

Coaching in Trauma-Informed Classroom Management

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Trauma-Informed Classroom Management (TICM) aims to incorporate training in Trauma-Informed Problem Solving (TIPS) and classroom-based coaching to improve internal capacity in school districts to meet the needs of students. TIPS addresses two critical needs in Utah: emotional and mental health supports in Utah schools and support systems that positively impact teacher retention rates.

What is Trauma-Informed Classroom Management?



Trauma-informed classroom management embeds evidence-based practices in working with students who have experienced trauma into class-wide and individual behavior management systems in schools.

According to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration (SAMHSA; 2014), a trauma-informed approach or system contains the following elements:

1. Realizes the widespread impact of trauma and understands the potential paths for recovery;
2. Recognizes the signs and symptoms of trauma in the clients, families, staff, and others involved with the system;
3. Responds by fully integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, and practices; and
4. Seeks to actively resist retraumatization (p. 9)

When teachers implement evidence-based classroom management strategies while incorporating trauma-informed practices, they are more likely to have a positive effect on all students. Three areas that can be positively affected for students are feelings of safety at school, the ability to self-regulate emotions and emotional responses, and the ability to build relationships with peers and teachers. In turn, not only are teachers effectively managing behavior in the classroom through the use of these practices, they are helping students who have experienced trauma to learn the skills necessary to build resilience.



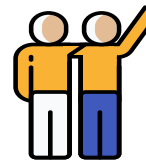
Safety

- Classroom organization
- Written daily schedule
- Active supervision
- Use of time-ins



Self-Regulation

- Classroom calming stations
- Flexible seating
- Mindfulness
- Movement breaks



Relationships

- Greetings with noncontingent attention
- Morning meetings
- Peer collaboration

Why Classroom Coaching?



Classroom coaching, which provides supports embedded in teachers' classrooms and teaching practices and makes the professional learning more relevant, is especially important for teachers to learn and implement new behavior management skills (Joyce & Showers, 2002; Stormont, Reinke, Newcomer, Marchese, & Lewis, 2015).



Traditional Professional Development

- "Train and hope" approach (Stokes and Baer, 1977)
- Low levels of implementation (Joyce & Showers, 2002)
- No incentive for change and no guidance for teachers (Myers, Simonsen, & Sugai, 2011)



Classroom Coaching

- Facilitates implementation with support (Kretlow & Bartholomew, 2010)
- Makes professional learning more relevant (Joyce & Showers, 2002)
- Results in positive findings regarding interventions (Stormont, Reinke, Newcomer, Marchese, & Lewis, 2015)

TIPS Coaching Intervention Pilot Study

An adapted version of the Classroom Check-Up (CCU; Reinke, Lewis-Palmer, & Merrell, 2008) was used as the coaching model for this study. The coaching intervention began with a brief classroom assessment and teacher interviews with each teacher pair, conducted by one of the researchers. These interviews were used as rapport building between the teacher pairs, rather than as data. After the interviews, the pairs were also trained on the use of the Classroom Check-Up website (www.classroomcheckup.org), on the use of Canvas modules on Trauma-Informed Practices created by the researchers, and on using Swivl bots and iPads to record lessons in their classrooms to be used during each pair's coaching meetings. Each coaching meeting was recorded for review and data collection by the researchers.

In the week after the interview meetings, each teacher pair met to create goals based on their own perceived areas of need in trauma-informed classroom management. These goals were based on the teachers' own observations and data provided by the researchers through the classroom assessment. Some of the skills targeted as goals were increased use of praise and using precorrective statements for classroom expectations.

Each teacher pair was able to complete two coaching meetings, including discussion of recorded lessons, prior to spring break and the halting of in-person school due to Covid-19. During these meetings, the teachers reviewed each other's goals, watched the recorded teaching segment, discussed goal progress, and provided suggestions for change, as needed.

It should be noted that student observation data was collected at the onset of the study, but was not able to be completed due to Covid-19.

Observation 1

Data collectors completed 20-minute teacher and 5-minute student observations

Oct-Nov
2019

Observation 2

Data collectors completed second 20-minute teacher observation

Mar
2020

Sept
2019

Pre-surveys

Teachers completed all survey instruments

Jan-Mar
2020

Coaching

Coaching intervention with teacher pairs

July
2020

Interviews

Interviews were conducted to gather additional data

Demographics and Measures

8 participants
(6 completers)



2nd to 9th
grade



6 females
2 males



7 general ed
1 special ed



Range of
Experience:
3-22 years



Teacher Measures - Pre Intervention

1

ACE SURVEY (PRE)

Teachers completed the ACE Survey (Felitti et al., 1998) to report their own lived experiences with childhood trauma.

2

TEACHER SENSE OF EFFICACY SCALE (PRE AND POST)

This rating scale measures teachers' opinions regarding their perceived effects on student behavior and classroom management. Only the eight items pertaining to classroom management were administered.

3

CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS (PRE AND DURING)

20-minute observations on the teacher behaviors: behavior specific praise, reprimands, pre-corrections, and opportunities to respond

4

SOCIAL VALIDITY SURVEY (POST)

Teachers reported on their attitudes toward the coaching intervention and their perceptions of the efficacy of the intervention

5

FOLLOW-UP INTERVIEWS

Teachers were asked to provide more in-depth information regarding their personal experiences with the coaching intervention to provide qualitative data for analysis.

ACEs Data

- ▲ 75% of teachers scored a 1 or higher
- ▲ 25% of teachers scored a 4 or higher
- ▲ Average ACE score was 2.25

Quantitative Results

1 Self-Efficacy

Teachers were asked eight questions addressing beliefs in their own effectiveness in classroom management
Responses ranged from 1- No feeling of effectiveness to 5 - Great deal of effectiveness

Example Questions

- How much can you do to control disruptive behavior in the classroom?
- How well can you establish routines to keep activities running smoothly?
- How well can you keep a few problem students from ruining entire lessons?

Time 1

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Time 2

- Eight Responses
- Responses Ranged from 23 to 40
- Average was 32.38
- Standard deviation was 5.26

- Six Responses
- Responses Ranged from 28 to 38
- Average was 34.33
- Standard deviation was 4.23

Paired Samples t-test between Time 1 (M=32, SD= 6.01) and Time 2 (M=34.33, SD= 4.23) was not significant; $t(5)=-1.78$, $p=.135$

- Paired samples correlation was high and significant $r(6)=.87$, $p<.05$ indicating that teachers are responding consistently to the questions (temporal validity).

2 Coaching Effectiveness

5 Questions Ranging from 1-Strongly Disagree to 5-Strongly Agree

1. I was provided with enough information and direction for me to understand the purpose of the intervention
 - N=6, Mean= 4.67
2. I had enough information and direction for me to use the necessary technology
 - N=6, Mean= 4.33
3. Through this intervention, I learned more about implementing trauma informed practices in my classroom
 - N=6, Mean= 4.67
4. This coaching intervention was beneficial to my students
 - N=6, Mean= 4.67
5. I had enough information and direction for me to choose a goal and intervention
 - N=6, Mean= 4.67

3 Coaching Attitudes

5 Questions Ranging from 1-Strongly Disagree to 5-Strongly Agree

1. This coaching intervention focused on teaching behaviors that are important to me
 - N=6, Mean= 5
2. I enjoyed working closely with a colleague in a coaching capacity
 - N=6, Mean= 4.83
3. I would recommend this coaching intervention to others
 - N=6, Mean= 4.67
4. Overall, this coaching intervention was beneficial to me
 - N=6, Mean= 4.67
5. This coaching intervention was not overly time consuming
 - N=6, Mean= 4.67

Attitudes and Effectiveness

Hypothesis: The better the attitude about the coaching program, the better the perceived effect of the intervention.

Relationship between Attitude and Effectiveness

- ✓ A regression analysis was utilized between attitude (IV) and perceived effectiveness (DV)
- ✓ Findings approached significance $b = .796$, $t(5)=2.630$ $p=.058$

Analysis

- ✓ With higher sample size there is high confidence that this would be significant
- ✓ Strong relationship between the two variables (.796) with an r squared explaining 63.4 percent of the relationship between variables

Qualitative Results from Interviews



Because schools closed in mid-March due to COVID-19, the research could not be completed as originally planned. A post-interview was added for the remaining six participants in order to collect additional data on the coaching process and outcomes for teachers. Each interview took between 30-60 minutes, and each participant was asked the same ten questions. The interviews were conducted using a research assistant who had not previously had contact with the participants, so as to avoid any bias. Each interview was conducted and recorded using Zoom. The recordings were downloaded into the Otter.ai application for transcription. Only four interviews were recorded and transcribed.

Several participants discussed how the goal they set influenced their work in the classroom because it broke some of the habits they used daily in the classroom. All participants interviewed indicated that they learned to set goals and pay attention to how they worked to achieve them. The process also uncovered specific practices in the classroom the teachers were working to change for the 2020-2021 school year. The majority of the participants stated that there were ways in which they could use trauma-informed practices moving into the new school year, which held many uncertainties because of the pandemic. Participant 3 stated they would utilize it in the transitions between activities in their elementary classroom. Participant 2 stated it was most important for their students to feel safe and supported in the classroom before they even began their schoolwork. The other participants planned to change some of their classroom procedures and rules to uphold both the new CDC guidelines for schools and to ensure that students felt supported in the classroom environment again.



“It was good for me to see just maybe where some weaknesses were that I didn’t address or wasn’t consistent in addressing a rule or something that we had set up. So, it helped me to be a bit more cognizant of what I was doing when just going through my routines.”



Participant 2 shared that they learned to increase teacher wait time when asking questions because it was apparent when watching the recordings of their teaching, they did not provide enough time for students to answer.



“I think that I'm going to use some social-emotional stuff and talk about that and how it affected them last spring, how we just stopped going to school, and we didn't see each other and how we can come back together as a group, and what we need to help each other as a group. If there's little places where we need lots of little celebrations, we're going to do that. And I think mostly, it's just to bring us back into the family.”

Discussion and Implications

Although this study had a few limitations, such as a small sample size and a lack of diverse participants, it served as a good pilot study to determine the possible utility of the intervention in more settings and across teacher demographics. Results indicate a proof of concept for the coaching intervention.

Additionally, the trauma-informed classroom management skills included in the intervention are well-supported in research and there is a demonstrated need for additional interventions in this area in schools. The participants contributed a few suggestions to improve the interventions if the study is replicated in the future. They overwhelmingly appreciated the opportunity to set goals and work towards them. Participant 1 discussed how after teaching for over a decade, teachers might not think there is anything else to learn, but they were able to be positively challenged in a way that had not happened since they obtained their Master's Degree. The participants agreed that the idea of setting up the interventions to be positive and not punitive through the use of a peer coach made them more eager to participate. The participants did indicate their desire for more training on the Swivl cameras and how to record their class sessions. Both of these suggestions could easily be changed in future versions of this type of study.



Implications for Future Research



Strong test case for future studies with more participants
Research questions approaching significance indicating possible findings with more teachers

Intervention appears to be very positive experience for teachers regardless of

- Years as a teacher
- Gender
- Teacher ACEs score



Implications for factoring in teacher attitudes during implementation

- pretest of attitudes toward coaching

Future studies needed to examine effect on student behavioral outcomes, as this data was eliminated due to Covid-19 school closures.



PLAN



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IMPLEMENT

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