

Feasibility, Acceptability, and Fidelity of a Small Group Social-Emotional Learning Program Adapted for Delivery in Schools

Desiree W. Murray and Doré LaForett
Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

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Disclosures

Dr. Murray is a trained mentor in the Incredible Years Teacher Classroom Management Program, and receives compensation from community organizations for providing trainings and consultation.

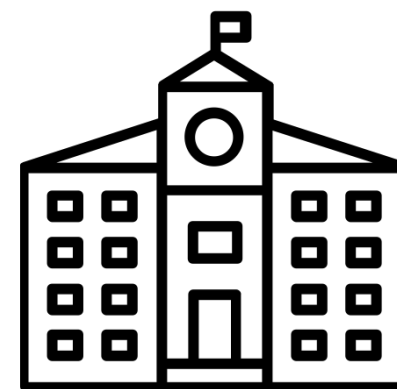
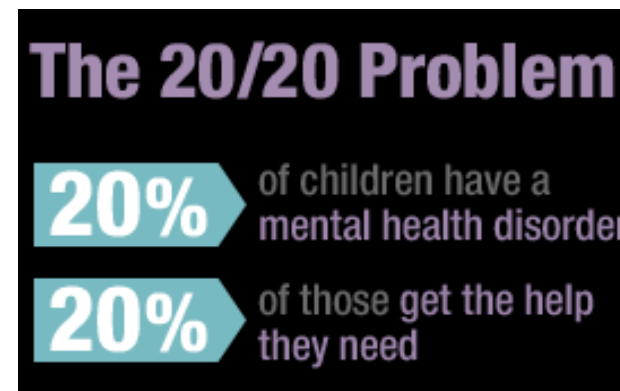
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The Promise and Challenge of Delivering EBPs in Schools

- 1 in 5 students has a diagnosable emotional or behavioral disorder; only 20% of these will receive any treatment
- Schools are ideal settings for enhancing access to mental health services, but fewer than half provide specific mental health programs
 - Programs are often not evidence-based
 - Evidence-based programs are often not delivered at full dosage, are not well-integrated into schools, and school staff receive little training – thus ***fidelity is reduced***



Self-Regulation Skills for Success (SRSS) Study



Objective

- Evaluate the Incredible Years® Dina Dinosaur Treatment program
 - Delivered in schools for 1st & 2nd graders with self-regulation difficulties
- Outcomes compared to services as usual in RCT design:
 - Self-regulation skills (inhibitory control, emotion regulation, executive functioning)
 - Disruptive and disengaged classroom behavior, discipline referrals
 - Learning behaviors, academic competence, and report card grades
 - Peer interactions and social competence

Context

- To date, 9 diverse schools in 4 districts in central NC
 - 5 low-income, high minority schools in urban district (78-100% F/R lunch)
 - 3 rural socio-demographically diverse schools (28-79% F/R lunch)
 - 1 well-resourced school in university community
- 118 students randomized (59 interv)
 - SDQ Tot Difficulties ≥ 12 (at-risk)
 - 66% male
 - 50% AA, 14% Latinx, 70% F/R lunch
- 12 intervention groups

The Incredible Years® Dina Dinosaur Treatment Program

- **Developed for delivery in clinics:**

- Small groups of 4-6 children meet with 2 therapists
- 18-20 weeks of 2 hour sessions, delivered with parent program
- Teacher consultation recommended

- **Instructional Methods:**

Developmentally-appropriate active learning strategies:

- Puppets, videos, role-plays, and small group activities



- **Students learn:**

- How to be successful in school
- Understanding feelings in self and others
- Calming down when upset or frustrated
- Getting along with friends and problem-solving



SRSS Adaptations for Schools

- **Delivery structure:** Twice weekly 45 minute sessions during non-core instructional time
 - 27 vs. 36 hours of targeted session time
 - Very little difference in session content with exceptions of omitting “coached play” and possibly fewer vignettes
- **Co-leader model:** SRSS mental health staff partner with school counselors to deliver
- **Intervention supports for skill generalization:**
 - Recess coaching (adds “dosage”)
 - Teacher inservice meetings
 - Parent educational meetings, phone calls



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Implementation Challenges

***Delivering
programs in
schools
is about a lot
more than the
program!***

Scheduling and Space

Group Composition

Variability in counselor skills

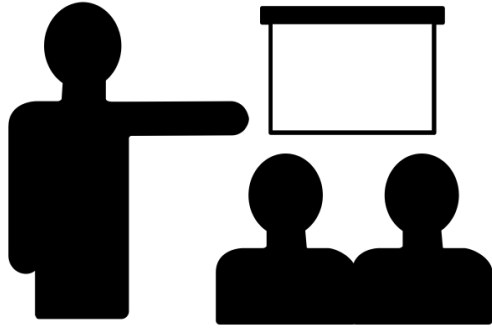
Teacher stress/School climate

Alignment between program
philosophy and school policy



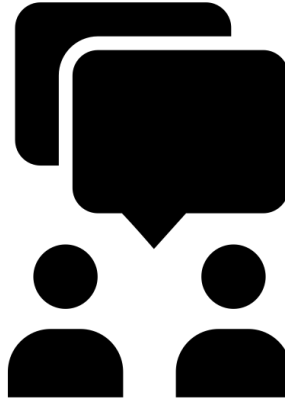
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Implementation Supports



Created by Jenny Chisnell
from Noun Project

Monthly “coaching” in a
Professional Learning
Community (PLC)



Created by Oksana Latysheva
from Noun Project

Regular and proactive
communication with
school leadership



Created by Artem Kovyazin
from Noun Project

Developed relationships
with school district
liaisons



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Preliminary Implementation Data*

- **Child Group Sessions:**
 - Average of 36 sessions to complete all 18 lessons (range = 32-40)
 - 90% student attendance at groups (range 15%-100% across students)
 - 4 of 59 students did not participate/dropped out of the program
- **Parent Attendance at 2-3 Meetings:**
 - 33-43% attendance rate (71% of parents came at least once)
- **Recess Coaching:**
 - Average of 14 recess coaching sessions per student (range = 2-20)
- **Teacher Consultation:**
 - Average of 6 contacts per teacher (range = 2-11)
- **Teacher Inservice:**
 - Ave 4.6 teachers/school at each session (25% without students in program)

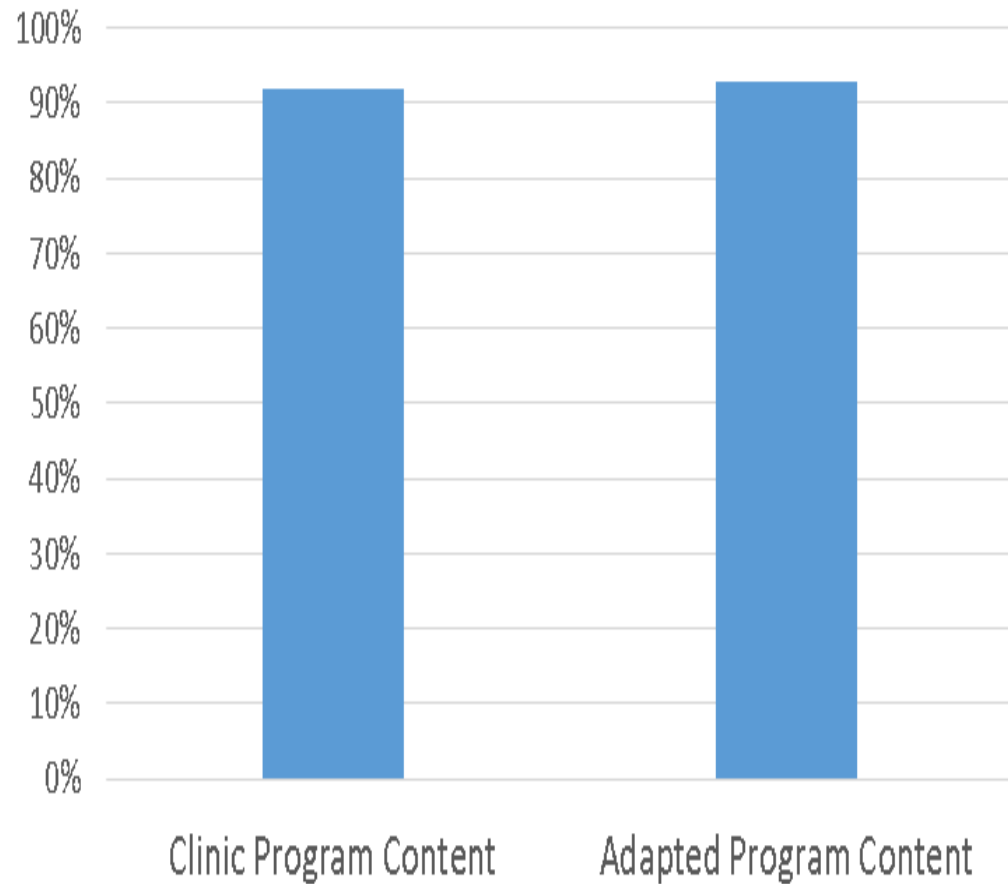
*Based upon ITT model including 4 drop outs



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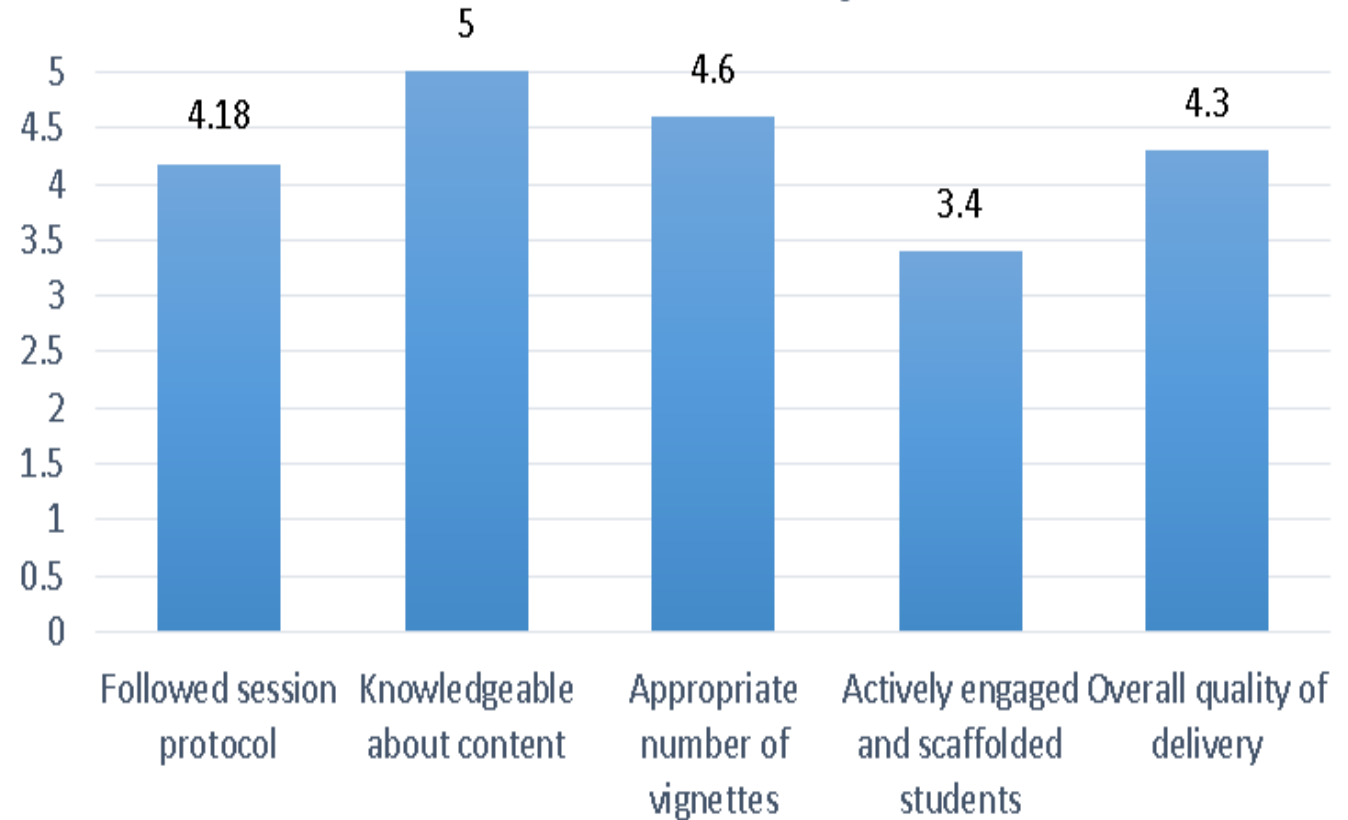
Fidelity

Group Leader Adherence Report



% of session content completed across 12 groups

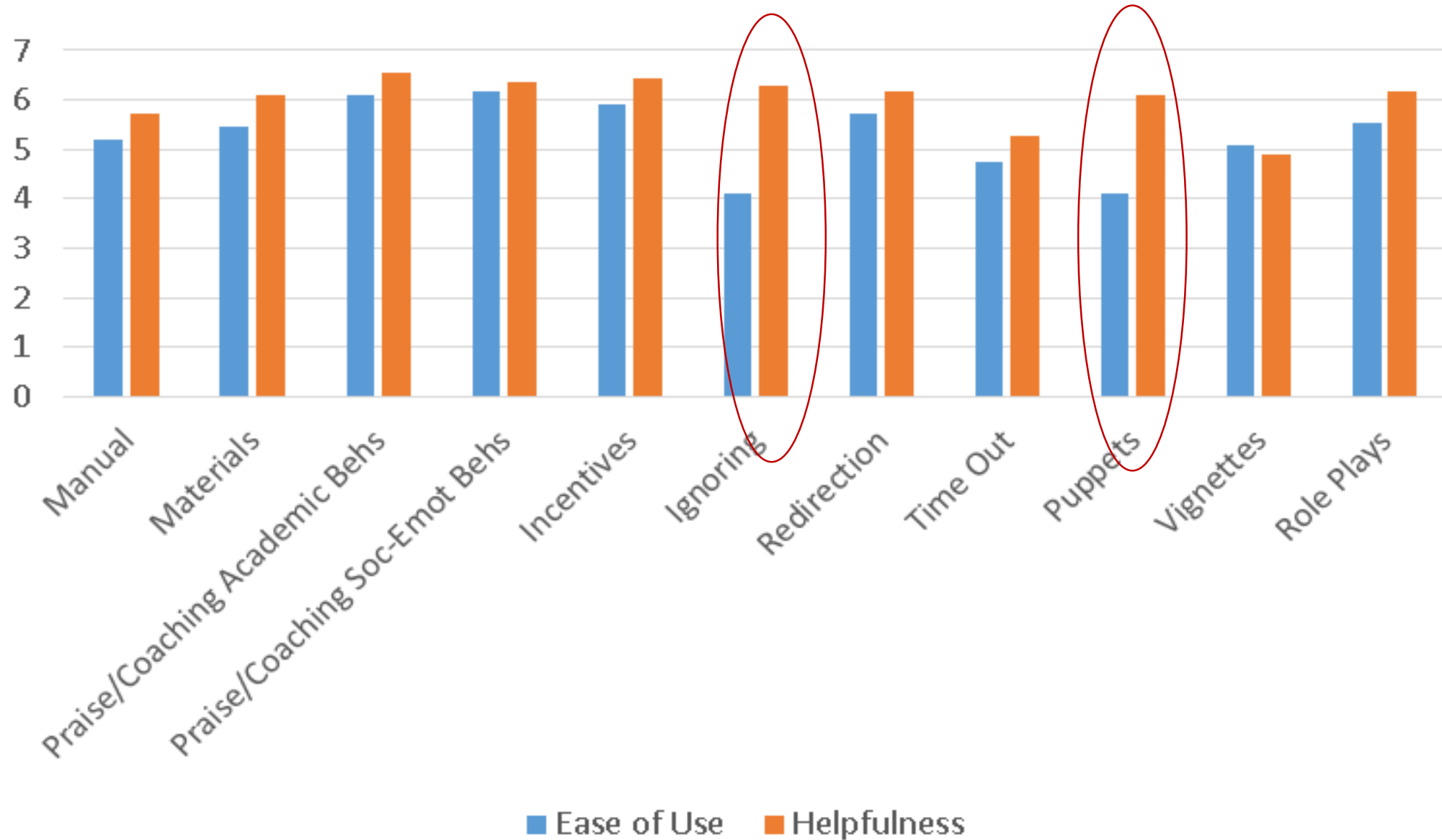
Independent Expert Ratings of Session Quality*



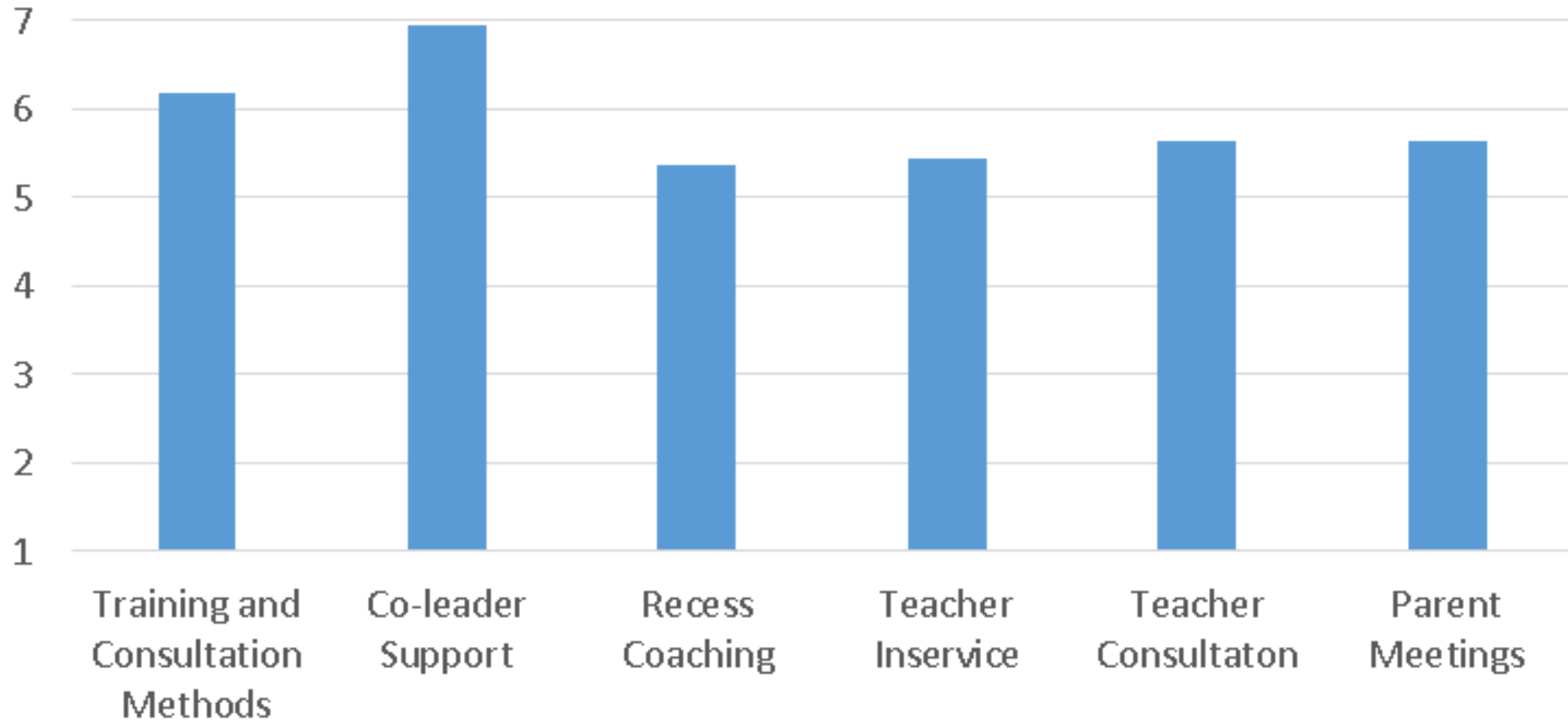
1 = not at all, 3 = sometimes, 5 = frequently/extremely well

*Based on 12 ratings from Cohort 1

Counselor Ratings of Methods



Counselor Perceived Helpfulness of other Intervention Supports and Activities



1=extremely unhelpful, 4 = neutral, 7 = extremely helpful

Counselor Comments

What did you like best?

- *The support was very good. Learning new ways to deal with problematic behavior was beneficial as far as professional development.*
- *I enjoyed having a researched based curriculum to help support my students.*
- *Learning strategies that were very useful in helping our students be successful in the classroom, on the playground and in developing appropriate peer relationships.*

What did you like least?

- *Figuring into my already packed schedule*
- *Some difficult group situations that seemed to continue regardless of multiple attempts at growth*
- *Some of the behaviors of the children were very challenging.*
- *The program covered too many areas, too quickly.....there wasn't time to dig deep and really practice the skills.*

How has your practice as a school counselor been impacted?

- *The monthly meetings were great... it was like grad school all over again... constant feedback and discussion*
- *I think I use proximal praise and ignoring much more effectively now.*
- *I have been able to develop my "ignore muscles" and use appropriate re-direction strategies. Give assistance and strategies that work to teachers whom are struggling with classroom behaviors. Use role play more often when working with students in conflict as well as improving my ability to "praise" more often and appropriately.*
- *Given me time to think about appropriate, linear, and clear ways to teach self-regulation skills to students. What should be taught, in what words, with what visuals and in what order.*

Counselors' Perceived Benefits to their Learning and Work

- **Increasing skills** to manage behavior and more effectively praise and ignore students
- **Gaining understanding** of challenging students and how to teach them social-emotional skills in “fun” ways
- **Suggesting more effective strategies** to teachers for challenging kids
- **Modeling effective strategies** for teachers
- Using **intervention materials** as part of classroom guidance



Initial Implementation Lessons

Adaptations and supports are helping integration into schools; may enhance effectiveness

Fidelity can be maintained with significant implementation supports

Counselor capacity for SEL interventions is increasing, likely enhancing broader impact



Implications for Future Use

- External supports for school delivery may be needed for full fidelity
 - Possibility of conjoint delivery with contracted mental health consultants
- Modifications for practice
 - Strategically select students and consider group composition
 - Deliver shorter modules matched to domains of student impairment
 - Smaller groups with school counselor
- Cost-benefit evaluation will be important



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