

ChangeLab Solutions


Positive Discipline and Healthy Kids: An Opportunity for Washington State


April 30, 2019

Presented by:
Alexis Etow, Senior Attorney
Cesar De La Vega, Policy Analyst



OSPI | Center for the Improvement
of Student Learning



AWSP
ASSOCIATION OF WASHINGTON
SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

ESD 112

Welcome!



Alexis Etow
Senior Attorney
ChangeLab Solutions

Cesar De La Vega
Policy Analyst
ChangeLab Solutions

Kurt Hatch
Associate Director
Association of
Washington
School Principals

ChangeLab Solutions
Law & policy innovation for the common good.



Healthier communities for all through equitable laws and policies.

Disclaimer

The information provided in this discussion is for informational purposes only, and does not constitute legal advice. ChangeLab Solutions does not enter into attorney-client relationships.

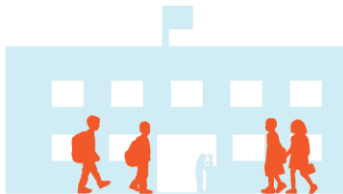
ChangeLab Solutions is a non-partisan, nonprofit organization that educates and informs the public through objective, non-partisan analysis, study, and/or research. The primary purpose of this discussion is to address legal and/or policy options to improve public health. There is no intent to reflect a view on specific legislation.

© 2019 ChangeLab Solutions

AGENDA



- Why do school discipline practices matter?
- What are promising alternatives to punitive discipline practices?
- Federal and state policy opportunities and trends
- Debunking common concerns
- Q&A



Why do school discipline practices *matter*?



What are ACEs?

Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) are "traumatic experiences that can have a profound effect on a child's developing brain and body with lasting impacts on a person's health throughout her lifespan."

Source: Center for Youth Wellness white paper "An Unhealthy Dose of Stress" (June 2013)



45% of all children in the U.S. have experienced at least one ACE.

Source: Child Trends "The Prevalence of adverse childhood experiences, nationally, by state, and by race/ethnicity" (February 2018)

Prevalence of ACEs	
Race or Ethnicity	% of children that have experienced at least one ACE
Black non-Hispanic	61%
Hispanic	51%
White non-Hispanic	40%
Asian non-Hispanic	23%

Black non-Hispanic, Hispanic, and non-Hispanic children of other races are more likely than White children to experience 2 or more ACEs

Source: Child Trends "The Prevalence of adverse childhood experiences, nationally, by state, and by race/ethnicity" (February 2018)

Prevalence of ACEs in Washington*



- 47% of children aged 0-17 have had at least one ACE
- Most common ACEs among children in WA:
 - Economic Hardship
 - Divorce
 - Alcohol Misuse
 - Mental Illness
 - Violence
- 11% of children have had 3 or more ACEs

* Source: Child Trends "Adverse Childhood Experiences: National and State Level Prevalence" (July 2014)



Toxic stress is "the extreme, frequent, or extended activation of the body's stress response without the buffering presence of a supportive adult."

Source: Center for Youth Wellness white paper "An Unhealthy Dose of Stress" (June 2013)



The Toll of ACEs and Toxic Stress

ACEs and a student's academic trajectory

- Chronic absenteeism
- Behavioral and learning challenges, and struggles in schools

ACEs and detrimental socioeconomic outcomes

- High school non-completion and household poverty
- Periods of unemployment



ACEs, toxic stress, and health outcomes

- Increased risk of suicide attempts, sexual risk behaviors, and lifetime depressive episodes
- Disruptions of the metabolic and immune systems
- Lower life expectancy



Protective Factors

How can we mitigate the effects of ACEs and Toxic Stress?

- By building resilience with *Protective Factors* that act like a shield to protect children from the effects of ACEs and toxic stress.
- Examples include:
 - Providing nurturing and supportive relationships with adults
 - Strengthening key social and emotional skills



What role do schools play?

Schools can play a critical role in mitigating the effects that ACEs and toxic stress can have on a young person's healthy development and educational success



And yet many schools, **beginning as early as preschool**, suspend and expel students—particularly students of color, LGBTQ youth, and students with disabilities—at alarming rates.



Washington State:
School Discipline Rates

Race/Ethnicity	Discipline Rate	Relative Rate
Black/African American	7.6%	2.35
American Indian/Alaska Native	7.2%	2.25
Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	5.3%	1.64
Multi-racial (2 or more races)	4.5%	1.39
Hispanic/Latino of any race(s)	4.4%	1.36
White	3.2%	1.00
Asian	1.0%	0.32

A missed opportunity for
schools



Academic



Classroom



Health



Negative

academic

outcomes

- Decreased academic engagement, performance, and attendance
- Increased likelihood of dropout



Negative

classroom

outcomes

- Increased likelihood of future disciplinary actions
- Decreased feelings of safety
- Lower school connectivity



Negative

health outcomes

- Education is a key social determinant of health
- Fail to address the "root causes" of behavior
- Undermine critical protective factors

How does this all fit together?

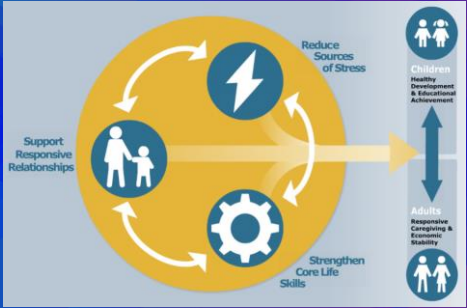
Understanding the connections between school discipline and health.





What are *promising alternatives* to punitive discipline practices?

Three Principles to Improve Outcomes for Children and Families



Source: Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University (2017). Three Principles to Improve Outcomes for Children and Families. <http://www.developingchild.harvard.edu>



Supportive alternatives that emphasize healthy development of the whole child positively reinforce each of the three design principles to cultivate healthier school environments, empower students, remove barriers to educational attainment, and equip students with the skills to thrive in and outside of the classroom



Design Principle #1:
Support Responsive Relationships

Restorative justice practices:

- Foster healthy relationships in schools built on a foundation of trust, respect, and care
- Increase engagement for students and families, and improves two-way communication

Social and emotional learning:

- Leads to schools characterized by
 - a supportive culture and climate
 - positive relationships
 - deeper learning and
 - improved classroom management



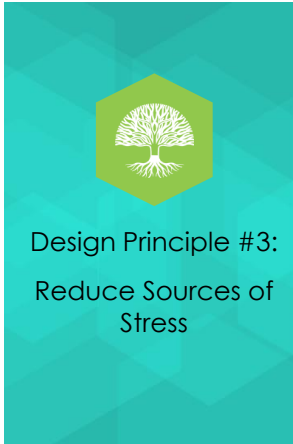
Design Principle #2:
Strengthen Core Life Skills

Restorative justice practices:

- Replace fear and punishment as motivators with belonging, connectedness, and a willingness to change
- Can create a school climate that develops social and emotional skills and understanding

Social and emotional learning:

- Fosters skills such as
 - self-regulation
 - executive function
 - self-efficacy and
 - empathy

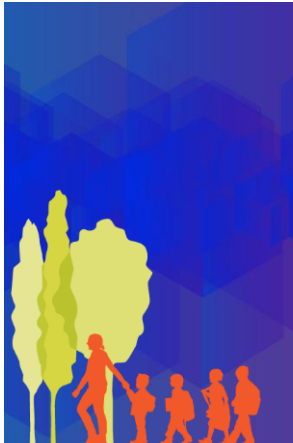


Restorative justice practices:

- Can reduce suspension rates across a school district
- Contributes to the narrowing of the racial-discipline gap

Social and emotional learning:

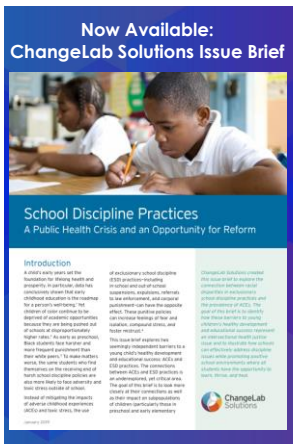
- Can shift race and gender disparities in school discipline
- Linked to reduced risk-taking and emotional distress



- ✓ Punitive discipline practices exacerbate the effects of ACEs and toxic stress

- ✓ Students at greater risk of experiencing 1 or more ACEs are being pushed out of schools at a disproportionate rate, raising health equity concerns

- ✓ There is growing momentum around an alternative vision for schools, grounded in science, that mitigates the effects of ACEs and toxic stress, and supports students to reach their full potential



- ✓ Explores the connection between racial disparities in exclusionary school discipline practices and the prevalence of ACEs

- ✓ Frames these barriers to healthy development and educational success as an intersectional health justice issue.

- ✓ Illustrates how schools can effectively address discipline issues while promoting positive school environments where all students have the opportunity to heal, learn, and thrive.

****Learn more [here](#)!****



A Spotlight on:
**Positive Behavioral
Interventions and
Supports (PBIS)**



Featured Speaker:

Kurt Hatch

*Associate Director,
Association of Washington
School Principals*

**Objective
for this
Presentation**

Provide resources
and take-aways
designed to help
school systems
increase behaviors
that promote
learning and
recapture
instructional time.

**Behavior is complex and
nuanced.**

Contexts:	Social	Physical Environmental
Influences:	State of being	State of mind
Situational:	Location	Activity
Motivation:	Attain	Avoid

Behavior is one of the most challenging things to teach...

Good news!

There is a science to it.

There are proven best ways to increase behaviors that promote learning and extinguish maladaptive behaviors.

Significant
reduction in
major office
referrals

- Average of 16 per day > 2.5 per day
- Recaptured over 900 hours of learning time.
- Eliminated the use of suspensions.
- Enhanced teacher/student relationships.
- Created a more equitable system.

Critical Components



1. Punishment vs Discipline
2. PBIS
3. W.H.O. Patrol
4. Precision Requests → Think Time
5. Clear, Concise and Predictable Behavior Plans

1. Punishment vs Discipline

"We are in the business of teaching, not punishing, students."

-Charly Harrington

"It's critical to understand what punishment is, it's psychological impacts, and why it is not an effective teaching tool."

Punishments are the arbitrary pairing of pain/fear with an unwanted behavior.

Punishment is an external stimuli that engages the **amygdala** in hopes of making a person react and comply.



The **amygdala** is a section of the brain responsible for detecting fear and preparing for emergency events.

Brain created by Meaghan Hendricks from Noun Project

Discipline is a teaching/learning tool designed to engage the **frontal lobe** so that children make socially acceptable decisions based on consequential reasoning...the kind of reasoning that kicks in regardless of whether an adult is around to monitor behavior.



Punishment doesn't work

Why punishment doesn't work
and what does

2. PBiS

"Go All-in for PBiS"

District-wide PBiS implementation w/ fidelity.

PBiS in the Classroom

CICO – Check-in Check-out

SWIS – School-Wide Information System

It's a fundamental shift on how we do school.

3. W.H.O. Patrol

"Back to Class"

Rather than sending students to the office, adults are sent to classrooms.

- Helps keep students safe.
- Helps recapture dozens of days of instruction.
- Helps maintain the critically important student/teacher relationship.

4. *Precision Requests → Think Time

Words matter.
Too many words REALLY matters.
The predictability of the words we use REALLY REALLY matters.

5. Clear, Concise and Predictable Behavior Plans

We often get bogged down in complicated systems for analyzing behaviors and crafting plans that are far too complicated.

5. Clear, Concise and Predictable Behavior Plans

If the adult(s) are able to teach the plan so the student can teach it to another student, the plan will have a high probability of success.

5. Clear, Concise and Predictable Behavior Plans

If the plan is utilized as designed by all the adults who interact with the student throughout the day, it will likely produce the desired results.

There are proven best ways to increase behaviors that promote learning and extinguish maladaptive behaviors.

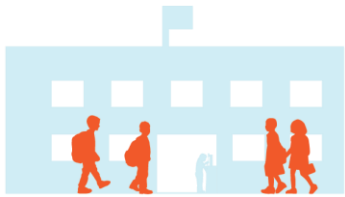
Critical Components



- 1. Punishment vs Discipline
- 2. PBIS
- 3. W.H.O. Patrol
- 4. Precision Requests → Think Time
- 5. Clear, Concise and Predictable Behavior Plans

"We can, whenever and wherever we choose, successfully teach all children whose schooling is of interest to us. We already know more than we need to do this."

-Ron Edmonds



Federal and state *policy opportunities* and trends



The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

Titles IV and VI of the Civil Rights Act

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)



Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

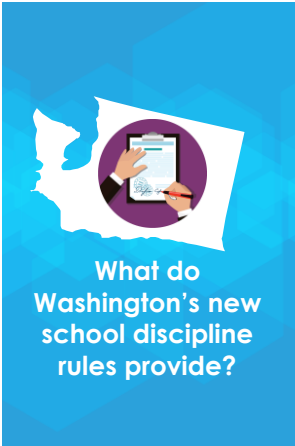
- Expands the criteria by which school are measured.
- State and district report cards must include discipline data (and must be made available to parents)
- State and district educational plans must address the overuse of traditional forms of discipline
- Funding for teacher trainings and addressing needs related to school climate.



Federal School Discipline Guidance



- ✓ Eliminate zero tolerance
- ✓ Grade-level restrictions
- ✓ Limit the type of violations
- ✓ Alternative school discipline strategies

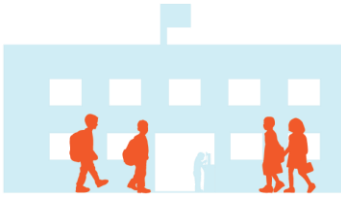


- ✓ Student protections
- ✓ Family engagement
- ✓ Best practices
- ✓ Educational services

To learn more about the rules, visit:
k12.wa.us/studentdiscipline/







1

How do children learn about the importance of consequences?



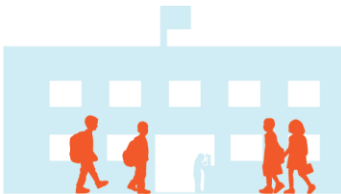
Concern:

- Without traditional forms of punishment, children will not learn the importance of consequences.



Fact Check:

- Punitive discipline exposes children to harsh consequences without the desired effects on behavioral control.
- Positive discipline practices focus on improving student behavior by teaching critical social and life skills, while also supporting positive academic outcomes



2

How do I get buy-in for schoolwide change?



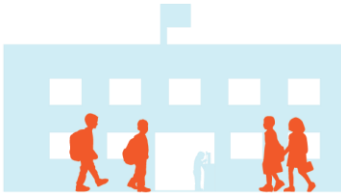
Concern:

- How do I convince the rest of the school community about the importance of positive approaches? Is this just adding one more thing to the already full plates of school staff?



Fact Check:

- Positive approaches that address the "root causes" of behavior are not only more effective but also have a strong ROI.
- Evidence that positive approaches can help improve attendance, academic performance, graduation rates, and overall well-being.



3

But what about school safety?



Concern:

- Traditional forms of punishment are necessary for keeping school safe.



Fact Check:

- According to research, they actually worsen school climate and make students feel less safe.
- Instead, positive approaches can help build school connectedness, a critical factor in promoting school safety.



4

Where can I go to learn more?



ChangeLab Solutions

Resources

OSPI

- New School Discipline Rules
<http://www.k12.wa.us/studentdiscipline/default.aspx>
- Unlocking Federal and State Program Funds
<http://www.k12.wa.us/ESEA/pubdocs/UnlockingStateFederalProgramFunds.pdf>
- Multi-Tiered Systems of Support
<http://www.k12.wa.us/MISS/Resources.aspx>
- Behavior Menu
<http://www.k12.wa.us/SSEO/BehaviorMenu.aspx>



OSPI | Center for the Improvement of Student Learning



ESD 112



ChangeLab Solutions

Resources



Contact us: Changelabsolutions.org

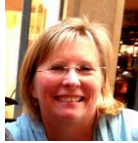


OSPI | Center for the Improvement of Student Learning



ESD 112

Q&A



Mark McKechnie
Senior Consultant, Equity in
Student Discipline
Center for the Improvement
of Student Learning, OSPI

Deb Drandoff
Director, Prevention and
Youth Services
Educational Service
District 112





Keep the conversation going

Alexis Etow: aetow@changelabsolutions.org
Cesar De La Vega: cdeleva@changelabsolutions.org
Mark McKechnie: Mark.Mckechnie@k12.wa.us

Thank you!
