

## Enhancing Conditions for Learning

### Social and Emotional Learning

- A meta-analysis of school-based social and emotional learning programs involving more than 270,000 students in grades K-12 revealed that students who participated in these programs improved in grades and standardized test scores by 11 percentile points compared to control groups.<sup>1</sup>
- Students who participate in social and emotional learning programs show significant improvement in social and emotional skills, caring attitudes, positive social behaviors, disruptive behaviors, and emotional distress.<sup>2</sup>
- Well-implemented social-emotional learning programs can have significant and meaningful preventive effects on the rates of aggression, social competence, and academic engagement in the elementary school years.<sup>3</sup>
- Interventions that strengthen students' social, emotional, and decision-making skills also positively impact their academic achievement, both in terms of higher standardized test scores and better grades.<sup>4,5</sup>

### Bullying

- A meta-analysis of 44 different school-based bullying prevention programs revealed them to be effective, with average decreases in bullying of 20–23% and average decreases in victimization of 17–20%.<sup>6</sup>
- Greater parental support of adolescents is associated with less bullying and less victimization through bullying, across all forms of bullying, including physical, verbal, relational, and cyber bullying.<sup>7</sup>
- A national study of more than 15,000 students and more than 1,500 school staff revealed that staff at all school levels tend to underestimate the number of students involved in frequent bullying.<sup>8</sup>

### School Climate

- A comprehensive review of empirical research supports the conclusion that improving school climate across multiple domains positively impacts students' academic, behavioral, and psychosocial outcomes.<sup>9</sup>
- Research has shown that aspects of school climate, such as feeling safe at and connected to school and experiencing positive support from peers, are protective factors for mental and emotional wellbeing over the transition from primary to secondary school.<sup>10</sup>

- Meta-analyses and numerous randomized trials have demonstrated the benefits of modifying the school environment to promote students' prosocial behaviors.<sup>11</sup>
- An analysis of data from over 1,700 public middle and high schools revealed that schools that consistently performed better than predicted in math and English language arts had substantially more positive levels of school climate than other schools (an average of 82% vs. 49%).<sup>12</sup>
- Analysis of data from 200 elementary schools in Chicago over a 7-year period showed school climate factors to play an important role in turning around unsuccessful schools.<sup>13</sup>
- School climate and connectedness are positively related to student achievement, and positive change in school climate and school connectedness is related to significant gains in student scores on statewide achievement tests.<sup>14,15</sup>

## Wellness

- The authors of a comprehensive review of positive youth development programs concluded that they produce positive behavior outcomes and prevent youth problem behaviors.<sup>16</sup>
- Resilience results from positive social relationships, positive attitudes and emotions, the ability to control one's own behavior, and feelings of competence.<sup>17</sup>
- A relatively small number of global factors are associated with resilience, including connections to competent and caring adults in the family and community, cognitive and self-regulation skills, positive views of self, and motivation to be effective.<sup>18</sup>

## Family–School Partnerships

- Several decades of research has demonstrated the power of family–school partnerships to positively impact children's school success.<sup>19</sup>
- Consultation has been found to yield positive results such as remediating academic and behavior problems for children in school settings; changing teachers' and parents' behavior, knowledge, attitudes, and perceptions; and reducing referrals for psychoeducational assessments.<sup>20,21</sup>
- A longitudinal study found participation in a school-based, early childhood program providing educational and family-support services for low-income children between the ages 3–9 years to be associated with positive outcomes on general well-being into adulthood, including higher rates of school completion; higher levels of educational attainment; and lower rates of felony arrests, convictions, incarceration, and depressive symptoms.<sup>22</sup>
- A meta-analysis of 77 studies comprising over 300,000 students revealed parents' involvement in their children's education to be associated with higher student achievement, whether measured by grades, standardized test scores, or various other measures.<sup>23</sup>

## School Mental Health Services

- Children's mental health continues to be neglected, even with the growing scientific evidence of the value of early interventions in pediatric care and schools and of the efficacy of interventions for children who are at risk for mental health problems.<sup>24</sup>
- Expanded school mental health services in elementary schools have been found to reduce special education referrals and improve aspects of the school climate.<sup>25</sup>
- Research reveals that interventions to address high anxiety in children ages 6–13 years contribute to improvement in their school performance and social functioning.<sup>26</sup>

- Intensive school-based mental health services for elementary school children experiencing severe emotional and behavioral difficulties have demonstrated reductions in conduct disorder behavior, attention deficit/hyperactivity, and depression.<sup>27</sup>
- School mental health programs improve educational outcomes by decreasing absences, decreasing discipline referrals, and increasing test scores.<sup>28</sup>
- When school-based mental health services are available, students are substantially more likely to seek help, especially those enrolled in special education programs.<sup>29</sup>
- The earlier students receive school-based mental health services, the earlier they are likely to receive needed specialty mental health services.<sup>30</sup>

## ENDNOTES

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