

Impacts of School-Wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports on Student Academics, Behavior and Mental Health

Authors : Catherine Bradshaw

Abstract : Educators often report difficulty managing behavior problems and other mental health concerns that students display at school. These concerns also interfere with the learning process and can create distraction for teachers and other students. As such, schools play an important role in both preventing and intervening with students who experience these types of challenges. A number of models have been proposed to serve as a framework for delivering prevention and early intervention services in schools. One such model is called Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), which has been scaled-up to over 26,000 schools in the U.S. and many other countries worldwide. PBIS aims to improve a range of student outcomes through early detection of and intervention related to behavioral and mental health symptoms. PBIS blends and applies social learning, behavioral, and organizational theories to prevent disruptive behavior and enhance the school's organizational health. PBIS focuses on creating and sustaining tier 1 (universal), tier 2 (selective), and tier 3 (individual) systems of support. Most schools using PBIS have focused on the core elements of the tier 1 supports, which includes the following critical features. The formation of a PBIS team within the school to lead implementation. Identification and training of a behavioral support 'coach', who serves as a on-site technical assistance provider. Many of the individuals identified to serve as a PBIS coach are also trained as a school psychologist or guidance counselor; coaches typically have prior PBIS experience and are trained to conduct functional behavioral assessments. The PBIS team also identifies a set of three to five positive behavioral expectations that are implemented for all students and by all staff school-wide (e.g., 'be respectful, responsible, and ready to learn'); these expectations are posted in all settings across the school, including in the classroom, cafeteria, playground etc. All school staff define and teach the school-wide behavioral expectations to all students and review them regularly. Finally, PBIS schools develop or adopt a school-wide system to reward or reinforce students who demonstrate those 3-5 positive behavioral expectations. Staff and administrators create an agreed upon system for responding to behavioral violations that include definitions about what constitutes a classroom-managed vs. an office-managed discipline problem. Finally, a formal system is developed to collect, analyze, and use disciplinary data (e.g., office discipline referrals) to inform decision-making. This presentation provides a brief overview of PBIS and reports findings from a series of four U.S. based longitudinal randomized controlled trials (RCTs) documenting the impacts of PBIS on school climate, discipline problems, bullying, and academic achievement. The four RCTs include 80 elementary, 40 middle, and 58 high schools and results indicate a broad range of impacts on multiple student and school-wide outcomes. The session will highlight lessons learned regarding PBIS implementation and scale-up. We also review the ways in which PBIS can help educators and school leaders engage in data-based decision-making and share data with other decision-makers and stakeholders (e.g., students, parents, community members), with the overarching goal of increasing use of evidence-based programs in schools.

Keywords : positive behavioral interventions and supports, mental health, randomized trials, school-based prevention

Conference Title : ICSRD 2020 : International Conference on Scientific Research and Development

Conference Location : Chicago, United States

Conference Dates : December 12-13, 2020