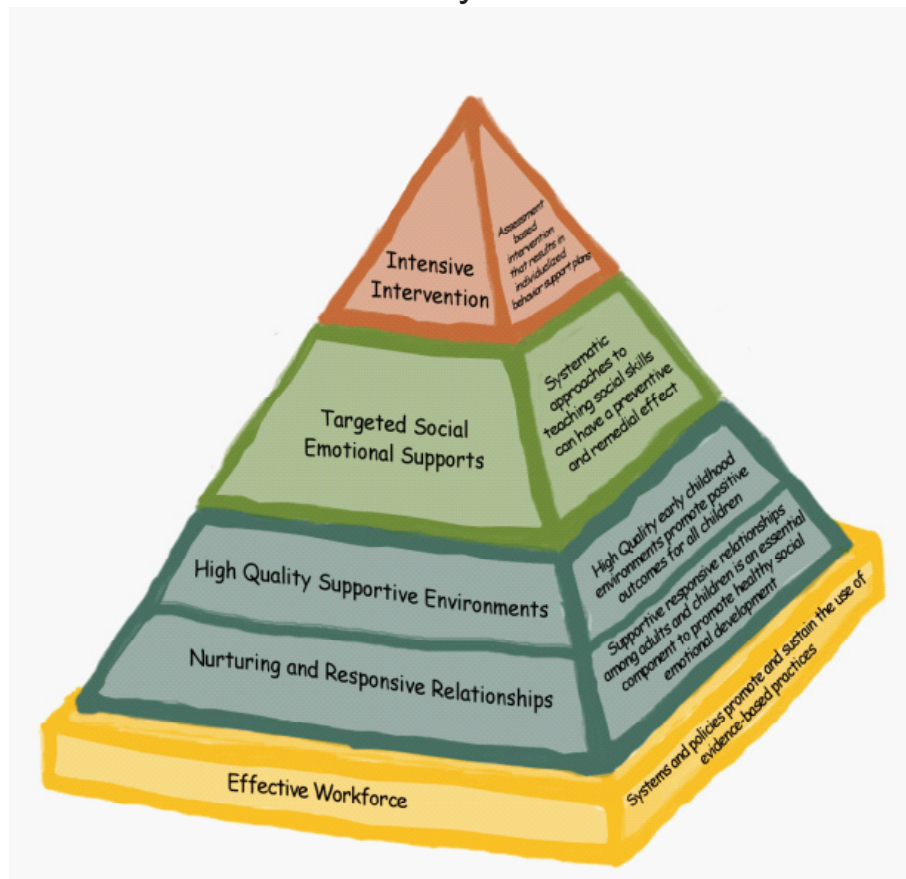


Center on the Social and Emotional  
Foundations for Early Learning  
[www.vanderbilt.edu/csefel/](http://www.vanderbilt.edu/csefel/)

April 2009

The **What Works Brief Training Kits** were developed to help in-service and pre-service providers conduct staff development activities. Each kit is based on one What Works Brief and contains the following items: presenter's PowerPoint note pages, participant handouts, activity ideas, pre-training survey, demographic form, training evaluation, and training certificate.

The What Works Brief Training Kits are grounded in the Pyramid model depicted below which provides a framework for describing the four interrelated levels of practice that address the social and emotional development of all children. The Pyramid is designed to guide practitioners in understanding the importance of children's social-emotional competence in terms of school readiness and the prevention of challenging behavior. This What Works Brief Training Kit relates to the "Intensive Intervention" level of the Pyramid.



We welcome your feedback as you provide professional development activities with these materials.

Special thanks to the Meginnis Endowment at UIUC for funding to help support this effort and to the following individuals who developed the What Works Brief Training Kits materials: Micki Ostrosky, Hedda Meadan, Greg Cheatham, Monique Mills, Sallee Beneke, Nancy Gaumer, Amy Hayden, Elenor Rentschler, and Angel Fettig.

## Presenter Notes



### ***Speaker Notes:***

- Presenter should be familiar with the content in *What Works Brief #10* and Module 3b, Sections V - XIV at <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/csefel>.
- Welcome participants.
- Take care of any logistics (e.g., length of time for session, break, handouts, etc.).
- Pass out pre-training survey for all participants to complete and turn in, if desired.

## Consider

“If a child doesn’t know how to read, we teach.  
“If a child doesn’t know how to swim, we teach.”  
“If a child doesn’t know how to multiply, we teach.”  
“If a child doesn’t know how to drive, we teach.”  
“If a child doesn’t know how to behave, we.....  
.....teach? .....punish?”

“Why can’t we finish the last sentence as  
automatically as we do the others?”

Tom Herner (NASDE President, *Counterpoint* 1998, p. 2)



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### ***Speaker Notes:***

Briefly discuss question.

# Think

- **Read** the scenario, “Jack and Amy.”
- **Discuss** “Did you ever have a child in your program who didn’t seem to respond to any of your typical approaches to dealing with challenging behavior, a child for whom nothing you tried seemed to work?”



## ***Speaker Notes:***

- Pass out scenario about “Jack and Amy” and have participants read it. Ask if the situation sounds familiar to them.
- Have participants share their responses (in partner and/or with the large group).
- After the large group sharing, tell participants if their answer to the question on the slide is YES, then Positive Behavior Support is for you!

# What Is Positive Behavior Support?

- An individualized approach to developing effective interventions for children with severe challenging behavior
- Developed from the science of applied behavior analysis (behavior modification)
- Incorporates the values of child-centered approaches



## ***Speaker Notes:***

Go over the slide.



# What Is Positive Behavior Support?

- Interventions are based on understanding the **purposes** of the challenging behavior
- Use of **positive strategies** to support child in achieving meaningful, long-term outcomes



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Emotional and Behavioral Disorders

## ***Speaker Notes:***

Go over the slide.

# How Does PBS Work?

**Step 1:** Bring together a team of individuals who are concerned and knowledgeable about the child.

**Step 2:** Gather information about the child's behavior (functional assessment).

**Step 3:** Develop the behavior support plan.

**Step 4:** Implement and evaluate the success of the plan.



## ***Speaker Notes:***

- This slide outlines the four basic steps involved in positive behavior support. All four steps are crucial in achieving successful outcomes for the child.



## Activity 2

### Establishing a Team

- **Read** Paragraph 1 of the “Amy” scenario
- Who was on Amy’s team?
- How did they begin to collaborate?
- Who might you include on a team for a child in your class?



#### ***Speaker Notes:***

- The first step in the process of PBS is to establish a team of individuals who are concerned and knowledgeable about the child.
- Have participants read the first paragraph of the handout, “Amy.”
- Encourage pairs or small groups to discuss the questions on the slide about Amy’s team and to discuss ideas for possible team members for a child in their own class or program.

# Functional Assessment

- Used to **understand** the purpose or function of a specific problem behavior
- Team members **observe** the child and write down what happens before, during, and after the child's challenging behavior
- **Interview** teachers and family members about the nature of the behavior, what the child might gain through the behavior, what predicts the behavior, etc.



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## ***Speaker Notes:***

Step 2 in PBS is to gather information about the child's behavior (functional assessment). Tell participants that the team will need to make some educated guesses about what is going on with Amy's behavior. In order to do this, they must conduct a functional assessment. If you used *What Works Brief #9*, have participants review information about functional assessment.

## Activity 3

### Purpose of the Behavior

- **Read** Paragraphs 2 and 3 of the “Amy” scenario.
- What did the team learn about Amy’s behavior?



### ***Speaker Notes:***

- Pass out copies of a sample Behavior Support Plan. “Tim’s Behavior Support Plan” is included with this workshop. Other examples are included on the CSEFEL website at <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/csefel>.
- Allow participants to scan the components of Tim’s plan. Then distribute copies of the “Behavior Support Plan Worksheet” that you will use for activities to follow. Have participant pairs or small groups read Paragraphs 2 and 3 of the Amy scenario, jotting down specifics about Amy’s behavior on the handout under “Functional Assessment.” Write their ideas on chart paper as well.

## What Is Included in the Behavior Support Plan?

1. Procedures for teaching new REPLACEMENT skills.
2. Strategies for RESPONDING so that new skills are maintained and acknowledged.
3. Strategies for modifying the curriculum, environment, activity, or interactions to PREVENT the occurrence of the behavior.



### ***Speaker Notes:***

- Tell participants that there are three main components to an actual behavior support plan. Go over the components above and on the Behavior Support Plan Worksheet.

# Preventing

Prevention strategies reduce the likelihood that the child will need or want to use the challenging behavior.



## ***Speaker Notes:***

- Now go over each segment of the plan individually. This slide explains the first segment.

## Prevention Strategies

- How can the environment be changed to reduce the likelihood that the behavior will occur?
- What procedures can I select that fit in with the natural routines and structure of the classroom or family?
- How can I build on what works?
- What can be done to help the child deal with or avoid behavior triggers?



### ***Speaker Notes:***

- These are examples of questions to ask yourself as you determine prevention strategies. Go over slide.

## Possible Prevention Strategies

- Offer **choices** using pictures or actual objects.
- **Safety signal**—provide a timeline (“5 minutes till clean-up”), use timer.
- **Modify task length**—shorten group time.
- Select reinforcer prior to activity (“When you put the toy away, you can go outside”).



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### ***Speaker Notes:***

- Go over or use as handout depending on time.
- Additional examples of prevention strategies, replacement skills, and responses to behavior are located in Module 3b on the CSEFEL website at <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/csefel>. There are great color examples that you might like to use in your training or refer participants to for use on their own.



## Activity 4

- Read Paragraph 4 of the Amy scenario.
- What prevention strategies were included in Amy's plan?
- List them under "Preventing" on the worksheet.



### ***Speaker Notes:***

- Have participant pairs read Paragraph 4 of the Amy scenario and then write down prevention strategies that were used with Amy. Ask participants for any other ideas they might have.

## Activity 5

- Read Paragraph 5 of the Amy scenario.
- What new skills did Amy need to learn?



### ***Speaker Notes:***

- Have participants read Paragraph 5 and complete the worksheet section under “Replacing.” List replacement skills or “new skills” on chart paper.

## Responding

- What adults will do when the challenging behavior occurs to ensure that the challenging behavior is not reinforced and the new skill is learned.
- A good basic strategy is to redirect the child to use an alternative skill or a new skill.
- Make sure rewards for appropriate behavior equal or exceed the rewards for challenging behavior.



### ***Speaker Notes:***

- The final step in the plan is to make sure that adults respond appropriately when the challenging behavior does occur, and that the new skills are strengthened. Go over slide.

## Examples of Responding

- Redirect child to use replacement skill.
- Praise/reinforce when replacement skill is used.
- State exactly what is expected.
- Cue with appropriate prevention strategies.



### ***Speaker Notes:***

- Go over the slide.

## Activity 6

### Responding

- **Read** the last paragraph of Amy scenario.
- How were the adults changing the way they responded to Amy's challenging behavior?



### ***Speaker Notes:***

- Read and discuss the final paragraph in the Amy scenario. Have participant pairs complete the worksheet section under “Responding.” For additional examples of strategies for responding to behavior, go to Module 3b on the CSEFEL website <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/csefel/preschool.html>.

## Will PBS Really Work?

- Research has shown this approach can produce rapid changes in behavior if used consistently.
- All three pieces (prevention, new skills, responses) must be implemented.
- There must be “buy-in” from the team.



### ***Speaker Notes:***

- Review this slide and encourage questions from participants. Ask them how they might use what they have learned. Is there a child in their program who may need PBS? How will they start?
- After the discussion is complete, thank the participants for participating and have them complete the evaluation form, if appropriate.
- Distribute the certificate of attendance if appropriate.

# Pre-training Survey

WWBTK #10: Positive Behavior Support: An Individualized Approach for Addressing Challenging Behavior

- ☀ What are two ways to gather information for use with positive behavior support (PBS)?

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- ☀ What are the necessary steps in the use of PBS?

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- ☀ What are two of the three elements included in a positive behavior support plan?

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- ☀ What are the three most pressing issues you face as an early childhood professional?

1. 

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2. 

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3. 

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# Pre-training Survey

WWBTK #10: Positive Behavior Support: An Individualized Approach for Addressing Challenging Behavior

## Demographic Information

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Describe yourself (check the boxes that best describe you):

Your gender: ☐ Female ☐ Male

Your age: ☐ under 30 ☐ 31 to 40 ☐ 41 to 50  
☐ 51-60 ☐ 61 and above

Your ethnicity: ☐ European American ☐ Asian-Pacific ☐ Hispanic  
☐ African-American ☐ American Indian ☐ Other (specify)\_\_\_\_\_

Check your current teaching certificates:

- ☐ Early Childhood Education
- ☐ Elementary Education
- ☐ Special Education
- ☐ Other (Specify)\_\_\_\_\_

Check the one that best describes your education:

- ☐ High school or GED
- ☐ Some college
- ☐ Associate's degree
- ☐ Bachelor's degree
- ☐ Master's degree
- ☐ Other (Specify)\_\_\_\_\_

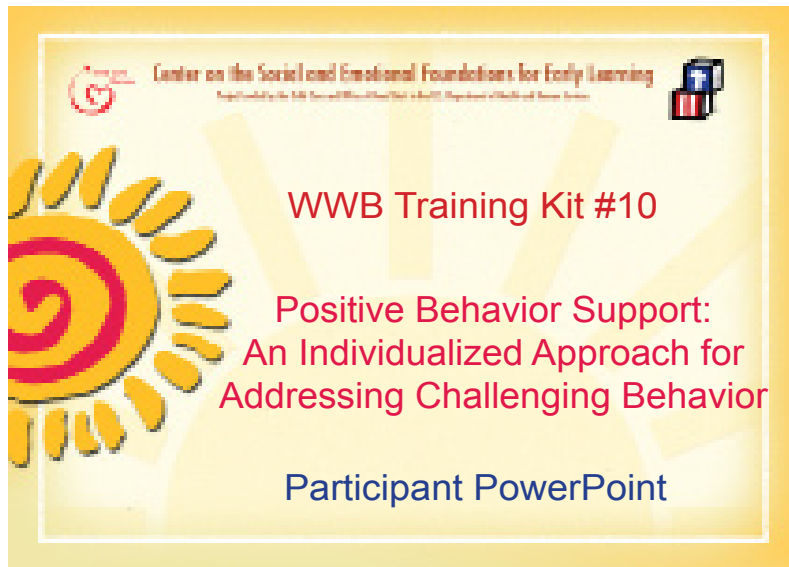
Your teaching experience:

How many year(s) have you taught preschoolers?\_\_\_\_\_

How many year(s) have you taught preschoolers with IEPs?\_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for completing this survey.

# Participant Notes



## Notes

### What is Positive Behavior Support?

- An \_\_\_\_\_ approach to developing effective interventions for children with \_\_\_\_\_
- Incorporates the \_\_\_\_\_ of child-centered approaches



### What is a Positive Behavior Support?

- Interventions are based on understanding the \_\_\_\_\_ of the challenging behavior
- Use of \_\_\_\_\_ to support child in achieving meaningful, long-term outcomes



## How Does PBS Work?

- Step 1:** Bring together a team of individuals who are concerned and knowledgeable about the child.
- Step 2:** Gather information about the child's behavior (functional assessment).
- Step 3:** Develop the behavior support plan.
- Step 4:** Implement and evaluate the success of the plan.



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## Notes

## Functional Assessment

- Used to \_\_\_\_\_ the purpose or function of a specific problem behavior.
- Team members \_\_\_\_\_ the child and write down what happens before, during and after the child's challenging behavior.
- \_\_\_\_\_ teachers and family members about the nature of the behavior, what child might gain through the behavior, what predicts the behavior, etc.



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## What is Included in a Behavior Support Plan?

1. Procedures for teaching new \_\_\_\_\_ skills.
2. Strategies for \_\_\_\_\_ so that new skills are maintained and acknowledged.
3. Strategies for modifying the curriculum, environment, activity, or interactions to \_\_\_\_\_ the occurrence of the behavior.



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## Preventing



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## Notes

### Preventing Strategies

- How can the environment be changed to reduce the likelihood that the behavior will occur?
- What procedures can I select that fit in with the natural routines and structure of the classroom or family?
- How can I build on what works?
- What can be done to help the child deal with or avoid behavior triggers?



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### Possible Prevention Strategies

Offering \_\_\_\_\_ using pictures or actual objects.

\_\_\_\_\_ - providing a timeline (“5 minutes till clean-up”), use timer

\_\_\_\_\_ – shorten group time.

Select \_\_\_\_\_ prior to activity (“when you put the toy away, you can go outside”).



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## Replacing

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## Notes

### Possible Replacement Skills

- Ask for break
- Say "all done"
- Ask for help
- Ask for a turn
- Ask for a hug
- Use a schedule
- ID feeling & express
- Ask for adult intervention
- Use supports to follow rule
- Anticipate transition
- Say "no"
- Take turns



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## Responding

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## Will PBS Really Work?

- Research has shown this approach can produce rapid changes in behavior if used \_\_\_\_\_.
- All three pieces (prevention, new skills, responses) must be implemented.
- Dependent on “buy-in” from the team.



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## Notes

# Jack and Amy: Activity 1

WWBTK #10: Positive Behavior Support: An Individualized Approach for Addressing Challenging Behavior

**Directions:** Read “Jack and Amy.” Discuss the following: “Did you ever have a child in your program who didn’t seem to respond to any of your typical approaches to dealing with challenging behavior a child with whom nothing you tried seemed to work?”

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## **Case Study: Jack**

Jack teaches in a Head Start center with eight classrooms. His center has been NAEYC accredited for the past six years. Jack has a bachelor’s degree in early education and serves as a mentor to new teachers at the center. This year, Jack has been very worried about the challenging behavior of one of the children in his class. Amy is a 4-year-old child with some language delays and significant problem behavior. Amy hits other children, pulls hair, bites, destroys toys and materials, and resists redirection by hitting, screaming, and scratching adults.

This is the first time Amy has been in a group care setting. In the first months of her enrollment, Jack thought Amy just needed to learn the classroom expectations and get used to being with other children. Now it is January, and Amy’s behavior has not improved. Jack has tried talking with Amy’s parents, establishing a home/school plan to remind Amy of the classroom rules, and has asked the Head Start mental health consultant to provide recommendations. Currently, the mental health consultant works with Amy for 30 minutes each week. Unfortunately, Amy’s behavior is unchanged. Jack is ready to “throw in the towel,” for he isn’t sure at this point if he can meet Amy’s needs. After much discussion, the mental health consultant and Jack decide to try a new approach to working with Amy, “Positive Behavior Support.”



## Amy: Activity 1

WWBTK #10: Positive Behavior Support: An Individualized Approach for Addressing Challenging Behavior

In Jack's classroom, PBS was implemented for Amy. The first step was to bring together the team of interested, concerned adults. Jack and the mental health consultant worked together to convene a team including Amy's parents and Jack's teaching assistants. The team met one day during lunch and talked about Amy's behavior, the need to understand her behavior, and the importance of finding effective strategies to teach her new skills. Amy's parents were very eager to develop strategies for interacting with Amy because they were experiencing similar challenges at home.

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The second step of the PBS process was to conduct a functional assessment. The functional assessment process included observing Amy during her routines at school and home. Each member of the team wrote down what happened before Amy's challenging behavior and what happened after each challenging behavior episode. The team got back together and reviewed the information that they had collected.

The team learned from their observations that Amy was most likely to play with a toy that she had chosen or when another child entered into her play space. When Amy attacked the child by hitting, biting, or grabbing a toy, the teacher would comfort the hurt child and then take the hurt child to another center or activity. Thus, Amy would be successful in getting that child to leave the activity or leave the toy. The team also realized that when Amy attacked adults who were redirecting her (usually to help her make a transition to a new activity), the adult would leave Amy alone when she began scratching or hitting. Amy was very successful at getting her own way. The team discussed these observations and determined that Amy was using her challenging behavior to avoid sharing toys or engaging in activities that she did not like. Amy's parents described similar experiences of challenging behavior at home. Amy would attack her mother when she asked Amy to do simple tasks like put her plate in the sink or pick up her toys. Amy would also bite or pinch her parents when they tried to help her make the transition from a desirable activity (e.g., playing in the park) to an activity that she did not want to do (e.g., get in the car to go home).

# Amy: Activity 1

WWBTK #10: Positive Behavior Support: An Individualized Approach for Addressing Challenging Behavior

The team developed a behavior support plan based on their new understanding of Amy and the function or purpose of Amy's challenging behavior. The following prevention strategies were used: warning Amy of transitions with a countdown cue (e.g. "five more minutes, three more minutes, one minute, time for circle"); watching Amy carefully during center time and facilitating peer interaction when peers approached Amy; and setting a timer for Amy that showed her how long she could play with a highly desired object before offering the toy to another child. In addition to these strategies, the team modified activities and transitions that were difficult for Amy. For example, at circle time, the teachers added a choice board that allowed Amy to pick the song that would be sung on arrival at circle.

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The support plan also included new skills to teach Amy. If the goal was that Amy would no longer need to use challenging behavior, she needed to learn some new ways to get her needs met. The team decided that Amy needed to learn how to take turns with peers and how to comply with transition requests. They set up play situations with peers where Amy could be taught to take turns. The team also made a schedule for Amy (a laminated piece of cardboard with fasteners that held photographs) of the activities of the day. The schedule was reviewed with Amy each day and prior to each activity. The fasteners allowed for changes to be made in the schedule (e.g., by adding new photos or drawings) and allowed Amy to peel off each photo upon completion of the activity and place it in a finished envelope. A similar schedule was created for activities at home. The schedule helped Amy anticipate transitions and could be used to cue Amy with countdowns.

The final piece of the support plan involved changing the way adults responded to Amy when she exhibited challenging behaviors. The team decided that when Amy was aggressive to another child, Amy would be guided to another play area. The adult might say, "Amy, you are having a hard time playing blocks, you need to pick a new activity." After a few minutes and when Amy was calm, the adult would allow Amy to return to the block area with the adult supporting Amy and her peers' social interaction. The team also decided that when they told Amy it was time to change activities, the adult needed to follow through with the request. Each team member agreed to use these strategies consistently.

# Activity 2

WWBTK #10: Positive Behavior Support: An Individualized Approach for Addressing Challenging Behavior

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**Directions:** Read Paragraph 1 of the “Amy” scenario then answer the following questions.

**CSEFEL**



- Who was on Amy’s team?
- How did they begin to collaborate?
- Who might you include on a team for a child in your class?

# Activity 3

WWBTK #10: Positive Behavior Support: An Individualized Approach for Addressing Challenging Behavior

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**Directions: Read Paragraphs 2 and 3 of the “Amy” scenario and answer the following question.**

**CSEFEL**



- What did the team learn about Amy’s behavior?

# Activity 4

WWBTK #10: Positive Behavior Support: An Individualized Approach for Addressing Challenging Behavior

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**Directions:** Read Paragraph 4 of the “Amy” scenario and answer the following question.

**CSEFEL**



- What prevention strategies were included in Amy’s plan?

# Activity 5

WWBTK #10: Positive Behavior Support: An Individualized Approach for Addressing Challenging Behavior

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**Directions:** Read Paragraph 5 of the “Amy” scenario and answer the following question. **CSEFEL**

- What new skills did Amy need to learn?





# Activity 6

WWBTK #10: Positive Behavior Support: An Individualized Approach for Addressing Challenging Behavior

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**Directions:** Read the last paragraph of the “Amy” scenario and answer the following question.

- How were the adults changing the way they responded to Amy’s challenging behavior?

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# Behavior Support Plan Worksheet

WWBTK #10: Positive Behavior Support: An Individualized Approach for Addressing Challenging Behavior

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**Functional Assessment (What do you think is the purpose of the challenging behavior?)**



**Preventing (strategies to use prior to situations that usually evoke challenging behavior)**

**Replacing (new skills to replace challenging behaviors)**

**Responding (adult responses that do not reinforce challenging behavior)**



# CSEFEL Training Workshop Evaluation

WWBTK #10: Positive Behavior Support: An Individualized Approach for Addressing Challenging Behaviors

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Topic: \_\_\_\_\_

Speaker(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Your position: \_\_\_\_\_

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☀ Circle the number that best expresses your reaction to each of the following items:

- |  |                       |   |   |   |   |                        |
|--|-----------------------|---|---|---|---|------------------------|
| 1. This topic is important to me.            | (Extremely Important) | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | (Not Important at All) |
| 2. The amount of information covered was     | (Just Right)          | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | (Inadequate)           |
| 3. The information covered was clear.        | (Very Clear)          | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | (Vague)                |
| 4. The activities conducted were beneficial. | (Very)                | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | (Not at All)           |
| 5. The handouts provided were useful.        | (Very)                | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | (Not at All)           |
| 6. Overall, this presentation was            | (Very Useful)         | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | (Not Useful)           |

☀ Things I liked about this presentation:

☀ Things I would change about this presentation:

☀ Additional information I would like on this topic:

☀ New things I am going to try as a result of this workshop:

☀ Additional comments:

# Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning

## *Certificate of Training* Positive Behavior Support: An Individualized Approach for Addressing Challenging Behavior

This is to certify that

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successfully completed the above training

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*Trainer*

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*Trainer*



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*Participant*

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*Date and Location*

Additional training resources are available at: <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/csefel/>