

Comprehensive School Safety Initiative

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Registration date 16/05/2019	Overall study status Completed	<input type="checkbox"/> Statistical analysis plan <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Results
Last Edited 08/08/2023	Condition category 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?

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Additional identifiers

Protocol serial number

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

Study type(s)

Prevention

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(s)

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

Key secondary outcome(s)

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

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

Healthy volunteers allowed

No

Age group

Mixed

Sex

All

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

ROR

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

Organisation

University of Michigan Office of Research and Sponsored Projects

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

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?
Results article		14/01/2020	14/07/2023	Yes	No
Protocol article	protocol	01/12/2020	08/07/2020	Yes	No
Funder report results		01/02/2022	14/07/2023	No	No