

# Accessing Behavioral Health Supports in Schools



**PRESENTED BY:**

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Advocates for Children of New York  
Protecting every child's right to learn since 1971



# Today's Training

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Introduction



Overview



Supports for  
All Students



Problem  
Solving



Tips &  
Strategies



Supports for  
Students with  
Disabilities



# What is Advocates for Children (AFC)?

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AFC is an independent agency that protects the education rights of **all** NYC students

## Our Services:

- Helpline: **1-866-427-6033** (Mon-Thurs, 10am – 4pm)
- Guides and resources: [www.advocatesforchildren.org](http://www.advocatesforchildren.org)
- Workshops and trainings
- Free legal services to low-income families

# Social-Emotional and Behavioral Supports

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# Why is this important?

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# Supports for All Students

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## School-Based Supports

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At-risk  
counseling

Informal  
behavior  
interventions

Crisis  
De-escalation  
Plans

STH Community  
Coordinators,  
Single Shepherd

School-based  
Mental Health  
Services

For a list of mental health programs by school, go to

<https://www.schools.nyc.gov/school-life/health-and-wellness/mental-health>



# School-Based Mental Health Services

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School Response  
Clinicians

STH staff can  
also support  
students in  
care!

School  
Response  
Teams

School  
Mental  
Health  
Specialist  
Program

School MH  
Prevention &  
Intervention  
Program

Schools  
with Health  
& Hospitals  
MH Clinic  
Partnership

Community  
School  
Mental  
Health  
Program

School-  
Based  
Health  
Centers  
and Mental  
Health  
Clinics

For a list of programs, go to <https://www.schools.nyc.gov/school-life/health-and-wellness/mental-health>





# Finding Supports on School's Website

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The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL [schoolsearch.schools.nyc](https://schoolsearch.schools.nyc). The page header includes the NYC Department of Education logo and a language selection dropdown. The main heading is "Find a School" with a "Submit your feedback" button. Below this is a search form with a text input for "School Name or Address", two dropdown menus for "Grade" (set to "All") and "Borough" (set to "All"), and a blue "Search" button. At the bottom, there are three tabs: "Map", "Schools" (which is selected), and "Filters".

Each school has a DOE website that lists the specific mental health supports in each school:

Go to:  
[schoolsearch.schools.nyc](https://schoolsearch.schools.nyc)

Type in name of school or address and any information you have, then select "Search"



# Finding Supports on School's Website

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The screenshot shows the NYC Department of Education website for P.S. 046 Arthur Tappan. The page includes a navigation menu with options like Enrollment, Learning, School Life, Get Involved, Careers, and About Us. The main content area displays school details such as address, phone numbers, and a 'District' dropdown. Below this is a tabbed interface with 'Overview', 'School Quality', and 'Reports'. The 'Overview' tab is active and shows several information cards: School Number: M046, Accessibility: No Accessibility, Grades: PK,0K,01,02,03,04,05,06,07,08,SE, 2020-2021 Enrollment: 490, Geographic District: 05, and Borough: Manhattan. At the bottom, there are two expandable sections: 'School Contacts and Information' and 'Superintendent and District Contacts'. The 'Mental Health and Wellness' section is highlighted with a red arrow pointing to it from the right.

Click on Mental Health and Wellness tab!



# Finding Supports on School's Website



## Superintendent and District Contacts



## Mental Health and Wellness

Ask your Parent Coordinator, School Social Worker, or School Counselor for more information about your school's mental health program.

### School-Based Mental Health Clinic

New York Presbyterian Hospital: [212-305-0924](tel:212-305-0924)

### Community School

Finnisha Hughes: [212-380-1519](tel:212-380-1519), [fnughes@newyorkedge.org](mailto:fnughes@newyorkedge.org)

### NYC Mental Health for All

Mental Health for All [📄](#) is a central hub where every New Yorker can connect to care and find mental health resources for themselves and their loved ones. No matter the age, ZIP code, ethnicity, or gender, we want every New Yorker to be able to live their best life.

### NYC Well Hotline

NYC Well offers free-confidential-24/7 support for problems like stress, depression, anxiety, and drug or alcohol use. NYC Well services include: counselors who will respond without judgment; connection to suicide prevention, crisis counseling and emotional support for you or someone you care about; and referrals to Mobile Crisis Teams for people experiencing a behavioral health crisis. Text and chat available in English, Spanish, and Chinese; for service in other languages please call number provided below.

Talk: [1-888-NYC-WELL \(1-888-692-9355\)](tel:1-888-NYC-WELL)

For Relay Service for Deaf/Hard of Hearing: Call [711](tel:711)

Text WELL to [65173](tel:65173)

Chat: [nyc.gov/nyowell](https://nyc.gov/nyowell) [📄](#)

### Crisis Supports

Suicide Prevention Lifeline [📄](#): [1-800-273-TALK \(1-800-273-8255\)](tel:1-800-273-TALK)

Crisis Text Line [📄](#): Text HOME to [741741](tel:741741)

### Hite Site

Hite Site [📄](#) offers a citywide online search for mental health, social services, and healthcare agencies.



# The NYC Discipline Code

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**Department of  
Education**

Chancellor Richard A. Carranza



## **Citywide Behavioral Expectations to Support Student Learning Grades K–5**

including the K–12 Student Bill of Rights and Responsibilities  
and the Discipline Code

**Effective September 2019**



**Department of  
Education**

Chancellor Richard A. Carranza



## **Citywide Behavioral Expectations to Support Student Learning Grades 6–12**

including the K–12 Student Bill of Rights and Responsibilities  
and the Discipline Code

**Effective September 2019**



# DOE Embraces Progressive Discipline

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students “are better served by providing positive supports that teach students social, emotional, and behavioral skills...”

“provid[e] enhanced support to students with special needs or those suffering from trauma due to exposure to poverty or violence”

“overly punitive methods of discipline are not in the best interests of students”

NYC “will reduce the use of suspensions as a disciplinary tool”

**DOE’s  
Mission  
Statement**



# Restorative Justice

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## Restorative Justice

- An intervention that replaces punishment and focuses on repairing relationships

## Types of Restorative Practices

- Collaborative negotiation, circle process, peer mediation, conflict resolution, and formal restorative conferencing

## Why Advocate for it?

- Can improve a student's behavior
- Lowers incidence of repeated misbehavior
- Contributes to more positive school environment by fostering respect for one another



# Social-Emotional Learning during COVID

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- Focus on building **community & resilience**
- All staff trained in Trauma Responsive Educational Practices (TREP)
- Activities vary based on age/grade
- Partnerships!
- Available at <https://www.schools.nyc.gov/school-life/safe-schools/resilient-kids-safer-schools>



# Supports for Students with Disabilities

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# Behavior Supports for Students with IEPs

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# IEP Supports and Services



Specific assistive technology

Equipment such as sensory items, weighted vest

Behavior supports: paraprofessionals, Behavior Intervention Plan

Allow for time to consult with providers, teachers, paraprofessionals

Changes to types of services to needs (timing, frequency, etc.)

Regular check in's with social worker, guidance counselor, etc.



# Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA)

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## Function

- Why does the behavior occur?



## Behavior

- What behavior needs to change?

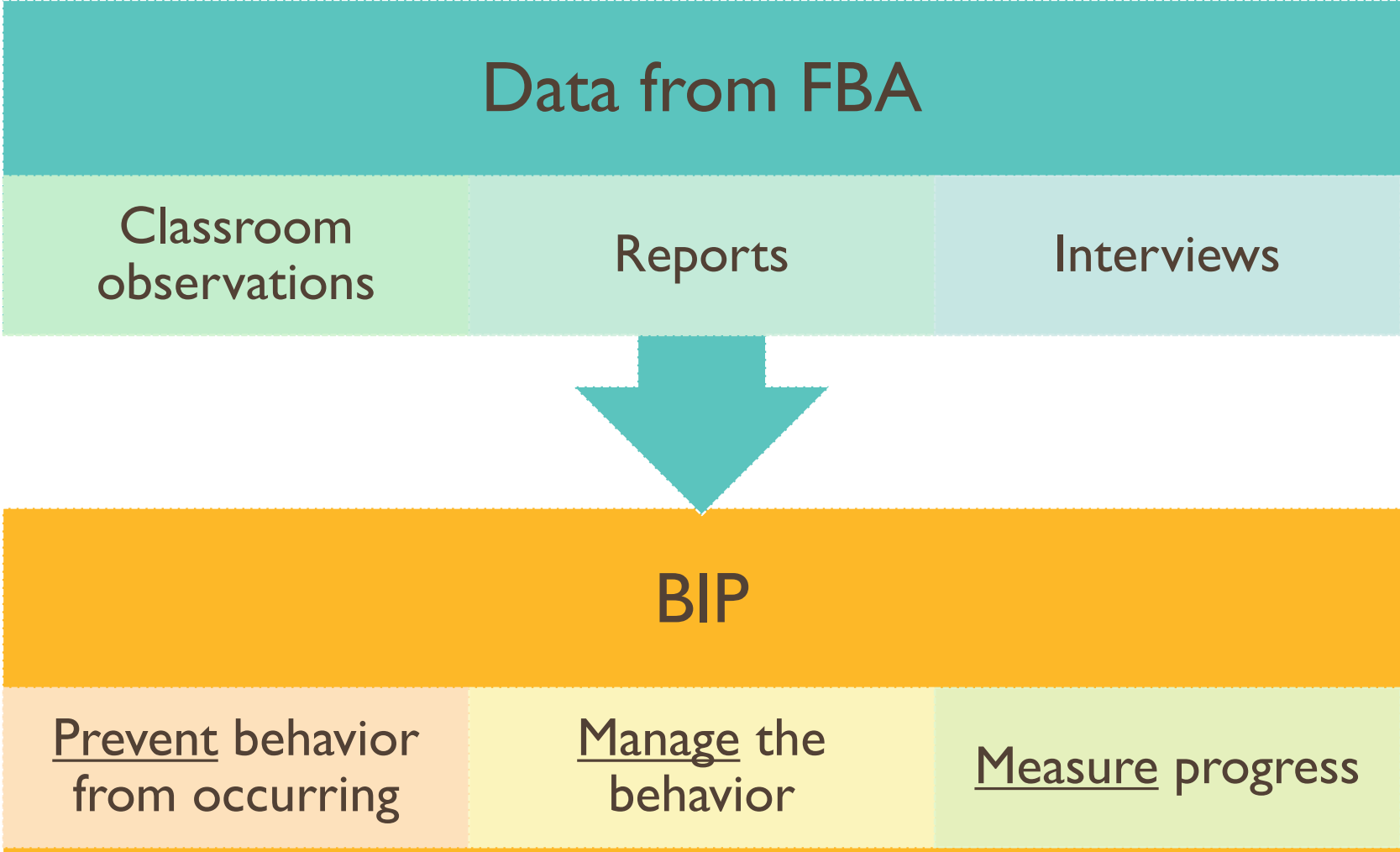


## Assessment

- When does the behavior occur? Where?
- How often? For how long?



# What goes in a BIP?



# Tips and Strategies

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## General Behavioral Management Tips

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Set clear, consistent, and reasonable expectations

Provide choices

Kids get bored - be flexible!

Take the path of least resistance and be kind to yourself

Validate your child and yourself

- Validation: communicating that thoughts, feelings, and behaviors **make sense** given your/your child's current circumstances
- **Validation does not mean agreement**



# Behavior Management Tools

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Use of a visual daily schedule

Cognitive breaks between tasks

Movement breaks

Verbal and visual cues for directions and staying on task

Use of a behavioral contract

Behavior chart – reward system for appropriate behavior

Consistent use of positive reinforcement

Daily teacher feedback to student and parent



## Sample Daily Schedule

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<b>Task</b>	<b>Example</b>
Consistent wake time	7:00 AM
Morning routine	Shower, dress, breakfast
School activity	Online courses, reading
Lunch/free time	
Physical activity	Walk, online workout video, yoga
School activity	Online courses, homework, virtual tutoring
Free time	Reading, art, mindfulness, virtual hang-outs, screen time
Dinner	Share responsibilities
Social activity	Phone calls/messaging, online games
Family activity	Watch a movie, play a game, do a puzzle
Consistent bedtime	9-10PM



# Sample Schedules (for school-aged children)

Getting Ready for School	
	Wake up
	Brush teeth and wash hands
	Get school materials
	Sit at workspace and log into classes

School Day	
	Check assignments for the day
	Reading
	Movement break
	Math
	Snack
	Creative activity
	Lunch/Free play
	Writing
	Quiet time (mindfulness exercise)
	Check-in with teacher
	Wrap up and write down homework for the day

After School	
	Snack
	Exercise
	Finish homework
	Free play
	Dinner
	Bath/Shower



# Common De-Escalating Strategies

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Stay Calm

Give a choice

Encourage the child to use a coping strategy

Show that you are listening

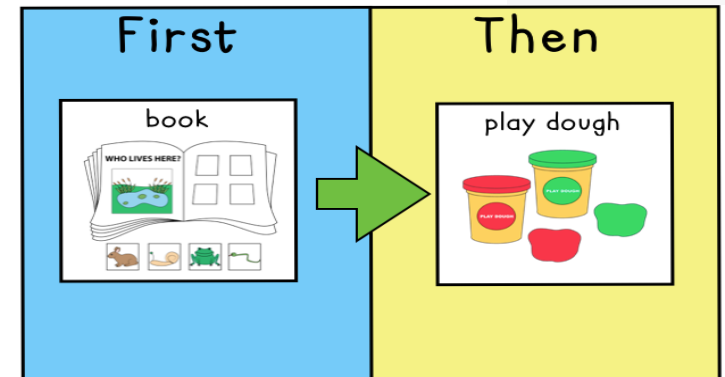
Validate the child's thoughts and feelings



# Strategies for Children with: Language Difficulties

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- Use a visual schedule
- Use a timer or visual countdown system
- Use First/Then statements
- Offer choices in a visual format





# Strategies for Children with: Attentional Difficulties

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- Create a Simple List of Instructions
- Use Praise
- Create a Reward System
- Use Consequences Effectively
- Establish Structure





# Strategies for Children with: Low Frustration Tolerance

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- Complete tasks one at a time
- Begin with less complex tasks with fewer components
- Return to mastery or a task that the child can successfully complete
- Offer choices
- Provide scaffolding, encouragement, and praise





# Strategies for: Highly Active Children

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- Movement/Motor breaks are key!
- Use of fidgets that are small and silent
- Set clear rules and expectations for behavior





# Strategies for: Children with Anxiety

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- Use coping and calming strategies
  - Listening to music on headphones, deep breathing, or watching a preferred video clip
  - Promote use of active positive coping strategies through modeling, co-participation and discussion
- Engage in exercise/physical activity
- Offer Choices



# Problem Solving

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# Who Should I Reach Out to in the DOE?

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Start with the School

Parent Coordinator, Principal, School Based Support Team



District Superintendent's Office

Family Support Coordinator, Behavior Specialists, Directors of Student Services and Administrator of Special Education



DOE Central – Office of Special Education

(718) 935-2007 or [specialeducation@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:specialeducation@schools.nyc.gov)

For school and superintendent information

visit: <https://sites.google.com/a/strongschools.nyc/contacts/>



# When to Call AFC

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Call  
AFC's  
Helpline:

- School will not recommend any new behavior supports
- School says it cannot consider any changes to an IEP or any additional supports (including equipment or services) until evaluations are conducted
- Your child is removed from class, suspended from school or otherwise disciplined



# Questions?

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## Wrapping up: Reminders!

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- Fill out our survey!
- If you need help, ask! We are Open!
- Call Our Helpline: 866-427-6033
  - Toll free
  - Monday-Thursday
  - 10am-4pm
- Email Us: [Info@advocatesforchildren.org](mailto:Info@advocatesforchildren.org)

