THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA
Arizona Center on Aging

Making Your Meal Program THRIVE

Addressing Ageist Cultures and Practices

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Objectives

- Identify socialization challenges that older adults encounter in communal settings

- Describe the evidence-based public-school program, Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS)

- Explain how to adapt evidence-based school strategies to communal settings to build a safe and inclusive culture

In High School I Was…

A) was popular

B) had a few close friends

C) was a bit of a loner

In High School, at Lunch I...

Y/N answer each question

1) sat with the same friends everyday

2) felt comfortable eating with kids I didn't know

3) felt comfortable eating alone

4) would skip lunch if my friends were absent

How Similar are High School cafeterias and Congregate Meal Sites?

Project THRIVE

Focused on how Independent and Assisted Living Facilities could ensure an emotionally safe, supportive, and inclusive environment

Challenges included:

• Diversity (culture, ethnicity, age, health, personality, health beliefs)

• Age-related changes and personal experience

• Ageism

Project THRIVE Continued

Goal: Develop a culture building model where residents felt welcome, comfortable and engaged

Method: Adapt an evidence-based public-school program focused on culture-building and inclusivity

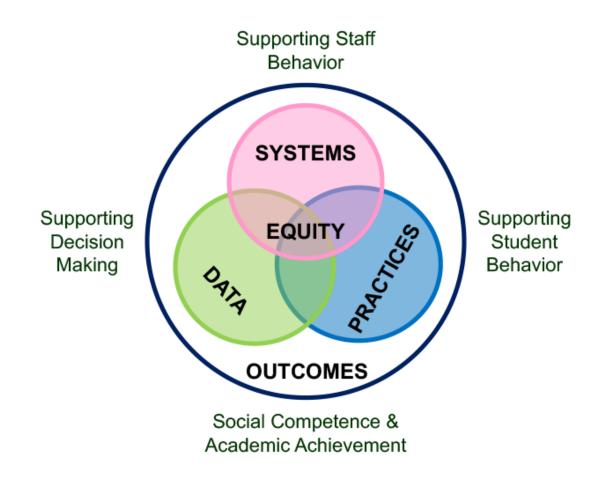# Are There Lessons We Can Learn from Schools?

To Reduce Isolation, Build Community and Improve Quality of Life

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)
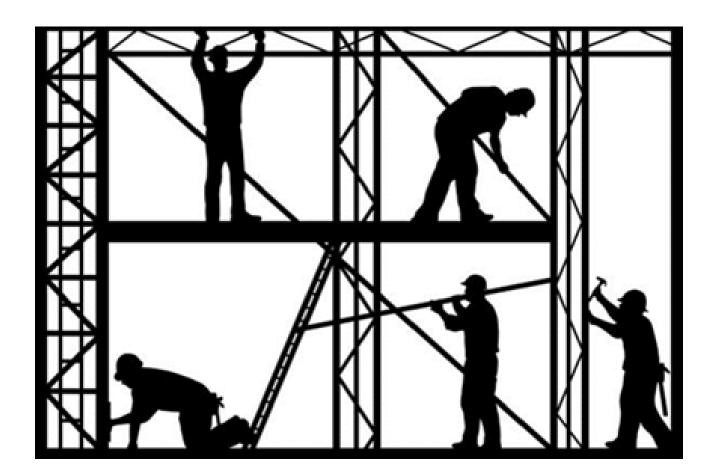
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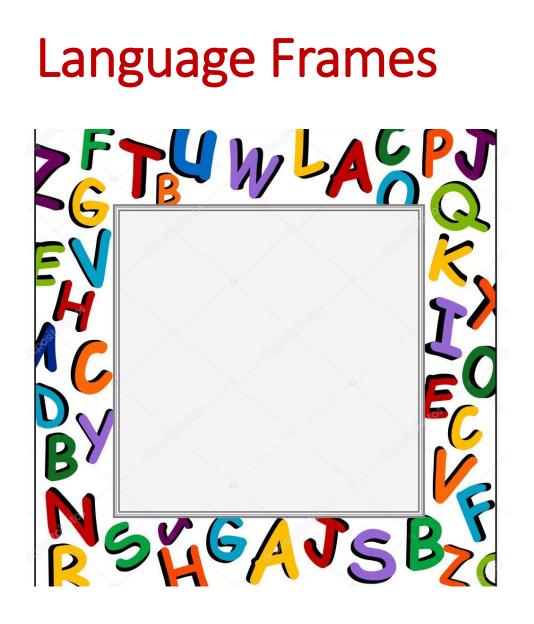
Results of PBIS in Schools

- Decrease in bullying and harassment

- Increase in feelings of belongingness

- Decrease in violent and aggressive acts

- Positive effect on climate for teachers, staff, and students

PBIS is a Framework

Not a Program or Model

Language Frames

- **Frames = Mental Models** = How we see the world
  - Frames are expressed in language

- Using **language,** we can create new **frames**

- **Behavior** is an expression of our mental models

- If we can adapt mental models, we can influence behavior

How does this make you feel?

Is This Better?

Join your fellow citizens in helping to save our environment.

Please re-use towels.

Culture:

- Culture: the learned and shared values, beliefs, norms and lifeways carried by a group of people which guides their decisions, thinking and actions

- PBIS links language to behaviors and beliefs = community building

Language Frames *Continued*

The goal is to have the new language frames become a shared norm throughout the site, with everyone modeling desired behaviors

Language Frames *Continued 2*

Problem: Residents want to have access to their mobility aids, but they crowd the dining area & create a fall hazard

Solution: Park the 'vehicles' outside the room and give access as needed

Language change/new verb: Valet

Develop

A GOAL WITHOUT A PLAN IS JUST A WISH

*Develop a vision and shared norms to bring about culture change

*Develop a system to match that vision, using language as the connection to emotion, and ultimately to the desired behavior

Goals

A GOAL WITHOUT A PLAN IS JUST A WISH

*Teach, model and practice new language frames

*Reinforce with strategic messaging

*Use incentives to initiate and sustain changes

*Monitor, evaluate, adjust

Goals *Continued*

*One of the most effective ways to combat negative behavior is to increase the efficacy of bystanders

Effective Culture Change

Culture building mindset:

we are creating a vision of a community that we desire, and we are taking coordinated and deliberate targeted steps to achieve it

Empathy Training

Empathy is being aware of and sensitive to another person's emotions—vicariously experiencing and understanding those feelings.

We have a 1-hour interactive training that we used with all staff and residents

Unfair Hearing Test

During this portion of Dr. O'Neills presentation she played an unfair hearing test. You may find one to listen to or include in a presentation of your own by searching "Unfair Hearing Test" on YouTube.

The Loss Game

Directions:

Give everyone 5 small pieces of paper

Ask them to write one thing on each piece of paper that is important to them; something in their life that you really enjoy (pets, friend, family, possessions, etc.), makes life meaningful

Once they have one thing written on all five sheets, hold them up like a hand of cards

Congregate Meal Sites

To make meaningful changes, it's important to take a deep dive into a site's unique culture

Potential Idea: Host 1-2 separate focus groups for participants and staff to discover if/where/when unwanted situations are occurring and discover more about the attitudes behind the negative behavior

Congregate Meal Sites *Continued*

- Is your site as welcoming as you think it is?

- Do you ask the diners if they feel welcome?

- Do you ask if they feel comfortable?

- What is your New Guest process?

Congregate Meal Sites *Continued 2*

- Do you allow saved seats?

- If so, what do people say if someone wants to sit at their table?

- Do you give them guidance on how to phase things?

- Do you have cliques?

Storytime

Data Gathering

- Keep it simple

- If needed, implement an Intervention

- Evaluate:

- Do we have a process that works?

- Is the intervention making a difference?

Intervention Ideas

Pick a handful of tables that always have 2 seats open for new people

Have a WELCOME table where new people sit for several visits and encourage other diners to share a meal with them

Have a few people who act as a meal buddy for new people

Intervention Ideas: Environment

Normalize use of pocket talkers at tables

Minimize center pieces to facilitate lip reading

Use place cards for conversation starters and rotate them around the tables

PBIS Framework Example for Congregate Meal Sites

1. Identify a problem area

2. How is current situation not meeting the needs of your community?

3. Is there any resistance to change? Look at current beliefs and behaviors

4. What message will communicate desired result and create new social norms?

5. How will new expectations be reinforced?

6. How will new expectations be monitored?

Key Points

Don't assume your current culture is working for everyone

Don't assume because you feel welcome and comfortable that everyone does

Don't assume things don't change

Don't get hung up on the data gathering process – keep it quick and simple

Thank you

for helping to build the WORLD we are all growing old in

Any Questions?

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