The Preschool Edition of PATHS in Sweden: Implications for Interventions to Promote Positive Youth Development

A presentation given at the University of Bergen, Norway on April 27, 2018
The Preschool Edition of PATHS in Sweden: Implications for Interventions to Promote Positive Youth Development

A presentation given at the University of Bergen, Norway on April 27, 2018
The Preschool Edition of PATHS in Sweden: Implications for Interventions to Promote Positive Youth Development

A presentation given at the University of Bergen, Norway on April 27, 2018
PATHS in Brief
Social emotional competence in children involves –
Integration

- Making and keeping relationships that enhance development
- Emotional knowledge/skills
- Social cognitive problem solving
- Executive functioning

Source: Bierman et al., 2008
A Theme in PATHS Social Emotional Competence as a predictor and index of PYD Positive Youth Development

Social and Emotional Competence

A protective factor associated with resilience

Appears as one of the 5Cs in Lerner and colleagues’ view of PYD

"Conceptually, the work on resilience suggests that we need to move positive goals to the forefront. Promoting healthy development and competence is as important, if not more important, than preventing problems, and will serve the same end. As a society, we will do well to nurture human capital, investing in the competence of our children."

Masten et al., 2011, p. 14

Sources: Lerner, 2011; Masten et al., 2011
Preschool PATHS

1. One lesson, 10 to 15 minutes once a week
   - A curriculum is a foundation for the lessons

2. Activities and generalizing activities
   - Games
   - Crafts
   - Teachable moments

3. PATHS teachers become part of a learning community
   Teachers are visited by a PATHS supporter regularly
   - 1 hour with teacher in their classroom or on the playground
   - 30 min to reflect and plan

Researchers Collaborating on preschool PATHS in Sweden: Lilianne Eninger, Laura Ferrer-Wreder, Ann-Charlotte Smedler, Mara Alloedi Westling, Tina Olsson, Sarah Thomas, Birgitta Herkner, Hanna Ginner Hau, Celene Domitrovich, Mina Sedem, Kyle Eichas and Ingela Gull
**PIA Phase Two: Intervention**

Wave 1: 124 children, 61 wait-list control and 63 intervention

Wave 2: 120 children, 60 wait-list control and 60 intervention

**Total: 244 children**, 121 wait-list control and 123 intervention children in 28 schools

---

**Wave 1**

Year 3: September 2014 - June 2015

- PATHS: 7 schools (schools 1 – 7) n= 63
- Control: 7 schools(schools 8 – 14) n= 61

**Wave 2**

Year 4: September 2015 - June 2016

- PATHS: 7 schools (schools 15 – 21) n= 60
- Control: 7 schools(schools 22 – 28) n= 60

---

**Data Collection**

- PATHS: Preschool PATHS Minimally Adapted
- Control: Wait-list control receives PATHS 1 year later

**Note**: Implementation data will be considered in the outcome analyses

---

**Status Update**: For intervention trial, data entry is almost completed, results of the intervention trial will be reported in March 2018, and an economic evaluation of program costs and short-term, immediate benefits will be reported in December 2018.
"Culture, data is not synonymous with country or ethnicity, but rather describes communities whose members share key beliefs and behaviors."

The Cultural Adaptation of PATHS before the Intervention Trial
“Culture, then is not synonymous with country or ethnicity, but rather describes communities whose members share key beliefs and behaviors”

(Jensen, 2010, p. 2).
A Theme in PATHS: Learning from the cultural adaptation of interventions

Implementation Science

Intervention Design & Evaluation

Outcomes Capacity Building

Culture

Language

Effectiveness, Transportability, and Dissemination of Interventions: What Matters When?

Cultural Sensitivity in Substance Use Prevention

Implementation Research: A Synthesis of the Literature

Tinkering with Perfection: Theory Development in the Intervention Cultural Adaptation Field

Issues and Challenges in the Design of Culturally Adapted Evidence-Based Interventions
Surface Structure

• Intervention messages, materials, activities and how they connect to participants’ lives

• Relevant surface structure = Increased acceptance and comprehension of an intervention

Deep Structure of an Intervention

• Change Producing Mechanisms
• The “Theory of Change”
• Causal Model
• Active Ingredients

Deep Structure Inquiry

• Start with intervention that has a clear empirical and theory based “causal model”

• Ask the question, will the “active ingredients” work the same in another cultural context, when the relations between the mediators for change and targeted outcomes may differ in a new sample, relative to how those relations patterned themselves in the validation sample?

Source: Resnicow, Soler, Braithwaite, Ahluwalia, and Butler (2000)
Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies (PATHS; Domitrovich, et al., 2004)

Theory-based deep structure of PATHS

Targets of Change

- Emotion Knowledge
  (identification of feelings in self and other, communication, regulation)

- Self-Control
  (e.g., self management, social skills, planning skills, problem solving)

- Social Problem Solving

- Self-Esteem

Outcomes

- Behavior
- Social Skills
- Cognitive Abilities

Academic Achievement
PIA Phase One: Study Year 1 (2012-2013)

Instrument pilot testing (small scale)

Study A:
76 four to five year olds completed assessment battery

Psychometric analyses*
→ Assessment battery refined

Preschool recruitment

In Year 1: Formative studies focus on measurement development, and support additional formative research in year two.

Participants who take part in Study A will not take part in any subsequent studies associated with PIA.
17 preschool teachers

Study C: Focus groups on program acceptability (Expert Teachers), after PATHS training and then after pilot testing lessons – focus groups with teachers continued throughout intervention trial

*Insights gained on PATHS Surface Structure & Building a learning community of teachers (expert and those in intervention trial)*

Create culturally adapted edition of PATHS based on formative studies A, B, & C (May-August)

Study B: 56 four to five year olds complete revised assessments

*Cross sectional analysis on patterns of social emotional competence in children from study A + B (n=132 children)*

*Insights gained on PATHS “deep structure” with a new population*

April, May, June, August, September 2014
Pre-Test for the intervention trial

Preschool recruitment

PIA Phase One: Year 2 (2013-2014)

In year two formative studies provide a test of the intervention’s “deep and surface structure” and guide cultural adaptations of the intervention. Child participants who take part in this formative research will not take part in PIA Phase Two.
Moving on...the road in front of us...
Implications for new PYD interventions
No intervention setting is without culture

**OUR GOAL:**
*Sustained benefits*

We can no longer make assumptions and thereby disregard cultural and organizational features and dynamics in intervention settings.

*It's important to attend to the context in its totality - the political, historical, geo-economic, cultural and social.*
A reflection

In intervention science, we should search for:

the General and the Specific

"active ingredients with wide applicability"

"context situated knowledge"

The challenge is to determine when one type of knowledge has more importance to yielding sustained benefits than another in a given situation for a particular type of intervention.
Action

We need more tools to help us determine when we should switch focus to the general and/or the specific.

Examples of Good Tools, We Have Now, But We Need More:

- The notion of intervention surface and deep structure
- Quality meta-analysis
- More individual studies in which the cultural adaptation process is carefully documented and empirically linked to outcomes and implementation
- Systematic, participatory action research
Positive Youth Development

Scalable, participatory interventions

Context

International PYD group in Bergen working to develop culturally appropriate, scalable, feasible, and beneficial youth interventions
Taking what we have learned from the evidence based research literature so far and moving to a new emphasis...

Building not only for effectiveness but also building inventions for:

- sustainability
- feasibility
- low cost
- wide program reach
In our work, we are exploring how to combine the idea of the WHO’s scalability plus...

An emphasis on interventions to support and enrich contexts of development such as neighborhoods

Focus is on the use of participatory research methods and intervention frameworks such as Getting to Outcomes (GTO).
Positive Youth Development

Scalable, participatory interventions

Context

International PYD group in Bergen working to develop culturally appropriate, scalable, feasible, and beneficial youth interventions


The Preschool Edition of PATHS in Sweden: Implications for Interventions to Promote Positive Youth Development

A presentation given at the University of Bergen, Norway on April 27, 2018