# Implementation of Evidence-based Practices in Urban Schools: Project ACCESS

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## Evidence-based Practices in Urban Schools

- Ideal setting for transporting EBPs to "real world"
  - Potential for addressing services disparities
  - Fewer access barriers
- Not effective or small effect sizes (Alegria et al, 2006)
- Difficulty achieving and sustaining high fidelity
- School-wide Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (SWPBIS) is a useful model for supporting implementation of EBPs in school settings

## School-wide PBIS

- Ecological, systems-approach
  - Emphasis on school climate
- Incorporates multiple tiers of prevention
  - Tier I or universal supports
  - Tier II or targeted group support
  - Tier III or intensive, individualized support
- Emphasis on data-based decision-making
  - Using data to adjust the environment
  - Using data to define staff interactions with students

## Purpose of Project ACCESS

- Use SWPBIS model to increase urban schools' internal capacity for uptake and sustainability of EBPs
- Train and support school staff members to encourage high program fidelity
- Improve school climate and student emotional and behavioral outcomes
- Decrease behavioral health disparities for urban students

## Project ACCESS: Consultation and Coaching

- 3 schools assigned to Consultation only
  - Training and preparation to implement Tier 1 and 2 interventions
- 3 schools assigned to Consultation Plus Coaching
  - Training and preparation to implement Tier 1 and 2 interventions
  - Performance feedback and reflection on progress/success of implementation

## Project ACCESS Tier 2 – Small Group CBT

- FRIENDS for Life to address anxiety
- Coping Power Program to address anger management
- Education/Skills building
- Problem solving
- Practice in challenging situations
- 4-6 children per group
- 40 minute sessions for 14 weeks

## Present Study: Aims

- Present preliminary implementation and acceptability data from years 1, 2 and 3 of the five-year project

## Participating Schools: Demographics

- Schools
  - 6 schools (4 K-8, 1 K-4, 1 K-5)
  - 3,900 students
  - 17% English Learners (range 11%-24%)
  - 97% Free or reduced price lunch (range 95%-98%)
- Ethnic breakdown
  - 58% Latino
  - 33% African American
  - 8% Other ethnic minority
  - 1% Caucasian
  - Approximately 260 teachers

## Inclusion Criteria

- Tier 1 – All children
- Tier 2 – Children in grades 3-8
  - Meet screening and diagnostic criteria
    - Screening Criteria – A score > 1SD on the Conduct Problems or Emotional Symptoms scales of the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) filled out by a teacher or other school staff member
    - Diagnostic Criteria – Primary diagnosis of ODD, CD, GAD, SAD, SP, PTSD (based on C-DISC-IV and Clinical Global Impression Severity Scale [CGI-S] filled out by an independent rater) at Intermediate or Positive level
  - Children with comorbid (secondary) conditions are included
  - Children with Intellectual Disability or with a history of psychotic or autistic spectrum disorders are excluded

## Measures

- Tier 1:
  - School-wide evaluation tool (SET)
    - Teaching Expectations & Mean Score – Goal ≥ 80%
    - Leadership team meeting process fidelity
- Tier 2:
  - Recruitment and enrollment data
  - Group attendance
  - Implementation content fidelity

## Pre-Leadership Team Meeting Consultation Call: Process Fidelity

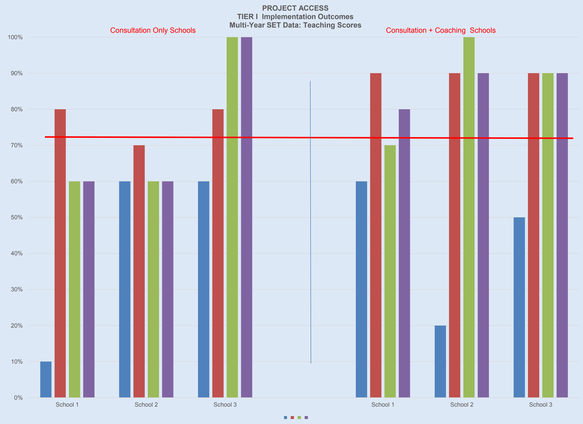
| | Percent of Steps Completed | |
|---|---|---|
| | 2013-14 | 2014-15 |
| C+C Schools | 100 | 87.67 |
| C-Only Schools | 100 | 84.4 |

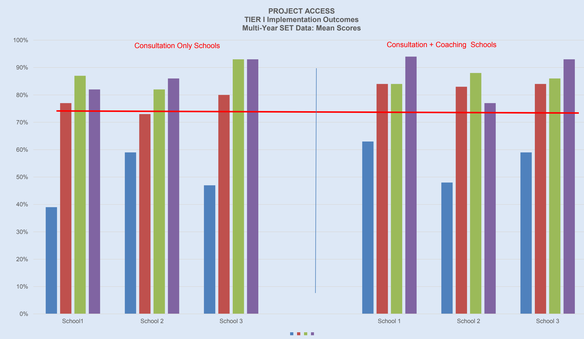
## Leadership Team Meeting Process Fidelity

| | Percent of Steps Completed | |
|---|---|---|
| | 2013-14 | 2014-15 |
| C+C Schools | 80 | 76.33 |
| C-Only Schools | | 76.2 |

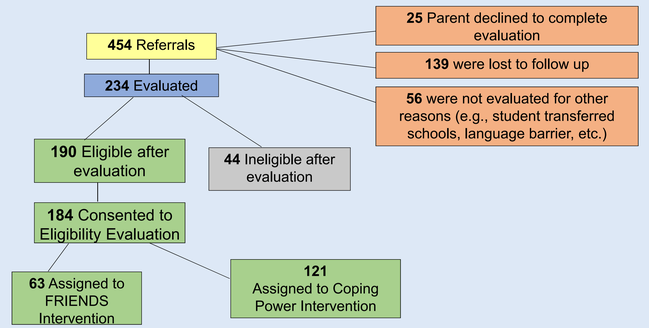
## PBIS Leadership Team Collaborative Process

| | Team Collaboration (Range 1-5) | |
|---|---|---|
| | 2013-14 | 2014-15 |
| C+C Schools | 3.95 | 4.02 |
| C-Only Schools | | 3.98 |




## Tier 2 Recruitment and Enrollment




## Tier 2 Feasibility

- Average Group Attendance = 85% of sessions
- Session Content Fidelity (100% of sessions randomly selected and coded by independent observer)

| | Consultation | Consultation + Coaching |
|---|---|---|
| Coping Power Program | 82.7% | 90.1% |
| FRIENDS for Life | 77.6% | 91.7% |

## Conclusions

- SWPBIS is a useful and feasible model for rolling out EBPs in urban school settings
- Preliminary data suggest that urban school staff can be trained to implement Tier 2 EBPs with fidelity
- Sample size is too small at this time to evaluate differences between groups (C and C+C)

## References

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