



Workshop 4 – 2018 Nordic Implementation Conference

Implementation in Education

Presenters: Kristine Amlund Hagen (NUBU – The Norwegian Centre for Child Behavioural Development, Norway), Liam O'Hare (Queen's University Belfast, Ireland), Kathleen Ryan Jackson (University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, U.S.) & Melissa van Dyke (University of Strathclyde, U.K.)

Presentation 1: Knowledge translation in Child Welfare Services: Improving educational outcomes for children at risk (Kristine Amlund Hagen)

Background

In Norway, a disproportionately high number of children receiving Child Welfare Services (CWS) fail academically and drop out of school. School mastery is one the strongest protective factors against societal marginalization. We are conducting a knowledge translation (KT) project in collaboration with local CWS in which we aim to support elementary school children's academic attainment.

Project aim

The main objectives of this project are: a) To evaluate a Knowledge Translation (KT) process that develops, implements and evaluates empirically derived measures to support school mastery for children and their families in CWS. The process is a facilitated co-creation effort between researchers, practitioners, school-personnel and users. b) To evaluate the effects of the empirically supported measures on children and their families in the CWS. This is done by conducting a randomized controlled effectiveness trial (a hybrid type 2 RCT) in the collaborating child welfare services.

Project methods

Participants in the effectiveness part of the study are elementary school children and their families receiving support from municipal CWSs. Intervention outcomes are measured at three time points (pre, post, and follow-up) and assess children's academic abilities, mental health, social skills, and executive functions and parents' school involvement. In the implementation part of the study, participants are practitioners and leaders in the CWSs. Outcomes include implementation climate, readiness for change, adherence, competence, comprehension, dose, adaptations, reach, and user satisfaction.

Project results

The academic support measures are delivered by CWS practitioners at home visits to families. CWS practitioners were trained prior to delivery. We want to present the processes of co-creation and implementation at the CWS. We want to share experiences on how we have identified the common elements of effective academic support and worked in collaboration with practitioners and users to develop, implement and evaluate these in the CWS. We also want to present some initial implementation data from our CWS sites and describe challenges with doing pragmatic trials in child welfare contexts in Norway.

Preliminary or final conclusions/discussion

We are testing a model for translating scientific knowledge into functional and useful evidence based practice, which in turn can support quality improvement in welfare services. By implementing empirically supported measures developed in collaboration with practitioners and users, the goal is to help children and families in the CWS to better master school and maintain effective practice over time. This can be of great value, both for the individual families and for society at large.



Presentation 2: An implementation study of the Positive Action social learning programme in English schools (Liam O'Hare)

Background

Positive Action is an elementary school curriculum being used by teachers with Year 4 and Year 5 students in England (aged 8-9). It is taught through 100 lessons (approximately 15 minutes each) drawn from six units over a whole school year. It also includes some related whole school activities. The main outcomes of the program are pupil self-regulation, improved behavior and emotional learning.

Project aim

This paper explores what program outputs (activities) and implementation factors were related to outcome change of the elementary school pupils participating in the Positive Action social and emotional learning program. The study explored the implementation of the program in 15 primary English school settings.

Project methods

The study uses mixed methods to explore the relationships between program outputs, implementation factors and outcome change. Pre- and post-outcome measures collected during the study include pupil: self-regulation; aggressive behaviour; pro-social behaviour; worry/anxiety; and feelings about the self. Program outputs include classroom activities and whole school activities. Measures of implementation collected in the study included: pupil engagement with the program; pupil/teacher relationships; pupil exposure to the program (dosage); and school climate.

Project results

A series of multi-level regression models are being used to explore the relationships between program outcomes, program outputs and implementation factors. In addition, to the outcome, output and implementation measures, a variety of qualitative implementation methods will also be employed including: classroom observations (all schools); stakeholder interviews and focus groups (involving pupils, teachers and school leaders in 5 schools). The report for this study is currently being drafted for the funder and the results are embargoed, but will be available at the conference.

Preliminary or final conclusions/discussion

Program outputs and implementation factors identified as having a significant relationship with program outcomes will be utilized in the scaling up and design of a randomized controlled trial evaluation of the program.



Presentation 3: Systemic Change to Close the Knowing – Doing Gap: Empirical Evidence from Real World Practice (Kathleen Ryan Jackson & Melissa van Dyke)

Background

The US Government funds a Centre to establish and sustain capacity for systemic change in State Education Agencies, intermediaries, and local schools. The State of Kentucky is the first to document initial changes in their education system, the benefits to system functioning, and improved teacher and pupil outcomes. This presentation will summarize key actions taken and evidence thus far.

Project aim

The purpose of the State Implementation and Scaling-up of Evidence Based Practices (SISEP) Centre is to establish large-scale, sustainable, high-fidelity implementation of effective education practices. The aim is to increase capacity (knowledge, skills, and behaviours) to use evidence-based implementation supports in states, their intermediaries, and local schools; establish implementation infrastructures in support of full and effective use of evidence-based approaches to education in the classroom; and establish implementation capacity in centres and projects funded by the U.S. Government.

Project methods

A Cascading Theory of Change is used to develop and sustain implementation and scaling capacity in a diverse slice of an organization's system. Implementation Teams are linked across the system with communication protocols to resolve barriers and replicate successes using Improvement Science. The first cohort is small enough to become functional, yet large enough to uncover barriers to effective use of a practice by teachers. The inputs at one level become the outputs at the next as teams develop and monitor their implementation capacity using practical assessments and action planning.

Project results

Capacity data was collected at the organizational levels to measure systemic change. After three years, the total state capacity score (systems, activities, resources) increased 53%; from 19% at baseline in November 2014 to 72% in June 2017. In the coming academic year, repeated measures of capacity data will be available from multiple levels, as well as teacher fidelity of practice data, and pupil's math outcome data. Data guides on-going action planning using Improvement Science to create a collective commitment to accountability and bridge the practice-science-policy gap.

Preliminary or final conclusions/discussion

Using evidence from Implementation and Improvement Science is complex and challenging. Excitement is experienced every time a tipping point is reached, often followed by the next adaptive challenge. In Kentucky, this process repeated itself for three years. Then one day, the adaptive challenges were less frequent and not so complex as the system aligned and strengthened the evidence ecology. This model bridges multiple implementation players and is transferable to any practice or sector.