Ben’s Bells-UA Research and Evaluation Partnership

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Community Research, Evaluation, and Development Team (CRED)

Fourth Annual Kindness Coordinators Conference
August 22\textsuperscript{nd}, 2015
Presentation Overview

• (Re)Introduce our team
• Progress in the last year
  – Kindness Coordinator Survey
  – Pilot evaluation
  – What we’re learning about Kind Campus
• What’s next?
Ben’s Bells Evaluation Team

- Michele Walsh, PhD
- Madeleine deBlois, MSEd, ScD
- Deanna Kaplan, MA
- Violeta Dominguez, MA
- Kara Tanoue, BA
- John Daws, PhD
- DeeDee Avery, MPH
- Jose-Michael Gonzalez BA, BHT
- Alyssa Begay, BA
- Ayana Blackey, Maggie Van Dop, BA, André Pettman
Our long-range goal is to work together to develop Ben’s Bells programming into empirically-based, nationally recognized interventions, improving well-being in our schools and communities and providing opportunities for translational research.
Why evaluate?

- 4 elementary schools (2007)
- 56 elementary schools (2010-2011)
- 142 elementary, middle, high schools (71,000+ students) (2012-2013)
- 300+ elementary, middle, high schools (150,000+ students) (2013-2014)
- 320 elementary, middle, high schools (183,000+ students) (2014-2015)
Programs Across North America, 2014-2015
Kind Campus in Southern Arizona

[Map Image]
Kind Campus Survey

• Goals:
  – Describe the program in schools
  – Understand what components schools use the most
  – Track perceptions of program impact
• Target audience: Kindness Coordinators
• What: Two online surveys throughout the year
Schools submitting surveys

- 228 at the beginning of the school year
- 64 at the end of the school year
- 44 for both beginning and end of the year

Kindness Coordinator Survey
Number of years participating schools have been with the program

- Less than 1 year: 55%
- 1 year: 22%
- 2 years: 8%
- 3 years: 5%
- 4 years: 6%
- 5 years: 2%
- 6 years: 1%
- 7 years: 2%
- 8 years: 0%
- 9 years: 1%
- 10 years: 2%
What activities are schools using?

(n=205)
Program Implementation

• **Minimal**
  – Never/rarely implemented Kind Kids/Kind Campus activities.
  – No visual reminders to 'be kind' on campus.
  – Students, staff/faculty and families are not aware of Kind Kids/Kind Campus.

• **Moderate**
  – Implemented Kind Kids/Kind Campus activities at least once a month.
  – Some visual reminders to 'be kind' on campus.
  – Most students, staff/faculty and families are aware of Kind Kids/Kind Campus.

• **Heavy**
  – Implemented Kind Kids/Kind Campus as part of our regular school day routine.
  – Multiple visual reminders to 'be kind' on campus.
  – All students, staff/faculty and families are aware of the program on our campus and participate.
Program Implementation Level

- Heavy, 56%
- Moderate, 36%
- Minimal, 8%

N=64
(all post surveys)
Perceived Impact... with a caveat

- Goal: to assess Kindness Coordinators’ perception of change between the beginning and the end of the school year
- However, low survey participation at the end of the year continues to limit our ability to look at perception of change in detail
- BUT.. We are building up a longitudinal data set to better examine change over time
Schools responding with pre-post surveys

Survey participation by region:
- Other US: 6.82%
- Conn: 20.45%
- SOAZ: 72.73%

School type:
- K-12: 2
- Preschool: 3
- Middle/High: 8
- Elementary: 33
How much of a positive impact did the Ben’s Bells Kind Campus Program have on students/teachers and staff at your school this year?

Kindness Coordinators report positive impacts on both students and teachers/staff.

- Impact on Students (N=42): Mean = 8.1
- Impact on Teachers and Staff (N=43): Mean = 7.3
Kindness Outcomes

- **Students** at my school treat one another/teachers/school staff with respect and kindness.

- **Teachers and staff** at my school treat one another/students with respect and kindness.
Kindness coordinators report increases in student kindness over the course of the year.

N = 42 schools
* p < .05

Strongly agree

Student Kindness Toward Students
Student Kindness Toward Teachers
Student Kindness Toward Staff
Teacher/Staff Kindness Towards Fellow Teachers/Staff
Teacher/Staff Kindness Towards Students

Strongly disagree

Baseline
Year end
The reported increases are more substantial in schools that implement the program more heavily (though they tend to be higher on reported kindness at the outset, too)

Strongly agree

Strongly disagree

Student Kindness Toward Students

Student Kindness Toward Teachers

Student Kindness Toward Staff

Teacher/Staff Kindness Towards Fellow Teachers/Staff

Teacher/Staff Kindness Towards Students

Baseline--Minimal

Year end--Minimal

Baseline-Minimal/Moderate

Year end-Minimal/Moderate

Baseline--Heavy

Minimal
N=13 (2014)

Minimal/
Moderate
N=19

Heavy:
N=24
You will be getting a link to the Fall survey soon. Please take it!
Evaluation: The Big Picture

Goals
• Create an evaluation toolkit for schools
• Quality improvement feedback
• Evidence-based programming

Key Questions
• How does Kind Campus work?
• How do we measure kindness?
• What are the effects of increasing kindness?
How does Kind Campus work?

- What Kind Campus activities are teachers/schools using most frequently?
- How does Kind Campus operate in a school?
- How do schools see Kind Campus fitting in the (many!) other things that they do?
How do we measure kindness?

– What is kindness? How do you capture that?
– How do we measure this idea in children? In teachers and staff?
What are the effects of increasing kindness?

– Does implementing Ben’s Bells Kind Campus produce measurable differences in kindness in schools?

– Do those differences translate to differences in outcomes like disciplinary actions? Or student at staff satisfaction/happiness?

Participating in Kind Campus activities

Kind behaviors increase in the school community

Schools are measurably happier, safer, places for people to learn and work
PILOT EVALUATION

- Partnered with a local school district
- 11 schools volunteered as Evaluation Pioneer Schools
  - 8 Elementary Schools
  - 3 Middle Schools
- Student surveys (~3000)
  - Tech-savvy district → all surveys online!
- Teacher surveys (~200)
- Observational visits by undergraduate assistants
- Principal interviews with evaluation staff
• Asked staff about
  – School’s involvement in KC
  – Use of KC materials in their classrooms
  – Support from staff and admin for KC
• Information through principal interviews
• Conducted walk-through observations of schools, looking for signs of Kind Campus participation and activities
Which of the following best describes your school's involvement with the Kind Campus Program?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minimal</th>
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<th>Heavy</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Never/rarely implemented Kind Campus activities. No visual reminders</td>
<td>(Implemented Kind Campus activities at least</td>
<td>(Implemented Kind Campus as part of our regular school day</td>
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</table>

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Average = 3.4

7 of 11 schools had answers ranging from 1 to 5
How do we measure kindness?

Concept Mapping Work

**Region 1: Student Social-Emotional Skills and Wellbeing**

**Region 2: School Climate**

**Region 3: Compassionate Intentionality and Awareness**

**Region 4: Work Environment**

**Region 5: School Operational Outcomes**

**Region 6: Extramural (Family and Community) Connection**
How do we measure kindness?

• Draw on the concept mapping work from last year

• Pulled questions from existing scales around topics like student socio-emotional skills, school climate, teacher burnout

• Tested surveys with student and teacher groups before the pilot
What are the effects of increasing kindness?
Measuring effects

• Asked **teachers** about their own thoughts and behaviors, happiness in their job, and the behaviors of students in their school
• Asked **students** about their own prosocial skills, the prosocial behaviors of their peers, school climate, their sense of school connectedness
• Hope to get administrative data, e.g., discipline records
Preliminary results

In schools where staff report that Kind Campus is a “big deal”, staff feel that

– Students get along better
– Students are happy
– Students are more respectful of teachers and staff
– Students are able to calm themselves when they get angry
– Students think it’s cool to be kind
– The school offers a friendly learning environment
– There’s good school spirit
– The school has clear norms and expectations about kindness
– Fighting is less of an issue
Next steps

• Continue to analyze the pilot data
  – Observational data
• Refine our surveys
• Work towards collecting longitudinal data & data on operational outcomes (e.g., discipline)
• Collaborate with new schools/districts
  – Partner with schools/districts to apply for funding for evaluation and research that matters to them
• Provide information back to you
Thank you!

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