Impact of a Universal Prevention Strategy on Reading and Behavioral Outcomes
Reading Improvement – Dr. Jason Fruth

Background

This study examined the impact of a classroom-based universal preventive intervention (PAX Good Behavior Game) on proximal and distal outcomes of 4th graders. This intervention was introduced at the beginning of the school year, and behavioral (disruptions per student per hour) and academic (short cycle reading performance) outcomes were tracked throughout the year as well as compared to control classrooms.

Efficacy Trials

The PAX Good Behavior Game has undergone multiple randomized control trials from Johns Hopkins University. These trials found PAX classrooms to have:

- 60-90 minutes of additional instruction
- 75% fewer disruptions
- 60% fewer discipline referrals
- 20-30% drop in identification for special education services

When these PAX students were tracked to age 21, they found that PAX students had:

- 50% less drug dependence
- 68% less tobacco use
- 35% less alcohol dependence
- 32% less criminal activity

Methods

4th grade students receiving PAX GBG had their proximal outcomes (disruptions per student per hour) tracked as a part of a within group repeated measures design and had their distal outcomes (short cycle reading performance) tracked and compared to the control group of 4th graders receiving the business-as-usual classroom instrcution.

The PAX Good Behavior Game involves teaching self-regulation through the administration of 5 evidence-based kernels, 4 research-based cues, and the soft team competition of the Good Behavior Game.

By using PAX to adjust the antecedents, reinforcement, and relational frames in the classroom during normal academic activities, students begin to show drastic improvements in behavior and performance.
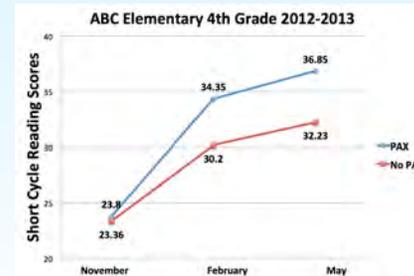
Results

4th grade students receiving the PAX Good Behavior Game demonstrated a significant decrease in disruptive behavior throughout the year.

ABC Elementary 4th Grade 2012-2013
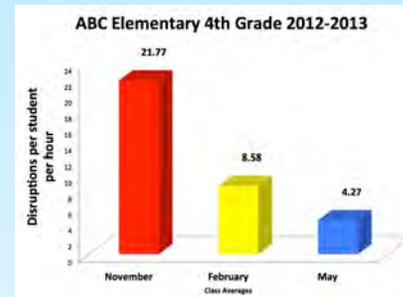
Students receiving the PAX Good Behavior Game also demonstrated substantially higher reading scores than students receiving normal classroom instruction.

ABC Elementary 4th Grade 2012-2013

Conclusion

This effectiveness trial yielded similar results to the efficacy trials carried out in ideal clinical conditions over the past 25 years. This indicates that teachers can successfully carry out universal prevention interventions in the classroom and see an improvement in academic and behavioral outcomes.

Discussion

The PAX Good Behavior Game appears in the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices. It is also recommended by name in the 2009 Institute of Medicine Report. When teachers use the PAX Good Behavior Game in the classroom, they are not only increasing the peace, health, happiness, and productivity of their students. They are teaching self-regulation and not merely administering classroom management. This self-regulation lasts a lifetime. In fact, a teacher who uses the PAX Good Behavior Game throughout a 30-year career will likely have:

- 66 more girls graduate from high school
- 49 more boys graduate from college
- 7 fewer boys convicted of violent crimes
- 72 fewer students develop drug addictions
- 49 fewer students using tobacco
- 27 fewer students using alcohol

The financial impact of this one teacher using the PAX Good Behavior Game on society amounts to over $9,700,000 in savings to local, state, and national communities and governments.

www.Wright.edu/prevention-science

WRIGHT STATE UNIVERSITY