

Effects for Kindr Foundation Programs in Schools

Program 1: *The Toolbox for Kindness*, including site-developed lesson plans: Effects

Effects of the Miami Breakthrough Project, 2021-22

Bonnie Grossen, Evaluation Director January 2023

Breakthrough Miami provides an academic enrichment program that uses a student-teaching-students model to ensure that motivated, under-resourced 5th – 12th grade students have access to excellent educational opportunities, graduate from high school on time, and attend college. Breakthrough Miami incorporated the Lasting Happiness (LH) workbook study into their Social Emotional Learning (SEL) program for 775 teens in 5 campuses.

Results:

Saturday Program During School Year

At the end of the school year, 259 scholars took a survey.

- 68% of Scholars reported feeling confident in using mindfulness as a strategy to support their mental health
- 69% of Scholars reported being able to react and respond to difficult situations with a growth mindset
- 80% of Scholars reported they developed close relationships with staff and volunteers
- 79% of Scholars reported feeling confident in being themselves at Breakthrough
- 85% of Scholars reported they felt a valued part of the Breakthrough community

Summer Survey Highlights:

At mid-summer and end of summer, 369 scholars took both surveys.

- 73% increase from mid-summer to post-summer surveys of Scholars who **Strongly Agreed** “I am starting to become more mindful (aware of my feelings and aware of other's feelings) due to the SEW Advisory activities (meditation, yoga, stretching, journaling).”
- 64% of Scholars reported Social Emotional Wellness program in Advisory made a positive impact on their Breakthrough experience
- 65% of Scholars reported as a result of the Breakthrough SEW program “I am kinder to myself and others.”
- 75% of Teaching Fellows reported “I am starting to become more kind to myself and others.”

Details of the results can be found at this link: [Miami Breakthrough Project January23-R.pdf](#)

Effects of the PBIS National School Kindness Project

Erin Chaparro

January 2023

DESCRIPTION: Schools that had implemented the Positive Behavior and School Support (PBIS) program for at least 3 years and obtained a high fidelity implementation score as measured by the Tiered Fidelity Inventory-SWPBIS (Algozzine, et al. 2014) were invited to apply for a \$5000 grant to increase kind behaviors. (The PBIS program goal is to decrease unkind behaviors.) Seventy-nine K-12 schools (54 elementary schools and 23 secondary schools) representing 14 states and approximately 43,000 students received grants to implement the kindness tools from August 2021 to June 2022, the first year schools were open again after Covid. Of the 77 schools for which demographic data were available, 56% had free and reduced lunch rates between 75-100%; 17 schools, or 22%, had FRL rates between 50-74%; 12 schools or 16% had FRL rates between 25-49%; only 5 schools or 6% had FRL rates at 25% or below. Students responded to the School Kindness survey at the beginning and end of the school year. The School Kindness Survey required participants to indicate their level of agreement with 5 statements on a 5-point Likert scale: 1. At my school I am encouraged to be kind. 2. Kindness happens regularly in my classrooms. 3. Kindness happens regularly in my school. 4. My teacher is kind. 5. The adults in my school model kindness.

RESULTS: Overall schools maintained their pre-test levels or slightly decreased in their perceptions of kindness. The survey questions that ask the students to rate the statements “My teacher is kind” and “At my school I am encouraged to be kind” consistently remained the same from pre- to post- and were also rated the highest across grade levels. Survey item “Kindness happens regularly in my school/classroom” saw the biggest change, a decrease, over the course of the year across grade levels. Across all questions the average ratings pre and post were quite high, indicating that students agree with the positive kindness statements. There were no single items where the students rated that on average, they disagreed with the kindness statement. Overall, the ratings trended lower, the higher the grade level. Because there was no control group, it cannot be ruled out that the beginning of year excitement coming back to school after two years of pandemic resulted in higher scores that could not be exceeded by the end of the year (a ceiling effect). Scores at the beginning of the year were very high, nearly averaging “strongly agree.”

Following the end of year, a follow-up 3-question survey was mailed to staff members. All (100%) agreed (60.2% strongly agreed) that “our staff and students experienced increasing stress during the 2021-22 school year. Nevertheless, the kindness grant prevented a significant drop in kindness by the end of the year.” Ninety percent strongly agreed that “because of the kindness grant, there was more student kindness than there would have been without the grant.” Ninety-seven percent agreed (55% strongly agreed) that “because of the kindness grant, there was much more staff kindness than there would have been without the grant.” These are highlights of the results. Details of the analysis and further findings can be found using the link:

[PBIS Kindness School Project Report 9 8 2022.docx](#)

(When above file is complete, the link will be to a pdf file. You can see the dialog between Chris and Erin in this document.)

A Quasi-Experimental Evaluation of the Philadelphia Schools' Kindness Implementation

Erin Chaparro, Evaluation Director

October 2022

DESCRIPTION: In fall 2021, 8 schools in communities with the highest rates of community and school violence in the Philadelphia School District received a Kindr grant to teach kindness. The the Kindr activities would complement the already existing Positive Behavior Support System (PBIS). The district matched these 8 schools with 8 other schools (control group) based on similarity in demographics and in PBIS implementation status. Propensity score matching was used to identify 8 comparison schools who did not statistically differ from the PBIS Kindness schools. The district administered surveys district-wide to monitor student, staff, and parent/caregiver perceptions. The district provided the data from the surveys as aggregated data. Student-level data was not shared. With a sample of only 16 (8 experimental and 8 control) the power to detect an effect is severely limited.

RESULTS: Responses from the Kindr program schools were compared to those from the matched comparison schools. The following comparisons reached statistical significance:

Students reported significantly lower bullying in intervention schools ($p = 0.001$).

Parents reported significantly higher bullying in intervention schools ($p < 0.001$).

Teachers in the Kindr program schools reported

- significantly lower classroom level challenges to student learning ($p < 0.001$)
- significantly lower external challenges to student learning ($p = 0.044$)
- marginally lower school level challenges to student learning ($p = 0.08$)

This is clear evidence that the Kindr Foundation's intervention is beneficial, at the very least by decreasing classroom level challenges to student learning and decreasing student perceptions of the frequency of bullying. Details of the analysis can be found at this link: [Final Philadelphia public schools eval report.pdf](#)

Erin Chaparro, Evaluation Director
September 2022

This study used a control group design. Teens with a background of adverse childhood experiences attending alternative high schools (New Beginnings) were invited to participate in the Lasting Happiness program. A control group also took the pre- and post-surveys.

Site A: New Beginnings High School, Ft. Meade, Florida, serves approximately 150 at-risk youth who have not been successful in the traditional county high school. However, there were only about 40 students who attended with any regularity. Ninety-three percent of the students at this site indicated that they had experienced some type of interruption in their education and had either failed a previous grade, were expelled or suspended from school, or dropped out of school prior to enrolling at NBHS.

While there was originally a combined total of 35 students enrolled in the project at the Ft. Meade site, only 15 students completed the project. The students who did not complete the project, also stopped attending school altogether. Three staff members facilitated the Lasting Happiness groups included in the two cohorts.

Site B: New Beginnings High School in Lakeland, Florida serves approximately 400 at-risk youth who have not been successful in a traditional high school setting. While there were approximately 400 youth enrolled, only about one-fourth of them attend school with any consistency or regularity. Ninety-two percent of the students at this site indicated that they had experienced some type of interruption in their education and had either failed a previous grade, were expelled, or suspended from school or dropped out of school prior to enrolling at NBHS.

While there was originally a combined total of 66 students enrolled in the project at the Lakeland site, only 37 students completed the project. Of the students that did not complete the program, 85% stopped attending school regularly. There were 5 facilitators, 3 in the fall for cohort 1 and 2 in the spring for cohort 2. Cohorts 1 and 2 ran concurrently with those on the Ft. Meade and the Winter Haven campuses.

Site C: New Beginnings High School - Winter Haven, Florida serves approximately 425 at-risk youth who have not been successful in a traditional high school setting. While there were approximately 425 youth enrolled, only about one-fourth of them attend school with any consistency or regularity. Ninety-seven percent of the students at this site indicated that they had experienced some type of interruption in their education and had either failed a previous grade, were expelled, or suspended from school, or dropped out of school before enrolling at NBHS.

On the Winter Haven campus, a total of 57 students enrolled in the project. However, only 32 students completed the project. Of the students that did not complete the program, most of them stopped attending school regularly. The same 3 facilitators taught both cohort 1 and 2. Cohorts 1 and 2 ran concurrently with those on the Ft. Meade and Lakeland campuses. Across all sites, there were two 15-week implementations conducted: Fall 2021 from September through December and Spring 2022 from January through May.

Results:

- The intervention led to a medium-to-large improvement in negative mental health indicators (SMD = -0.75) in the intervention group compared to the control group. The effect is so large because the control group had a small-to-medium increase in negative mental health indicators (SMD = 0.34) and the intervention group displayed an outright decrease (SMD = -0.41) in the negative mental health indicators over the course of the intervention.
- The attrition/retention rates for treatment and control should be taken into consideration while interpreting the results. At the same time it should be noted how good retention was for the intervention group compared to control (42% and 11%, respectively, for Satisfaction with Life; 51% and 12%, respectively, for the Stress Survey). In a sample of high-risk adolescents placed in an alternative high school setting, that is an important outcome of its own as retention in the program was a direct product of retention in school. Details of the results can be found at this link: [Final NBHS eval report 10 1 22.pdf](#)

Three Programs in facilitated groups: *Lasting Happiness, Stepping Stones and First Steps: Effects*

EFFECTS OF THREE BEKINDER PROGRAMS ON SATISFACTION WITH LIFE AND PERCEIVED STRESS OF AT-RISK CHILDREN

Bonnie Grossen, Evaluation Director, August, 2024

While much research has examined correlates with satisfaction with life (family structure, delinquent behavior), little or no research has evaluated whether intervention can improve adolescents' level of satisfaction with life. This study found that the BeKinder interventions to teach kindness had a significant positive impact on adolescent satisfaction with life, and consequently, implies that these interventions also can reduce delinquent and risky behavior.

The effects of BeKinder interventions to teach kindness were evaluated with a sample of 85 Tier 2 and 3 at-risk adolescents in 8 schools in 7 different states, aged 9 to 18 in grade 4 through 12. The at-risk factors represented frequent behavior problems, anxiety disorders, emotional disturbances, non-compliance, and such. The sample showed significant gains on the Satisfaction with Life survey for adolescents developed by Huebner (1994), the same measure that numerous studies have shown predicts adolescent delinquency, including illegal and risky behavior (MacDonald et. al., 2005; McCarthy, 2011; Olsen et. al., 2021; Tang & Chan, 2017; Valois et al., 2001). Significant effects ($p < 0.05$) were found on 3 of the 5 sub-constructs (School, Living Environment and Family). Effects on the two sub-constructs (Self and Friends) approached significance. (Significant p values are highlighted in dark green; those approaching significance are in light-green.)

Satisfaction with Life (each item has score of 1 to 4); N=85

	Pre Mean	Pre sd	Post Mean	Post sd	Change in Means	ES	t	p
Overall (40 items)	114.8	14.64	120.86	17.3	6.15	0.42	3.1	0.001
Satisfaction with Life by Construct								
	Pre mean	Pre sd	Post mean	Post sd	Change	ES	t	p
School (8 items)	19.60	5.26	21.6	5.65	2.00	0.38	3.05	0.003
Living Environment (8 items)	22.55	5.25	23.61	5.28	1.06	0.20	1.82	0.036
Family (8 items)	23.51	4.00	24.59	4.63	1.08	0.27	1.7	0.05
Friends (9 items)	28.69	4.75	29.68	5.06	0.98	0.21	1.58	0.059
Self (7 items)	20.35	4.93	21.38	5.11	1.03	0.21	1.5	0.07

The BeKindr programs also resulted in significantly lower levels of perceived stress. Other research has determined that changes in satisfaction with life affect perceived stress and not vice versa (Tang & Chan, 2017). The effects of the BeKindr programs were significant ($p < 0.05$) for the negatively worded items (e.g., in the last month, I got angry when I couldn't do things well) and approached significance for the positively worded items (e.g., in the last month, I felt in control of the important things in my life).

Perceived Stress (each item has score 1 to 4; negative stress reverse scored; higher score is more desirable); N=85								
	Pre Mean	Pre sd	Post Mean	Post sd	Change	ES	t	p
Perceived Stress (10 items)	22.91	5.48	24.57	5.48	1.66	0.30	2.65	0.005
Negative Stress (5 items)	11.04	3.71	11.91	3.55	0.87	0.23	1.93	0.028
Positive Stress (5 items)	11.87	3.95	12.66	3.26	0.79	0.20	1.55	0.065

More details regarding these findings can be found at this link: [Results Report Spring 24 FS SS LH.docx](#)