

Promoting social and emotional competence for Wisconsin's youngest children

What do we mean by Pyramid Model?

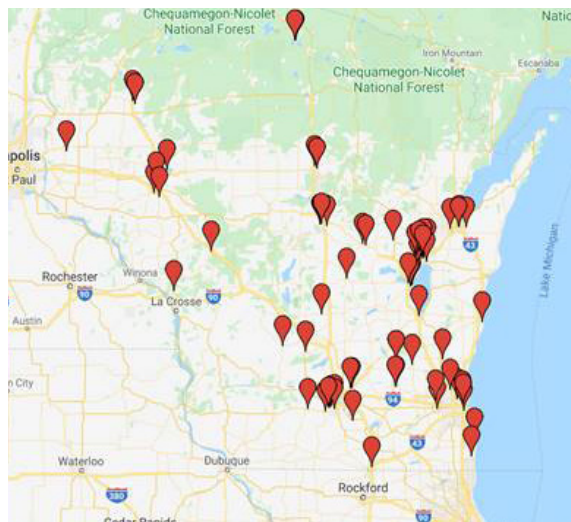
The Pyramid Model is a framework for implementing a culturally responsive and equitable multi-levelled system of supports designed to enhance social and emotional competence of young children, promote the development of program policies and practices, and provide early care and education providers with practice based coaching to ensure that evidence based practices are integrated and used with fidelity.



Providing high quality services for infants, toddlers and young children requires nuanced effort that incorporates a relationship based approach and the science of early care and education. The Pyramid Model was developed by applied researchers who used **scientifically anchored practices** to create a **functional and adaptable framework** to assist early care and education programs, teachers, and families to enhance **social and emotional learning** of young children with confidence and competence in the real world. Program-wide implementation of the Pyramid Model enhances the effect of early childhood social and emotional curricula. This makes the Pyramid Model unique and an important connector in helping adults and children feel safe and supported in their communities.

Building the framework means program-wide implementation

- ▲ Train **teachers** in the practices promoted by the Pyramid Model and encourage them to try the practices
- ▲ Create a **team** of people that gathers and uses information to make sure teachers can implement practices and children and families feel supported
- ▲ Develop a program **coach** – someone who can help teachers reflect and coach them to use practices with confidence
- ▲ **Collaborate** with others to ensure that all children and families can **access** supports and services to learn and grow
- ▲ Keep gathering and using information to make **wise decisions**



Locations of Wisconsin's Pyramid Model program-wide implementation sites

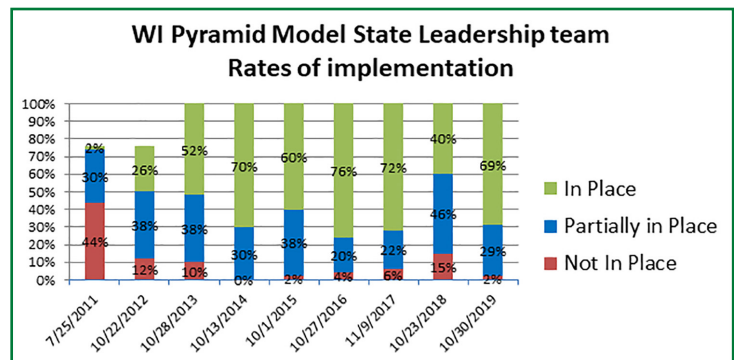
Why Wisconsin Pyramid Model?



Since 2009, Wisconsin’s cross-sector State Leadership Team has thoughtfully and effectively coordinated not only training in the evidence based practices promoted by the Pyramid Model, but capacity building in programs and communities to **provide leadership** for program-wide implementation of the Pyramid Model in child care, public schools, Head Start, and family resource centers. The validated tools used in Pyramid Model implementation help to **define quality** at the teacher and child outcome levels.

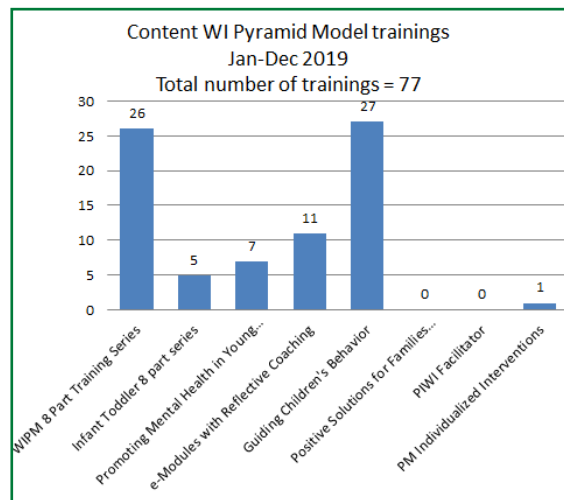
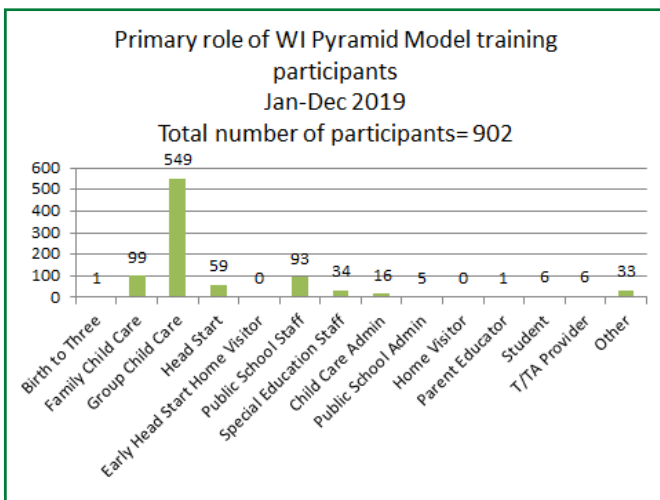
Reinvigorated and moving forward!

After two years of limited funding, Wisconsin Pyramid Model work has been reinvigorated through increased funding in the Department of Children and Families budget. Pyramid Model key outcomes align with Wisconsin’s early care and education priorities. Wisconsin’s efforts have gained national attention, and coordinators work with national experts to ensure that our Pyramid Model work is efficient and effective. Wisconsin’s state implementation is guided by the Core and Advisory Leadership teams, led by coordinators from WI-AIMH, using data gathered through an annual self-assessment called the State Leadership Team Benchmarks of Quality for Implementing the Pyramid Model Statewide.



The Pyramid Model works for Wisconsin

Wisconsin Pyramid Model works for Wisconsin. Concerted effort, energy and funding have been invested to create Wisconsin specific Pyramid Model training strands that guide content and support for Wisconsin’s diverse early care and education field. Our statewide effort has over ten years of experience in systemic and sustainable change that leads to improved outcomes for infants, young children, and their families. We are ready, willing and able to sustain and scale up this good work.



2019 Highlights

Wisconsin's First Lady, Mrs. Evers, has identified social and emotional learning as an important agenda item. Three of Wisconsin's program-wide implementing sites — the Dodgeland Elementary 4K, Reach Dane Head Start and Once Upon a Time Child Care center in Verona — hosted state leaders who are invested in quality improvements to learn more. First Lady Evers, representatives of the Office of Children's Mental Health, and leaders from the Departments of Public Instruction and Children and Families met with program administrators, teachers, children and parents to learn more about the process and outcomes of program-wide implementation of the Pyramid Model.

Expanded funding has enhanced our Pyramid Model work:

- Full time coordination began in September 2019
- Strengthened external coaching strategic efforts
- Supported the process and plans to expand Wisconsin's Pyramid Model trainer cadre
- Accepting new program wide implementing programs every six months
- Celebration and acknowledgment of a decade of Pyramid Model in Wisconsin
- Intensive learning through the first annual Pyramid Model Institute



Community spotlight on Verona

Verona, Wisconsin is investing in its youngest children. The entire community has made a passionate commitment to social and emotional development by equipping the adults who care for babies and young children with Pyramid Model philosophy, framework, and support.

This universal approach infuses Pyramid Model values of social and emotional development into every aspect of young children's experiences: in the library, in child care, at school, and at home.

The Verona Area School District partners with 13 child care programs, located in 12 community sites that impact the lives of more than a thousand infants, toddlers and young children on a daily basis. The Pyramid Model is a key component in each of these programs. Its framework provides universal practices while allowing each program to retain their unique identity.

Verona's journey began with Pyramid Model training in 2013. Recognizing the importance of gradual, intentional implementation, the community made sure to focus on quality and support in its process. Seven of the 13 sites have a leadership team that guides program-wide implementation and there is a plan to add more programs. Each of the program-wide implementing sites provides not only training, but coaching for classroom staff.

Community leadership represents diverse backgrounds that are committed to safe, equitable, quality child care and education. In 2019, the Verona Area First Five Years (VAFFY) was established guided by an advisory council, parent advisory council, and pre-K advisory council. The Pyramid Model framework is a standing item on every agenda. This universal approach infuses the Pyramid Model values of social and emotional development into every aspect of young children's experiences: in the library, in child care, at school, and at home.

A critical aspect of Verona's success is its focus on support for the people who work with babies and young children. The sites collaborate to share ideas and resources, internal and external coaches provide guidance

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and information, and regular training and meetings provide new skills and collaboration time. Data-informed decision-making is another key component of Verona's process. Data is collected and analyzed to ensure that children and sites receive the support they need.

Verona's community is fortunate to be shepherded by Jennifer Skibba, the school district's Early Learning Coordinator, who is a teacher, internal coach, external coach and participant in VAFFY leadership. Her hands-on experience with children and families, combined with her passion for equipping children with social and emotional competence, enables her to bring people together to work collaboratively for the success of children, families, and professionals.

Looking ahead to 2020 and beyond

Reliant in the adoption of the Pyramid Model is the understanding that a multi-leveled system of support for infants, toddlers, young children and their families requires connected, cohesive and comprehensive services at the community level. This is especially vital if the goal is elimination of detrimental practices like suspension and expulsion.

Preschool Development Grant (PDG) is an exciting opportunity for Wisconsin to expand on investments we know work for our infants, toddlers and young children. Our Pyramid Model framework will continue to connect the dots at the Community, Early Care and Education, and Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health levels.



▲ Continued connection to important State-wide efforts:

- Continued connection and support for Wisconsin's YoungStar through enhanced access to high quality training and technical consultation and recognition via the Social and Emotional badging process
- Support for school districts who are working to expand PBIS systems work within their communities
- Building intentional opportunities for IMH consultants to learn and embed with Pyramid Model systems work
- Enhancing data based decision making in partnership with national leaders
- Expanding the work of regional Pyramid Model Communities of Practice
- Serve on the Wisconsin Early Childhood Expulsion Policy Advisory Group to promote the Pyramid Model as a solution

▲ **Regionally based Pyramid Model Leads** ready to help communities to connect efforts related to enhancing social and emotional competence in innovative ways

▲ **Enhancing and expanding training and coaching support** for program-wide implementation within communities

- Reinvigorating current program wide implementing programs and sites
- Establishing a regular and consistent Team Launch every 6 months
- Creating a cadre of Teaching Pyramid Infant Toddler Observation Scale (TPITOS) reliable coaches to increase supports for infant/toddler teachers

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