

# STUDY ABSTRACT

## EXAMINING THE POTENTIAL EFFICACY OF A CLASSROOM WIDE MODEL FOR PROMOTING SOCIAL EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND ADDRESSING CHALLENGING BEHAVIOR IN PRESCHOOL CHILDREN WITH AND WITHOUT DISABILITIES

MARY LOUISE HEMMETER, VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY  
LISE FOX, UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA  
PATRICIA SNYDER, UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

AWARD NUMBER: R324A070212

### PURPOSE:

Although research has established a positive relationship between young children's social emotional skills and success in school, large numbers of young children are beginning their school experiences without the emotional, social, and behavioral skills necessary for academic success. The purpose of this project was to refine the Teaching Pyramid intervention, a multi-tiered intervention to address the social emotional development and challenging behavior of young children with or at risk for disabilities. The research team developed the intervention and conducted an initial evaluation of the intervention in public preschool classrooms.

### SETTING:

Public preschool classrooms in urban areas in Tennessee and Florida.

### POPULATION:

A total of 40 preschool classrooms that serve children with, at risk for, and without disabilities.

### INTERVENTION:

The Teaching Pyramid provides educators with a multi-tiered model of universal strategies (classroom preventive practices), secondary strategies (social emotional teaching strategies), and targeted interventions (individualized interventions) focused on promoting young children's social and emotional development and reducing challenging behavior.

### RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS:

Phase 1 involved developing and field testing implementation materials for teachers and establishing the psychometric integrity of an observation for measuring implementation fidelity. Phase 2 involved an initial evaluation of the intervention in 40 classrooms (20 intervention and 20 control) in Tennessee and Florida. The design was a cluster-randomized trial with random assignment at the classroom level.

### CONTROL CONDITION:

Control classrooms included teachers who are implementing "business as usual" practices.

### KEY MEASURES:

The project collected demographic and descriptive measures as well as measures of intervention fidelity, teacher and classroom variables, and children's social skills and behavioral development. Key classroom-level measures included the Classroom Assessment Scoring System, and direct observations of classroom behavior. Child-level measures included the Caregiver-Teacher Report Form, Child Behavior Checklist, and the Social Skills Rating System Preschool Version.

### DATA ANALYTIC STRATEGY:

To establish the psychometric integrity of intervention instruments, generalizability theory and measures of concurrent validity were used. To evaluate initial impact of the intervention, the research team analyzed the data using a multivariate analysis of covariance and multi-level modeling to take into account the nested nature of the data, while examining for main and interaction effects.