

Readiness Tool: Positive Action (PA)

During program selection, it is important to research and compare possible evidence-based prevention programs to ensure that you are selecting the program that is the best fit for your community and available resources. This tool is intended to help you plan for the implementation of an evidence-based program with a commitment to quality and long-term sustainability.

Program Selection

Is Positive Action a good fit for your community? While researching and comparing possible programs, consider the following information to determine if Positive Action is the best fit for the community.

1. *Are these the risk and protective factors identified and/or prioritized by your community?*

Positive Action Targeted Risk Factors

- Antisocial/Aggressive Behavior
- Bullies Others
- Early initiation of antisocial behavior
- Early initiation of drug use
- Favorable attitudes towards antisocial behavior
- Favorable attitude towards drug use
- Physical Violence
- Rebelliousness
- Substance use
- Victim of bullying
- Interaction with antisocial peers
- Peer substance use
- Low school commitment and attachment
- Poor academic performance
- Repeated a grade

Positive Action Targeted Protective Factors

- Academic self-efficacy
- Clear standards for behavior
- Exercise
- Perceived risk of drug use
- Problem solving skills
- Prosocial behavior
- Prosocial involvement
- Refusal skills
- Rewards for prosocial involvement
- Skills for social interaction
- Interaction with prosocial peers
- Attachment to parents
- Opportunities for prosocial involvement with parents
- Rewards for prosocial involvement with parents
- Opportunities for prosocial involvement with education
- Rewards for prosocial involvement in schools

2. *Is Positive Action appropriate for the population you plan to target?*

- **Positive Action is a universal school-based program consisting of several different curriculums. The Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD) supports the most evidence-based curriculum (Pre-K through grade 8) and is shown to increase**

positive behavior, reduce negative behavior, and improve social and emotional learning and school climate. Positive Action is designed to be implemented school wide.

3. *What are the outcomes you intend to change in your targeted population?*

Positive Action has been shown to have the following outcomes:

SHORT-TERM

- Improved grades and test scores
- Improved self-esteem and self-efficacy
- Improved health behaviors

LONG-TERM

- Reduced antisocial behavior
- Reduced substance abuse
- Improved school performance
- Reduced disciplinary problems
- Improved Social-Emotional skills

Implementation Planning Steps

4. *Is it feasible for you to invest in the following key elements **BEFORE** implementing Positive Action?*

- **Location:** Decide on the specific school in which Positive Action will be implemented. The program was designed to be implemented school wide in all grade levels. Positive Action can be implemented in an after school setting, however the most effective setting to implement the program is in a school environment.
- **Teacher Buy In:** Education for teachers as to what the program is, how it will be implemented, what the expectations are for implementing, and what type of support they will receive. This is extremely important and should occur BEFORE teacher training days.
- **Training days:** It is vital to train all teachers who will be implementing, administrators, and support staff within the school. While web-based training is available, PCCD requires or strongly recommends face-to-face training.
- **Administrative Support:** School administrators should plan to support the teachers implementing Positive Action. At minimum, administrators should be included in the Positive Action training, start the school year with a Positive Action “kick-off” day or assembly, provide additional prep time for Positive Action lessons, and schedule regular Positive Action meetings to discuss how implementation is going.
- **Curriculum:** Your Positive Action Program should fit your needs and goals, by selecting the tools appropriate for the children you are serving in the school. All Positive Action tools are based on the same foundational content and establish common vocabulary. You can choose from the following Positive Action tools:
 - Elementary and Middle School Classroom Kit-for each teacher and 30 students. Scripted lessons take 15-20 minutes.

- Climate Development Kit-for leaders to engage everyone in the school/site in developing a positive school climate.
- Counselor Kit-for counselors, therapists, social workers, school psychologists, and others.
- Family and Parenting Classes Kit-to teach families and parents how to use the Family Kit at home.
- Family Kit-for families to use at home.
- Community Kit-to engage the community members and various community groups.
- Drug Education Supplement Kit-to supplement the regular curriculum or stand alone.
- Conflict Resolution Supplement Kit-to supplement the regular curriculum or stand alone.
- Bullying Prevention Supplement Kit-to supplement the regular curriculum or stand alone.
- Refresher Kits-to replace consumables for ALL Positive Action tools.

Positive Action curriculum materials can be purchased at <https://www.positiveaction.net/>.

- **Budget:** A budget for annual expenses beyond the initial training and purchase of materials should be developed and incorporated into the school/district annual budget. The following should be considered in your yearly budget

- Start-up curriculum
- Refresher kits
- Initial training
- On-going training for new staff/Refresher training
- Copying costs after year 1

Current cost information can be accessed here: <https://www.positiveaction.net/program-training>

Please contact EPIS to acquire information about access to Pennsylvania in-state training and/or to coordinate training.

- **Data collection and analysis plan:** Evaluation is an important step of any prevention program. PCCD grantees are required to use pre/post measures and fidelity measures to track process and outcomes measures. PCCD grantees will need to determine the following:
 - When will students receiving Positive Action complete evaluations (pre and post surveys)?
 - Who will be responsible for assigning student survey identification numbers for confidentiality as well as distributing, administering, and collecting the surveys?
 - Who will be responsible for data entry?
 - Who will be responsible for analyzing and reporting the data results?

Resources Available to help plan for Positive Action:

<https://epis.psu.edu/ebp/pa>

Implementation Steps

5. *Can these expectations for quality and dosage be met within the existing structure and with the existing resources?*
 - In-person Training Workshop (minimum of 6 hours depending on size of training group)
 - Appropriate time provided for lesson preparation
 - Lesson time of at least 15-20 minutes
 - Appropriate time for student pre/post surveys as well as teacher unit surveys
 - Lessons taught at least two times per week throughout the school year, completing all six units within the grade level curriculum.
 - **Grades Pre-K to 6** curriculum consists of 140 lessons (lessons are 15-20 minutes)
 - **Grades 7-8** curriculum consists of 82 lessons (lessons are 15-20 minutes)
 - Plan to inform parents about Positive Action (Kickoff event, parent letter, school newsletters, open houses, assemblies, conferences, press releases, etc.)

Steps for Assessing Program Impact

6. *Does the school have the capacity to collect outcomes data and to monitor program fidelity?*

Data collection:

- Pre student surveys completed by students before Positive Action lessons are implemented.
- Post student surveys completed by students at the end of the program.
- It is recommended that a person other than the classroom teacher administer the Positive Action student survey. It is also recommended that two adults administer the surveys to children in grades Pre-K-2 to help monitor the students. This should be taken into consideration when planning the data collection process.

Data entry/analysis and PCCD reporting: EPIS has developed a data tool. PCCD grantees are required to use this tool for quarterly reporting. The data tool is free to use and you can contact EPIS for help to learn how to use this tool or visit: <https://epis.psu.edu/ebp/pa>. Once the pre/post surveys have been administered and collected, it is important to analyze and understand the data in order to highlight program successes. You will need the following assignments:

- A person(s) designated to take completed student surveys and enter them into the Positive Action Spreadsheet for Outcomes Analysis and PCCD Quarterly Reporting Tool.
- A person(s) designated to complete quarterly reporting requirements for PCCD.
- A person(s) designated to share Outcomes data and successes with stakeholders at least twice per year.

Fidelity monitoring:

- Teachers implementing the Positive Action Program should complete a Unit Implementation Report at the end of each unit. **All** teachers completing the Unit Implementation Report should have completed Positive Action training. A predetermined process for providing feedback to the teachers should be developed to provide continuous quality program improvement.
- School Principals/Administrators should plan for group time to discuss implementation challenges and successes as part of regular monthly staff meetings and/or grade level teacher planning meetings.

Steps for Sustainability

7. *Can funds/resources be identified to sustain key implementation elements of the program beyond the initial seed funding? Make sure to carefully consider and designate those responsible for sustainability planning and securing funds/resources.*

- Will Positive Action program supply costs and refresher kits be built into the school/district annual budget?
- Will there be funds to provide annual Positive Action training to teachers?
- Will there be funds to provide training for new teachers?
- Will there be capacity to purchase/print evaluation tools and analyze outcomes data?
- Will there be capacity to continue to support staff time to conduct observations and monitor implementation quality?
- Use EPIS' Sustainability Checklist as a resource: <https://epis.psu.edu/sustainability>

Addressing Challenges during Implementation

8. *By carefully pre-planning Positive Action implementation you will be addressing most of the common barriers encountered, however, it is still important to develop a plan for addressing day-to-day challenges before starting Positive Action.*
- Who will be the main point of contact in each school when a teacher has question related to Positive Action?
 - Who will be the contact person with the Positive Action consultant or trainer to relay questions and answers to teachers and staff?
 - How will school administrators and/or coaches address teachers who are struggling with implementation? What resources are available to these teachers?
 - Consider joining EPIS' Positive Action Networking group.

Additional assistance and resources for implementing Positive Action can be obtained by contacting EPIS at 814-863-2568 or by visiting <https://epis.psu.edu/ebp/pa> or email epis@psu.edu



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