

Year Three Positive Action Evaluation Report Executive Summary

Data from: August 2015 - June 2016

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OVERVIEW

The Positive Action program was piloted in one classroom at Sequoia Middle School, and in the Redding Community Day School classroom, for the first year. For the second year of the pilot, the program was expanded into 2 additional Sequoia classrooms, 5 classrooms in Fall River Mills, 6 classrooms in Burney and 1 classroom in Montgomery Creek. For the third year of the pilot (currently in progress), the program was implemented in all 4 classrooms at Montgomery Creek (K-1st, 2nd-3rd, 4th-5th and 6th-8th grade classes), 4 classrooms in Fall River Mills (two 7th grade and two 8th grade classes), and 4 classrooms in Burney (two 6th grade and two 7th/8th grade classes), for a total of 12 classrooms which receive Positive Action curriculum in Shasta County currently.

The evaluation of this pilot project has changed in focus, based on issues found during the first two years. Because Positive Action is an evidence-based practice, it is unnecessary for Shasta County to attempt to validate outcomes independently. Instead, for the third year of this pilot program, an emphasis has been placed on fidelity in program implementation, in order to yield better results, and help alleviate some of the data collection issues seen in the first two years of piloting Positive Action. The Program Coordinator is responsible for collecting and submitting aggregate data to the county. Additionally, in line with program fidelity, Positive Action is being implemented with younger children also, with the hope of influencing their actions, behaviors and future well-being and creating an established base of positive behavior patterns before they enter middle school.

There were four specific evaluation measures from the Student Behavior Rating Scale listed in the current contract:

- Negative self-concept: pessimistic, unhappy, withdrawn, depressed
- Poor self-control: does not know how to control feelings, anger
- Violent: gets into fights, threatens others, hits/pushes others, hurts others
- Non-Sociable: very unfriendly and unsociable, does not like to be with peers, does not like to be with teachers

As an indicator of the effectiveness of the Program, for each of the four outcome measures listed above, a minimum of at least a 15% increase in scores from the beginning of the school year to the end was set.

Data was also collected on student survey results, and implementation data. Program satisfaction surveys were collected at the end of year three of this pilot program from teachers, climate committee members and other staff, parents, and the students.

STUDENT SURVEYS

An important component of this pilot project is decreasing high-risk behaviors while increasing positive coping skills and psychosocial development. In order to try and measure items in these areas, students were given a survey at the beginning of the year (to create a baseline) and then repeated once per quarter thereafter. Surveys differ by grade level, ranging from 6 to 21 questions. While no formal analysis or outcomes measurements are based on these surveys, it is interesting to track how overall percentages of each answer change over time. Because all data is compiled and reported in aggregate by the Program Coordinator as negotiated in the contract, t-tests or other formal statistical analysis is not possible on year 3 data. While no formal outcomes are being determined from the student surveys, the data may still be of some use and interest in overall program evaluation.

GRADES K-3

In half of the questions asked there is a very slight (less than 3%) increase in positive responses between the baseline measure from the beginning of the year and the final survey conducted at the end of the year. In the other half of the questions, there is a more noticeable (between 5%-15%) decrease in positive responses between the baseline measure and the final survey.

GRADES 4-6

In four of the 21 questions asked there is a very slight (average of less than 3%) increase in more positive responses between the baseline measure and the final survey. However, in all 4, the most positive answer possible for those questions shows a decrease between baseline and the final survey.

In the other 17 questions, the decrease in positive responses ranges from 1% to 12% (average of 7%) between the baseline measure and the final survey.

GRADES 7-8

In twelve of the 21 questions asked there is a small (average of 6%) increase in more positive responses between the baseline measure and the final survey. However, on three of them, the most positive answer possible for those questions shows a decrease between baseline and the final survey.

In the other nine questions, the decrease in positive responses ranges from less than half a percent to 9% (average of 5%) between the baseline measure and the final survey.

STUDENT SURVEY CONCLUSIONS

While this data is of some interest, due to the type of data collection and reporting it is impossible to determine if there is any statistical significance to any of the changes seen. Based on the very small increments of change seen, it is highly unlikely. It is also beyond the scope of this evaluation to determine if negative responses are due to a select few students skewing the results, or reflect more prevalent changes in behavior and attitude throughout the classes. Score variations could have been impacted by any number of factors, including but not limited to: a learning curve over the year of what some of these questions and concepts entail; a willingness to be more truthful as comfort was gained in the classroom over time; a mirroring of negative attitudes towards the program by peers, parents or teachers; a desire to “shock” teachers or administrators; or, survey fatigue.

STUDENT CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR

While the student surveys provide self-reported data about student behaviors, teachers in the classrooms are asked to complete a baseline and then quarterly surveys on student behavior they observe. The Student Behavior survey is a series of 15 questions which the teacher completed for each individual student, ranking various behaviors and attitudes seen by them in the classroom setting. Each question has a range of numeric values (1 for least positive response up to 7 for most positive response), so scoring can be summarized and compared. All students, regardless of grade level, are rated with this tool and all student data is consolidated prior to being reported to the county.

OUTCOME MEASURES

As noted above in the Overview, outcomes are being tracked on 4 specific measures from these behavioral surveys:

- Negative self-concept: pessimistic, unhappy, withdrawn, depressed
- Poor self-control: does not know how to control feelings, anger
- Violent: gets into fights, threatens others, hits/pushes others, hurts others
- Non-Sociable: very unfriendly and unsociable, does not like to be with peers, does not like to be with teachers

As an indicator of the effectiveness of the Program, for each of the four outcome measures listed above, a minimum of at least a 15% increase in scores from the beginning of the school year to the end was set.

As of the end of the year, two of the four measures (negative self-concept and poor self-control) showed slight positive change when compared to baseline. The other two measures (violent and non-sociable) showed no change from baseline. None of the four measures demonstrate significant movement towards meeting the 15% increase target that was set in the contract.

CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR SURVEY CONCLUSIONS

Again, due to the type of data collection and reporting it is impossible to determine if there is any statistical significance to any of the changes seen. Based on the very small increments of change seen, it is highly unlikely. Since these surveys were all completed by the teachers, and as trained educators they were aware of what appropriate classroom behaviors should look like, there would be no “learning curve” where baselines are higher than later surveys due to participants not knowing what they don’t yet know. It is not clear what other factors could have played into the results seen. Anecdotal feedback from teacher and school administrator comments would suggest better behavioral outcomes than demonstrated by the data collected with these surveys.

IMPLEMENTATION DATA

Part of ensuring that there is fidelity to the Positive Action evidence-based practice requires data documenting the implementation of the curriculum. Teachers have been asked to complete an implementation survey each month. Because the classrooms are using different curriculum, the number of lessons and units, as well as the timing of their completion, will be different for each school and/or classroom.

For evaluation purposes and to achieve fidelity through minimum adequate implementation of 75%, a minimum of **105 lessons** is required to be taught out of each K - 6th grade kit. The 7th grade curriculum only contains the first 3 units of the Program. For evaluation purposes to achieve fidelity through minimum adequate implementation of 75% implementation, a minimum of **60 lessons** is required to be taught out of each 7th grade kit. The 8th grade curriculum contains units 4-7 of the Program. For evaluation purposes to achieve fidelity through minimum adequate implementation of 75%, a minimum of 58 lessons is required be taught out of each 8th grade kit. In addition, drug kit lessons are required for grades 6-8.

The implementation survey includes data regarding how much of the curriculum was used, if there was anything added or subtracted from the curriculum, and how consistently the materials were presented. In addition to the actual lessons presented to students in the classroom, Positive Action also includes a number of tools and activities to be used for altering the school climate. The implementation surveys track data on the average number of these activities during each week of the unit as well.

TK/K/1ST GRADES COMBINED CLASSROOM – MONTGOMERY CREEK

The curriculum for this classroom was to include 20 Core Lessons required, and 85 additional lessons of the teacher's choice, for a total of 105 Positive Action lessons.

The Implementation Reports list a total of 41+ Core Lessons having been taught over the course of the year. It is unclear exactly how many lessons were taught, but the "Lesson # Ended on This Month" data reported seems to indicate that target of 105 lessons may have been met. The report also indicates good consistency on the timing and length of the lessons. The data on lesson adaptation is incomplete, with no lesson numbers given for any of the adaptations reported.

2ND/3RD GRADE COMBINED CLASSROOM – MONTGOMERY CREEK

The curriculum for this classroom was to include 20 Core Lessons required, and 85 additional lessons of the teacher's choice, for a total of 105 Positive Action lessons.

The Implementation Reports list a total of only 15 Core lessons having been taught over the course of the year. There is a 60% no response rate for both the timing of lessons during the day, and the amount of adaptation made to the lessons. Based on the "Lesson # Ended on This Month" data, it appears as if the target of 105 lessons was not reached in this classroom.

4TH/5TH GRADE COMBINED CLASSROOM – MONTGOMERY CREEK

The curriculum for this classroom was to include 20 Core Lessons required, and 85 additional lessons of the teacher's choice, for a total of 105 Positive Action lessons.

The Implementation Reports list a total of only 10 Core lessons having been taught over the course of the year. There is a 30% no response rate for the timing of lessons, and no consistency for when the reported lessons were taught during the day. There is also a wide variation on the length of time spent on lessons. The data on lesson adaptation is incomplete, with lesson numbers provided in only 25% of the instances where adaptation was reported. Based on the “Lesson # Ended on This Month” data, it appears as if the target of 105 lessons was not reached in this classroom.

6TH/7TH/8TH GRADE COMBINED CLASSROOM – MONTGOMERY CREEK

The curriculum for this classroom was to include 20 Core Lessons required, 85 additional lessons of the teacher’s choice (for a total of 105 Positive Action lessons), plus any 15 Drug Kit lessons.

The Implementation Reports list a total of 28 Core lessons having been taught over the course of the year, however there was a change in teachers for this classroom within the first few months of the school year. Looking at data from the final teachers, it appears as if exactly 20 Core Lessons (the expected number) were taught from the time the teachers began the curriculum in November 2015 until the end of the school year. Additionally, the timing and length of lessons shows good consistency from November 2015 through the rest of the school year. There was good reporting on adaptations of lessons as well. Based on the “Lesson # Ended on This Month” data, it appears as if the target of 105 lessons was not reached in this classroom, but it does appear as if the 15 Drug Kit lesson target was reached.

6TH GRADE CLASSROOMS – BURNEY ELEMENTARY

The curriculum for these classrooms was to include 20 Core Lessons required, 85 additional lessons of the teacher’s choice (for a total of 105 Positive Action lessons), plus any 15 Drug Kit lessons.

The Implementation Reports list 47+ Core Lessons taught for one classroom, and 23+ Core Lessons taught in the other classroom. There is good consistency in both timing of the lessons and the length of lessons in both classrooms for the entire year. There is also complete data provided on adaptations made. There is some confusion regarding the “Lesson # Ended on This Month” for both classrooms, with numbers not appearing sequentially from month to month. It is unclear if the target of 105 lessons plus 15 Drug Kit lessons were reached in both classrooms.

7TH GRADE CLASSROOMS – BURNEY JR/SR HIGH & FALL RIVER HIGH

The curriculum for these classrooms was to include 20 Core Lessons required, 40 additional lessons of the teacher’s choice (for a total of 60 Positive Action lessons), plus any 15 Drug Kit lessons.

The Implementation Reports list 40+ Core Lessons completed for one classroom, 43+ for a second classroom, and 46+ for the third. There is good consistency in both timing of the lessons and the length of lessons in two of the three classrooms for the entire year (both from Fall River High). There is incomplete data provided on adaptations to lessons, with no lessons number given in 63% of the instances where adaptation was reported. In one classroom (from Burney Jr/Sr High) the “Lesson # Ended on This Month” data is confusing, with numbers not appearing sequentially from month to month, and one number repeating several months apart. It appears from the “Lesson # Ended on This Month” data as if the 60 regular Positive Action lessons target may have been met. There is no data to indicate that any of the required 15 Drug Kit lessons were taught in any of these three

classrooms in the teacher Implementation Reports; however, the Positive Action Coordinator’s Implementation Progress report does indicate that the Drug Kit was completed in all three of these classrooms.

8TH GRADE CLASSROOMS – BURNEY JR/SR HIGH & FALL RIVER HIGH

The curriculum for these classrooms was to include 20 Core Lessons required, 38 additional lessons of the teacher’s choice (for a total of 58 Positive Action lessons), plus any 15 Drug Kit lessons.

The Implementation Reports list 22+ Core Lessons completed for one classroom, 32+ for a second classroom, and 46+ for the third. There is fairly good consistency on timing of the lessons in all classrooms. The length of lessons shows some wide variations in one of the three classrooms (from Fall River High). There is incomplete data provided on adaptations to lessons, with no lesson numbers given in 50% of the instances where adaptation was reported. The “Lesson # Ended on This Month” data is confusing, with numbers not appearing sequentially from month to month, in all three classrooms. It appears as if the 58 regular Positive Action lessons target may have been met; however, there is no data to indicate that any of the required 15 Drug Kit lessons were taught in two of the three classrooms. According to the Positive Action Coordinator’s Implementation Progress report, only one of the classrooms did not implement the Drug Kit.

FAMILY AND CLIMATE KITS

The family kit information was made available as handouts and included in newsletters sent home to the parents, and via face-to-face meetings at Back to School nights or other parent functions. There are no specific implementation surveys for the family kit. None of the family pretest/posttest surveys were utilized this year as the family kit was not implemented in a class-style setting for parents, which has been determined by school staff and the coordinator to be ineffective in the highly rural setting of the intermountain area.

Climate kit information was implemented in assemblies, student clubs, and the “Words of the Week”. There are no specific implementation surveys for the climate kit.

IMPLEMENTATION CONCLUSIONS

As has been noted in previous years, based on implementation requirements from the Positive Action program, and the data provided from the vendors, it seems there were issues with the program being implemented as prescribed. It appears from the Implementation Reports submitted, in conjunction with the Positive Action Coordinator’s reports, that the full target number of lessons (including Drug Kit lessons where appropriate) were only possibly met in six out of the twelve classrooms which used Positive Action curriculum.

Overall, while implementation was not ideal in this third year of the pilot, it was improved from the prior year. Planned changes to the data collection for next year include setting the student and teacher survey schedules to match the schools’ trimester schedule. It is hoped this will help streamline some of the timing and data collection issues, and implementation data will reflect further improvements for the 2016/2017 school year. The Coordinator has also requested some changes to the monthly Implementation Reports that will assist the teachers with more accurately reporting precisely which Positive Action lessons have been taught each month.

PROGRAM SATISFACTION SURVEYS

In order to assess satisfaction with the Positive Action program, end of year surveys were administered to four different groups of individuals: students, teachers, climate committee members and parents. The intent was to obtain a well-rounded view from all involved parties. All surveys were anonymous, and where individual student names were written in or provided, they have been redacted in this report, in order to maintain confidentiality.

All surveys were adapted from approved Positive Action surveys, and changes to these surveys were made with the knowledge and approval of Dr. Brian Flay, who is the evaluator of the Positive Action program at the national level. All surveys included both multiple-choice Likert scale questions, and free text comment areas.

Results were tracked by individual school.

STUDENT PROGRAM SATISFACTION SURVEYS

There were a total of 253 student surveys collected: 38 from Burney Elementary; 73 from Burney Jr/Sr High; 74 from Fall River High; and, 68 from Montgomery Creek.

TEACHER PROGRAM SATISFACTION SURVEYS

Because there were again only a few teachers involved in the pilot project, survey results have been combined in order to try and allow for some anonymity. There were 9 completed teacher survey forms collected.

CLIMATE COMMITTEE PROGRAM SATISFACTION SURVEYS

As a part of the Positive Action program, Burney Elementary, Burney Jr/Sr High, Fall River High and Montgomery Creek each designated their own Climate Committees comprised of teachers, school counselors, school administrator(s) and parents. In most of the schools, these were already-existing student councils, on campus youth-led clubs and site councils who were tasked with implementing Positive Action activities. These committees implemented activities both from the Positive Action Climate Kit, and other outside activities they felt were compatible with the Positive Action philosophies. At all sites (not just Montgomery Creek where the entire school was engaged), these activities involved the whole school and not just the one or two classrooms where the Positive Action program was being piloted. This structure and implementation, according to discussions with Dr. Brian Flay, has never been done before, which means there are no comparable studies to validate our results against. There were 12 completed surveys: 5 by Burney Elementary; 3 by Burney Jr/Sr High; 2 by Fall River; and, 2 by Montgomery Creek.

PARENT PROGRAM SATISFACTION SURVEYS

There were 21 completed parent surveys: 5 from Burney Elementary parents; 3 from Burney Jr/Sr High parents; and, 13 from Fall River parents. There were no parent satisfaction surveys received from Montgomery Creek parents.

PROGRAM SATISFACTION CONCLUSIONS

In general, the surveys completed reflect satisfaction with the Positive Action program, or at least with results seen from it. What little criticism appeared in the comments is constructive (with the exception of a few of the student survey responses), giving suggestions and ideas for how the implementation or program could be improved upon in the future.

One recurring theme noted, particularly in student responses from Fall River High and from the parent surveys, is the impression that this curriculum would be more beneficial to younger age levels than the middle school/junior high classes. This may well speak to the fact that as an evidence-based program, Positive Action is designed to be started at a much younger age, and without that earlier exposure and foundation, it is much harder to obtain buy-in from tween and teen-age students.

Another theme noted in the teacher and climate committee responses is the difficulty in completing all the necessary surveys. The importance of the Positive Action program, and adherence to fidelity, is recognized; but, the logistics of actually accomplishing all the paperwork is hard for school staff members. In fact, Fall River High has withdrawn from participation next year for this very reason.

ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

ANALYSIS

As stated previously, the evaluation has changed in focus, and for the third year of this pilot program an emphasis has been placed on fidelity in program implementation. The Program Coordinator was responsible for collecting and submitting aggregate data to the county.

Data to be collected	Timeliness	Completeness	Analysis of implementation
1. Student Surveys	All required aggregate reports were submitted by the Coordinator in a timely fashion.	All reports provided were complete.	From an implementation standpoint, these surveys were administered appropriately and in compliance with program fidelity.
2. Student Classroom Behavior Surveys	All required aggregate reports were submitted by the Coordinator in a timely fashion.	One teacher inadvertently sent the wrong survey link to students, and because it was impossible to determine which behavior surveys had been completed by the teacher and which by students, one classroom's data was excluded for one quarterly report.	From an implementation standpoint, these surveys were administered appropriately and in compliance with program fidelity.
3. Monthly Implementation Survey	All required reports were submitted by the Coordinator in a timely fashion.	Approximately 30% of the reports completed by teachers were missing one or more data elements.	In order to accurately determine fidelity to the evidence-based practice, these surveys needed to have been more thoroughly completed.
4. Monthly Coordinator's Implementation Progress Report	All required reports were submitted by the Coordinator in a timely fashion.	The Coordinator did an outstanding job documenting implementation barriers and progress.	These reports were critical for county staff to follow program implementation, and greatly facilitated dialogue with the Coordinator to address concerns.
5. Year-End Surveys	All required reports were submitted by the Coordinator in a timely fashion.	While it would have been ideal to receive more feedback from parents and climate committee members, it is understood that response to surveys such as these will never result in 100% participation rates.	From an implementation standpoint, these surveys were administered appropriately and in compliance with program fidelity.

There were four specific evaluation measures from the Student Behavior Rating Scale listed in the current contract:

- Negative self-concept: pessimistic, unhappy, withdrawn, depressed
- Poor self-control: does not know how to control feelings, anger
- Violent: gets into fights, threatens others, hits/pushes others, hurts others
- Non-Sociable: very unfriendly and unsociable, does not like to be with peers, does not like to be with teachers

As an indicator of the effectiveness of the Program, for each of the four outcome measures listed above, a minimum of at least a 15% increase in scores from the beginning of the school year to the end was set.

None of these measures reached the targeted goal.

RECOMMENDATIONS

While it is disappointing to not be able to gather objective data which clearly demonstrates immediate benefits to implementing Positive Action, because it is an evidence-based practice it is unnecessary to attempt to validate outcomes independently. A continued emphasis on the fidelity of implementation can reasonably be expected to increase positive outcomes, which have been reported anecdotally and just do not appear in the limited data gathered.