

# Comprehensive School Safety Initiative

<b>Submission date</b> 13/05/2019	<b>Recruitment status</b> No longer recruiting	<input type="checkbox"/> Prospectively registered <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Protocol
<b>Registration date</b> 16/05/2019	<b>Overall study status</b> Completed	<input type="checkbox"/> Statistical analysis plan <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Results
<b>Last Edited</b> 08/08/2023	<b>Condition category</b> Other	<input type="checkbox"/> Individual participant data

## Plain English summary of protocol

### Background and study aims

School safety is fundamental to fostering positive outcomes for children and youth, such as academic achievement, well-being, and prosocial behavior. A safe school is defined as one that minimizes violence, promotes student mental health, and fosters a positive climate. Violence remains a pressing concern in American schools: in 2013, nearly 20% of high school students were bullied at school, while 8% had been in a physical fight on school property. Even by ages 10-11, more than half of boys and one-third of girls are either victims of or engage in delinquent behaviors. Among girls, victimization and delinquency increase significantly between ages 11 and 12; among boys, a corresponding jump occurs between ages 13 and 14. Similarly, over half of lifetime mental health concerns become evident before age 14. Thus, interventions to promote safety likely need to focus as early as elementary school. Such interventions should emphasize a positive school climate, which includes the appropriate connections, support, and commitment to promote positive outcomes. This study will examine a comprehensive multi-component intervention targeted to fourth through sixth graders (i.e. 9–12 year olds), using primary and secondary prevention approaches.

### Who can participate?

Students in 4th- 6th grade (i.e. 9–12 year olds) and school staff and teachers at participating schools in Michigan (USA)

### What does the study involve?

Participating schools are randomly allocated to either the treatment group or the control group. The ten treatment schools receive interventions in restorative justice practices and mental health first aid. These schools also receive a physical assessment and work to make physical changes to improve school safety. At each school, a three-person leadership team, led by a mental health professional and comprised of one police officer and one school staff member, makes decisions and guides the intervention. The control schools do not receive these interventions. The research involves an evaluation of the effectiveness of the interventions on school climate, classroom management and student behavioral outcomes. Students in 4th, 5th and 6th grades at the intervention schools and the control schools are invited to complete a survey. Teachers and school staff at the intervention schools are also invited to take a survey. Students receive a follow-up survey at the end of the school year. The researchers use data currently collected by Genesee Intermediate School District (GISD) schools, including the School Wide Information System (SWIS) database, to record behavioral referrals and truancy, and the

MiPHY (Michigan Profile for Healthy Youth). The researchers also survey teachers regarding their perceptions of school climate and safety. The teachers at intervention schools can benefit by enhancing their classroom management skills. The study also looks at how different schools implement the interventions and ways to keep these programs going by doing focus groups with key stakeholders, teachers, and students. Finally, a cost-benefit analysis is conducted with regard to violence outcomes.

What are the possible benefits and risks of participating?

There are no personal benefits to participants. Results from this study, however, will help to determine whether a comprehensive school climate initiative can improve the learning environment in Genesee County, MI schools, and how local school districts can improve school climate. There are no foreseeable risks associated with student's participation in this study because the information is protected by Federal statute; that is, his/her answers cannot be shared with anyone.

Where is the study run from?

Michigan State University and the University of Michigan partners with the Genesee Intermediate School District for this study

When is the study starting and how long is it expected to run for?

September 2017 to June 2020

Who is funding the study?

National Institute of Justice (USA)

Who are the main contacts for this study?

1. Edmund McGarrell

mccgarrel@msu.edu

2. Justin Heinze

jheinze@umich.edu

## Contact information

### Type(s)

Public

### Contact name

Dr Edmund McGarrell

### Contact details

Professor School of Criminal Justice

Michigan State University

Baker Hall, Room 441

655 Auditorium Road

East Lansing

United States of America

48824-1118

+1 (0)517/355 6649

mccgarrel@msu.edu

### Type(s)

Scientific

**Contact name**

Dr Edmund McGarrell

**Contact details**

Professor School of Criminal Justice  
Michigan State University  
Baker Hall, Room 441  
655 Auditorium Road  
East Lansing  
United States of America  
48824-1118  
+1 (0)517/355 6649  
mcgarrel@msu.edu

**Type(s)**

Public

**Contact name**

Dr Justin Heinze

**Contact details**

HBHE  
3818 SPH I  
Ann Arbor  
United States of America  
48109-2929  
+1 (0)734- 615 4992  
jheinze@umich.edu

**Type(s)**

Scientific

**Contact name**

Dr Justin Heinze

**Contact details**

HBHE  
3818 SPH I  
Ann Arbor, MI  
United States of America  
48109-2029  
+1 (0)734 615 4992  
jheinze@umich.edu

**Additional identifiers**

**EudraCT/CTIS number**

Nil known

## **IRAS number**

## **ClinicalTrials.gov number**

Nil known

## **Secondary identifying numbers**

IP #00118484 verify

# **Study information**

## **Scientific Title**

Comprehensive approaches to addressing mental health needs and enhancing school security: a cluster randomized controlled trial

## **Acronym**

CSSI

## **Study objectives**

1.1 Do students in schools receiving the intervention report less violence (over time) compared with students in the control group? Do the intervention schools have an overall lower rate of violence over the school year compared with control schools?

1.2 Are there fewer records of truancy and behavioral referrals in the intervention schools as compared with change among the control school records over time?

2. Mediation effects of school climate and mental health:

2.1 Do intervention school students report more positive school climate and mental health compared with students in control schools over time? Does change of positive school climate predict change toward positive mental health and reduced violence?

2.2 Do teachers in the intervention schools report more positive school climate compared with teachers in control schools control over time? Is greater teacher-reported school climate associated with more positive student mental health and reduced violence?

3. Implementation evaluation

3.1 Is the intervention able to be implemented as planned as reported by school staff (including the 3-PLT) and students in each year of the program?

3.2 Is there evidence that the three intervention components are implemented in an integrated fashion as reported by school staff and students as well as by activity logs and observation (e.g., environmental design components)?

4. Cost-Benefit Analysis:

4.1 How do the costs of the intervention compare with benefits associated with less violence?

## **Ethics approval required**

Old ethics approval format

## **Ethics approval(s)**

1. Approved 27/09/2017, Michigan State University Institutional Review Board (4000 Collins Rd., Suite 136, Lansing, MI 48910; Tel: +1 (0)517 355 2180; Email: irb@ora.msu.edu), IRB# x15-1129e Category: EXEMPT 1

2. Approved 19/12/2017, University of Michigan Health Science and Behavioral Science Institutional Review Board (2800 Plymouth Rd, Bldg. 520, Rm. 1169, Ann Arbor, MI 48109, Tel: +1 (0)734 936 0933; Email: irbhsbs@umich.edu), HUM00139400, EXEMPT

3. Approved 22/12/2017, University of Michigan Health Science and Behavioral Science

Institutional Review Board (2800 Plymouth Rd, Bldg. 520, Rm. 1169, Ann Arbor, MI 48109, Tel: +1 (0)734 936 0933; Email: irbhsbs@umich.edu), HUM00114385, EXEMPT

## **Study design**

Cluster randomized controlled trial

## **Primary study design**

Interventional

## **Secondary study design**

Cluster randomised trial

## **Study setting(s)**

School

## **Study type(s)**

Prevention

## **Participant information sheet**

## **Health condition(s) or problem(s) studied**

School safety

## **Interventions**

The overarching framework for the intervention is guided by the premise that elementary school safety can be promoted through a positive school climate, which in turn is associated with better mental health and less violence. The researchers propose to implement a comprehensive intervention using a compilation of evidence-based approaches tailored to individual school contexts by a leadership team within each school, led by a climate specialist. The approach centers around fostering positive school climate among elementary-aged students, targeting change early and building support systems.

The intervention will be implemented over three years to facilitate change in school climate. The intervention will be staggered (5 intervention schools starting in Year 1; 5 additional schools in Year 2) in order to maximize the likelihood of intensive implementation. The intervention centers on three key areas: (i) at a universal prevention level, focusing on changes to the physical school environment (environmental design) and promoting consistent and fair discipline and reward practices (restorative justice); (ii) a more targeted approach, to help those with early signs of mental health problems (mental health first aid); and (iii) engaging those involved in violent or aggressive situations at school through restorative justice practices. Each school will recruit a three-person leadership team (3-PLT) comprised of a school resource officer (police), a school staff member, and led by a full-time mental health expert (who will hold an advanced degree in counseling/social work) employed for this project.

All eligible schools (N = 35) in the county were listed in an Excel file. Each school was assigned a random number through the Microsoft Excel random number generator between 1 and 1,000. The schools were then sorted from highest random number to lowest random number. The first ten schools were identified as treatment schools, and the second ten were identified as control schools to initially approach for inclusion in the study. The remaining schools were assigned as replacement treatment or control schools on an every other case basis (i.e., alternative treatment, alternative control, alternative treatment, alternative control). If an initially

identified treatment or control school declined participation, the researchers would select the next alternative treatment or control school in the list to approach for participation. The cohort in which they were assigned was not random. Rather, that process was dictated through a negotiation with the GISD and the school district.

Although the framework and underlying foundational principles for interventions can be consistent, intervention delivery will vary across individual schools, making complete standardization difficult. The proposed study seeks to standardize processes and components where feasible, and account for differences in school readiness, practices, and resources differ; the researchers therefore seek to evaluate the feasibility of district-wide (yet individualized) implementation of the three school safety components using the implementation facilitation strategy. Facilitation includes diverse, implementation-science informed, tailored activities that enhance intervention delivery (e.g., stakeholder engagement), and identify and solve implementation challenges. Facilitation will be delivered via regular contact with the school staff and other 3-PLT members by the climate specialist (CS) trained in program implementation and use of RJ, MHFA and CPTED in schools. The CS will support the school staff and 3-PLT in strategic thinking and program specific skills to address barriers related to the context, innovation, provider and recipients.

The 3-PLT will be provided with a comprehensive set of resources and training for components of MHFA, restorative justice, and environmental design planning. The 3-PLT will be trained to deliver MHFA training to all school staff, deliver restorative justice efforts (e.g., be trained in peer mediation and similar restorative processes and facilitate this within schools), and liaise with expert consultants of environmental design. Environmental design components will be tailored for each school's unique physical and social structures; in general, aspects of the school's image/management, and increasing ownership of undefined spaces will be emphasized. The intervention will not be entirely or minutely prescribed; rather, the 3-PLT, led by the climate specialist, will guide school-wide delivery using their knowledge of each school's culture. The climate specialist will coordinate the activities and will facilitate efforts between the 3-PLT, PTA representatives, and students. The climate specialist will also help develop processes based on local evidence, thus necessitating improved data systems and procedures management. This component stems from the evidence-based School Wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports program (SWIS). Expectations for discipline and reinforcement of positive behaviors are developed and communicated to staff and students with SWIS. Also key is a formal system to collect, analyze, and use data on disciplinary infringements for data-based decision-making. This includes data self-reported in the MiPHY (Michigan Profile for Healthy Youth) survey and from the Internet-based system SWIS, where disciplinary data (e.g., suspensions, behavior management referrals) are systematically collected (entered by an administrator) and summarized for the 3-PLT.

## **Intervention Type**

Mixed

## **Primary outcome measure**

1. Student school-climate perceptions are measured by students self-reporting on the Student Climate Reflection Scale in the MiPHY Survey at baseline and 9 months (beginning and end of school year)
2. Emotional functioning (anxiety and depression symptoms) data are measured by students self-reporting in the MiPHY Survey at baseline and 9 months (beginning and end of school year)
3. Aggression is measured by students self-reporting in the MiPHY Survey at baseline and 9 months (beginning and end of school year)

4. Violence, victimization, and bullying are measured by students self-reporting on the School Victimization Scale and Outside Victimization Scale in the MiPHY Survey at baseline and 9 months (beginning and end of school year)
5. School violence perceptions are measured by students self-reporting on the School Perceived Risk Scale in the MiPHY Survey at baseline and 9 months (beginning and end of school year)
6. Student violations and truancy are measured by data reported and abstracted from school records at the end of the school year, annually
7. Student discipline and behavioral referrals are measured by data reported and abstracted from school records at the end of the school year, annually

### **Secondary outcome measures**

1. Student discipline is measured by data reported by the school Climate Specialist in a monthly school audit
2. Teacher and staff climate and safety perceptions are measured by teachers self-reporting in the Teacher and Staff Survey at baseline and 9 months (beginning and end of school year)
3. Feasibility of the implementation strategy is assessed using from qualitative process evaluation data. The researchers will obtain input from teachers of senior elementary students at each intervention school through focus groups and interviews and focus groups conducted with 3-PLT members annually
4. Intervention costs are tabulated by GISD staff on an ongoing basis
5. Implementation costs are tabulated by GISD staff on an ongoing basis

### **Overall study start date**

27/09/2017

### **Completion date**

30/06/2021

## **Eligibility**

### **Key inclusion criteria**

Students:

1. Enrolled in intervention or control schools
2. All genders
3. 4th- 6th grade

School staff and teachers:

1. Working at intervention schools
2. All genders
3. All ages

### **Participant type(s)**

Mixed

### **Age group**

Mixed

### **Sex**

Both

### **Target number of participants**

**Key exclusion criteria**

Students:

1. Non-students
2. Not enrolled in intervention or control schools
3. Not in 4th- 6th grade

School staff and teachers:

1. Not working at intervention schools

**Date of first enrolment**

01/09/2017

**Date of final enrolment**

15/06/2020

**Locations****Countries of recruitment**

United States of America

**Study participating centre****Genesee Intermediate School District**

2413 W Maple Ave

FLINT

United States of America

48507

**Study participating centre****Atherton Elementary**

3444 S Genesee Rd,

Burton

United States of America

48519

**Study participating centre****Richfield Academy**

3807 Center Rd

Flint

United States of America

48506



**Study participating centre**  
**Feidler Elementary**  
6137 Nightingale Dr  
FLINT  
United States of America  
48506

**Study participating centre**  
**Grand Blanc Academy**  
5135 Hill Rd,  
Grand Blanc  
United States of America  
48439

**Study participating centre**  
**Northridge Academy**  
4100 Coldwater Rd,  
Flint  
United States of America  
48504

**Study participating centre**  
**Dailey Elementary**  
6236 Neff Rd,  
Mt. Morris  
United States of America  
48458

**Study participating centre**  
**Dye Elementary**  
1174 S Graham Rd  
Flint  
United States of America  
48532

**Study participating centre**  
**Rankin Elemntary**  
3459 Mundy Ave G  
Swartz Creek,  
United States of America  
48473

**Study participating centre**  
**Montague Elementary**  
344 W Mt Morris St,  
Mt Morris  
United States of America  
48458

**Study participating centre**  
**McGrath Elementary**  
5288 Todd St  
Grand Blanc  
United States of America  
48439

**Study participating centre**  
**Columbiaville Elementary**  
4775 Pine St  
Columbiaville  
United States of America  
48421

**Study participating centre**  
**McMonagle Elementary**  
3484 N Jennings Rd  
Flint  
United States of America  
48504

**Study participating centre**  
**Moore Elementary**  
1201 Wisner St  
Mt Morris  
United States of America  
48458

**Study participating centre**  
**Elms Road Elementary**  
3259 Elms Rd

Swartz Creek  
United States of America  
48473

**Study participating centre**  
**Randels Elementary**  
6022 Brobeck St  
Flint  
United States of America  
48532

**Study participating centre**  
**Lakeville Middle School**  
11107 Washburn Rd  
Otisville  
United States of America  
48463

**Study participating centre**  
**Barhitte Elementary**  
6080 Roberta St  
Burton  
United States of America  
48509

**Study participating centre**  
**Greater Heights Academy**  
3196 Pasadena Ave  
Flint  
United States of America  
48504

**Study participating centre**  
**Haas Elementary**  
7347 N Genesee Rd  
Genesee  
United States of America  
48437

**Study participating centre**  
**Kuehn Haven Middle School**  
303 Ray St  
Montrose  
United States of America  
48457

**Study participating centre**  
**Woodland Park Academy**  
2083 E Grand Blanc Rd  
Grand Blanc  
United States of America  
48439

## **Sponsor information**

### **Organisation**

Michigan State University

### **Sponsor details**

Contract and Grant Administration  
301 Administration Building  
East Lansing  
United States of America  
517.355.5040  
+1 (0)517 355 5040  
help@cga.msu.edu

### **Sponsor type**

University/education

### **Website**

<https://msu.edu/>

### **ROR**

<https://ror.org/05hs6h993>

### **Organisation**

University of Michigan Office of Research and Sponsored Projects

### **Sponsor details**

3003 South State Street  
First Floor, Wolverine Tower

Ann Arbor  
United States of America  
48109  
+1 (0)734 763 5500  
orosp-info@umich.edu

**Sponsor type**

University/education

**Website**

<https://orosp.umich.edu/>

## **Funder(s)**

**Funder type**

Government

**Funder Name**

National Institute of Justice

**Alternative Name(s)**

Natl Inst of Justice, National Institute of Justice Office of Justice Programs, National Institute of Justice - Office of Justice Programs, National Institute of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, National Institute of Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice, NIJ, NIJOJP

**Funding Body Type**

Government organisation

**Funding Body Subtype**

National government

**Location**

United States of America

## **Results and Publications**

**Publication and dissemination plan**

The researchers also have existing mechanisms for dissemination to both research and practice communities. The Michigan Youth Violence Prevention Center (MI-YVPC), housed at UM, is part of the CDC-funded network of National Centers of Excellence in Youth Violence Prevention, which may serve as an additional venue for disseminating results to researchers and practice professionals. MSU houses Bureau of Justice Assistance training and technical assistance programs for Project Safe Neighborhoods, the Violence Reduction Assessment Tool, and the Smart Suite Research Practitioner Fellows Academy that provide outstanding mechanisms for the dissemination of findings to teams of practitioners and researchers across the US. Finally, we

will aim to disseminate results and lessons learned to practitioners (including school administrators and resource officers) at conferences such as Michigan's SEPLA conference (<http://www.seplainstitute.org/index.htm>) and the conferences of the Michigan Chiefs of Police and Sheriffs Associations. We plan to publish outcome and implementation findings in peer reviewed journals.

In addition, the researchers aim to make information about this research available to a broader audience including the GISS community (students, families, staff, and local residents); local, state, and national policy makers; and the general public. Upon study completion, they will feed back results to the GISS community via newsletters, town halls, and presentations to school administrators, district officials, and the Genesee Intermediate Board of Education. They will create a page on the MI-YVPC website (<http://yvpc.sph.umich.edu>) to communicate information about their research and house links to reports, publications, or any media coverage. Similar information and links to the MI-YVPC website will also be available through the Michigan Justice Statistics Center, the Statistical Analysis Center for the state of Michigan (housed at MSU). The researchers will also make this information available for a common NIJ-sponsored school safety website. Finally, they will work with the UM School of Public Health's Office of Communications to prepare press releases for state and national print, radio, and television outlets.

### Intention to publish date

01/01/2020

### Individual participant data (IPD) sharing plan

De-identified quantitative survey data, notes from qualitative interviews and transcripts from focus-group data will be provided to the National Archive of Criminal Justice Data (NACJD) at ICPSR at the University of Michigan within two years after the completion of the project. The NACJD will make the final determination of whether or not the data are suitable for public release, as well as the conditions associated with the release of the data if it is deemed appropriate for public use. Requests for the data can be made through their online data portal found at: <https://www.icpsr.umich.edu/icpsrweb/content/NACJD/index.html>.

All adults participants provided informed consent, while youth provided their assent, and their parents were offered the opportunity to refuse their child's participation through a passive parental consent process given data is not identifiable at the individual level. No individual identifying information was collected as part of the survey data collection process.

### IPD sharing plan summary

Stored in repository

### Study outputs

Output type	Details	Date created	Date added	Peer reviewed?	Patient-facing?
<a href="#">Protocol article</a>	protocol	01/12/2020	08/07/2020	Yes	No
<a href="#">Funder report results</a>		01/02/2022	14/07/2023	No	No
<a href="#">Results article</a>		14/01/2020	14/07/2023	Yes	No