



### **What is Pyramid Model for social and emotional competence:**

The early years of life present a unique opportunity to lay the foundation for healthy development. It is a time of great potential and of great vulnerability. The first years are shaped by the relationships children have with their caregivers.

Research demonstrates that children who experience quality early relationships do better in early learning and K-12 settings and have a lower risk of learning difficulties, behavioral problems, juvenile delinquency and teen pregnancy.

Pyramid Model is an evidence based prevention/intervention framework that promotes healthy social and emotional development and prevents challenging behaviors by supporting positive relationships, creating engaging environments, providing concrete teaching strategies, and if/when needed creating individualized interventions for children.

The Pyramid Model framework was developed by the Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL) - a national center focused on promoting the social and emotional development and school readiness of children birth to age 5.

Pyramid Model is a relationship-based framework that focuses on evidence-based practices implemented in a systems change mode. Pyramid Model is professional development and it improves the quality of care for infants and young children. Pyramid Model implementation requires training, coaching, administrative commitment, partnership with families, and data based decision making.

### **State implementation of the Pyramid Model:**

In March of 2009, the State of Wisconsin was awarded a three year training and technical assistance grant from the Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL). The state implementation of the Pyramid Model is guided by the Wisconsin Pyramid Model state leadership team. Wisconsin Pyramid Model state leadership team is a collaborative cross-disciplinary team of professionals that includes representatives from child care, special education (Part C and B), Head Start, family support, parent education, higher education, infant mental health, home visiting, and child abuse prevention.

Research demonstrates that the most effective way to change practice and support social and emotional development of children is through the program –wide adoption of the Pyramid Model. Program-wide adoption of the Pyramid Model refers to a systemic effort within a program for Pyramid Model implementation fidelity.

Sites for program wide implementation of the Pyramid Model are selected through a rigorous application process. Currently, there are 26 programs in different geographical locations in Wisconsin

working on the program-wide implementation of the Pyramid Model. Three to five new sites are expected to join the community of program-wide implementers every year.

**Successes and benefits of the implementation:**

Data collection is one of the essential components of the Pyramid Model implementation. Program wide implementation sites are collecting data on program/teacher/child levels.

Data demonstrate concrete, measureable improvements in the overall program functioning, significant reduction in “red flags” in teachers’ behavior, improvements in promoting children’s engagement, communication with families and family involvement, supporting children with persistent problem behavior, and strategies to build collaborative teaming relationships with colleagues. Programs also report that implementation of the Pyramid Model relates to higher rating on the YoungStar- WI quality rating and improvement system.

Benefits of the Pyramid Model program wide implementation:

*Program-level outcomes:*

- Decreased administrative and teacher time spent addressing challenging behavior.
- Increased satisfaction of program staff and families
- Clearly articulated and implemented policies and procedures
- Stronger collaboration with mental health providers

*Teacher-level outcomes:*

- Increased teacher competence and confidence in supporting development
- More intentional teaching and purposeful support of children’s emotional development
- Decreased staff turnover

*Child-level outcomes:*

- Elimination of time out resulting in more learning opportunity
- Increases in social skills
- Decreases in challenging behavior

The Pyramid Model is a way to support positive and sensitive relationships and to promote optimal well-being for all children. It provides parents and professionals with evidence-based relationship-based practices that ensure a healthy foundation for future success.



