



Illinois State Board of Education



*Behavior
Assessment
Training*

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**Illinois
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Overview of Implicit Bias

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Agenda

- Welcome
- Overview of BAT project
- Cultural responsiveness poll
- Implicit bias
 - Key definitions related to implicit bias
 - Irrefutable influence
 - Assumptions
 - Discipline disparities
 - Strategies to counter implicit bias including social validity
- Self-reflection
- Q&A
- Exit survey



Behavior Assessment Training (BAT) project



The Special Education Behavior Assessment Training Project will provide comprehensive, professional learning for special education personnel on culturally responsive Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) practices and Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPs) for students across all grade levels identified as having a disability in one or more of the 13 categories specified in IDEA...Additionally, the successful Offeror will coordinate with ISBE on mandate 105 ILCS5/14-8.05, which requires ISBE to develop and implement State-level guidelines on culturally responsive, evidence-based behavior interventions for students across all grade levels identified as having a disability in one or more of the 13 disability categories specified in IDEA.



Poll: Rate your cultural responsiveness

1. I demonstrate a great deal more cultural responsiveness compared with others
2. I demonstrate more cultural responsiveness compared with others
3. I demonstrate less cultural responsiveness compared with others
4. I do not demonstrate cultural responsiveness
5. I am unfamiliar with cultural responsiveness



Implicit bias

- Examine student behavior through a personal, contextual, and professional lens
- Awareness of personal lens as a process; much is long-standing and not examined
- Explore potential for mismatch in what we bring and what our students bring to the classroom



Consider the similarity between preferred learning modality and implicit bias

- What if there is a mismatch in your preferences and one or more of a student's preferred learning modality?
 - What is the potential impact on academic success?
 - What is the potential impact on behavioral expectations?
- We also need to consider implicit bias and stereotype awareness in terms of potential for a mismatch and negative consequences such as student suspension.

Key definitions

- **Culturally responsive:** awareness of one's own cultural identity and views about difference, and the ability to learn and build on the varying cultural and community norms of students and their families

Key definitions continued

- **Teacher bias:** one or more factors that cause a teacher to have higher expectations for some students and lower expectations for others; this situation often creates results to match the expectations
- **Stereotyping:** widely held, fixed and oversimplified image or idea of a particular type of person (e.g., race, geographic location)

Key definitions continued

- **Behavioral expectations:** broad goals and/or general ways teachers would like students to act; guidelines for behavior for all students across all settings.
- In addition, there are behavioral expectations which apply to the adults (teachers, administrators, related service providers) in school settings; not not be explicit.

Irrefutable influence

- School climate is not synonymous with school culture. The former is school conditions including engagement, safety and environment.
- School culture is comprised of the following:
 - Core values and strategic plans
 - Reflective practice and accountability
 - Voice and leadership
- Consider when school culture is not consistent with students and their families (e.g., core values)

Tralli, R. (2022). *Irrefutable influence: The impact of school culture on student intervention success*. Council for Exceptional Children.

Assumptions impact students

School professionals may hold assumptions about students' learning and behaviors and their capability for academic success which are tied to students' identities and/or backgrounds, and can impede student growth

- Instructors may **assume** that certain students know to seek help when they are struggling, although students at higher risk for struggling academically are often less likely to seek help and support.
- Instructors may **assume** that students from certain backgrounds or social groups have differing intellectual abilities and/or ambitions. For example, an instructor might assume that a student from a certain background will be satisfied with a lower level of achievement in one or more core subjects.
- Instructors may **assume** that students will best relate to the historical, contemporary, or fictional character who resembles them demographically.

Staats C et al. (2017). *State of the Science: Implicit Bias Review 2017*. Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity.

Discipline disparities

- Racial disparity in special education due to a deficit lens; has not changed since initial passage of IDEA
- Suspension is a social justice issue
 - Racial/ethnic disparity
 - Disability inequities in addition to learning difficulties
- Suspension and/or expulsion can lead to dropping out
- Larger number and lengthier time out of school for Black students can contribute to negative outcomes

Fenning, P. A., & Johnson, M. B. (Eds.). (2022). *Discipline disparities among students with disabilities: Creating equitable environments*. Teachers College Press.

Discipline disparities (Newell & Healey in Fenning & Johnson, 2022) continued

- Influence of racism and ableism
- Identity is multidimensional
- Interplay of context/environment such as poorly funded schools and implicit bias of staff
- Impact of labels
 - Expectations/marginalization
 - Deficit perspective
 - Self-fulfilling prophecy



Moving forward to a culturally responsive view of student behavior

- Being culturally responsive entails an awareness of one's own cultural identity and the ability to learn and build on that identity from varying cultural and community norms (e.g., students and their families)
- Acknowledging held stereotypes and ways to overcome fixed and simplified views
- Acknowledging bias which causes lower expectations for specific students, which often create results to match the bias
- Acknowledging behavioral expectations and the impact of the same expectations for all students, across all settings etc. and learning about adjustments to align with student's cultural and background (family, community)

Strategies for Countering Unconscious Bias in the Classroom

- Inquiry: ask questions for greater understanding
- Framing: examine issues from multiple perspectives
- Dialogue: engage in conversations to build knowledge, tolerance, and acceptance
- Reflection: willingness to change our perspectives and actions
- Action: use what is learned to counter bias

Adapted from <https://www.nafsa.org/ie-magazine/2020/8/4/strategies-countering-unconscious-bias-classroom>



Social validity

An additional factor to consider related to bias and determining ways to address it is social validity - a behavioral concept.

A few definitions to consider:

- Social validity refers to the social significance of intervention goals, social acceptability of intervention procedures, and social importance of their effects.
- Social validity is concerned with measuring the impact of treatment goals, procedures, and effects on not only the direct recipients of treatment but also on others that may indirectly influenced by the treatment. Social validity assessment frequently incorporates treatment mediators, family members, friends, peer groups, etc. This inclusion in social validity assessment offers a method for measuring and ensuring that the welfare of others is considered in treatment programs.

Social validity

Need to consider how a strategy, technique, process etc. favored or adopted by one or more individuals may not be socially valid for others who are involved in addressing student behavior concerns

- FBAs: a data collection method
- BIPs: an intervention to teach replacement behavior
- Collaboration with team members
- Collaboration with parents and families

Self-reflection

- Do I recognize the expertise of families and school professionals singularly and combined as related to behavioral expectations?
- Do I demonstrate respect and understanding for views on behavior different from my own?
 - If yes, how do I demonstrate this?
 - If no, what are the first steps to take to demonstrate this?
- What is my school's/program's/district's culture as related to behavioral expectations?

Self-reflection continued

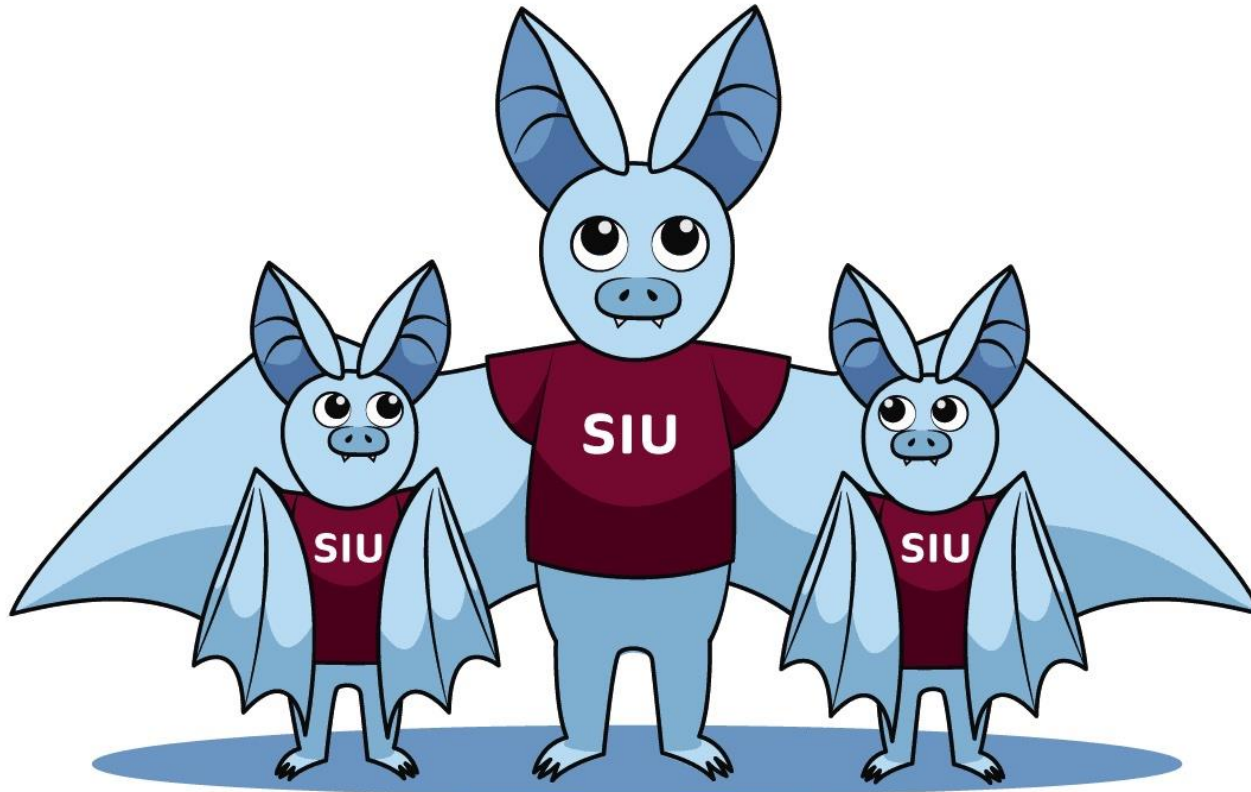
- What are your thoughts about the following statement:
“teachers and school administrators often cite factors external to schooling (e.g., children's parents, their home lives, their communities, and even their genetics) as cause, or the students themselves (something internally wrong with them), rather than the institution of schooling - the assumptions, beliefs, practices, procedures, and policies of schools.” (Groenke, 2010)
- In your estimation, how many referrals to special education are due to one or more of these factors?
- When a BIP is developed, it is intended to reduce and replace challenging behavior and reinforce appropriate behavior.
Who decides what is “challenging” and “appropriate” behavior?

Q&A



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Please complete the Exit survey



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