

Home > Publications and Reviews > WWC Quick Review



WWC QUICK Review

“Evaluation of the College Possible Program: Results from a Randomized Controlled Trial”

What is the study about?

This study investigated the effect of the *College Possible* program, which is designed to serve low-income high school students. *College Possible* provides a 2-year after-school curriculum to high school juniors and seniors that includes SAT and ACT test preparation services, college admissions and financial aid consulting, and guidance on the transition to college. Students apply as high school sophomores and enter the 2-year program as juniors. The program is limited to students from families below the median city/county household income, and a minimum GPA of 2.0 is suggested for program participation. Over the course of 2 years, each participant in the *College Possible* program receives a total of 320 hours of direct program services. The study sample consisted of 91% minorities, and most participants were potential first-generation college students.

What did the study report?

The study author reported that there was a statistically significant effect of the *College Possible* program on the total number of college applications submitted. Follow-up analyses revealed that students in the intervention group submitted more applications to 4-year institutions and selective institutions than students in the comparison group. The author also reported a statistically significant effect on overall enrollment in college during the fall after high school. Students in the intervention group were more likely to enroll in 4-year and selective institutions than students in the comparison group. *College Possible* participants were also less likely to enroll in 2-year institutions. The author reported no statistically significant effect of the intervention on ACT scores.

Subscribe

To receive quick reviews by email:

- Go to IES Newsflash
- Select “What Works Clearinghouse”
- Provide your email address

Handy Definitions

- ▼ *quick review*
- ▼ *study rating*
- ▼ *meets WWC evidence standards without reservations*
- ▼ *meets WWC evidence standards with reservations*
- ▼ *does not meet WWC evidence standards*

See the [full glossary](#) ►

How does the WWC rate this study?

This report covers two distinct studies. One appears to be a randomized controlled trial with low attrition, and as such, it could *meet WWC evidence standards without reservations*. However, more information is needed from the study author regarding the randomization process before a rating can be given. The other study is a regression discontinuity design that *does not meet WWC evidence standards* because the forcing variable does not have a sufficient number of unique values. A more thorough review (forthcoming) will determine the final study rating and will report more fully on its results.

Citation

Avery, C. (2013). *Evaluation of the College Possible program: Results from a randomized controlled trial* (NBER Working Paper 19562). Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research. Retrieved from <http://www.nber.org>

Posted: December 2013

This quick review was prepared for the WWC by Development Services Group, Inc. under contract ED–IES–12–C–0084.