Project Title: A Multi-Site Efficacy Trial of the Class-wide Function-related Intervention Teams “CW-FIT”: A Research to Practice Agenda for Students with and At Risk for EBD

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Brief Description of Project:

Purpose: Research suggests that 3–6 percent of school-age children have emotional and behavioral disorders (EBD), yet these students are typically not identified until they have exhibited serious problems, including school failure, over multiple school years. There is a need for evidence-based interventions that prevent and ameliorate severe problem behavior exhibited by school-age children. Behavioral interventions based on an understanding of “why” a student displays problem behavior (i.e., the function or cause) have shown promising results for addressing a wide range of problem behaviors. One such intervention with evidence of efficacy is the Class-wide Function-based Intervention Teams (CW-FIT), which is designed to teach appropriate behavior skills (e.g., how to appropriately gain the teacher's attention) and reinforce the use of those skills through a game format. The intervention package also includes individual intervention procedures for students who do not successfully respond to the class-wide intervention. CW-FIT has prior evidence of efficacy to improve class-wide on-task behavior and decrease disruptive behaviors of students with or at risk for EBD. This study intends to replicate prior findings with a larger, more diverse population across three geographical areas. In addition, the implementation will better represent typical conditions of routine practice with school staff providing the majority of the supervision, compared to the first efficacy trial which included coaches supported with grant funds. This study will examine the impact of the intervention on outcomes measured at the teacher, class, and individual student levels for students diagnosed with or at risk for EBD in general and special education settings.

Project Activities: The researchers will conduct a multi-site randomized efficacy trial of the Class-wide Function-based Intervention Teams intervention in three states with school staff providing the majority of the supervision to closely resemble typical conditions of routine practice. Fidelity of implementation will be monitored and outcomes will be measured at the class level (increases in on-task behaviors and teacher praise) and student level (increases in on-task behavior and decreases in disruptions) for (1) students at risk for EBD, and (2) students who received Tier 2 interventions (i.e., self-management, help cards) in addition to the CW-FIT intervention. Peer performance for typical peers will also be measured for a sample at each site.