

ILLINOIS PRESCHOOL DEVELOPMENT GRANT - EXPANSION (PDG-E) Pyramid Model Partnership Pilot Evaluation

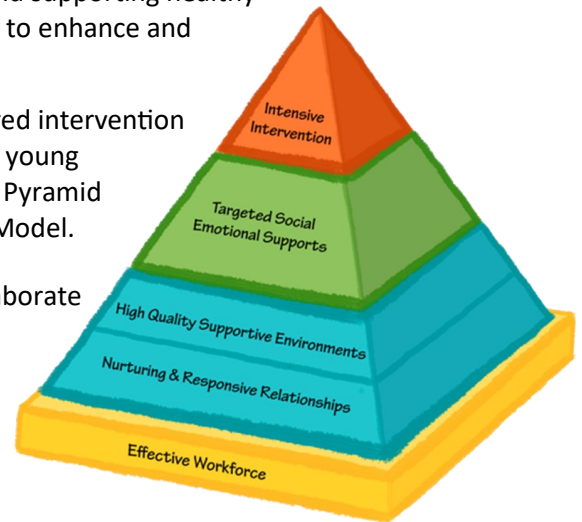
Evaluation Brief - Volume 1, July 2019

Illinois PDG-E and the Pyramid Model

In 2017, the **Governor’s Office of Early Childhood Development (GOECD)**, in partnership with the **Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE)**, received supplemental funding as part of the **Preschool Development Grant - Expansion (PDG-E)**. Through the PDG-E, Illinois is promoting and supporting healthy social emotional growth for all children ages birth to five, and working to enhance and expand the quality of preschool education in high-need communities.

To help achieve this goal, the state selected the **Pyramid Model**, a tiered intervention framework for supporting social emotional competence in infants and young children, as its evidence-based approach. Visit the National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations (NCPMI) for more information about the Pyramid Model.

Illinois contracted with the **Pyramid Model Consortium (PMC)** to collaborate on implementing the project. PMC is a non-profit organization that promotes high fidelity use of the Pyramid Model through in-person training sessions, online ePyramid training modules, program/process coach supports and guidance, and access to resources.



The Pyramid Model Pilot Sites

In spring 2018, 22 PDG-E preschool programs self-selected to engage as pilot sites. As a first step, each program identified a **Pyramid Model Leadership Team** and began training and early work toward implementation. Each program has also been receiving ongoing, individualized support from a state-level **Pyramid Model Process Coach** to guide program-wide planning and fidelity to the model. In spring 2019, four additional programs joined the initiative, bringing the total to 26 programs.

| 22 Pilot Sites — Spring 2018 Start-up | |
|---|---------------------------------|
| Addison School Dist 4 | Kid’s Hope United Northern Reg |
| Aurora East USD 131 | Lansing SD 158 |
| Cahokia CUSD 187 | Lessie Bates Davis Neighborhood |
| Children’s Ctr Cicero-Ber | McLean County USD 5 |
| Children’s Home and Aid Society | Metropolitan Family Services |
| CUSD 300 | North Chicago SD 187 |
| Decatur SD 61 | Rock Island ROE |
| Dolton SD 148 | Rockford School Dist 205 |
| Dolton SD 149 | SD U-46 |
| Freeburg CCSD 70 | Valley View CUSD 365U |
| Harvey SD 152 | West Chicago ESD 33 |
| Additional Pilot Sites — Spring 2019 Start-up | |
| Aurora West USD 129 | Collinsville C U Sch Dist 10 |
| Berwyn South SD 100 | Mount Vernon SD 80 |

Evaluation Activities



Professional Development Feedback—After each event, participants rate their progress toward the learning objectives, the relevance and usefulness of the event, and provide suggestions for future events.

Process Coach Logs—Process Coaches use an online system to document each substantive coaching contact with their programs including participant roles, focus of contact, and planned next steps.

Early Childhood Benchmarks of Quality (EC-BOQ)¹—The EC-BOQ is a measure of program-wide Pyramid Model implementation used by Leadership Teams to chart their progress and to develop action plans. EC-BOQ ratings are shared with the evaluation team.

Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool (TPOT)²—The TPOT is a measure of Pyramid Model implementation fidelity in the classroom. Teachers are observed by personnel trained in TPOT administration, and de-identified results are shared with the evaluation team.

Leadership Team Survey—Each team among the original 22 pilots sites completed an online survey approximately six months into the project. The purpose was to assess early implementation progress, successes, challenges, and needs going forward.

¹Early Childhood Program-Wide PBS Benchmarks of Quality, version 2.0, Lise Fox, Mary Louise Hemmeter, Susan Jack, and Denise Perez Binder (2017).

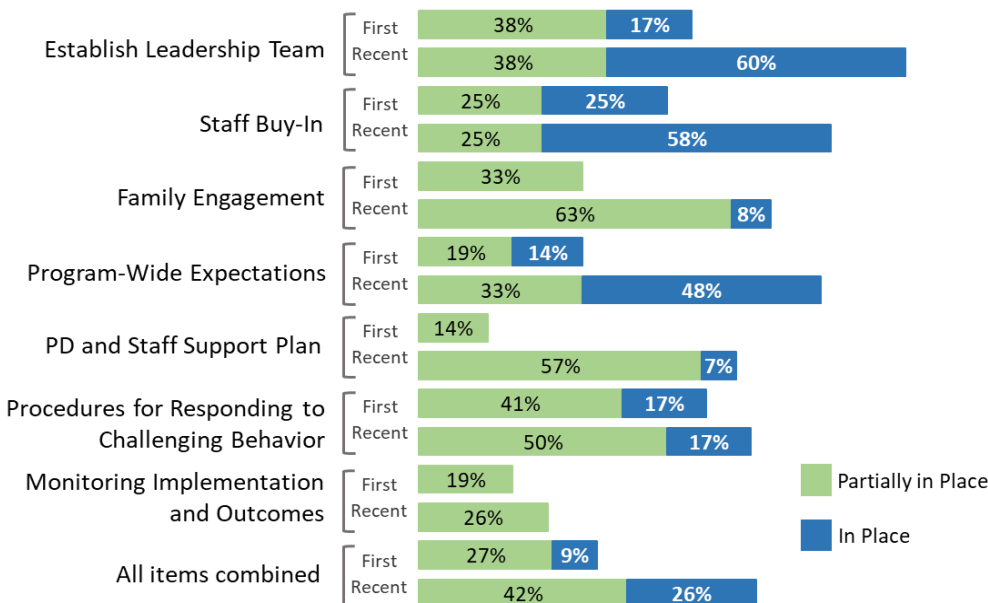
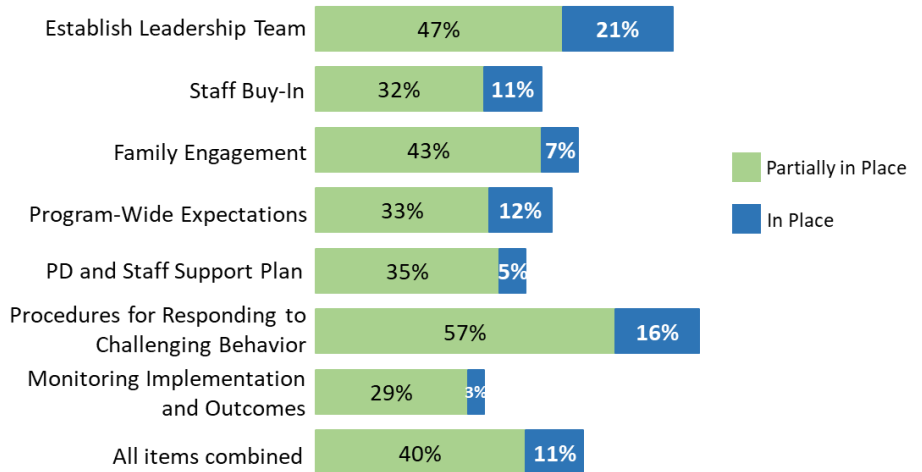
²Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool (TPOT) for Preschool Classrooms, Lise Fox, Mary Louise Hemmeter, and Patricia Snyder (2010).

Program-wide Implementation: EC Benchmarks of Quality

A STRONG START

Initial EC-BOQ results from 22 pilot programs* indicated, on average, all Critical Elements at least “partially in place”.

*n=22 pilot programs with EC-BOQ ratings provided for the evaluation. The time of the initial EC-BOQ ranged from May 2018 to May 2019.

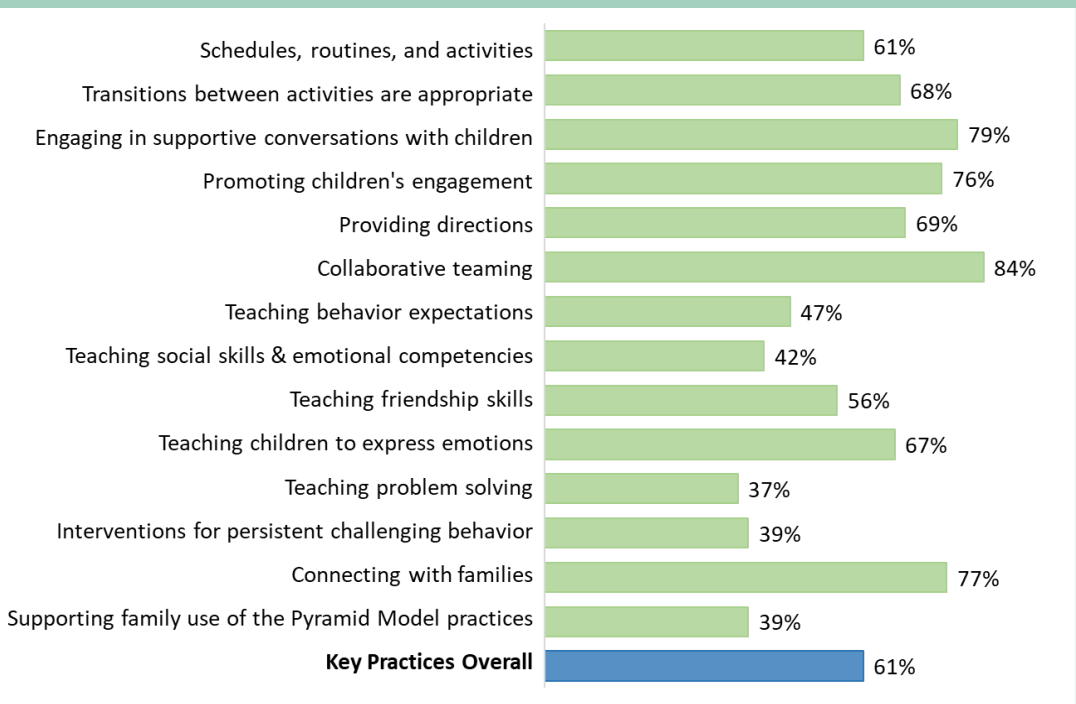


GROWTH OVER TIME

EC-BOQ results from 6 pilot programs with ratings at two points in time* suggest progress was made across all Critical Elements over the time span.

*n=6 pilot programs with more than one EC-BOQ rating provided for the evaluation. The time span between the first and most recent EC-BOQ ranged from 3 months to 11 months (most spanned 6 months or more).

Classroom Implementation: TPOT Results



MOVING TOWARD FIDELITY

The most recent TPOT results for 36 teachers* show teachers, on average, reaching or nearing fidelity (80%) on some key practices. The group scored an average of 61% overall on the assessment.

*n=36 teachers from 25 pilot programs. The timeframe of the "most recent" TPOTs ranged from September 2018 to May 2019. Two-thirds of the scores were from 2018.

Potential Benefits, and Moving Forward

LEADERSHIP TEAM FEEDBACK

Leadership Team members* believe in the potential of the Pyramid Model pilot to improve social emotional outcomes for children, and to reduce suspension and expulsion.

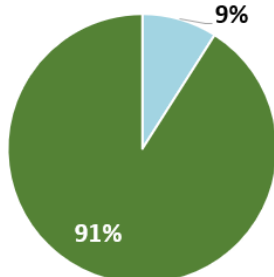
Leadership Team members indicated what they need most to keep moving forward, which included: *additional Pyramid Model practices training, assistance building internal coach capacity, guidance on blending funding to support their work, and continued access to statewide training events.*

Relatedly, some of the challenges noted mid-year by team members included staff coverage and the resources needed to send all staff to training, as well as time constraints related to training and classroom-based coaching.

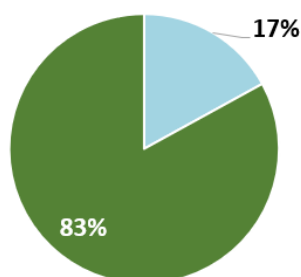
*Source: Leadership Team Survey, December 2018; n=23.



Potential to Improve Social Emotional Outcomes for Children



Potential to Reduce Suspensions and Expulsions



Legend: Agree (light blue), Strongly Agree (dark green)

"The greatest strength of this pilot is providing strategies to staff in support of children's social emotional needs."

"As an expansion program we have embraced the Pyramid Model and are using it throughout the program. Social Emotional learning has been a critical focus for us."

~ Leadership Team Members

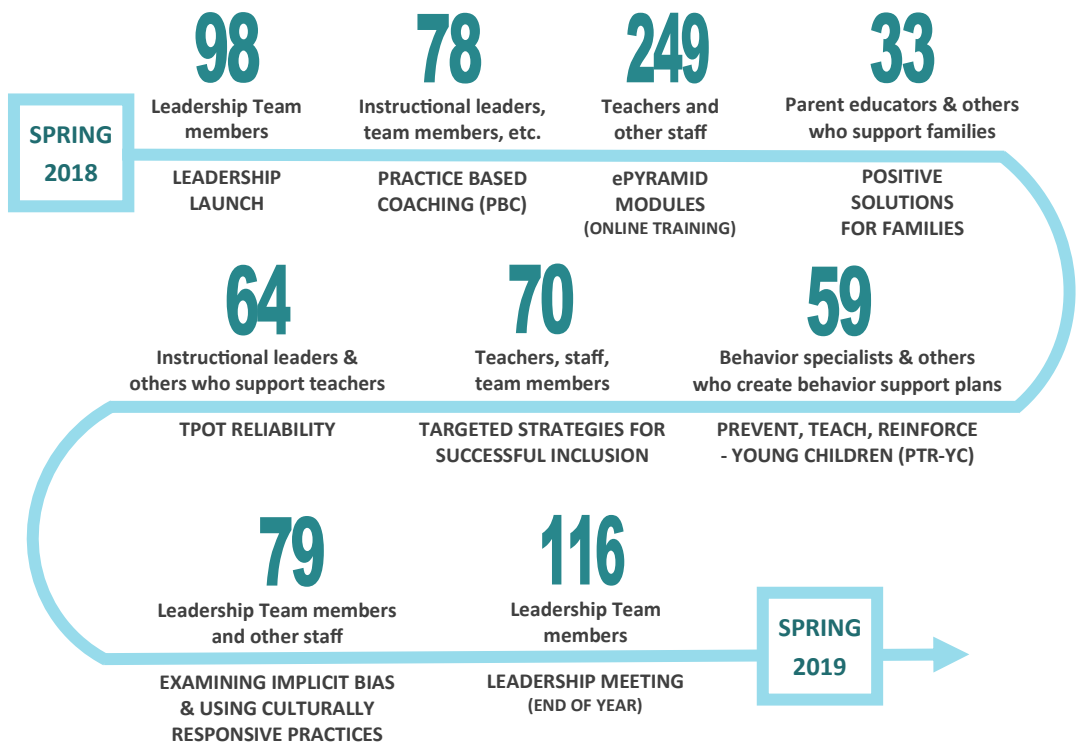
Professional Development and Ongoing Support



TRAINING SESSIONS

To prepare programs for implementing the Pyramid Model, staff participated in high-quality training events provided by the Pyramid Model Consortium.

*Participation numbers reflect May 2018 - April 2019 events. Numbers were derived from event sign-in sheets.



PROCESS COACH LOG 'STATS'

- During the 2018-2019 school year, Process Coaches documented a combined total of **231 contacts across 24 of the 26 pilot programs**. Among the 22 'original' pilot sites, 21 programs had documented coaching events.
- Process Coaches were most likely to work with their programs to **provide support to Leadership Teams (73%)**, followed by **Internal Coach support (27%)**.
- Among the 22 original pilot programs, the **number of coach contacts ranged from 1 to 23. On average, programs worked with their coaches 11 times.**

Leadership Team members have been very appreciative of support they've received from their Process Coaches, and have indicated the importance of coaching to their overall progress. As described by one team member:

"Training opportunities have been great, and the Pyramid Model Process Coach has been instrumental in developing our action plan."

ONGOING SUPPORT

To extend and sustain progress toward implementation, all programs receive ongoing individualized support from an experienced Process Coach.

*Process Coach Log stats reflect events logged from August 2018 through June 2019.

What's Next for the Illinois PDG-E Pyramid Model Evaluation



As the **PDG-E Pyramid Model Partnership Pilot** project continues through December 2019, the evaluation activities currently underway to document project events and outcomes will also continue. Going forward, results on the EC-BOQ and TPTOT in particular will allow for an assessment of progress over time with respect to program- and classroom-level implementation fidelity.

Additional evaluation activities will be conducted during fall 2019, and a full evaluation report will be produced at the end of the grant period.

For more information about the Illinois PDG-E Grant and Pyramid Model expansion across the state, please visit:

<https://www2.illinois.gov/sites/OECD/Pages/Pyramid-Model.aspx>. This Evaluation Brief was prepared by Evaluation Partners, LLC.