



Promoting Social Emotional Competence in California's Young Children

CA CSEFEL TEACHING PYRAMID ENHANCEMENTS



CA CSEFEL TEACHING PYRAMID

The TEACHING PYRAMID is the name used by CA CSEFEL (California Collaborative on the Social Emotional Foundations for Early Learning) to describe the training and technical assistance for the approach developed by the national Center on the Social Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL). The *Teaching Pyramid* is a systematic framework of evidence-based, user-friendly practices to help early childhood educators meet the needs of the growing number of children with challenging behaviors and mental health concerns. The *Teaching Pyramid* tiered approach incorporates practices and strategies—including early childhood Positive Behavior Support—to promote healthy social-emotional development, support children's appropriate behavior, prevent challenging behavior, and address problematic behavior. This document explains the history, development, and adaptations that make up the *CA CSEFEL Teaching Pyramid*.

History of CSEFEL in California

- △ The TEACHING PYRAMID initially came to California through the Office of Head Start and Office of Child Care, Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families. Training and information sessions were held by the regional Head Start T & TA agency
- △ National CSEFEL and WestEd jointly trained sites in three counties (2005-2007) on the Teaching Pyramid preschool modules as part of the First 5 California Special Needs Project
- △ WestEd continued training on the Teaching Pyramid preschool and infant/toddler modules, adding coaching between modules, convening a leadership team that met during the training period, and making modifications based on training and coaching experiences. The modifications have contributed to the California adaptations. WestEd is currently leading the statewide activities.
- △ Head Start continued to share National CSEFEL Teaching Pyramid information and ideas through training and conferences.
- △ Partnership with the National Center at the state level started in 2009 with a broad interagency leadership team convened by the Child Development Division, California Department of Education. The state leadership team continues to meet, though the national partnership ended in 2012.
- △ WestEd shared enhancements and modifications with the statewide leadership team and made additional adaptations in partnership with the California Department of Education, Child Development Division.

- △ The Center for Excellence in Child Development, UC Davis led the adaptation of CSEFEL Teaching Pyramid modules for use with family child care providers. Since 2011, locally-held trainings have been offered to providers throughout the state.

California Enhancements

- △ Created a **professional development process** that includes
 - One-day **trainings** for the four distinct modules **spread out over several months**
 - **Module 1:** Building Relationships and Creating Supportive Environments (sometimes split into two separate days of **Module 1a:** Relationships and **Module 1b:** Environments)
 - **Module 2:** Social-Emotional Teaching Strategies
 - **Module 3a:** Intensive Individualized Intervention – Identifying the Function behind Behavior
 - **Module 3b:** Intensive Individualized Intervention – Developing a Plan of Action
 - A **Leadership Team** that meets throughout the training process and works on sustainability activities including revision of policies and procedures and planning for implementation
 - **External** and **internal coaching** following every module session to support implementation/practical application and help teaching staff understand the conceptual underpinnings behind many of the strategies
 - **Community of Practice** opportunities online for programs to continue to share experiences and deepen their implementation
 - Ongoing activities to increase sustainability including partner **implementation sites** and **Going Deeper** training sessions
- △ The materials are aligned with **California Early Learning & Development System** and include items and references from various documents in that system such as the Foundations, Desired Results Developmental Profile, and Curriculum Frameworks.
- △ During the module training and coaching sessions, there is an increased focus on **self-reflection** and the **teacher’s emotional experience**, including cultural beliefs, values, and perceptions.
- △ **Early childhood mental health concepts** are intentionally included, particularly the parallel process, attending to the emotional experience of the child, the internal working model of the self, secure attachment, and co-regulation
- △ Replaced the strategy of “**praise**” with that of **positive, descriptive acknowledgement (PDA)** to promote intrinsic motivation and self-understanding in children, in other words, giving the “credit” to children for their efforts, attempts, and accomplishments
- △ Continued to expand and develop the concept of **Expectations** as the “why” or the reason behind classroom rules, which are examples of what to do to meet the expectation

CA CSEFEL TEACHING PYRAMID ADAPTATIONS AND ENHANCEMENTS

- △ Educate about and link research on **brain development** as a way of understanding the importance of the concepts and strategies
- △ Forms and materials have been revised and streamlined to make them build on one another and be **more teacher-friendly** (for example, changed the Behavior Incident report to a Behavior Observation Report which also replaced separate behavior observation cards)
- △ **Removed references** to Time-Out and physical restraint
- △ Expanded problem-solving steps to include a specific **systematic conflict resolution** process in **Module 2**
- △ Revised the content of **Module 3b** to focus on teacher use of the **Behavior Observation Report (BOR)** form for support planning, including practice with an adapted version of the **Routines Based Support Guide**
- △ **Moved** the case studies and development of **behavior support plans** to a separate training session (called the **TOP OF THE PYRAMID**) which is targeted to leadership teams and professionals involved in the development of the plans
- △ The focus is on understanding the concepts behind the strategies which will increase administrators' and teachers' **confidence and competence** in promoting social emotional development and addressing challenging behavior

Currently, the *CA CSEFEL Teaching Pyramid* training and technical assistance professional development packages being used across California include:

- △ A **Preschool** version (for children ages 2^{1/2} years through 5 years),
- △ An **Infant/Toddler** version (for children birth to age three years),
- △ A **Family Coaching for Early Intervention** version (for children with special needs birth to age three years served by early intervention programs), and
- △ A **Family Child Care** version (with a focus on mixed ages)
- △ An **Kindergarten/Early Primary** version (Currently focused on Kindergarten and Transitional Kindergarten)

There are also two sets of materials to use when conducting educational support groups for family members:

- △ TEACHING PYRAMID FOR FAMILIES (for programs implementing CA CSEFEL TEACHING PYRAMID) and
- △ A California adaptation of the POSITIVE SOLUTIONS FOR FAMILIES series.

CDE has tasked WestEd with creating an **authorization** process for trainers and coaches that will support fidelity to this CA CSEFEL Teaching Pyramid process for the Preschool version. For more information, please contact teachingpyramid@wested.org