Utilizing Social Work and Behavior Consultation within a Multi-Tiered PBS Framework

AppleTree Early Learning Public Charter Schools
Annual Conference on Advancing School Mental Health
November 2019
agenda

01
SHIFT OVERVIEW

02
CONSULTATION APPROACH

03
TROUBLESHOOTING

04
CASE STUDIES
47% of DC students attend a charter school

3 and 4 year olds only

PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL NETWORK

AppleTree Statistics

Every Child Ready Curriculum
Tiered SEL lessons

INSTITUTE

11 campuses in 18-19;
1,300 students

~60% “at risk”

1:160 social worker:students

POPULATION
16-17 NEEDS ASSESSMENT

TIMING

October 15

MINDSET

COLLECTION AND USE OF DATA
1. Teachers were not implementing any interventions in the beginning of the year. Behaviors were escalating.

2. Or teachers were implementing interventions, but none were documented or progress monitored.

3. Teachers reported they did not feel supported when behavioral concerns arose.
1. Students receive proactive behavioral interventions with a quicker response.

2. Create a structure for the documentation of interventions (Tiers 1, 2, and 3)

3. Merge the structure of data-based RtI with the reality of school-based behavioral concerns.
Based on Consultation Theory and Practice: A Handbook for School Social Workers

**Goal:** “When an individual student’s behaviors are seen as presenting obstacles to her successful learning, the focus of the consultant’s efforts is on strengthening the capacity of teachers to modify the classroom learning environment...and eliminate any barriers to other students’ learning”.

**In Practice:**
- Meeting the teacher where s/he is in regards to mindset, skill, and buy-in
- Interventions and accommodations implemented daily by the teacher and as needed by support staff
Consultant/Consultee: “The behavioral consultant shares her professional expertise, but this can only be successful if that expertise is balanced by the unique knowledge and professional skills that the teachers and administrators have in relation to students and the particular school environment”

In Practice:
- “Best” intervention may not be the “best” for the teacher
- Teacher makes ultimate choice regarding the interventions
  - Social worker provides suggestions and guidance to fit the teacher and student needs based on a functional hypothesis
- What will be implemented with fidelity > intervention done once
Basis in Behavioral Theory: students “defined by their objectively observed behavior rather than subjectively”

Interjection of person-in-environment viewpoint
- Inclusion of home and community influences

In Practice:
- Use of behavioral data to inform decisions
- Allowance for additional social work interventions (e.g. counseling, attendance meetings, community referrals) as part of a Tier 2 plan
current process

1. Teacher has a concern about an individual student
2. Teacher requests consultation meeting with the social worker

During the meeting:
1. Discuss problem behavior
2. Review behavioral data
   a. Schedule observation if lack of data
3. Collaborate and decide upon interventions TOGETHER
3. Social worker documents conversation, data, and intervention decision

4. Follow up meeting scheduled for 4-6 weeks to review progress and make adjustments
   a. Parents informed verbally
   b. Written consents obtained for pull-out interventions

In Practice
- Often clinician-initiated
- Informal or on-the-fly discussions
behavior consultation interview form
behavior intervention database

TOOLS
maximizing teacher buy-in

- **LISTEN:**
  - Use active listening skills
  - Discuss what they are already doing and what is already working
  - Recognize when to emphasize what they are doing and when they really want “to know what to do”

- **DO NOT THROW THE KITCHEN SINK AT A STUDENT (AND TEACHER):**
  - Suggest 1-3 key accommodations/interventions
  - If you are not sure what to suggest, gather more data/put your eyes on the student
maximizing teacher buy-in

● **MATCH YOUR SUGGESTIONS:**
  ○ With student and teacher needs
  ○ Recognize your own skills and abilities

● **RECOGNIZE WHEN CONSULTATION IS NOT APPROPRIATE**
  ○ Consider frequency, duration, intensity and SAFETY
  ○ Instructional Coaching vs. Consultation
Don’t Forget!

TEACHERS. ARE. CLIENTS.
Mind the Gap: The Key to Working with Adult Learners

Elena Aguilar
At 8 out of 11 campuses, students with interventions made more or the same growth as students without interventions.
How do we know if we’re missing students?
- 3 lowest students in each class on behavioral measure
- Way to leverage a conversation with teachers

How does this fit into the larger RtI process?
- Bi-weekly/Monthly RtI Core Team meetings
- Behavioral supports included in larger discussions and plan creations
Challenges and limitations

- Clinician Expertise and Experience
- Time Commitment
- Culture Shift
- Consistency

challenges and limitations
How might you meet the teaching team where they are?

CASE STUDIES
Generalizing to other sites...
THANK YOU!
megan.berkowitz@appletreeinstitute.org
ariel.dickinson@appletreeinstitute.org