

THE INCREDIBLE YEARS TEACHER CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT PROGRAM: USING COACHING TO SUPPORT GENERALIZATION TO REAL-WORLD CLASSROOM SETTINGS

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This article focuses on the Incredible Years Teacher Classroom Management Training (IY TCM) intervention as an example of an evidence-based program that embeds coaching within its design. First, the core features of the IY TCM program are described. Second, the IY TCM coaching model and processes utilized to facilitate high fidelity of implementation of IY TCM by classroom teachers are highlighted. The goal is to demonstrate the use of coaching as a support system toward effective generalization of the IY TCM strategies among teachers with diverse backgrounds and skills who work with students with varying developmental, academic, and social-emotional needs. Implications for school psychologists, researchers, and implementation science are discussed. © 2012 Wiley Periodicals, Inc.

Schools across the country are trying to build capacity to meet the diverse needs of learners. Given educational reform and an increase in accountability for student outcomes, the effectiveness of school practices has come under increased levels of scrutiny (Lembke & Stormont, 2005). Evaluating the effectiveness of practices often yields information that highlights the need for new practices; school psychologists are often key staff involved in supporting the adoption of new practices overall, as well as at the classroom level. To support teachers' use of new interventions, it is vital to understand the factors that influence adoption and implementation. Research indicates that the quality of a program's implementation is associated with student outcomes (Durlak & DuPre, 2008). For interventions to be implemented with high fidelity, the necessary support systems or infrastructure to coordinate and deploy the intervention must be in place, and the quality of these supports must be systematically evaluated (Domitrovich et al., 2008).

One practice that has emerging promise for teacher implementation of evidence-based practices is the use of coaching (see Reinke, Herman, & Sprick, 2011). The purpose of this article is to provide an example of how coaching has been used as a support system for generalization of a classroom management program, the Incredible Years Teacher Classroom Management program (IY TCM; Webster-Stratton, 1994). The following sections offer a context by first providing a review of the literature on the IY TCM program and collaborative consultation and coaching. Next, the underlying principles guiding the IY TCM intervention and coaching model are discussed, and examples from an ongoing efficacy trial are presented. Lastly, implications and future directions are discussed.

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RESEARCH ON THE IY TCM PROGRAM

IY TCM is part of the Incredible Years (IY) Series, which includes complementary curricula for parents and children, all of which utilize similar collaborative and self-reflective training methods and interactive, experiential processes. The IY Series programs have been the subject of extensive empirical evaluation over the past 3 decades. All three programs have been widely endorsed by various review groups, including the Office for Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, as one of 11 “blueprint” model violence prevention evidence-based programs for treating and preventing disruptive behavior disorders (Webster-Stratton, Mihalic et al., 2011).

The IY TCM group-based training program has been evaluated by the developer in three randomized control trials (RCTs), as well as by six independent investigators. The IY TCM program was first evaluated in a trial with 133 children diagnosed with conduct problems comparing child training and parent training with and without teacher training. Post-treatment classroom observations of teacher behavior consistently favored conditions in which teachers received training. Trained teachers were less critical and less harsh than control teachers were. Trained teachers were more nurturing and consistent, used more praise, and reported more confidence in teaching than control teachers. Results also indicated that in classrooms where teachers were trained, children were observed to be significantly less aggressive with peers and more cooperative with teachers than were children in untrained teacher classrooms. Trained teachers also reported children had increased academic competence compared with children in control classrooms (Webster-Stratton, Reid, Hammond, 2004).

Nearly identical findings emerged in another RCT with 272 Head Start children, in which teachers and parents received the group-based IY parent and teacher training programs and were compared with regular Head Start classrooms (Webster-Stratton, Reid, & Hammond, 2001). Additional findings indicated that in classrooms where teachers received training, children were observed to have higher school readiness scores (engagement and on-task behavior) and increased prosocial behaviors, as well as significantly reduced peer aggression. Teachers’ reports of parent bonding and involvement in school, as well as children’s social competence, were also significantly higher for classrooms with IY TCM-trained teachers than for control teachers (Webster-Stratton et al., 2001).

A recent study evaluated the teacher training program in combination with the IY child social-emotional and problem-solving curriculum. Matched pairs of schools were randomly assigned to intervention or control conditions. In the intervention conditions, Head Start, kindergarten, and first-grade teachers were trained. Results among 153 teachers and 1,768 students indicated that in intervention classrooms, teachers used more positive classroom management strategies, and their students showed more social competence and emotional self-regulation, school readiness skills, and reduced conduct problems. Intervention teachers also showed more positive involvement with parents than control teachers (Webster-Stratton, Reid, & Stoolmiller, 2008). One limitation of all three of these studies is that it was unknown what effects the IY TCM program alone would have had without being combined with the parent or child programs.

Another study by independent investigators replicated the developer’s findings using the IY TCM program as a single group training approach in combination with mental health consultation in low-income, high-minority Head Start classrooms in Chicago (Raver et al., 2008). Teachers were found to have higher levels of positive classroom climate, teacher sensitivity, and effective behavior management than control classrooms.

Another study was conducted in Jamaica with teachers of 24 preschools from inner-city areas. Schools were randomly assigned to to intervention or control conditions. All teachers in the intervention schools were trained in eight to nine full-day workshops (Baker-Henningham, Walker, Powell, & Gardner, 2009). Large benefits were found for teacher classroom management

practices and improved classroom atmosphere. Significant improvements were also seen in the behavior of children in intervention classrooms according to independent observations compared with control classrooms.

A recent study evaluated the revised IY TCM program offered in weekly 4-hour sessions (rather than monthly day-long sessions) with one of the lowest income and highest unemployment counties in Michigan; follow-up data found sustained improvements in teachers' perceptions of positive management strategies and their use in the classroom (Carlson, Tirt, Bender, & Benson, 2011).

Finally, one study evaluated the self-study method of training teachers compared with a self-study plus consultation model and found significant differences between groups in teacher confidence, use of positive instructional practices, and acceptability supporting the self-study plus consultation condition. Positive trends also favored the combined training in terms of students' increased social competence (Shernoff & Kratochwill, 2007).

Currently, our research team is conducting a large-scale efficacy trial in a large urban district in the Midwest. The trial compares 50 elementary school classrooms (kindergarten through third grade [K-3]) with teachers trained in and implementing the IY TCM program with 50 control elementary classrooms (K-3) randomly assigned over a 3-year period. We are currently in the second year of the trial. Examples of coaching from this trial are presented following the review of the theoretical and research support for coaching.

Consultation and Coaching

The field of school psychology has a long history of utilizing consultation models to support implementation of evidence-based social-emotional and behavioral practices (Watson & Robinson, 1996). Such models have included professionals with behavioral expertise assisting teachers in the development of specific intervention plans for students with social-emotional and behavior problems. Often, the type of technical assistance for teachers has included short-term follow-up visits to check on the teachers' use of the intervention plan and to determine the perceptions of student improvement. However, given the complexity of behavior challenges in children and the factors that contribute to teachers' need for support when working with children with behavior problems, short-term consultation with experts is often not an effective consultation model (Erchul & Martens, 1997). Teachers may be struggling to effectively support a child with challenging behavior for many different reasons, such as lack of skills, knowledge, objectivity, or self-confidence (Caplan & Caplan, 1993). Accordingly, for many decades researchers have underscored the importance of providing more ongoing and collaborative support for teachers to adopt and sustain new practices (e.g., Bergan, 1977; Noell et al., 2005; Reinke, Lewis-Palmer, & Merrell, 2008).

The need for ongoing teacher support in implementing new practices has also been underscored in professional development research. According to research, teachers do not implement practices presented in typical "one-shot" professional development models (Fixsen, Naoom, Blase, Friedman, & Wallace, 2005). However, assistance with implementation is not the only support needed for a teacher's sustained use of a practice in a classroom setting. Research has clearly documented that teachers can use new skills in practice with high fidelity of implementation (Noell et al., 2005). Yet, within a short period, teachers tend to stop using new practices with integrity, although they may not be aware that they have stopped using newly learned skills effectively. Specifically, research has found that teachers reported they were implementing interventions as planned, but direct observation data proved otherwise (Noell et al., 2005).

In theory, coaching facilitates the teacher's implementation process because it provides an outside set of eyes and ears, which can help determine whether the teacher understands and can implement the intervention. Coaching can provide support and consultation in collaboration with the teacher in efforts to fine tune intervention strategies within the classroom context. Coaching has

included various types of support for teachers to increase the fidelity of intervention implementation (Kretlow & Bartholomew, 2010). In the social behavior coaching literature, key coaching components include direct observation of teachers in classroom settings, and collaborative meetings between the coach and teacher focus on self-reflection, goal setting, goal review, modeling, performance feedback, instruction on skills, and ongoing planning for specific problems (see Reinke et al., 2011). Research on coaching teachers on specific interventions to improve students' social behavior has provided support for the use of coaching (e.g., Carter & Van Norman, 2010; Noell, Duhon, Gatti, & Connell, 2002; Noell et al. 2005, Reinke, et al., 2008).

The IY TCM program is one evidence-based program that systematically embeds coaching within the intervention to support teachers in effectively generalizing skills learned in a series of group-based video-modeling training workshops to real-world classrooms. The following section includes a description of the program and the specific principles that both IY TCM group leaders and coaches utilize to ensure the skills learned by teachers are relevant, feasible, and generalize to their individual classroom context.

THE IY TCM

The IY TCM program was designed to reduce the multiple risk factors associated with ineffective classroom management practices, early-onset conduct problems, and emotional and social difficulties in young children aged 3 to 8 years. The IY TCM program trains teachers in evidence-based practices in effective behavior management, strategies for building teacher–child relationship skills, parent–teacher collaboration, development of behavior plans with appropriate developmental expectations for individual students, and supporting student problem solving, emotional regulation, and social skills development.

It is recommended that IY TCM be delivered in six full-day workshops spread out monthly over the school year by trainers (called group leaders) to small groups of teachers. The program was updated several years ago in DVD format to include additional video vignettes of children of varying ages with behavior problems and developmental issues, as well as to provide new content and additional teacher training regarding academic, persistence, social, and emotional coaching; methods of teaching children problem-solving skills and emotional self-regulation skills; social skills needed to develop positive friendships; proactive discipline hierarchies; and parent involvement strategies. These additions have resulted in the program taking 6 days to complete rather than the original 4- to 6-day protocol described in the earlier studies (Webster-Stratton et al., 2001, 2004). The IY TCM program utilizes self-reflective and experiential learning, group support and problem solving, and specific collaborative interactive learning methods that facilitate teachers in learning important classroom management skills, as well as helping teachers manage their own stress and cognitive and emotional responses.

Coaching Process Embedded Within IY TCM

Between each monthly training workshop, an IY TCM coach visits teachers' classrooms to model skills and support teachers' efforts. The IY TCM coaches are experienced and certified IY TCM group leaders who have been selected to receive additional training because of their collaborative and interpersonal skill set, knowledge of evidence-based classroom management skills, education, and prior experience in the classroom as teachers. Thus, they are given additional coaching training and may obtain certification by submitting videos of their coaching sessions and evaluations from teachers they have coached for review, demonstrating knowledge of the program and classroom coaching methods (see <http://www.incredibleyears.com/Certification/about.asp> for the IY certification process).

The workshop group leader and coach can be the same person, but in some cases, group leaders are individuals who live outside the school district area, making it impossible for them to be on-site coaches. In these cases, individuals trained as IY TCM coaches (after being certified as group leaders) within the school district meet with teachers between workshop sessions. Additionally, the coach maintains ongoing close contact and collaboration with the certified group leaders. The coach actively collaborates with the group leader so that content in subsequent workshops is tailored to the needs of the teachers. The IY TCM coach meets individually with teachers on a weekly basis using a collaborative process designed to help generalize the principles and skills learned during the workshop trainings to the classroom setting. The IY TCM coach is defined as:

someone who is learner-centered, supportive and collaborative, builds on teachers' strengths, observes and monitors their skills and interpersonal teaching processes with children, models skills and thoughts, prompts teacher self-reflection and problem solving, sets up behavioral practices and promotes teachers' use of strategic behavior plans and parent involvement, and encourages, praises and reinforces steps in the right direction. (C. Webster-Stratton, personal communication, November 15, 2011)

Coaching draws on social constructivist learning theory and is focused on helping teachers reach a particular goal they have set for themselves (Lucas, 2001; Parsloe & Wray, 2001).

Within the IY TCM coaching model, the teachers are asked to complete self-reflective inventories regarding the specific topic being covered at the monthly workshop (e.g., relationship building, proactive strategies; see http://www.incredibleyears.com/Resources/TCM-workshops_self-reflection-forms.pdf). They are asked in the inventory to reflect on their goals and to share them with their coach prior to the coach visiting their classroom. The coach then visits the classroom and supports the teacher in using these strategies with encouragement and praise, and by modeling the strategies. The IY TCM coach also records observational data on the use of the strategies covered in the workshops and student-teacher interactions. The coach then completes a similar coaching reflection observation inventory (see http://www.incredibleyears.com/Resources/teacher-observation-form_proactive-teacher.pdf) to determine whether the assessment matches the teacher's self-assessment and to decide whether there are other areas of need for discussion and feedback at weekly meetings. For example, sometimes teachers underestimate or overestimate their proactive approaches or the nature of student behavior problems and developmental abilities. The coach then uses the classroom observation data and reflections to provide both quantitative and qualitative feedback to the teacher to monitor progress on goals and inform the discussion on mastery of the key principles and goal development.

During each meeting, the coach and teacher review the teacher's goals for implementing IY TCM practices within his or her classroom, and the teacher also shares self-reflections in regard to progress. They revisit the teacher's successes and challenges over the past week in meeting his or her goals, and the coach sets up role-play practices of challenging student scenarios so that the teacher can practice his or her responses to the child (the coach may take on the role of the child). The coach provides feedback on the teacher's performance of new skills in a sensitive and collaborative manner, a critical component to supporting new behaviors in the classroom (Noell et al., 2005; Reinke, Lewis-Palmer, & Martin, 2007; Reinke et al., 2008; Stormont, Smith, & Lewis, 2007). Additionally, the coach can show further IY vignettes or model particular skills according to the teacher's particular skill level.

There are several benefits to this coaching model for supporting generalization of the IY TCM program components to real classroom settings. Specifically, an on-site IY TCM coach experiences firsthand what is going on in the classroom, sees teachers' efforts to use particular management

strategies, makes changes and gives feedback and support, models strategies with children, and collaborates with teachers to fine tune learning to specific classroom and students' developmental needs. The IY TCM coach works with teachers on the development, refinement, and implementation of behavior support plans, reviews teacher goals, and builds teacher self-efficacy and confidence by highlighting teacher successes. Furthermore, the coach elicits teacher feedback about the coaching process regularly, using a collaborative style and specific coaching evaluation forms. In the next section, the principles that guide the intervention are described, as well as the coach's role in promoting generalization.

IY Principles

Compared with other manualized interventions, the IY programs are unique because although the core components of the intervention are clearly operationalized in the group leader manual, the delivery of the intervention is guided by a set of principles. These principles allow the program to be flexible enough to permit adaptations for the given cultural contexts, teacher skill levels, and experiences of the participants, tailoring the content to the specific needs of each teacher attending the group training (see Webster-Stratton, Reinke, Herman, & Newcomer, 2011). Whereas the IY TCM group leaders tap these underlying principles during the group trainings, IY TCM coaches also utilize these same principles when providing ongoing coaching support to teachers between training workshops. The following discussion provides a brief description of each principle and how the coaching process uses each IY principle to support teachers.

Principle 1: Collaboration and Developing Relationships Are Essential to Teacher Learning. Collaboration is a critical principle in the IY TCM model. Using this model, the teacher workshop group leaders and coaches do not set themselves up as “experts,” but rather, teachers function as experts regarding their own students, classrooms, schools, and communities in determining their goals. Collaboration implies a reciprocal relationship in which the coach's and the teacher's knowledge, strengths, and viewpoints are equally utilized (see Knight 2010; Webster-Stratton & Herbert, 1994). Group leaders facilitate this collaborative partnership during the workshop sessions, and the IY TCM coach continues this relationship between each session. For instance, during individual meetings, the coach actively learns about the teacher's classroom by inviting the teacher to share his or her experiences; discuss thoughts, feelings, and ideas; and engage in problem solving. The coach works with each teacher to adapt concepts and skills learned in the workshop session to his or her particular circumstances. This increases the likelihood that the skills learned during the workshop will generalize into classroom practices in a way that fits with that teacher's particular skill level, values, and the specific needs of his or her students in the classroom. Additionally, the IY TCM coaches and group leaders interact and collaborate between workshop sessions to ensure that workshop examples and content reflect the needs of the teachers in the group.

Another key component of the IY TCM program is the pairing of teachers with a “buddy” from the group. The purpose of the buddy system is to allow teachers to support one another outside of the workshop sessions, process challenges and successes, and share ideas and experiences toward promoting generalization of the IY TCM skills into their classroom setting. The IY TCM coach encourages the teachers to utilize their buddies between workshop sessions and to bring the shared ideas to workshop sessions.

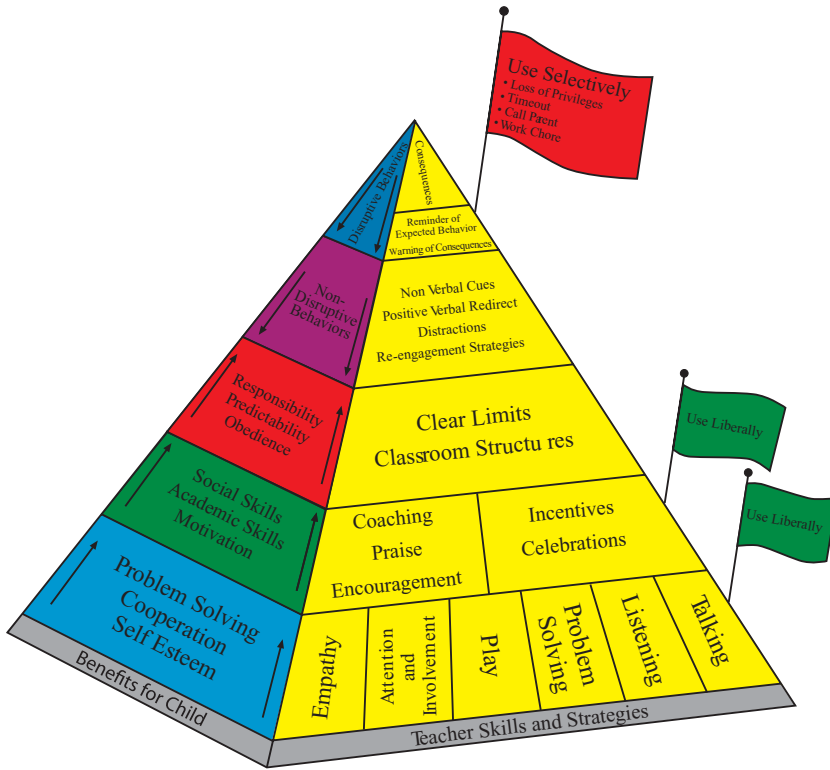
Principle 2: Start With Teachers Choosing Goals and Self-Monitoring Progress. Within the coaching process, teachers are active participants, setting goals for the meeting agendas and for using newly learned practices in the classroom setting. This principle ensures that the program's goals are congruent with teachers' values and suit the backgrounds or abilities of the students in

their classrooms. Teachers monitor progress toward achieving their goals, complete self-reflection inventories regarding their use of the ideas discussed on the IY TCM workshop topic each month, and determine their goals for the subsequent month. Between workshop sessions, the teachers work directly with the IY TCM coach, who helps support teachers in meeting these goals in the actual classroom. For students who demonstrate exceptional challenges, the teacher and the IY TCM coach use tailored strategies to address the challenges by creating individual behavior support plans.

Individual Behavior Planning Meetings. To further individualize the IY TCM content to the specific challenges faced by the teachers, teachers develop individual behavior support plans for students in their classroom. The IY TCM program is constructed with the knowledge that universal classroom practices will not work for every student in the classroom. Therefore, during the workshops, teachers break into small groups to collaboratively develop behavior plans for the children in their classrooms whom they have identified as having specific behavioral difficulties. They complete a brief functional assessment of the target child to understand the time, setting, antecedent, and consequences of the misbehavior (http://www.incredibleyears.com/Resources/iy_behavior-plan-form.pdf). The behavior plans target positive behaviors to encourage reinforcement of the replacement behaviors and proactive discipline responses for discouraging classroom misbehavior. Teachers are encouraged to share the plan and collaborate with parents to promote consistency from home to school. This process begins in the first workshop, empowering teachers with skills and practices to utilize with students exhibiting challenging behaviors and with their parents from the start, which can support teacher efficacy and ongoing implementation of effective practices (Han & Weiss, 2005). The IY TCM coach meets with teachers between workshops to support behavior plan implementation, gather data on the effects of the behavior support plan, provide performance feedback to the teacher on the use of strategies with the individual students, and problem solve when the plan is not working as intended.

The impact of this personalized support for increasing teachers' capacity to work with children exhibiting challenging behavior can be monitored with descriptive teacher reports or direct observational data. For example, during an initial workshop session with a recent cohort, a few teachers admitted that they had students in their class whom they required to sit away from the other students. Each teacher reported feeling that the removal of the student from the group was necessary because they themselves were not successful in managing the student's behavior. These teachers chose to work with the coach on reintegrating these students into their classrooms, building a behavior support plan toward this goal. Thus, with support from the coach and the development of individualized plans based on IY TCM strategies and principles, each student was able to move back into the group and participate fully in class.

Principle 3: The IY Teaching Pyramid Is a Road Map for Content. The IY TCM program is based on relationship (Dozier, Lindhiem, & Ackerman, 2005; Hoffman, Marvin, Cooper, & Powell, 2006) and social cognitive learning theories (Bandura, 1986). The Teaching Pyramid serves as the road map for delivering content (see Figure 1), providing a guide for conceptualizing effective supportive classroom environments. Behaviors and activities depicted in the base of the pyramid should be applied liberally within the classroom, and those at the top of the pyramid should occur with less frequency. A basic premise of the model is that a positive teacher–student–parent relationship foundation precedes discipline strategies, and attention to positive behaviors should occur far more frequently in effective classroom environments than attention to negative behaviors. The IY TCM coach, using knowledge of the Teaching Pyramid strategies and the IY principles, guides teachers in utilizing these strategies within the classroom with high fidelity. The coach works with teachers to negotiate how each element can be effectively implemented within their specific classrooms.



Teaching Pyramid

FIGURE 1. Incredible Years Teacher Classroom Management Teaching Pyramid.

Principle 4: Build Participants' Confidence and Self-Efficacy. Given the connection between knowledge, efficacy, and behavior, increasing teacher confidence and self-efficacy is a major principle of the IY TCM program (Bandura, 1977, 1982, 1989). The collaborative partnership between the teachers and IY TCM workshop group leaders and coaches works to empower teachers by increasing their autonomy rather than dependency on the coach or group leaders. IY TCM coaches facilitate this by celebrating successful experiences and supporting the knowledge and skill base of the teachers. IY TCM coaches utilize an array of strategies that focus on teacher strengths and emphasize the positive. For instance, coaches comment on positive achievements noticed during classroom observations. Coaches also reward teacher participants for reaching personal goals and completing classroom practice exercises with prizes (e.g., special stickers, pencils), while simultaneously building self-efficacy and modeling a host of strategies those teachers are being trained to use with students. In essence, coaches develop a positive relationship foundation with the teacher, which is intended to reflect a parallel process for teachers to model with students and their parents.

Principle 5: Address Cognitions, Emotions, and Behaviors. IY TCM targets the link between thoughts, emotions, and behaviors (Bandura, 1989). For instance, teachers who have worked with a challenging student for months without success may have developed very negative views of that

student. Frequent thoughts, such as, “He’s doing that just to irritate me,” “She is hopeless,” “He belongs in a special education setting, not in my class,” and “He is never going to change,” make it likely that the teacher will have negative feelings and antagonistic interactions with the student and his or her parents, and fuel a lack of motivation to implement effective new strategies. Likewise, teachers’ negative perceptions of their work environment (“It’s not fair that I get stuck with these kids”), parents (“His parents just don’t care”), and their own ability to manage their frustrations (“I’m going to explode”) produce unproductive internal dialogues that will undermine nearly any intervention unless they are systematically addressed.

The IY TCM intervention addresses these self-defeating thoughts, as well as the emotions and behaviors they engender. IY TCM coaches may work with teachers to reflect on their internal dialogue, bringing negative thought patterns to light and encouraging teachers to develop more positive coping thoughts to counter them. This can include challenging and rewriting specific negative thoughts, using positive imagery of successful implementation of new practices, and planting simple positive coping messages that they prompt themselves to think throughout the day. The IY TCM coach meetings provide opportunities to practice through role-plays and give feedback in the classroom as the teacher implements these strategies. The teachers are also provided with opportunities to express the emotional challenges they face while learning new strategies for coping, which can increase the likelihood of quality implementation and generalization of IY TCM practices learned in the group trainings.

Principle 6: Use Experiential and Self-Reflective Learning Methods. IY TCM training places a major emphasis on experiential learning rather than simply didactic instruction. During workshop sessions, teachers are given the opportunity to observe group leaders and video models demonstrating implementation of various teaching practices, reflect on which practices best fit with their style and class in the group discussions, and practice the observed skills while receiving feedback and encouragement from their peers. IY TCM coaches continue using experiential learning, discussion, and self-reflection during individual meetings with teachers between workshop sessions. For instance, the coach may demonstrate or model a new skill for the teacher, set up a role-play of a challenging student situation so that the teacher can practice responses, or show additional video vignettes related to the teacher’s particular goals in the coaching meetings. The discussions and self-reflection process inform the coach about the cultural context of the classroom and the past experiences, values, and beliefs of the teachers, leading to a greater fit between the IY TCM practices, the teacher, and the students within that specific classroom.

Principle 7: Contextualize Learning Process. Contextualizing the information presented during the training can support generalization and use of skills in the classroom. IY TCM coaches work with teachers to identify particular circumstances in which they find it difficult or impossible to apply strategies learned during the training. Often, teachers will identify high stress times of the day or situations in which they have limited time. Teachers are encouraged to identify these times and strategically plan ways to deal with them. When teachers successfully utilize a strategy during a stressful situation, they are encouraged to reflect on this success and share their strategies. The coach might use probing questions, such as “What made it possible for you to follow through in such a stressful situation?” “What were you thinking to yourself at the time?” and “How did you manage that?”

Examples from a cohort of teachers recently trained in IY TCM demonstrate this principle. For instance, one teacher in our recent trial set a goal to decrease her negative interactions with a specific student during group activities by using planned ignoring for minor misbehaviors. When questioned about her progress by the IY TCM coach, the teacher reported that planned ignoring allowed her to focus her attention on instruction and the positive behaviors of all students, and as

a result, she felt less drained at the end of the day. Another teacher was struggling to normalize the classroom experience of a child who was sexually acting out while ensuring that other children remained safe. She was able to successfully maintain the student in the classroom by focusing on clear limits and classroom structures, praise, problem solving, and encouragement, all principles she generalized from the IY TCM training. The proactive strategies she put in place allowed her to focus on prevention and alleviated the anxiety she experienced regarding the placement of the student in her classroom.

Overall, the IY principles guide the coaching process. The principles encourage a collaborative relationship between the coach and teacher that allows for generalizing skills learned during the IY TCM workshops into real-world classroom settings with high-quality implementation.

Implications for School Psychologists

Implications for practicing school psychologists as well as researchers include needs for identifying 1) the essential components of effective coaching; 2) teacher characteristics that impact receptiveness, adoption, and use of specific strategies; 3) skills and training needed to be a coach for an evidenced-based program such as IY TCM; and 4) coach fidelity of implementation of key components. First, the coaching and consultation literature includes a wide variety of supervision strategies, with essential components, including instruction on specific target interventions, ongoing progress monitoring through direct observation of teachers' use of target strategies specifically in their classrooms, instruction on specific behaviors as needed (perhaps in booster sessions), and performance feedback. The performance feedback part of coaching has a significant amount of research support (Noell et al., 2005; Reinke et al., 2007; Reinke et al., 2008; Stormont et al., 2007). Research has also clearly demonstrated that instruction on a strategy alone does not have a strong association with increased, sustained use of that strategy without feedback (Noell et al., 2005). The importance and impact of other coaching variables, such as modeling, prompting, collaborating, relationship building, problem solving, and ongoing emotional support, need more attention in the research literature. School psychologists involved with implementation of school-based interventions and coaching should collect descriptive data on how coaches use their time and how the coaching process impacts teacher and student improvement in classrooms.

More research is also needed to determine whether specific teacher characteristics contribute to the extent to which teachers actively engage in and benefit from a coaching relationship (see Domitrovich et al., 2008). Poor response or resistance to coaching is often characterized as inflexibility, poor motivation, irrationality, or philosophical and theoretical differences. It has been suggested, however, that what is perceived as teacher characteristics or teacher resistance may be a function of the operating contingencies of the coaching process that are either too prescriptive, punishing, or inadequately reinforcing from the teacher's perspective (Gonzalez, Nelson, Gutkin & Shwery, 2004). The principle-based coaching model utilized by IY TCM is designed to reduce resistance and promote collaborative relationships.

Although much has been written about the process of coaching and relationship building (Erchul & Martens, 1997; Fixsen et al., 2005; Reinke et al., 2011), and there is some research support for coaching (e.g., Carter & Van Norman, 2010; Noell et al., 2002; Noell et al., 2005, Reinke et al., 2008), there is an absence of experimental studies that define best practices for coaches (see Becker & Domitrovich, 2011). One barrier to identifying best practices in coaching is that the term is broadly applied across interactions and approaches. A specific definition and understanding of coaching and the role of a coach (e.g., specific core duties, method, frequency, duration) are needed to conduct experimental studies to determine the critical features of effective coaching. This information is critical to identifying what kind of professional training and support/supervision coaches need.

Additionally, it is important to explore how to build the infrastructure necessary for the use of coaching by natural implementers rather than by outside experts. For example, specific teachers may need some booster sessions because of maintenance problems. If the coach were only available for a limited time, this support would not be feasible. Further, the use of natural implementers as on-site coaches increases the feasibility and sustainability of coaching as a lasting supportive infrastructure.

Finally, fidelity measures of the coaching process are necessary to establish a link with improved teacher performance and student outcomes. As do most teacher training models that utilize coaching, IY TCM training uses self-report as a fidelity measure of the coaching process. Such self-reports are typically a checklist of topics and activities addressed by the coach during a coaching session. Although self-report can reflect adherence to prescribed procedures, such fidelity measures do not adequately address the complexity of the dynamic and reciprocal process of the underlying coaching principles used to support teachers. For this reason, IY TCM also utilizes observation checklists and coding of coach–teacher interactions to certify coaches and to ensure fidelity of the process.

SUMMARY

Schools are increasingly encouraged by state and federal policy to adopt evidence-based practices and programs. However, schools have unique contextual factors that create challenges and influence the quality of intervention implementation (Ringeisen, Henderson, & Hoagwood, 2003). Quality of implementation mediates outcomes associated with the use of school-based interventions. Therefore, building the necessary infrastructure, such as ongoing coaching to support teachers in their use of evidence-based practices, can increase the quality of implementation. The IY TCM program embeds a flexible collaborative coaching model within its design to support teachers. Understanding the vital mechanisms of coaching and systematically measuring the quality of coaching holds important implications for school psychologists and implementation science (Becker & Domitrovich, 2011; Domitrovich et al., 2008). Coaching is one form of systemic support that can help move evidence-based practices into real-world settings. Researchers and practitioners can work together to increase high-quality implementation toward maximizing important positive outcomes for students.

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