TEACHER-STUDENT RELATIONSHIPS

RESEARCH AND RECOMMENDED INTERVENTIONS

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MODULE STRUCTURE

• Module series goal:
  • Provide information to schools that can lead to improvements in school climate and behavioral outcomes.

• Module narratives provide additional information to accompany PowerPoint Presentation.
  • Endnotes throughout slides correspond to the references in the module narrative.

• Gold star = Resource on Delaware PBS website

WHAT ARE TEACHER-STUDENT RELATIONSHIPS?

• Quality of the interactions between teachers and students within a classroom and school-wide context
• Teacher-student relationships often considered to have three different qualities:
  • Emotional support
  • Classroom organization
  • Instructional support

• Emotional support is the focus in this presentation

DE-PBS/SCSS: Teacher-Student Relationships Module
DELAWARE SCHOOL CLIMATE SURVEY

On the Delaware School Climate Survey, teacher-student relationships is captured by items assessing:

- Teachers caring about students
- Teachers liking students
- Teachers listening to students when they have problems
- Teachers treating students of all races with respect

Primary focus of this module is student perceptions of teacher-student relationships.

WHY ARE TEACHER-STUDENT RELATIONSHIPS IMPORTANT?

Impact for individuals:

- Greater peer acceptance and friendships²⁰-²³
- Greater comfort in seeking help from teachers and other adults in school, such as when being bullied¹⁵
- Greater academic achievement¹⁴, ²⁴-²⁵, ⁷¹

- Greater academic initiative and engagement²⁶-²⁹
- Greater self-esteem, cognitive competence, and internal locus of control³⁰
- Greater school satisfaction, liking of school, and school completion³¹-³³
At classroom and school level, teacher-student relationships influence norms and group behavior mostly through classroom management.

**Teacher-Student Relationship Contributing Factors**

**Student Characteristics**

**Classrooms & Teachers**

**STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS CONTRIBUTING FACTORS**

- Students with the following characteristics tend to have less close relationships with teachers:
  - Frequent antisocial or aggressive behaviors and behavior problems
  - Shy tendencies
  - Greater internalizing problems, such as anxiety and depression
STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS
CONTRIBUTING FACTORS

• Although not malleable, student age, gender, and race also are related to teacher-student relationships
  • Perceptions decrease with age\textsuperscript{34-38}.
  • Girls have closer relationships\textsuperscript{1,35}.
  • African-American students tend to view these relationships less favorably\textsuperscript{36}.

CLASSROOMS AND TEACHERS
CONTRIBUTING FACTORS

Preferred Teachers
- Care, guidance, high achievement, respect
- Spend time with students; engage them in their interests
- High expectations and well-managed classrooms
- Self-efficacy in teaching and classroom management

• Students prefer teachers who:
  • Use proactive and positive techniques rather than punitive techniques\textsuperscript{49}.
  • Make learning fun\textsuperscript{45-46}.
  • Foster student autonomy and self-determination\textsuperscript{46,50}.
  • Communicate often with their families\textsuperscript{36,51}.

• These same themes emerge in studies of students of various cultures and backgrounds, including studies focusing on African-American and Hispanic students, students who feel alienated, and students living in poverty.\textsuperscript{46}.
Teachers who have:
- Stress
- Depressive Symptoms
- Self-Efficacy

Tend to have more negative relationships with their students

Teacher-Student Relationships Contributing Factors

Recommendations for Relationship Improvement

RECOMMENDED EVIDENCE-BASED STRATEGIES AND INTERVENTIONS
- Tier 1: designed to be implemented for all students at the school-wide and classroom levels
- Tier 2 & 3: designed to be implemented with students who have the most difficult time forming positive relationships with teachers.
- Tier 1: data to determine needs, strategies, and interventions
- Tier 2: implement classroom management strategies for prevention of behavior problems and promotion of positive teacher-student relationships
- Tier 3: employ strategies and provide opportunities that build and maintain positive teacher-student relationships
- Tier 2 & 3: implement an evidence-based SEL curriculum that has been shown to strengthen students’ social-emotional competencies while also fostering positive teacher-student relationships

DE-PBS/SCSS: Teacher-Student Relationships Module
DATA ANALYSIS
RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES & INTERVENTIONS: TIER 1

- Examine data, such as from Delaware School Climate Survey
  - Are teacher-student relationships viewed favorably across students, teachers/staff, and parents, and across subgroups within those respondents, including grades (e.g., ninth versus twelfth grade), racial/ethnic groups, and gender?
- If an area of need:
  - Gather and examine more data to determine why these relationships are not viewed positively
    - Other subscales
    - Specific items
    - Share results of the additional data with focus groups

CONDUCTING FOCUS GROUPS

Focus group guide
- Information on:
  - Designing questions
  - Recruiting participants
  - Conducting the group
  - Analyzing data
- Provides examples

from Duke University
(https://assessment.trinity.duke.edu/documents/How_to_Conduct_a_Focus_Group.pdf)

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT & SCHOOL-WIDE DISCIPLINE
RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES

- Classroom management strategies
  - Wise and strategic praise/rewards for prosocial behavior
  - Model prosocial behavior
  - Clear expectations, routines, and procedures
  - Fair rules and consequences
  - Close monitoring of student behavior
  - Collaborate with families
EFFECTIVE USE OF PRAISE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

- Provides general strategies for effectively praising and rewarding students
- Gives specific script examples of what to do or what to say to students
- Activity for staff practice also available.

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT & SCHOOL-WIDE DISCIPLINE

RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES

- Corrective strategies
  - Correct misbehavior privately, not publicly
  - Recognize positive behaviors
  - Emphasize impact of student’s behavior on others
  - Communicate your dislike for behavior – not student
  - Communicate shared responsibility
  - Communicate optimism for future

REFLECTIVE ACTION PLAN

- Plan completed by students to help them:
  - Reflect on their behavior
  - Problem solve to prevent future behavior problems

Courtesy of G. Bear – DE-PBS: Developing Self Discipline Workshop 2011-12
BUILD RELATIONSHIPS WITH STUDENTS
RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES

• Get to know every student
• Spend time individually with students
  • At least one positive interaction daily
  • May be more intensive like Banking Time
• Greet students every morning
• Notice when students have difficulties; listen, show concern
• Treat students equally

BANKING TIME

• Designed for children in preschool and early elementary grades, but aspects of it would apply to all grades.
• Teachers spend individual time with students
• Help prevent behavior problems and reduce teacher-student conflict when problem behaviors occur.

From LOOK Consultation (www.lookconsultation.org/resources/BankingTime-Resource1.pdf)

BUILD RELATIONSHIPS WITH STUDENTS
RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES

• Communicate your own experiences, thoughts, feelings
• Join students for lunch occasionally
• Have fun and use humor
• Attend sports/extra curricular activities
• Reflect upon how well you know your students
  • Knowing your students’ activity
KNOWING YOUR STUDENTS ACTIVITY

- Teacher fills in three columns: 1 = students names in class, 2 = something each student likes or is interested in, 3 = note if the student is aware that the teacher knows this about him/her.
- Missing information may indicate that teacher needs to spend more time with child, engage in conversation more often, and/or connect with them more.

Adapted from Responsive Classroom (http://www.responsiveclassroom.org/blog/how-well-do-you-know-your-students)

BUILD RELATIONSHIPS WITH STUDENTS
RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES

- Provide school-wide activities that include teacher and student participation
- Advocate for your students
- Communicate positive messages about students to their homes

IMPLEMENT AN EVIDENCE-BASED SEL PROGRAM
RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES

- Use one that has been shown to strengthen social-emotional competencies and teacher-student relationships
  - Responsive Classroom
  - 4Rs
  - RULER
  - Second Step
- See CASEL.org for a list of such programs, and descriptions of each
SECOND STEP

• Targets comprehensive SEL skills
• Tied to improved social skills and prosocial behavior
• Reduces several externalizing and internalizing behaviors related to peer acceptance55-67

From Committee for Children (http://www.cfcchildren.org/second-step)

RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES

STUDENTS AT TIER 2 & 3

• Apply the strategies already mentioned as appropriate at the universal level and for all students
  • With greater frequency and intensity
  • More comprehensive
  • More individualized

• Provide social skills/SEL training related to prosocial skills
  • Universal or Tiers 2/3

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STUDENTS AT TIER 2 & 3
RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES

• Collaborate with families

• Where appropriate (e.g. Tier 3) develop a behavioral contract
  • Targeting specific social skills

• Consider implementing elements of Check & Connect intervention
  • Students less likely to drop out of school
  • Related to increases in school engagement

CHECK AND CONNECT INTERVENTION

• A school staff member regularly assesses the student’s behaviors associated with engagement

• The staff member connects with others to implement interventions to increase engagement

• Example of monitoring form for teachers and administrators

  [Link to University of Minnesota resources]

Making a Plan
Who is going to do what actions by when?
THANK YOU

- Based on areas of need identified by data, check out other resources provided through the School Climate and Student Success Module Series.
- www.delawarepbs.org
- Questions can be directed to Sarah Hearn
  - skhearn@udel.edu