Excellence in Prevention – descriptions of the prevention programs and strategies with the greatest evidence of success

Name of Program/Strategy:  Project ACHIEVE

Report Contents

1. Overview and description
2. Implementation considerations (if available)
3. Descriptive information
4. Outcomes
6. Washington State results (from Performance Based Prevention System (PBPS) – if available)
7. Who is using this program/strategy
8. Study populations
9. Quality of studies
10. Readiness for Dissemination
11. Costs (if available)
12. Contacts for more information

1. Overview and description

Project ACHIEVE is a comprehensive school reform and improvement program for preschool through high school (students ages 3-18 years) that focuses on students’ academic, social-emotional/behavioral, and social skills outcomes; school-wide positive behavioral support systems and school safety; positive classroom and school climates; and community and parent outreach and involvement. For students, the aim is to improve resilience, protective factors, and effective self-management skills so youth are better able to resist unhealthy and maladaptive behaviors. The aim for staff is to ensure effective instruction and classroom management as well as supports and services to students not responding with academic and behavioral success. The school aim is to help schools to be successful for all students.

Based on social learning theory and effective approaches to school reform and improvement, this school-wide program uses professional development and ongoing technical consultation to target and reinforce critical staff skills and intervention approaches. The program incorporates a continuum of student services, including prevention, strategic intervention, and crisis management, and consists of seven interdependent components implemented over 3 years:

- Strategic planning and organizational analysis and development
- Problem-solving, response-to-intervention, teaming, and consultation processes
Excellence in Prevention – descriptions of the prevention programs and strategies with the greatest evidence of success

- Effective school, schooling, and professional development
- Academic instruction linked to academic assessment, intervention, and achievement (i.e., Positive Academic Supports and Services)
- Age-appropriate social skills instruction (i.e., Stop & Think Social Skills Program) linked to behavioral assessment, intervention, and self-management (i.e., Positive Behavioral Support System)
- Parent and community training, support, and outreach
- Data management, evaluation, and accountability

Project ACHIEVE involves the school’s entire instructional, administrative, and support staff and, following training, can be implemented with resources available in most schools. Training typically involves in-service training, classroom-based demonstrations, and technical consultation and follow-up.

Project ACHIEVE has been used in public schools, alternative schools, special education centers, psychiatric and juvenile justice facilities, Head Start programs, and specialized charter schools. The research study reviewed for this summary involved kindergarten through grade 6 in public schools.

2. Implementation considerations (if available)

3. Descriptive Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Areas of Interest</th>
<th>Mental health promotion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Outcomes          | 1: School staff perceptions of staff interactions and school cohesion  
|                    | 2: School staff perceptions of school discipline and safety  
|                    | 3: Office discipline referrals  
|                    | 4: Administrative actions in response to office discipline referrals  
|                    | 5: Academic achievement |
| Outcome Categories| Education  
|                  | Environmental change |
| Ages              | 6-12 (Childhood)  
|                  | 18-25 (Young adult)  
|                  | 26-55 (Adult)  |
| Genders           | Male  
|                  | Female |
| Races/Ethnicities| Black or African American  
|                  | Hispanic or Latino  
|                  | White |

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Outcomes

Outcome 1: School staff perceptions of staff interactions and school cohesion

Description of Measures

Perceptions of staff interactions and school cohesion were measured using the Scale of Staff Interactions and School Cohesion (SSISC), which was administered online. School staff (i.e., instructional, administrative, support staff) rated characteristics of staff in their school along a 5-point scale from 1 (excellent) to 5 (poor). The SSISC consists of 26 items across the following 4 scales:

- Scale 1: Staff understanding of the mission of the school
- Scale 2: Staff interactions contributing to successful
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| Key Findings | In schools that participated in cohort 1 of Project ACHIEVE, staff completed the SSISC prior to implementation and after 1 and 2 years of implementation. From baseline to 1-year follow-up, schools had statistically significant improvement on all four scales of the SSISC (p < .001 for Scale 1, p < .002 for Scale 2, p < .05 for Scales 3 and 4). From 1- to 2-year follow-up, no statistically significant differences were found. In schools that participated in cohort 2 of Project ACHIEVE, staff completed the SSISC prior to implementation and after 1 year of implementation. From baseline to 1-year follow-up, schools had a statistically significant improvement on Scale 1 (p < .01), with no significant differences on the three other scales. No data were reported for comparison schools. |
| Studies Measuring Outcome | Study 1 |
| Study Designs | Quasi-experimental |
| Quality of Research Rating | 2.1 (0.0-4.0 scale) |

**Outcome 2: School staff perceptions of school discipline and safety**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description of Measures</th>
<th>Perceptions of school discipline and safety were measured using the Scale of Effective School Discipline and Safety (SESDS), which was administered online. School staff (i.e., instructional, administrative, support staff) indicated their agreement with statements along a 5-point scale from 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree). The SESDS consists of 58 items across the following 5 factors:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Factor 1: Teachers’ effective classroom management skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Factor 2: Students’ positive behavioral interactions and respect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Factor 3: Holding students accountable for their behavior: administration and staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Factor 4: Teachers’ contribution to a positive school climate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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**Key Findings**

In schools that participated in cohort 1 of Project ACHIEVE, staff completed the SESDS prior to implementation and after 1 and 2 years of implementation. From baseline to 1-year follow-up, no statistically significant differences on any of the five factors were found. From baseline to 2-year follow-up, four of five factors showed significant improvement (p < .05 for Factors 2 and 4, p < .001 for Factor 3, p < .01 for Factor 5).

In schools that participated in cohort 2 of Project ACHIEVE, staff completed the SESDS prior to implementation and after 1 year of implementation. From baseline to 1-year follow-up, no statistically significant differences on any of the five factors were found. No data were reported for comparison schools.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Studies Measuring Outcome</th>
<th>Study 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Study Designs</td>
<td>Quasi-experimental</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of Research Rating</td>
<td>2.1 (0.0-4.0 scale)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Outcome 3: Office discipline referrals**

**Description of Measures**

Office discipline referrals, expressed in the number of referrals per 100 students in the school, were measured using data from the Arkansas Department of Education's Arkansas Public School Computer Network (APSCN). Using APSCN, referral data were reported annually, following State regulation and Federal law, by every school principal in the State.

**Key Findings**

In six Project ACHIEVE schools that demonstrated high implementation fidelity, the average number of annual office discipline referrals per 100 students decreased from 65.50 at baseline to 42.14 after 1 year of implementation and 38.14 after 2 years of implementation. In contrast, the 17 comparison schools, which were demographically matched to intervention schools but did not implement Project ACHIEVE, averaged 43.31 office discipline referrals at baseline, 47.68 at 1-year follow-up, and 37.83 at 2-year follow-up (p < .01).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Studies Measuring Outcome</th>
<th>Study 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Study Designs</td>
<td>Quasi-experimental</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Quality of Research Rating | 2.2 (0.0-4.0 scale)
--- | ---

**Outcome 4: Administrative actions in response to office discipline referrals**

**Description of Measures**: Administrative actions of school principals (e.g., suspension, expulsion) in response to students’ office discipline referrals, expressed in the number of administrative actions per 100 students in the school, were measured using data from the Arkansas Department of Education's APSCN. Using APSCN, administrative action data were reported annually, following State regulation and Federal law, by every school principal in the State.

**Key Findings**: In six Project ACHIEVE schools that demonstrated high implementation fidelity, the administrative actions per 100 students decreased from baseline to 1-year follow-up (mean change score of 83.36). In contrast, the administrative actions for the 17 comparison schools, which were demographically matched to intervention schools but did not implement Project ACHIEVE, increased from baseline to 1-year follow-up (mean change score of 171.93; p = .043.). From baseline to 2-year follow-up, the number of administrative actions per 100 students decreased in the Project ACHIEVE schools (mean change score of 69.70) and the comparison schools (mean change score of 120.49), with no significant difference in the change between intervention and comparison schools.

**Studies Measuring Outcome**: Study 1

**Study Designs**: Quasi-experimental

**Quality of Research Rating**: 2.2 (0.0-4.0 scale)

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**Outcome 5: Academic achievement**

**Description of Measures**: Academic achievement was measured using data on the following measures available on the Arkansas Department of Education's Web site:

- Arkansas State Benchmark Tests, given in Literacy and Mathematics. These test data generally are reported as the percentage of students who score at the "below basic," "basic," "proficient," and "advanced" levels using score...
### Key Findings

In six Project ACHIEVE schools that demonstrated high implementation fidelity, scores on 2 literacy tests (Arkansas State Benchmark Test and ITBS Reading Comprehension test) were tracked over time for 11 groups of students: 3rd-graders from 5 schools, 4th-graders from 4 schools, and 5th- and 6th-graders from 1 school. With 11 groups of students and 2 tests, there were 22 possible student group-by-test combinations. In 12 of the 22 combinations (55%), students increased their scores from baseline to the 2-year follow-up:

- On the Arkansas State Benchmark Test, scores improved for 4 groups of the 3rd graders, 3 groups of the 4th graders, and the group of 5th graders.
- On the ITBS, scores improved for 2 groups of the 3rd graders and 2 groups of the 4th graders.

Eight of these 12 increases reached statistical significance (p values ranging from < .001 to < .05). Further, four groups of students increased their scores on the ITBS from baseline to 2-year follow-up more than their comparison school counterparts (p values < .05).

Scores on 3 mathematics tests (Arkansas State Benchmark Test, ITBS Math Concepts and Estimation test, and ITBS Math Problem Solving and Data Interpretation test) were tracked over time with the same 11 groups of students. With 11 groups of students and 3 tests, there were 33 possible student group-by-test combinations. In 26 of the 33 combinations (79%), students increased their scores from baseline to the 2-year follow-up:

- On the Arkansas State Benchmark Test, scores improved for all 5 groups of 3rd graders, all 4 groups of 4th graders, the group of 5th graders, and the group of 6th graders.
- On the ITBS Math Concepts and Estimation test, scores improved for 4 groups of the 3rd graders and 3 groups of the 4th graders.
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On the ITBS Math Problem Solving and Data Interpretation test, scores improved for 4 groups of the 3rd graders, 3 groups of the 4th graders, and the group of 5th graders. Twelve of these 26 increases reached statistical significance (p values ranging from < .001 to < .05). Further, five groups of students increased their average math score on the ITBS from baseline to 2-year follow-up more than their comparison school counterparts (p values < .05).

Studies Measuring Outcome | Study 1
--- | ---
Study Designs | Quasi-experimental
Quality of Research Rating | 2.9 (0.0-4.0 scale)


6. Washington State results (from Performance Based Prevention System (PBPS) – if available)

7. Where is this program/strategy being used (if available)?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Washington Counties</th>
<th>Oregon Counties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8. Study Populations

The studies reviewed for this intervention included the following populations, as reported by the study authors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Study 1</td>
<td>6-12 (Childhood)</td>
<td>51% Male</td>
<td>55% White</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18-25 (Young adult)</td>
<td>49% Female</td>
<td>40% Black or African American</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>26-55 (Adult)</td>
<td></td>
<td>5% Hispanic or Latino</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9. Quality of Research

The documents below were reviewed for Quality of Research. Other materials may be available. For more information, contact the developer(s).

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Study 1


Supplementary Materials


Development and Psychometric Properties of: The Scale of Effective School Discipline and Safety and the Scale of Staff Interactions and School Cohesion

Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS) Forms, A, B, and C


Quality of Research Ratings by Criteria (0.0-4.0 scale)

External reviewers independently evaluate the Quality of Research for an intervention's reported results using six criteria:

1. Reliability of measures
2. Validity of measures
3. Intervention fidelity
4. Missing data and attrition

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5. Potential confounding variables

6. Appropriateness of analysis

For more information about these criteria and the meaning of the ratings, see Quality of Research.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Reliability of Measures</th>
<th>Validity of Measures</th>
<th>Fidelity</th>
<th>Missing Data/Attrition</th>
<th>Confounding Variables</th>
<th>Data Analysis</th>
<th>Overall Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1: School staff perceptions of staff interactions and school cohesion</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2: School staff perceptions of school discipline and safety</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3: Office discipline referrals</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4: Administrative actions in response to office discipline referrals</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5: Academic achievement</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Study Strengths**

Standardized instruments with good psychometric properties were used in measuring academic achievement.

**Study Weaknesses**

Psychometric information was not adequately documented for some measures. The majority of the intervention schools did not implement the program with high fidelity. During the implementation of one intervention component, observations of a "master trainer/consultant" were conducted, but results of these observations were not presented. The researchers did not discuss how they handled missing data associated with the intervention schools. The data analysis did not account for some confounding variables. For example, intervention schools were matched with controls, yet some differences at baseline existed (e.g., on average, intervention schools had 50% more office disciplinary referrals than comparison schools). No analysis of covariance was conducted to examine the impact of other potential confounding variables, such as demographic characteristics.
10. Readiness for Dissemination

The documents below were reviewed for Readiness for Dissemination. Other materials may be available. For more information, contact the developer(s).

Dissemination Materials


Abuse Prevention.

Division of Behavioral Health and Recovery.

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Project ACHIEVE. (n.d.). Core Knowledge Foundation: Early childhood program. Autonomy, social skills and work habits [PowerPoint slides]. Little Rock, AR.


Project ACHIEVE. (n.d.). Staff Interactions Scale--Rating Scale. Little Rock, AR.

Project ACHIEVE. (n.d.). Stop & Think parents slides and handouts [PowerPoint slides]. Little Rock, AR.


Readiness for Dissemination Ratings by Criteria (0.0-4.0 scale)

External reviewers independently evaluate the intervention's Readiness for Dissemination using three criteria:

1. Availability of implementation materials
2. Availability of training and support resources
3. Availability of quality assurance procedures

For more information about these criteria and the meaning of the ratings, see Readiness for Dissemination.

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**Excellence in Prevention** – descriptions of the prevention programs and strategies with the greatest evidence of success

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Implementation Materials</th>
<th>Training and Support Resources</th>
<th>Quality Assurance Procedures</th>
<th>Overall Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Dissemination Strengths**

Implementation materials are comprehensive. "Blueprints," planning worksheets, and checklists facilitate navigation through the many processes required for implementation. The program developer requires new sites to conduct an organizational analysis and needs assessment prior to implementation. The developer offers comprehensive training using multiple training methods and formats. Multiple quality assurance tools, in both paper and electronic formats, are available and are supported by on-site consultation.

**Dissemination Weaknesses**

The volume of highly detailed and technical materials may be overwhelming to prospective implementers. Electronic versions of the many forms, assessment instruments, and other tools are not readily available.

**11. Costs**

The information below was provided by the developer and may have changed since the time of review. For detailed information on implementation costs (e.g., staffing, space, equipment, materials shipping and handling), contact the developer.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Description</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Required by Program Developer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Implementing Response-to-Intervention at the School, District, and State Levels: Functional Assessment, Data-Based Problem Solving, and Evidence-Based Academic and Behavioral Interventions (book)</td>
<td>$39.95 each</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementing Effective School-Wide Student Discipline and Behavior Management Systems: Increasing Academic Engagement and Achievement, Decreasing Teasing and Bullying, and Keeping Your School and Common Areas Safe (book)</td>
<td>$29.95 each</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More Stop &amp; Think Social Skills</td>
<td>$34.95 each</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Excellence in Prevention

- **Excellence in Prevention** – *descriptions of the prevention programs and strategies with the greatest evidence of success*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program/Strategy</th>
<th>Price</th>
<th>Availability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>and Steps: Classroom and Building Routines and Scripts From Preschool to High School (book)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holding Students Responsible for Their School and Classroom Behavior: Developing a School-Wide Accountability System To Encourage Student Self-Management and Staff Consistency (book)</td>
<td>$34.95 each</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changing Student Behavior by Linking Office Discipline Referrals to a Strategic Time-Out Process: A Step-by-Step Implementation Guide to the Effective Use of Classroom Consequences (book)</td>
<td>$29.95 each</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building Strong Schools To Strengthen Student Outcomes: The Project ACHIEVE Forms Book</td>
<td>$59.95 each</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade-level classroom sets</td>
<td>$180 each</td>
<td>Yes, at least one per grade level required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support materials for school</td>
<td>$250 per school</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Stop &amp; Think Parent Book: A Guide to Children's Good Behavior (with DVD)</td>
<td>$59.95 each</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Stop &amp; Think Social Skills Songbook (CD) with posters</td>
<td>$75 each</td>
<td>Yes, required for preschool-grade 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-12 days of on-site training</td>
<td>$2,250-$3,000 per day, depending on site location, plus travel expenses</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Off-site training via conference call or Skype</td>
<td>$250-$300 per hour</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project ACHIEVE Technical Assistance Papers</td>
<td>Free</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Excellence in Prevention** – *descriptions of the prevention programs and strategies with the greatest evidence of success*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Available</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parent Literacy Training PowerPoint</td>
<td>Free</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent Home Discipline, Behavior Management, and Stop &amp; Think Social Skills Training PowerPoint</td>
<td>Free</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Seven Sure Solutions to School-Based Mental Health Services Success: The Necessary Collaboration Between School and Community Providers (book)</td>
<td>Free</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building Strong Schools To Strengthen Student Outcomes 12-DVD Training Series</td>
<td>Free</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Off-site consultation via conference call or Skype</td>
<td>$250-$300 per hour</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-site consultation</td>
<td>$2,250-$3,000 per day depending on site location, plus travel expenses</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scale of Staff Interactions and School Cohesion</td>
<td>Free</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scale of Effective School Discipline and Safety</td>
<td>Free</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The PRAIIE--Project ACHIEVE Implementation Integrity and Self-Evaluation</td>
<td>Free</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The APPRAISE--Action Plan for Project ACHIEVE Implementation Success and Evaluation</td>
<td>Free</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**12. Contacts**

*For information on implementation or research:*

Howard M. Knoff, Ph.D., NCSP  
(501) 312-1484  
knoffprojectachieve@earthlink.net

**Learn More by Visiting:** [http://www.projectachieve.info](http://www.projectachieve.info)