

Behavior Intervention or Crisis Plans

Does your child with a disability also have **behavioral or mental health challenges** at school? If so, your child's Individualized Education Program (IEP) can be used to address those needs. A positive behavior intervention plan is **proactive or preventative in responding to your child's behavior**. A crisis plan is an action plan developed for how to respond to support a child at specific times when he or she may be at risk of harm to self or others related to mental health or behavioral health needs. The plans are distinctly different and important to consider when developing appropriate educational plans for children with emotional or behavioral disabilities.

What is a positive behavior intervention plan?

A positive behavior intervention plan is a written **proactive plan** that is part of a child's IEP and includes strategies to help reduce or prevent the likelihood of challenging behaviors 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 your 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 **learn positive behavioral skills** as well as academic skills.

A positive behavior intervention plan is developed by the IEP team with information gathered from the:

- Student
- Parents
- Teachers
- Other staff who know the student well
- Updated evaluation information including a Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA), which determines the reason for a behavior through collecting, analyzing, and reviewing data and observations.

What should a positive behavior intervention plan include?

A positive behavior intervention plan should include specific steps to help your child learn new behavioral skills. It should include:

- **Environmental changes** to reduce or eliminate challenging behaviors
- **Strategies for teaching new skills** to replace challenging behaviors
- **Skills training** to increase student understanding of positive behavior strategies
- **Support** that will be provided to help the student practice the new strategies across different settings within the school

What is a crisis plan?

Many children have behavioral intervention plans in their IEPs; some children also benefit from a crisis plan as part of their IEP. A crisis plan **is an action plan that is needed for times when a student may be at risk of harm to self or others**. A child's crisis plan should be developed by individuals knowledgeable about the child and include someone trained in mental health crisis response. Crisis plans should be individualized and reviewed regularly by the IEP team. When developing a crisis plan, the IEP team should consider any school or district policies and procedures for responding to a student who is experiencing a crisis. In some cases, a child's crisis behaviors may be viewed as violation of the school's discipline policy. In these instances, the IEP team should plan on discussing whether the child's crisis may trigger a school disciplinary action.

What should a crisis plan include?

A crisis plan defines what a child's crisis looks like. It includes clear steps the school will take to support your child during a crisis including knowing who to contact for assistance, how to work together with the youth during the crisis, and how to know when the crisis is over. A crisis plan also identifies when parents should be notified.

A crisis plan:

- Is used when the student may be at risk of harm to self or others
- Focuses on **immediate response to the risk of the student's harmful behaviors or actions**
- Can include support from a trained **mental health crisis response provider**
- Is more effective when developed using positive strategies and with the input and support of the student

The development of a positive behavior intervention plan or a crisis plan is an important addition to the IEP for students who experience mental health or behavior challenges at school. For additional information, parents can learn more by visiting:

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Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports

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