

Behavioral Monitoring and Reinforcement Program and Achievement Mentoring

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Long-term, Low intensity, School-based Programs Conducted by Adults for Middle and High School Students

- Placed at Risk for School Failure, School Drop-out, Substance Abuse, and Juvenile Delinquency

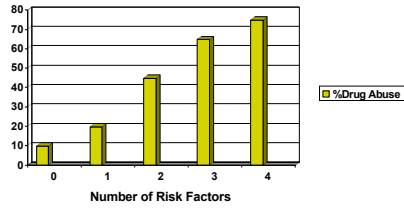


Rationale of Programs

- Since the probability that an adolescent will have future problems increases as his/her number of risk factors increases, reducing his/her number of risk factors should reduce the probability of future problems
- Risk factors targeted:
 - School failure
 - Behavior problems



Number of Risk Factors Predicts Probability of Problems



Bry, B.H., McKeon, P., & Pandina, R. (1982). Extent of drug use as a function of number of risk factors. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, 91(4), 273-279.

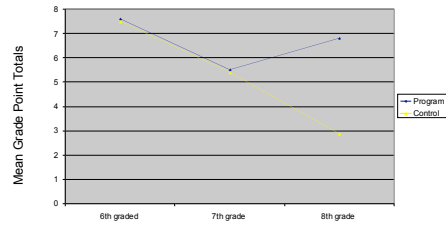
Overview of Programs

- Type? Selective prevention
- For Whom? Middle or High school youth placed at risk for substance abuse, juvenile delinquency, and school failure
- Youth's backgrounds? African, European, & Asian American; Latino/a; Suburban, Urban, & Rural; Middle & Low income
- Format? Adult facilitator meets weekly with group of 6 – 8 youth during school day for one class period or with individual youth for twenty minutes a week
- Length? Two academic years plus less frequent individual meetings during the third year

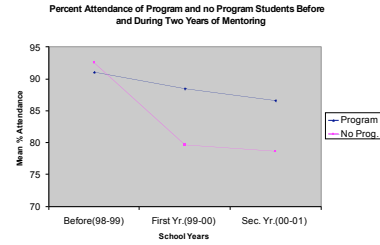
Program Effects

- Reduce deterioration that naturally occurs in adolescents placed at risk if there is no preventive intervention
- Do not turn them into angels

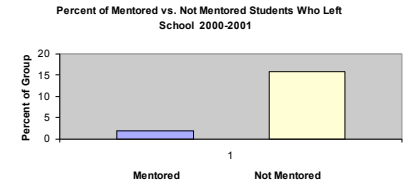
Grade Point Average Outcomes



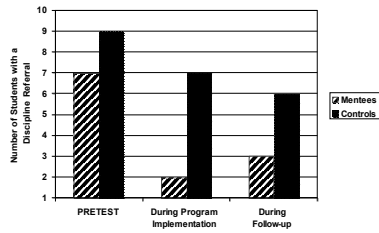
Attendance Outcomes



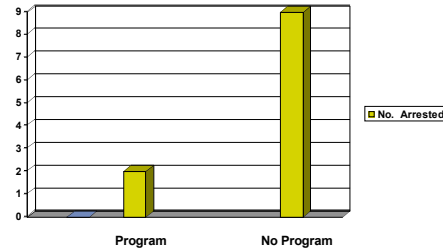
School Drop-out Outcomes



Discipline Referral Outcomes



Arrest Record Outcomes



How are Students Selected?

- Consult with teachers, guidance counselors, & disciplinarians
- Look for students with 2 out of 3 of criteria:
 - Low academic performance due to low motivation, poor organizational skills, or low attendance
 - Behavior problems
 - Family foundation problems, e.g., substance abuse, sibling did not graduate, ineffective parenting
- To evaluate program effects, identify twice as many students as you can serve, and randomly assign half of students to the program by flipping a coin
- Outcome data are three years of grades, attendance, and enrollment in school

1. Program Procedures



- Facilitator discusses with one teacher a week per youth how youth has done that week and records:
 - Something youth did right
 - Some small steps youth could take to improve
- Facilitator also examines school records of each program youth and records:
 - Days present, days on time, and days with no discipline referrals

Weekly Report Card



- Name: _____ Homeroom: _____
- Date: _____
- Circle yes or no for each area, indicating satisfactory or unsatisfactory
- Performance in the past week.
- Teacher or Subject _____
- On Time _____ Yes No
- Materials for Class _____ Yes No
- Did Classwork _____ Yes No
- Recent Grades _____
- Satis. Behavior _____ Yes No
- Did Homework _____ Yes No
- (Was Homework Assigned?) _____ Yes No
- Comments: _____
- Assignments due soon: _____

2. Program Procedures(BMRP)



- Facilitator meets for one class period a week together with 6-8 program students and with one student at a time,
 - Shares the positive feedback and chooses one area for improvement, and
 - Goes through problem-solving steps to choose new approach and rehearses it,
 - While others listen and get points for not interrupting, criticizing, or making fun of fellow program students.

3. Program Procedures(BMRP)



- At end of meeting, program students fill out individual sheets where they add up their own points for the past week:
 - Number of days in school, on time, and staying out of discipline trouble
 - Number of "yes's" they received from one teacher to the standard questions that facilitator asks
 - Obey group meeting rules (e.g., not interrupting)

4. Program Procedures(BMRP)



- Facilitator checks accuracy of each student's arithmetic and
- Records new points on a cumulative bar graph for each student
- Points earn one day away from school at the end of the year on a recreational/educational field trip that the program students plan during the year

Program Procedures (Achievement Mentoring)



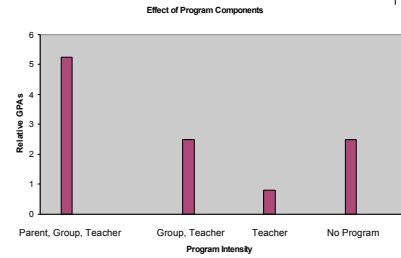
- Mentor meets for 20 minutes a week with program students, one student at a time,
 - Shares the positive feedback and chooses one area for improvement, and
 - Goes through problem-solving steps to choose new approach and rehearses it

5. Program Procedures

- Weekly, after meetings, facilitator or mentor leaves notes or messages for teachers to watch for small improvements students plan to make
- Monthly, facilitator contacts parents with some specific, positive feedback about their youth's progress, and praise for the parents' support of it
- Goal: Orchestrate the students' receiving the same positive messages from many sources



Empirical Rationale for the Necessity of Parent Contact



How do Programs Work? How do They Change Youth?

- Because facilitator or mentor repeats the same procedure week after week for two years and continues procedure less frequently on an individual basis during a third year,
- Students learn:
 - An adult cares for them and supports them over time
 - What behaviors are valued by adults and society
 - That they can learn and do these behaviors
 - That subsequently better things happen to them
 - That they can improve their lives through their own actions (vs. using substances, disobeying laws, or joining a gang)



Budgeting for Programs



- A full time facilitator (M.A. level) 40 students
- A half time facilitator or mentor 20 students
- A one day a week facilitator 8 students
- Include funding for a recreational/educational one day field trip for program students
- Manual No cost
- OPTIONAL:
 - Training day by Bry associate \$3000.+exp.
 - Local weekly or monthly consultant ?

Why In Schools During Day?



- Access to adolescents placed at risk
- In their natural environment
- Program goes to them
- Requires no new habits to participate
- Social validity
- Can target two risk factors there
 - School failure
 - Behavior problems

Challenges of Selective Prevention & Their Resolutions



- Students did not ask for help
- Parents did not ask for help
- Teachers are pessimistic or angry
- Negative labeling
- School personnel see no improvement & question your effectiveness and lower evaluation of student
- Students feel "chosen" & have an adult to talk to
- Parents feel "partnered" & re-engage with students
- Teachers feel "partnered" & re-engage with students
- Program's for "Students who can do better in school"
- Graphs of long-term outcomes give them "bragging" materials

Relation of Programs to School



- Best if it is a program school chooses to provide to certain students
- Best if implemented by school personnel, but outsiders can come in weekly
- It is a "no drop-out" program
- Do not need parent permission, although they are informed after program begins
- Implementers have access to students' school records

How are Programs Different from Usual TX? Positive View of Youth's Problems



- Explanations are from learning theory
- "Youth has not yet learned skills" vs. characterological explanations ("lazy," "passive-aggressive," "self-defeating")
- Learning does not occur through merely telling someone to do something
- Learning occurs through breaking down skills into small steps and repeated practice
