The Incredible Years Teacher Classroom Management (TCM) Program: An evidence-based intervention for young children at risk for social-emotional difficulties

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Inclusion Institute

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• Dr. Murray has received funding from the Institute of Educational Sciences (IES) to evaluate the Incredible Years TCM Program

• She is also a nationally-certified mentor for TCM
Overview

- Program Description
  - Rationale
  - Delivery Model
  - Methods
  - Content with sample vignettes
- Review of Research
- Recommendations for Use
Almost half of kindergarten teachers report that their students lack self-regulation skills to be successful in the classroom.

Children with emotional and behavioral difficulties are at high risk for underachievement, school drop out, delinquency, bullying, and substance abuse.

Emotional regulation and social competence are powerful predictors of school success, even after controlling for variations in cognitive ability.
Rationale for Teacher Interventions

- Unsupportive or critical teacher responses can **escalate children’s behavior problems**
- Positive teacher-student relationships **enhance learning, school adjustment, and buffer other sources of stress** in the child’s life, improving long-term outcomes for at-risk children
- Well-trained teachers can help children **develop social and emotional skills** and improve the peer status of at-risk students
- **Parenting programs alone do not provide adequate benefit** to improve behavior and peer interactions at school for the at-risk child

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Pianta et al., 2002; Webster-Stratton et al., 2000
Overview of Incredible Years

• Multi-component social-emotional intervention for young children (aged 3-8 years)
  – Parent Training
  – Child-Directed (small group and classroom)
  – Teacher Training

• Evidence-based for the prevention and treatment of disruptive behavior and conduct problems
  – Included in the National Registry of Evidence-Based Programs and Practices
  – Identified as an “exemplary” and “blueprints” program by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP)
  – Selected as a “model” Strengthening Families program by the Center for Substance Use Prevention (CSAP)

www.incredibleyears.com
• 42 hours of teacher training
  – 6 full day monthly workshops (or 12 half days held every 2 weeks)
• Classroom coaching/consultation
  – Model strategies, support implementation and assist with individual behavior plans
  – Weekly to monthly depending on need
• May be combined with other IY programs or offered alone
TCM Delivery Model

• Recommended Model: Two trained group leaders should co-lead workshops and provide classroom coaching
  
  – Leader Background: expertise in child development, behavior management, cognitive social learning methods; group facilitation skills, experience working with teachers and in schools/preschools

• 10-15 teachers/group

• Ideally, teacher assistants and program administrators also should be trained

• First workshop should can be held prior to start of school
Supports for Fidelity

- Standardized training by certified trainer or mentor
  - 3 day workshop
- Detailed treatment manuals and materials
- Standardized session protocols
- Group leader consultation with mentor and/or peer coaching
  - Use of video review to enhance implementation
- Group leader certification through National Office

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TCM Training Methods: Active, Collaborative Learning

- Video modeling
- Role play ("practices") & positive behavioral rehearsal
  - Introduce strategies, re-do vignettes, spontaneous to address questions
- Peer support - turn and talks, group work, buddy system
- Coping model vs. expert model
- Reading and "homework" assignments
- Self-reflection and goal-setting
- Individual consultation/ coaching in classroom

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How TCM differs from other Teacher Training Programs

• Takes an active, collaborative learning approach consistent with adult learning literature
• Workshops are held monthly with time for classroom practice to enhance skill acquisition
• Coaching by group leaders or coaches provides support for implementation
• Teachers meet in groups, providing structure to support practice change within centers or schools
• Comprehensive curriculum builds solid foundation of skills
TCM Workshop Content

- Building positive relationships with students
- Building parent-teacher collaboration
- Teacher attention, encouragement and praise
- Preventing problems: proactive teaching
- Decreasing children’s inappropriate behavior
- Promoting social skills, emotional literacy, problem solving, and academic learning
Workshop 1
Building Relationships and Proactive Management

- Introduction to IY pyramid (road map of strategies)
- Building relationships with difficult students
- Building relationships with parents
  - Parent handouts with suggested home activities, positive phone calls
- Proactive Management Strategies
  - Rules, routines, transitions
  - Structure, monitoring, and placement
  - Getting and holding children’s attention
  - Giving clear instructions
- Initial development of a behavior plan for a challenging student
“Coaching” (descriptive commenting)
- Academic concepts and behaviors (persistence), social skills, emotions (feelings identification)
- Child-directed play/learning

Praise and Encouragement
- Individual, group
- Encouraging self-praise and giving compliments
- Proximity praise

Continued development of a behavior plan for a challenging student
Workshop 3 - Incentives

- Motivating students through Incentives
  - Individual, team and group incentives (depending on developmental appropriateness)
  - Celebrations, special recognition, tokens/points, behavior charts
  - Happy Grams for parents
- Optional: Dialogic Reading
- Continued development of a behavior plan for a challenging student
Workshop 4
Decreasing Inappropriate Behaviors I

• Introduction to discipline hierarchy
• Identification of discipline goals
• Redirection – nonverbal, positive verbal
• Ignoring
  – Teaching students to ignore
  – Teacher stress management
• Reminders and Warnings
• Continued development of a behavior plan for a challenging student
Workshop 5
Decreasing Inappropriate Behaviors II

• Natural and Logical Consequences

• Time Out to Calm Down
  – Goals and developmental considerations
  – Strategies for dealing with resistance
  – Teaching to children (puppets and calm-down thermometer)

• Continued development of a behavior plan for a challenging student
Workshop 6
Emotion Regulation, Friendship Skills, and Problem-Solving

• Teaching emotional literacy
• Review of social-emotional coaching
• Coaching self-regulation
  – Turtle technique
• Problem-solving
  – Teaching through puppets, stories, and role-plays
  – Dealing with problems and conflicts in the moment
• Continued development of a behavior plan for a challenging student and transition planning

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3 RCTs in combination with other IY programs by developer

- Webster-Stratton (2004) – 72 teachers, 152 children 4-7 years with conduct problems (+ IY Parent, IY Child, or both)
Randomized Controlled Trials (RCTs) of TCM

4 RCTs by independent investigators

- **Raver** (2008) – Chicago School Readiness Project, 90 Head Start teachers and 543 children (+ 4-5 hrs/week of in-class consultation); adapted version of the intervention

- **McGilloway** (2011) – 22 teachers in Ireland, 217 children aged 4-7 years (standard TCM workshop)

- **Baker-Henningham** (2009) – 24 teachers in Jamaica (+IY Dina social-emotional training -total of 9 days + abbreviated Dina curriculum)

- **Hutchings** (2014) – 12 teachers in Wales with children aged 3-8 years, implemented as an independent intervention
• **Hutchings (2007)** - comparison of 21 teachers in North West Wales, half of whom were trained in TCM (but not randomized)

• **Shernoff & Kratochwill (2007)** – Case studies of TCM as self-study program with and without 5 weeks of consultation with 8 preschool teachers

• **Carlson (2011)** – pre-post design in low income preschools in Michigan with 24 teachers

• **Williford & Shelton (2008)** – 40 teachers of 103 Head Start students with disruptive behavior in NC, 1 day training + 4 months weekly consultation using quasi-experimental design
TCM as a Stand-Alone Intervention

- **Murray**, 97 K-2 teachers in NC—5 days/workshop + limited class consultation
  - Positive effects on Classroom Climate and emotion regulation for some students
- **Morris** (CARES study), 104 Head Start Centers across 10 states, compared TCM vs. PATHS vs. Tools of the Mind with weekly coaching
  - Positive effects on observed teacher management strategies and social-emotional supports and on children’s emotion knowledge, social problem solving, and social behaviors and fewer problem behavior for the highest risk children

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Summary of TCM

Efficacy Data

- **Teachers** - moderate to large effects seen in objective observational data as well as teacher self-report
  - Less harsh and critical; more warm/affectionate
  - More teaching of social-emotional skills
  - Increased praise and consistency
  - More effective discipline (less consistent finding)

- **Students** (greater results seen for those at higher risk levels)
  - Increased emotion regulation/decreased emotional symptoms
  - Increased social skills and social problem-solving
  - More appropriate classroom behavior, decreased problem behaviors
  - Increased academic readiness (by teacher report)

- **Decreased teacher stress**

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Research on IY Program Combinations

- Parent Training alone impacts the most domains
- Child treatment enhances long term effects and is needed for improvement in peer relations
- Addition of TCM may be particularly helpful for students with hyperactivity and adds benefits for:
  - Academic and social competence
  - Reducing aggression
- Best results are obtained when all 3 intervention components are implemented

Webster-Stratton, Reid, & Hammond, 2004; JCCAP; Reid, Webster-Stratton, & Hammond, 2007; JCCAP; Beauchaine, Webster-Stratton & Reid, 2005, JCCP
Limitations of Research

• Evaluations have primarily been with preschool-aged samples in high-risk settings

• Studies have evaluated different dosages of the intervention (difficult to compare outcomes)
  – 4-6 days of training
  – with and without consultation
  – with and without other IY interventions
  – THUS, consultation effects and dosage needed are unclear

• Academic benefits have not yet been established

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• **Invests in teachers’ long-term professional development**
  - “Helps teachers adjust to changing demographics at school and increased needs of students and families”
  - “Great training opportunity” for new teachers
  - “Re-energizes” veteran teachers, particularly with increased focus on addressing children’s social-emotional needs

• **Decreases teacher stress**
  - May reduce teacher turnover
• Provides evidence-based training to teachers in managing behavior of challenging students
  – May reduce office referrals/children needing to be removed from centers
  – May prevent need for additional school services/special education
  – May increase overall instructional time and academic gains for all students

• Consistent with CSEFEL and PBIS framework

• Builds peer support (strengthens PLCs)
Recommendations for Use

• Ideal for children exhibiting conduct problems or hyperactivity or who lack expected social-emotional skills
  – Also beneficial for children with anxiety/depression

• Ideal for settings with many high-risk children
  – Head Start, schools with high free/reduced lunch rates

• Ideal for teachers with high stress due to student needs

• Ideal for teachers with weak management skills or limited knowledge of children’s social-emotional development
• Obtain agency, supervisor, and teacher buy-in
  – Readiness surveys, orient to commitment up front
• Provide trainings in half-day or even 2.25 hour sessions to reduce need for subs/problems with coverage
• Train teachers from the same center/grade level together
  – along with others to increase range of experience in group
• Offer parent groups to those whose children are in trained teachers’ classrooms
  – School Readiness or Attentive Parenting Program
Other Options for Use

- If funding prohibits offering full 42 hour TCM Program:
  - 1 day of training orientation followed by classroom consultation for targeted students may be beneficial (Williford & Shelton, 2008)
  - Teacher self-study with phone consultation may have some benefit (Shernoff & Kratochwill, 2007)
  - Group leader training for classroom consultants may allow them to integrate principles into current work
• Research
  – 100+ K-2 teachers trained in Orange, Franklin, & Alamance public schools through Duke IES study
  – New pre-k Duke IES study combining TCM with classroom Dina

• Community Practice
  – Communities in Schools of Durham-DPS pre-K program
  – Family Solutions in Greensboro
  – Beaufort/Hyde Partnership for Children

• Local Training and Consultation Available
  – Over 60 early childhood professionals trained since 2012
Feel free to contact me at desireew@unc.edu

For more information on TCM, visit www.incredibleyears.com