NTACT
National Technical Assistance Center on Transition

Using Check and Connect to Promote Student Participation in the IEP Meeting

What is the evidence base?

- This is a Research-Based Practice for **students with emotional-behavioral disorders** based on one methodologically sound group study with random assignment across 71 students with emotional-behavioral disorders.

Where is the best place to find out how to do this practice?

- The website for Check & Connect provides numerous resources for implementing the model including information on a manual (Christensen et al., 2008) and trainings.

    http://checkandconnect.org/default.html

With who was it implemented?

- Students with
    o Emotional/ behavior disorders (n = 71)
- Ages ranged from 14 – 26; ninth graders, followed for three to five years
- Males (n = 60), Females (n = 11)
- Ethnicity
    o African American (n = 45)
    o European American (n = 17)
    o Other (n = 8)

What is the practice?

Check and Connect is a structured intervention model designed to assist schools and organizations in identifying students who are at risk for dropping out of school, then pairing those students with mentors who address each student's individual needs to help them progress toward school completion. http://checkandconnect.org/model/default.html; (Christenson et al., 2008).

The Four Components of Check & Connect

1. A mentor who keeps education salient for students

2. Systematic monitoring (the –check component)
3. Timely and individualized intervention (the –connect component)
4. Enhancing home-school communication and home support for learning

The Core Elements of Check & Connect

- Relationship Building—mutual trust and open communication, nurtured through long-term commitment focused on students' educational success.
- Routine Monitoring of Alterable Predictors—systematic check of warning signs of withdrawal (attendance, grades, suspensions) using data readily available to school personnel.
- Individualized and Timely Interventions—support tailored to individual student needs, based on level of engagement with school, associated influences of home and school, and the leveraging of local resources.
- Long-term Commitment—committing to students and families for at least 2 years, including the ability to follow mobile youth from school to school
- Persistence Plus—persistent source of academic motivation, continuity of familiarity with youth and family, and consistency in the message that –education is important for your future.
- Affiliation with School and Learning— facilitate students' access to and active participation in school-related activities and events.
- Problem-solving and Capacity Building—promote the acquisition of skills to resolve conflicts constructively and to look for solutions—avoid the tendency to place blame and diminish potential to create dependency.

How has the practice been implemented?

In the article used to establish the evidence base, Check and Connect was used to promote student participation in the IEP meeting.

Caseloads of 30 – 35 students were assigned to monitors
- Monitors responsibilities included
  - providing monitoring of variables (e.g., attendance, academic performance), including monthly summaries and reviews of data
  - holding weekly conversations with students in the program regarding the relevance of education
  - providing problem-solving training (e.g., real and hypothetical scenarios)
  - providing transportation for families for school meetings
  - following-up with students through mobility (school transfers)
  - inviting and encouraging student participation in IEP meetings
  - assisting students with signing up for extracurricular activities (e.g., waiving
  - enrollment fees, accompanying or transporting to the first meeting)
- Students with disabilities who participated in the intervention were more likely to (a) participate in their IEP meetings, (b) articulate goals or services related to transition

Where has it been implemented?

- General school locations
- Community Home
- Hospital

How does this practice relate to Common Core Standards?

- Comprehension and Collaboration (Anchor Standards for Speaking and Listening, Grades 9-12)
  - Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively
- Making Inferences and Justifying Conclusions (Statistics and Probability, High School)
  - Evaluate reports based on data.

How does this practice relate to the Common Career Technical Core?

- Demonstrate use of the concepts, strategies, and systems for obtaining and conveying ideas and information to enhance communication in the workplace (Communications)
  - Communicate with other employees to clarify workplace objectives.
- Employ critical thinking and interpersonal skills to resolve conflicts with staff and/or customers (Problem Solving)
  - Implement stress management techniques.

References used to establish this evidence base:

Sinclair, M. F., Christensen, S. L., & Thurlow, M. L. (2005). Promoting school completion of urban secondary youth with emotional or behavioral disabilities. Exceptional Children, 71, 465–482.

Additional References:

Christenson, S. L., Thurlow, M. L., Sinclair, M. F., Lehr, C. A., Kaibel, C. M., Reschly, A. L., Mavis, A., et al. (2008). Check & Connect: A comprehensive student engagement intervention manual. Minneapolis, MN: Institute on Community Integration at the University of Minnesota. Retrieved from http://www.checkandconnect.org/publications/default.html#manual.

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