

Creating a Positive BIP and a Crisis Plan

Does your child with a disability also have behavioral needs at school? If so, your child's IEP can be used to address those needs as well as the needs resulting from the disability itself. Adaptations for behavioral needs may include both a Positive Behavior Intervention Plan and a Crisis Plan. The Positive Behavior Intervention Plan is proactive in relationship to your child's behavior while the Crisis Plan reacts to your child's behavior. The plans are distinctly different and should be considered carefully.

What is a Positive Behavior Intervention Plan?

A Positive Behavior Intervention Plan is a proactive plan that includes strategies to help prevent a behavior from occurring. For some students, simple interventions, such as moving a desk in a classroom may make a difference. For others, a more formal plan may be needed to address the behavior.

When a child's behavior is disruptive of his or her learning or that of others, the IEP team is required by federal law to consider the use of positive behavior interventions, strategies, and supports to address the problem. It is important for the team to consider ways to help your child to learn positive behavior as well as academic skills. Remember, this plan should be positive from the child's standpoint also!

Where do you find information to write a Positive Behavior Intervention Plan?

A Positive Behavior Intervention Plan should be put together with information from:

- The student
- The parents
- Teachers or other staff who know the child well
- Evaluation results, such as those from a Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA), which helps determine the reason for the behavior through a review of existing data and observations.

What should a Positive Behavior Intervention Plan include?

A Positive Behavior Intervention Plan should include the specific steps that will be taken to help your child learn new behavior skills. It should address such things as:

- Environmental changes to reduce or eliminate inappropriate behaviors
- Strategies for teaching new skills to replace the problem behaviors
- Skills training to increase the frequency of appropriate behaviors
- Support for the student to use the appropriate behaviors in various settings

What is a Crisis Plan?

A Crisis Plan is a reactive plan that outlines what will happen to the child who violates a school rule and endangers himself, herself, or others. The IEP team should discuss the school discipline policies to determine an appropriate response that fits the child and the nature of his or her disability. A plan based on your child's needs provides appropriate consequences even in a crisis.

What should a Crisis Plan include?

A Crisis Plan lists the steps taken after a problem behavior has happened. It focuses on immediate elimination of the dangerous behavior and outlines an agreed upon approach to stopping the behavior. A Crisis Plan:

- is used only as a last resort or in an emergency
- focuses on immediate elimination of dangerous behavior

- may include controlled procedures such as restraint or time out
- may include the use of local police or school police liaison officer

In general, children with disabilities are expected to follow the same rules and policies as any other child unless the IEP states otherwise. As you address the subject of discipline, be sure that your child is held accountable for behaviors and that consequences take into account his or her disability.

Development of a Positive Behavior Intervention Plan and a Crisis Plan are important additions to the IEP for students who find it difficult to meet standard school discipline expectations, or who, because of their disability, need to be taught appropriate behavior skills.

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PATH Project: 1-800-866-4726



PEN Project: 1-877-762-1435



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