The Coach Experience: Impacts and Scalability of a Behavioral Intervention Coaching Program

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BEST in CLASS

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Outline of Presentation

- Overview of BEST in CLASS

- Implementation study of coach experiences

Slides available at:

studentbehaviorblog.org/presentations

Purpose

Research tells us that persistent challenging behavior has harmful long-term effects.

The **good news** is that evidence shows problem behavior is alterable with effective early intervention.

Positive teacher-child interactions can serve as a "protective" factor for social/emotional and academic success.
(Bulotsky-Shearer et al., 2012; McCabe & Altamura, 2011; O'Conner & McCartney, 2007)

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Professional Development Components

Rules

BEST Collaborative Coaching

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

Linking & Mastery

BEST in CLASS Practices

BEST in CLASS Teacher Workshop and Manual

BEST in CLASS Practice-based Coaching

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Evidence for BEST in CLASS

In comparison to Business as Usual, there is evidence that **BEST in CLASS** leads to:

Improved classroom **atmosphere**	**Improved** teacher-child **interactions**	**Improvements** in child **appropriate** behavior, **engagement**, and **social skills**	**Reductions** in child **challenging** behavior

- **BEST in CLASS** is an intervention that mitigates obstacles shown to negatively impact short- and long-term child outcomes

- These findings have maintained   Over **time** & Across **trials**

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Systematic Replication Study

Current evidence base for BEST in CLASS from **efficacy trials**

- Conducted under **ideal** conditions:
  - Coaches were **highly trained** and experienced research staff, closely **supervised**.
  - Coaches observed teaching practices and **corrected deviations**.
  - Program developers provided **regular monitoring.**

Systematic replication study

- Intervention implemented in **naturally occurring** conditions (e.g., typical early childhood classrooms) with **typical end users** (e.g., current program staff) and **evaluated independently**.
- Results will provide practically important impacts on **meaningful education outcomes**.
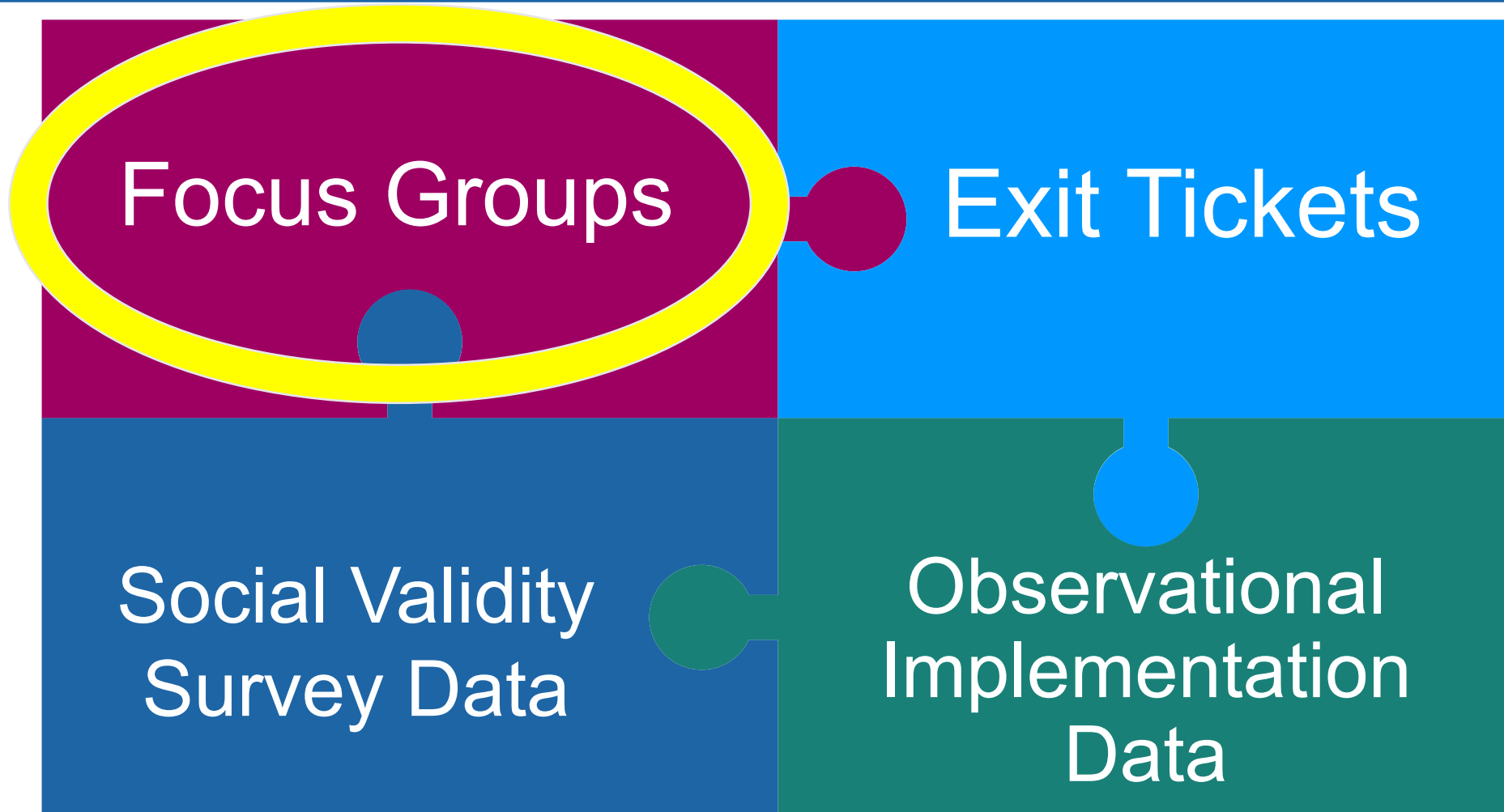
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Current Project: BEST in CLASS implementation and outcomes study

District partnership considerations

- Time commitment

- Staffing

- Alignment with district priorities

- Data collection activities

- Previous experience with research

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Focus Groups

Purpose

- To understand **barriers** and **facilitators** of BEST in CLASS implementation in real word settings.

Cohort 1 Sample

- 3 focus groups and 1 interview
  - 6 school-based coaches
  - 3 developer coaches

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Methodology

- SRI researchers developed interview questions from a review of the BEST in CLASS **Coaching Integrity Manual** and in collaboration with VCU/UF partners.

- We are employing a **6-Phase Thematic Analysis** (Braun & Clarke, 2006).
  - SRI developed *a priori* codes based on existing theory, literature, and interview question content.
  - Codes were subsequently revised through 2 rounds of coding.
  - Quotes were coded by 2 researchers. All discrepant codes were discussed and consensus was reached to establish a final code.
  - Analyses are still in progress.
    - We are currently finalizing themes.

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Preliminary Themes

Facilitators of implementation

- Importance of weekly meetings with developer coaches.
- Importance of alliance building.
- Importance of ongoing feedback.

Barriers of implementation

- Impact of competing demands.
- Challenges with positively framing behavioral expectations.
- Limited understanding and knowledge.
- Teacher perceptions of coaching as invasive.

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Facilitators

Importance of alliance building

Developer Coaches

- Alliance building was a critical consideration in optimizing training and weekly meetings for school-based coaches.

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Facilitators

Importance of alliance building

"It felt much more important in these sessions to be a **cheerleader***, and really encouraging... It just seemed like that was a really important piece of this, alliance building, as part of this team to communicate... we* **valued each other** *and that we recognize there was a lot of other stuff going on, but we really appreciated seeing you all every Friday."* **(Developer coach)**

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Facilitators

Importance of alliance building

"It was right around the time one of my coaches came back… and I was trying to **re-engage** *her. I actually set up a meeting to show up on a Tuesday at their office, just to see them, and kind of popped in and hung out for twenty minutes because I felt like they needed a little* **face time**, *a little* **boost**, *and so I think being aware and sensitive to those things is very important as we engage."* **(Developer coach)**

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Facilitators

Importance of ongoing feedback

Developer Coaches

- The critical importance **individualized** feedback for coaches.

School-Based Coaches

- **Video-based feedback** for teachers is particularly useful.
- Coaches can learn from **feedback** provided to other coaches.

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Facilitators

Importance of ongoing feedback

*"it really needed to have a more **a la carte approach** based on the needs of the coaches. Like our site, the coaches may have grasped the practices really well as opposed to other sites, but they need a little bit of help with providing **feedback**. This allows the site team lead, based on the needs of coaches, to choose to focus on certain competency areas. Then if additional coaches need more supports, they have a one-off.* **(Developer coach)**

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Facilitators

Importance of ongoing feedback

"The thing that I like the best is recording, and being able to have that **video** *in hand. When I went back to do my* **feedback session** *with my teacher, because sometimes you can talk to someone and tell them. But then, being able to actually see it, I think that was very very helpful."* **(School-based coach)**

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Barriers

Impact of competing demands

Developer Coaches

- Despite additional burden, coaches were still **highly motivated** to carry out program activities.
- School-based coaches' ability to provide BEST in CLASS coaching was **negatively impacted by existing workload**.

Both

- School-based coaches already have an **immense workload** with many competing responsibilities.

School-Based Coaches

- BEST in CLASS **procedures outside of coaching sessions** add additional burden.

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Barriers

Impact of competing demands

"We had a lot of people that were coaches that had quit, and somebody had to fill that hole. So, I doubled up my schedule... But yeah, to be effective at anything that we do, we don't want to be **overburdened***, or* **rushed***, you don't want to rush through the process with these teachers because they're not going to get the full potential of it."* **(School-based coach)**

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Barriers

Impact of competing demands

"I was surprised about how many **competing demands** *they had... It seemed like it was next level, they would get pulled randomly into a grant meeting or have a teacher that wouldn't show up, so they'd be driving across town to then fill in... They took a lot of those meetings from their car or walking in the rain to get to their next building… it really illustrated their dedication to sticking with it... But I think it also* **inhibited how much they could participate***." (Developer coach)*

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Barriers

Teacher perceptions of coaching as invasive

School-based Coaches

- Teachers were very reluctant to participate in coaching because they assumed that the process would be **overly intrusive**.

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Barriers

Teacher perceptions of coaching as invasive

*"That initial meeting was kind of like, we're going to come in there and we're going to help you deal with behaviors. It felt like an **invasion of space** more than it felt like you're there to help me… But it felt like it was going to be a lot more **intrusive** on the teachers than it actually was, which is why I feel like a lot of teachers didn't really sign up for it, because it was like somebody's going to be in my classroom all the time **up in my space**, telling me what to do."* **(School-based coach)**

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Discussion

- **Barriers:**
  - Lack of knowledge/understanding of key concepts and skills
  - Competing demands
  - Perceived Invasiveness
- **Facilitators:**
  - Alliance
  - Routine support/accountability
  - Ongoing feedback

- **Next steps**

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Student Behavior Blog

- Purpose: To help stakeholders learn 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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