

Effectiveness Replication of BEST in CLASS: Partnering with Early Childhood Programs to Evaluate a Tier 2 Behavioral Intervention Under Real World Conditions

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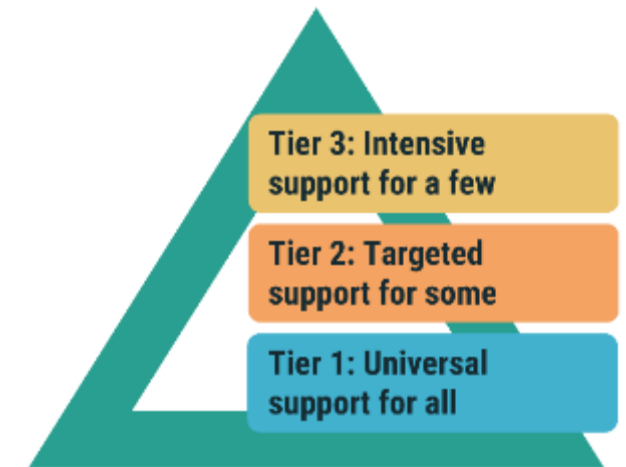
SRI Education

Behavioral, Emotional, and Social Training: Competent Learners Achieving School Success

- A **tier 2** (targeted) evidence-based intervention for young children with persistent and intensive challenging behaviors.
 - Teachers identify children who can benefit most from focused behavioral support.
- Instructs teachers in the use of practices during **authentic learning activities** (e.g., circle time, small group) to prevent behavior problems and support learning.
- Consists of **three interactive components**:
 - Teacher workshop (1-day)
 - Teacher handbook with detailed learning modules
 - Practice-Based Coaching over 14 weeks



<https://education.ufl.edu/best-in-class/>



BEST in CLASS: Key instructional practices

Rules:

Teach short, simple classroom rules to support focal children's compliance and appropriate behavior.

Precorrections:

Remind or instruct focal children to engage in appropriate, alternative behaviors before challenging behaviors can occur.

Opportunities to repond:

Enhance instructional queries and pacing to increase focal children's active engagement and decrease their challenging behaviors.



Behavior-specific praise:

Build positive relationships with focal children and reinforce their appropriate behaviors with specific, verbal encouragement.

Corrective feedback:

Use learning opportunities to help focal children learn the correct responses and appropriate behaviors via timely, high-quality feedback.

Instructive Feedback:

Expand focal children's preacademic and behavioral learning via extended learning opportunities.

Linking and mastery:

Link and combine BEST in CLASS instructional practices to maximize effectiveness and promote continued mastery, maintenance, and generalization.

Benefits of BEST in CLASS

- BEST in CLASS is an **evidence-based program** that reduces teacher time spent responding to challenging behaviors, allowing more time for **quality instruction** and **positive interactions**.

Positive outcomes for teachers

- Improved teacher-child relationships
- Increased self-efficacy
- Improved classroom atmosphere

Positive outcomes for children

- Increased engagement and on task behavior
- Increased positive teacher-child interactions
- Decreased problem behavior
- Increased social skills



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Building the Evidence

BEST in CLASS – Pre-K:
Goal 2
Development Study

TIMECS:
Goal 5
Measurement Study

BEST in CLASS – Web:
Goal 2
Development Study

BEST FRIENDS:
Goal 1
Early Career Study

BEST in CLASS – Pre-K
Replication Study

2011-2015

2015-2018

2018-2022

2020-2024

2008-2011

2014-2018

2016-2019

2019-2023

2021-2026

BEST in CLASS – Pre-K:
Goal 3
Efficacy Study

BEST in CLASS – Elementary:
Goal 2
Development Study

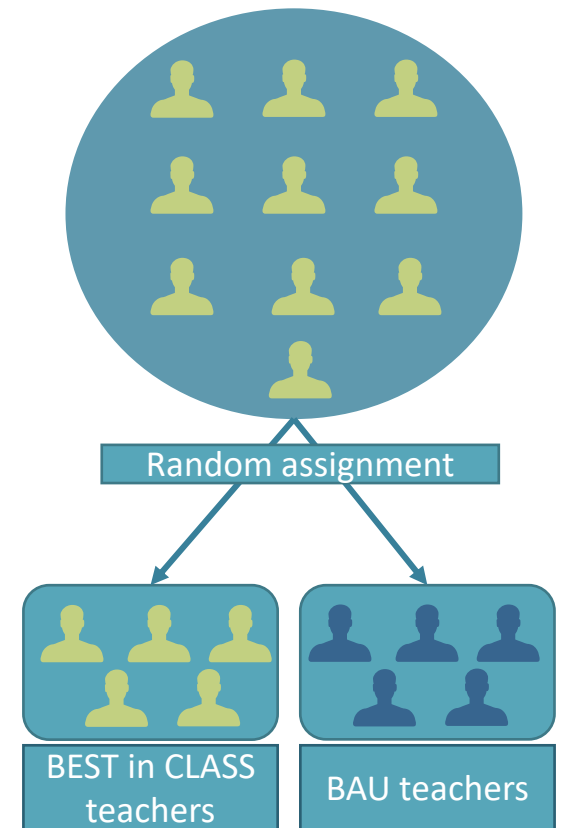
BEST in CLASS – Elementary:
Goal 3
Efficacy Study

BEST in CLASS – Elementary:
NIMH
Sustainability Study



Examining the effectiveness of BEST in CLASS

- Funded by the **U.S. Department of Education**, Institute of Education Sciences (\$4.5M, 5 years).
- Partnership of **SRI** (lead researchers) and **University of Florida** (UF) and **Virginia Commonwealth University** (VCU) (developers)
- Large-scale **experimental** study of BEST in CLASS under routine conditions in authentic Early childhood settings across the country.
 - Teachers will be **randomly assigned** to the BEST in CLASS group or comparison group.
 - Teachers in **comparison** group engage in “business as usual” (BAU) instructional practices.
 - At study end, teachers in comparison group receive BEST in CLASS materials and training.



Replication Effectiveness Trial

- “Systematic replication studies that vary one or more aspects of a previous study.”
- “The goal of IES’s program of systematic replications is to build on prior evidence in order to better understand what interventions improve education outcomes and the conditions under which they will likely work and for whom.”



The Current Project

- Difference from previous studies:
 - Previous studies of BEST in CLASS relied on program developer staff to provide coaching for teachers
 - The current study relies on district-based coaches, who receive training from program developers, to work with educators

The Current Project

- District Partnership Considerations
 - Time commitment
 - PD scheduling
 - Staffing
 - Alignment with district priorities
 - Data collection activities
 - Previous experience with research
 - Capacity to train additional staff not assigned to the intervention

The Current Project

- Successes

- Collaboration with 2 large early childhood education programs, 6 coaches, and 21 educators.

- Challenges

- Promoting teacher participation despite initial time commitment
- Addressing misconceptions about program goals

Focus Groups

- Purpose: to understand barriers and facilitators in BEST in CLASS implementation in real word settings. Questions were developed by referring to the BEST in CLASS Coaching Integrity Manual.
- 6 coaches from the Mid-Atlantic and Southeastern United States
- 2 school-based coach focus groups

District Coach Focus Group Results

- Facilitators
 - Focus on “real strategies” versus general best practices
 - Providing training in collaboration with experienced coaches
 - The value of having protected time through weekly meetings
 - Importance of teacher engagement in specific goal setting and shared goals
 - Benefits of focusing on antecedents/preventive measures
 - Links and connections across training modules where new content can build on previous content

District Coach Focus Group Results

- Barriers
 - The need for more broadly understandable language and less jargon
 - Challenges associated with having staff in the classroom who are not receiving BEST in CLASS coaching.
 - Limitations of coach observations of the classroom (is it a reflection of typical behavior?)
 - Practices that are more driven by student performance may be more challenging to implement (e.g., corrective and instructional feedback). More challenging practices may require additional coaching sessions.
 - Time commitment, paperwork, and scheduling challenges for coaching sessions.

Questions?

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We are looking for Head Start and early childhood programs in Virginia!

Would you like to learn more about participating in the BEST in CLASS project?

Contact Dan Cohen - dan.cohen@sri.com





- Purpose: To facilitate learning about **evidence-based** approaches to support all students' **positive behavior**, **mental health**, and **well-being**.
- Includes tips and findings from our research, evaluation, and TA work.
 - Perspectives from our partners on the ground, too!
- Send comments and inquiries about partnering or working with us to: studentbehaviorblog@sri.com

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