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## **JONATHAN DANIELS PRESCHOOL SUCCEEDS IN IMPLEMENTING PYRAMID MODEL**

Keene, NH - 1/31/2019: Over the last four years, Keene's Jonathan Daniels Preschool has been involved in an exciting project: implementing the "Pyramid Model," an evidence-based framework to develop a multi-tiered system of support designed to address the social-emotional needs of young children, including those with special needs.

The Pyramid Model, developed at Vanderbilt University in Tennessee, supports social-emotional competence in infants and young children and its impact on learning, and helps early childcare educators be more intentional about their work to support this development. Based on over a decade of evaluation data, the Pyramid Model has shown to be a sound framework for early care and education systems and a new way of approaching professional development for preschool teachers.

The model, designed for professionals who work with young children and their families, emphasizes building nurturing skills, creating positive learning environments and addressing challenging behavior through positive intervention methods. The project is backed by the special education departments of the US Department of Education as well as the New Hampshire Department of Education.

What does a Pyramid Model classroom look like? You would see lots of pictures and other visuals showing children what's expected of them. You would hear staff stating messages in positive ways. Close staff collaboration is also key in a Pyramid Model classroom, and families are very involved through commonly shared tools and close communication.

Several community partners, including the Keene School District, have been working together as a leadership team, overseeing strategic planning for the multi-year project of bringing the Pyramid Model to several preschools in the Keene area.

In 2014, Jonathan Daniels Preschool was chosen as an implementation site as part of New Hampshire's Department of Education Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP). Over four years of planning and program-wide application, the staff at Jonathan Daniels Preschool has worked on embedding sound practices for social skills. "Implementing the Pyramid Model, program-wide, has provided consistency for all of our students at Jonathan Daniels and has helped our

students to be better prepared to enter kindergarten," says Joanne Mulligan, Director at Jonathan Daniels Preschool.

Family engagement has been a big part of the project over these last four years. Teachers have been working on creating opportunities to learn from families and providing the support families might need to help promote their child's skill development, so consistent messages are given to the children at school as well as at home.

Especially the peer-to-peer coaching as part of the implementation was a big community investment, says Beth Sibley, preschool teacher at Jonathan Daniel School, "it has promoted teamwork among teachers, therapists, support personnel, and families through sharing and providing resources related to children's social and emotional development."

The work at Jonathan Daniels Preschool has laid the foundation to broaden the project community-wide through partnership with Impact Monadnock. Funded by the State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG), Keene Day Care was added this year as an implementation site, looking to replicate and continue the great work of the Jonathan Daniels Preschool staff.

Supported by a multi-year grant awarded by the NH Department of Education in 2018, Impact Monadnock is now sponsoring the "Pyramid Model Implementation Site Readiness" series to broaden the program's impact on the greater community. Through April, informational sessions are being offered to representatives from early childhood centers in the Keene area who are interested in becoming implementation sites for the Pyramid Model as well.

The programs selected will receive training in the model, as well as hands-on coaching to incorporate its strategies in the classroom.

More information:

An overview of the Pyramid Model:

<http://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/Implementation/family.html>

Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning at Vanderbilt University, Tennessee: <http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu/>