

Week Six

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As part of my role at The WVBMHTAC Center, I am a trainer of The Pyramid Model. In this position, I train preschool teachers, assistants and stakeholders in the tiers and frameworks that encompass The Pyramid Model. It is based on underlying principles of positive behavioral support that have been changed in a way that is developmentally appropriate for early childhood practices (Rothstein & Rivard 2023). We follow the framework closely to Tier 1 and 2. In Tier 3 we continue to follow the principles, however, we have transitioned to a more developmental model that we shaped from Stuart Ablon and Ross Greene's work. Their work focuses on addressing underlying deficits to reduce challenging behaviors. At our center we assist districts in our state with pyramid team development, training coaches, professional development opportunities, and data collection to ensure the best practice to promote fidelity.

The outcome measures that I currently use most is the Teaching Observation Pyramid Tool (TPOT). The duration of the test is 2 hours, assessing fourteen different key practices. The TPOT is a comprehensive assessment tool that measures the implementation of the Pyramid Model in early childhood classroom, with a focus on teacher practices and classroom environments that support children's socio-emotional development. The interview questions that follow the observation allow the observer to ask the teacher about specific teaching strategies and give the teacher an opportunity to articulate her beliefs about her teaching practices. The tool includes a red flags subscale that includes items for both structural and procedural shortcomings in the observed classroom. Structural items include things like poorly defined center boundaries and open spaces where children can run. Procedural items include things like chaotic transitions, limited interactions between students during activities, and the use of threats and punishments. The researchers of the tool investigated the validity and reliability of the TPOT Evidence of positive relationships with other instruments looking at several factors and for reliability. (Johnston, et.al. 2021). Research in this area continues to point to positive

effects that of having social emotional programs in preschool improve the trajectories of children and prevent long term negative effects (Barbu.et.al. 2013). It could lend itself to being positive for the teacher as she would have fewer challenging behaviors.

The outcome measures that are derived from the use of the TPOT are specific to Pyramid Model practices. For fidelity measures without need for intervention, the teacher would score an eighty percent on the TPOT tool during the assessment. Then depending on the lowest scores (we typically look at the lowest three scores) and then provide individualized coaching (intervention) to the teacher where they create a specific goal based on the areas of concern. The teacher is then given a timeline to implement the goal and then the teacher and one of our team members discuss if the goal is met, needs more work or if the teacher would like to the areas of deficits or if collectively a preschool team in a district is scoring lower on a certain area, then a professional development opportunity (intervention) would be planned.

I believe both formal and informal means of evidence are needed to demonstrate the effectiveness of the pyramid practice interventions. The formal way that our center evaluates progress is the TPOT and behavior data from the department. Our informal ways of evaluating progress are anecdotal records, surveys, implementation, and word of mouth. To me, both formal and informal ways to collect data to determine if your interventions are successful are important for those “quick wins.” Formal data in our center are used for long term program development and system changes.

## References

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