

## PROJECT BRIEF

### **Implementation and Sustainability of Positive Behavior Support in Real Early Care (InSPIRE)**

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**Grant or Contract Number:** 90YE0207

**Period of Funding:** October 1, 2018 through September 30, 2019

#### **Project Description.**

The goal of this study is to understand the use of positive behavior support (PBS) practices, as well as challenges and barriers that impact PBS practice implementation, in early care and education programs. PBS practices have been reported to promote social-emotional competence and reduce challenging behaviors in young children when implemented with fidelity. As a result, state and local professional development activities have promoted the provision of training opportunities for the early care and education workforce to learn to use PBS practices.

However, there is a lack of program- and teacher-level information about real-world factors leading to implementation of PBS practices and its sustainability. A description of PBS implementation is crucial to bridge the research-to-practice gap and reap the benefits of investments in early childhood initiatives.

Two objectives guide this project:

Objective 1. Examine the status of implementation and sustainability of PBS practices in Kansas Child Care and Head Start programs.

Objective 2. Identify factors that are associated with sustainable implementation of PBS practices.

#### **Research Questions.**

These objectives will be met through two studies: Study 1 – Survey of licensed Child Care and Head Start Programs and Study 2 – A Multiple Case Study of Programs Implementing PBS.

Study 1 has three research questions:

RQ1. What is the current implementation stage of PBS in Child Care and Head Start programs in the state of Kansas?

RQ2. Is there a correlation between the current implementation and program variables?

RQ3. To what extent do K12 PBS sustainability factors apply to early childhood PBS implementation?

Study 2 has two research questions:

1. What are program characteristics that are associated with sustainable implementation?

2. What challenges do programs experience and what strategies do they use to address the challenges?

#### **Implications for policy/practice**

This study will provide valuable information for policymakers to:

- 1) Develop statewide data system to provide on-going monitoring and evaluation of PBS implementation within early childhood settings.
- 2) Collect and analyze statewide data on professional development resources and outcomes on PBS practices on a regular basis.
- 3) Set improvement goals based on knowledge of current implementation and sustainability status and outcomes.

#### **Implications for research**

This project is grounded in an implementation science framework. A survey will be developed to analyze the implementation stage and sustainability factor of program-wide PBS.

No study has specifically reported on a more in-depth picture of how programs and providers adopt, adapt, implement, and sustain PBS practices after they received

professional development. Through multiple case study, mixed methods research design will be used to obtain and integrate qualitative and quantitative data to generate an in-depth understanding of the implementation and sustainability of program-wide PBS.

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