



Promoting Social Emotional Competence in California's Young Children

# CA TEACHING PYRAMID FRAMEWORK Information Sheet

10/21/2025

## What is CA TEACHING PYRAMID FRAMEWORK?

The CA TEACHING PYRAMID FRAMEWORK is a tiered approach of evidence-based practices intended to put an emphasis on

- △ **Promoting** healthy social-emotional development for all children through the two foundational tiers (Nurturing and Responsive Relationships and High-Quality Supportive Environments)
- △ **Preventing** challenging behaviors (Targeted Social-Emotional Supports), and
- △ **Intervening** to address individual problematic behaviors through intensive interventions (Positive Behavior Support).



This is all built on an effective workforce to deliver these strategies. The CA TEACHING PYRAMID FRAMEWORK draws from Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) and was originally developed as a national initiative. CA CSEFEL\* has been operating since 2009.

The CA TEACHING PYRAMID FRAMEWORK was designed to guide learning experiences of early childhood professionals during training sessions, facilitate reflective practice through classroom-based coaching, and ensure sustainability by leadership team development. The CA TEACHING PYRAMID FRAMEWORK promotes belonging for all infants, toddlers, preschool-age, and school-age children. When the CA TEACHING PYRAMID FRAMEWORK is implemented with fidelity, children will demonstrate greater social competence, increased emotional literacy, and fewer behavior challenges.

## What is Social-Emotional Development?

Social-Emotional development<sup>i</sup> is the developmentally and culturally appropriate ability to:

- △ Experience, express, and manage emotions
- △ Establish positive and rewarding relationships with others

## What are the components for implementing the CA TEACHING PYRAMID Framework?

The power of the CA TEACHING PYRAMID FRAMEWORK is most clearly seen when it is implemented program-wide across an entire site, district, or agency. There are six recommended components for achieving a program-wide approach:

- △ Planning by a group of leaders (Leadership Team, Implementation Team)
- △ Training for all program staff in a systematic way
- △ Technical assistance and coaching to support implementation to fidelity
- △ Incorporation of family engagement to strengthen the link between home and school
- △ Identification and training of those responsible for the development of positive behavior support plans
- △ Follow-up for sustainability after training ends

For a description of these components, please visit

<http://cainclusion.org/teachingpyramid/professional-development-components/>

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### Evidence-based Facts

Young children with challenging behavior are more likely to experience expulsion from preschool programs and experience expulsion at 3.2 times the average rate of K-12 students (Gilliam, 2005).

A randomized study<sup>ii</sup> conducted within public school classrooms enrolling preschool children with disabilities in Florida and Tennessee found that:

- Δ Teachers in the experimental condition who received training and coaching demonstrated increases in practices for promoting social emotional development and addressing challenging behavior.
- Δ Children enrolled in the experimental classrooms implementing the Pyramid [Framework] demonstrated statistically significant improvements in their social skills.
- Δ “Target” children in the experimental classrooms had statistically significant reductions in problem behavior

### CA TEACHING PYRAMID FRAMEWORK In Action

- Δ The CA TEACHING PYRAMID FRAMEWORK is being implemented in California.
  - There are more than 48 counties with some level of program implementation.
  - There are two levels of program implementation recognized by CA CSEFEL:
    - **Implementation Sites** are using the approach and are committed to implementing all components of the framework.
    - **Partner Sites** are practicing sites that are interested in implementing the framework with fidelity, sharing data, and are collaborating with CA CSEFEL to share its practices and support state-wide implementation.
- Δ 25 Partner Sites in 21 counties across the state are implementing all the components.
- Δ Using the Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool (TPOT), Partner Sites classrooms were implementing with empirical fidelity (a Key Practices subscale over 70%).
- Δ A state-wide Leadership Team meets quarterly to provide oversight and support regional and cross-agency collaboration regarding children’s social-emotional development.

### CA TEACHING PYRAMID FRAMEWORK Training and Professional Development

- Δ An Overview of the CA TEACHING PYRAMID is available as a full-day workshop or an online module through [California Early Childhood Online](#).
- Δ Professional development packages with the recommended components for home visitors, infant/toddler, preschool, for family child care providers, transitional kindergarten, and kindergarten-2<sup>nd</sup> grade are available from CA CSEFEL through [teachingpyramid@wested.org](mailto:teachingpyramid@wested.org)
  - CA CSEFEL has 18 core trainers and coaches on staff at WestEd.
- Δ There is a network of CA CSEFEL authorized trainers and coaches for the CA TEACHING PYRAMID FOR PRESCHOOL and/or INFANT/TODDLER in various counties.
  - Nearly 330 coaches
  - Over 230 trainers
- Δ There are a small number of CA CSEFEL authorized trainers and reflective practice cadre facilitators for the CA TEACHING PYRAMID FOR EARLY ELEMENTARY in various counties.
  - CA CSEFEL has 10 core trainers and facilitators on staff at WestEd

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<sup>i</sup> California Department of Education. *California Infant/Toddler Learning and Development Foundations*. Sacramento: California Department of Education, 2009.

<sup>ii</sup> [Pyramid Research](#)