

# Developing, implementing and evaluating a teacher-training intervention to promote child mental health in the early grades of primary school in Jamaica

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|----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Submission date</b><br>26/03/2015   | <b>Recruitment status</b><br>No longer recruiting             | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Prospectively registered<br><input type="checkbox"/> Protocol |
| <b>Registration date</b><br>13/04/2015 | <b>Overall study status</b><br>Completed                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Statistical analysis plan<br><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Results |
| <b>Last Edited</b><br>04/06/2020       | <b>Condition category</b><br>Mental and Behavioural Disorders | <input type="checkbox"/> Individual participant data                                              |

## Plain English summary of protocol

### Background and study aims

Violence is a leading worldwide public health problem. Interventions in early childhood are an important component of the primary prevention of violence. Training young children's caregivers in behavioural strategies to reduce children's conduct problems and promote child social skills can prevent the early development of antisocial behaviour and reduce violence against children by caregivers. The aim of this study is to evaluate whether training Grade one primary school teachers in classroom behaviour management strategies and in how to promote young children's social and emotional skills reduces teachers' use of corporal punishment and verbal abuse and children's aggression. We will also examine the effect of the intervention on child and teacher mental health, on the quality of the grade one classroom environment, and on children's academic achievement, self-regulation skills and school attendance.

### Who can participate?

The study will be conducted in primary schools in Kingston and St Andrew, Jamaica. All Grade one teachers and all children in Grade one classrooms in the selected schools can participate in the study.

### What does the study involve?

Schools will be randomly assigned to an intervention group or to a comparison group. All teachers in the intervention schools will be invited to participate in training workshops which cover skills in classroom management, effective instruction and teaching social skills to children. Teachers will also receive coaching in the skills taught once a month in their classrooms for about one hour and they will receive weekly text messages. Teachers in the comparison group schools will receive the same educational materials at the same time as the intervention group schools. The intervention will be conducted over one school year. The effect of the intervention will be evaluated in the final term of the school year.

What are the possible benefits and risks of participating?

Teachers will be trained in evidence-based behaviour management strategies and we anticipate that this will lead to benefits to teacher child management practices, child behaviour, the overall quality of the classroom environment, teachers' and children's mental health, and inhibitory control and child attendance. There are minimal risks. There is a possibility that teachers may misunderstand how to use the strategies and/or implement them incorrectly; however, this will be addressed by the support and training in monthly in-class coaching sessions.

Where is the study run from?

The study is run from the Tropical Medicine Research Institute, University of the West Indies, Kingston, Jamaica.

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

Recruitment for the study will start in May 2015 and the study will run for one year and 2 months.

Who is funding the study?

Grand Challenges Canada.

Who is the main contact?

Dr Helen Baker-Henningham

## Contact information

**Type(s)**

Scientific

**Contact name**

Dr Helen Baker-Henningham

**Contact details**

Tropical Medicine Research Institute

University of the West Indies

Kingston

Jamaica

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## Additional identifiers

**Protocol serial number**

0592

## Study information

**Scientific Title**

Developing, implementing and evaluating a teacher-training intervention to promote child mental health in the early grades of primary school in Jamaica: a cluster randomised trial

**Study objectives**

A school-based universal violence prevention programme involving training Jamaican primary school teachers in classroom behaviour management and in how to promote children's social and emotional competence will lead to:

1. Reductions in teachers' use of violence against children
2. Reductions in the level of children's classroom aggression

We also hypothesise that the intervention will lead to increases in the level of children's prosocial behaviour, improvements in the quality of the classroom climate, improvements in teacher and child mental health and improvements in children's academic achievement, self-regulation and school attendance.

## **Ethics approval required**

Old ethics approval format

## **Ethics approval(s)**

1. School of Psychology Ethics and Research Committee, Bangor University, 14/01/2015, ref: 2014-14347
2. University of the West Indies/University Hospital of the West Indies Ethics Committee, 02/02/2015, ref: ECP 51, 2014,2015

## **Study design**

Two-arm single-blind cluster randomised trial with parallel assignment

## **Primary study design**

Interventional

## **Study type(s)**

Prevention

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

Violence, mental health, quality of primary school environment

## **Interventions**

The intervention involves training Grade one primary school teachers using 'The Irie Classroom Toolbox'. The Toolbox has been developed for use with preschool teachers in Jamaica and will be adapted to make it suitable for the primary school environment. The Toolbox consists of three modules:

1. Creating an emotional supportive classroom environment.
2. Using classroom rules and routines to prevent behaviour problems and to maximise children's engagement in learning activities.
3. Teaching social and emotional skills to children.

The training will be delivered over one school year through training workshops, monthly in-class coaching (approx. 1 hour/month in each class) and weekly text messaging. Each class will be provided with a small amount of educational materials to facilitate their use of the strategies.

Teachers in control schools will receive the same educational materials at the same time as intervention schools. The effect of the intervention will be evaluated in the final term of the school year.

## **Intervention Type**

Behavioural

**Primary outcome(s)**

1. Violence against children by teachers: measured by direct observation over 2 school days in each class. Event recording will be used to record use of corporal punishment and verbal abuse (e.g., threats, name-calling) by teachers.
2. Aggression at the classroom level: measured by observer ratings of the level of children's interpersonal aggression and destructive behaviours in 20-minute intervals over 1 school day. Outcomes will be measured at post-test only.

**Key secondary outcome(s)**

We have secondary outcome measures at the level of the classroom, the teacher and the child. All measures will be collected at post-test only.

1. Classroom-level outcomes: include observer ratings of children's prosocial behaviour at the classroom level and observer ratings of the quality of the classroom environment using the Classroom Assessment Scoring System – K-3.
2. Teacher-level outcomes: include depressive symptoms (using the Centre for Epidemiological Studies Depression Scale), teaching self-efficacy (using three subscales from Bandura's Teaching Self-Efficacy Scale: disciplinary efficacy, enlisting parent involvement and creating a positive school climate) and teacher burn-out (using the Teacher Burnout scale) by teacher report using interviewer-administered questionnaires.
3. Child-level outcomes: includes child mental health by teacher report using the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire, children's academic achievement in reading, mathematics, phonics and oral language using the Woodcock Johnson Test of Achievement, ratings of child self-regulation during the testing session and child attendance from school records.

**Completion date**

30/06/2016

**Eligibility****Key inclusion criteria**

1. Schools: Primary schools situated in specified urban areas in Kingston & St. Andrew, Jamaica with 3-5 Grade 1 classrooms
2. Teachers: All teachers in the selected preschools
3. Children: A random sample of four children from each Grade one classroom in the selected preschools

**Healthy volunteers allowed**

No

**Age group**

Mixed

**Sex**

All

**Total final enrolment**

275

**Key exclusion criteria**

1. Primary schools with less than three and more than five classrooms/teachers
2. Children with identified developmental disability or delay
3. Children with attendance less than 50%

**Date of first enrolment**

01/05/2015

**Date of final enrolment**

30/04/2016

## **Locations**

**Countries of recruitment**

Jamaica

**Study participating centre**

**Tropical Medicine Research Institute**

University of the West Indies

Kingston

Jamaica

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## **Sponsor information**

**Organisation**

University of the West Indies

**ROR**

<https://ror.org/03fkc8c64>

## **Funder(s)**

**Funder type**

Government

**Funder Name**

Grand Challenges Canada

**Alternative Name(s)**

Grands Défis Canada, gchallenges, Grand Challenges Canada / Grands Défis Canada, grandchallengescanada, GCC

**Funding Body Type**

Government organisation

**Funding Body Subtype**

National government

**Location**

Canada

## Results and Publications

**Individual participant data (IPD) sharing plan****IPD sharing plan summary****Study outputs**

| Output type                     | Details | Date created | Date added | Peer reviewed? | Patient-facing? |
|---------------------------------|---------|--------------|------------|----------------|-----------------|
| <a href="#">Results article</a> | results | 06/08/2019   | 04/06/2020 | Yes            | No              |