

SWPBS in The Netherlands

In 2009, SWPBIS was introduced in the Netherlands. The Netherlands have approximately 17 million inhabitants and a surface area of 41,543 km². There are 6,431 schools for primary education and 638 schools for secondary education. Many schools for primary education are relatively small (50% of schools have less than 200 students). Freedom of education is a Dutch constitutional right. All schools can decide how to educate their students and they all receive an allocated budget from the Dutch government. At this moment approximately 350 schools are now working with SWPBS.

SWPBIS was introduced by a consortium of partners two universities of applied sciences and youth care organizations. These organizations collaborated in adapting SWPBIS for the Dutch context. Core features were summarized and rephrased to clarify the content, and specific procedures were developed to align SWPBIS to the Dutch educational context. Two main tendencies in implementing SWPBS are visible in the Netherlands: following strict procedures and techniques according to a manual, or using techniques and implementation strategies in a more organic way modifying them to accommodate the needs of specific schools (using SWPBIS as a tool for school development). Some schools are guided by an external PBS coach, other schools form SWPBS learning networks, in which they study PBS issues and exchange information, knowledge and experiences.



Most research done on SWPBS in the Netherlands is practice based. However, a major study is now performed by Windesheim and Radboud University following 70 schools of primary education, measuring implementation fidelity and student outcomes. Results are expected in 2019.

A case study

OBS De Meander is a primary school in Amersfoort (the Netherlands). We started implementing SWPBS in November 2011. The teachers noticed a (negative) behavior change and were looking for ways to change this. This is when we got in contact with an external PBS coach and started to work with SWPBS. First, we chose the values of our school: Safe and Responsible. Second, we discussed where problems emerged inside school. We chose to address the hallway and stairs area, where a lot of human traffic caused many small and bigger problems. We formulated behavioral expectations: what behavior did we want to see or hear. Then, we started introducing SWPBS in the school, without even teach the pupils about what we all wanted to see. We just painted arrows on the stairs in the

weekend. When the children came to school on Monday, they automatically walked on the right side of the stairs, instead walking anywhere they wanted. Next thing we did was to introduce the first five expectations by teaching expectations. We developed lessons and started to give the pupils a smiley when they performed conform expectations. Each week one class was pointed out to be the winner of the week for the school. The picture of that class was showed in the hallway.

Every month, we collected data about behavior incidents for one day. In that way we could analyze what expectation was difficult for the children to follow and at what time of the day. We used this data to develop (preventive) interventions, for example to reteach this specific expectation. At this moment, we have changed our data collection system. Now we collect data every day. We also write down the pupils' name involved in the incident. This enables us to develop preventive interventions for groups or individual pupils.

Parents were involved into the implementation of SWPBS by informing them via the schools' newsletter. Parents are not formal member of the SWPBS leadership team. The leadership teams consists of 2 teachers, the SEN-expert and the principal.



SWPBS in Spain

In Spain, education is compulsory for children between 6 years old to 16 years old. The underlying principles to these laws are educational inclusion and equity, doing so, most of the children with intellectual and developmental disabilities are in mainstream schools. However, these whose needs cannot be attended to these schools, they usually attend the special school.

Regarding problem behavior, either they are engaged by children with and without disabilities, in Catalonia, Spain, different events and initiative have influenced the implementation of Positive Behavior Support.

Since 1970, and specifically in the field of special education, knowledge regarding the Applied Behavior Analysis has been introduced not only to get a better understanding of challenging behavior engaged by children with intellectual disabilities, but also to implement practices according behavioral needs. Indeed, the implementation of this approach was a real step forward on our educational model. This development implied significant changes improving the learning of students and their quality of life. This new perspective served both academic learning as well as how to cope with behavior problems. Follow-up events have contributed to think from a wider perspective when assessing problem behavior. For example, every two years, Ampans organizes a congress on Problem Behavior. This congress emerges as a key event for leadership teams, psychologist and practitioners. Indeed it aims to provide those key aspects that may guide professionals and researchers to get a better understanding of the behavior. Also, it let professionals share and discuss practices on behavior management. Moreover, from a universal level of intervention and prevention, in November 2017 the IV Congress has been hold with a special emphasis on Multi-Tiered Systems of Support integrating the behavioral and social components (Positive Behavior Support) and the academic competences (Response to Intervention).

As a result, some mainstream and special schools are now implementing some aspects or key features of School Wide Positive Behavior Support. That is, they are not only implementing Tier 1 of supports, but also tier 2 and 3 within the continuum of supports. Although the understanding of problem behavior and practices to prevent them have been changing over the last years, these experiences lack on scope, validity and fidelity when implementing SWPBS, for example.

