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Introduction & Rationale

- Without intervention, students with behavioral challenges are vulnerable to difficult life circumstances (Wagner et al., 1993)
  - Significant academic challenges (e.g., grade failure, lower GPAs, missed school, dropout)
  - Serious difficulties outside the school (e.g., pregnancies, criminal activity, substance abuse, homelessness)
Introduction & Rationale

- There is a strong need for intervention across home-school contexts

  - Family-school partnerships & parental involvement positively correlate with favorable outcomes for students, parents, and teachers (e.g., Grolnick & Slowiaczek, 1994; Haynes, Comer, & Hamilton-Lee, 1989; Masten & Coatsworth, 1998)

  - 20th Annual Report to Congress (US Department of Education, 1998) had recommended implementing programs that are "flexible, positive, collaborative, culturally appropriate, and regularly evaluated..." and (b) "...have multiple components tailored to individual needs... build on strengths of youth and their families...and [are] continually evaluated" (US Department of Education, 1998; II-59).
Introduction & Rationale

- Conjoint Behavioral Consultation is a promising home-school intervention model (CBC; Sheridan et al., 1996; Sheridan & Kratochwill, 2008)
  - Promotes implementation of evidence-based intervention strategies by parents and teachers conjointly
  - Provides a mechanism to develop collaborative family-school partnerships to support children
Additional research on CBC is needed

- CBC’s efficacy has been examined primarily via single subject or quasi-experimental studies (e.g., Sheridan, Clarke, & Burt, 2008); need a large-scale randomized trial

- Mechanisms by which CBC exerts its effects (e.g., parent-teacher relationships) have not been explored
Primary objectives of this study:

- to present preliminary findings of a randomized trial evaluating the efficacy of CBC
- to determine the effects of CBC on parent-teacher relationships
- to examine the parent-teacher relationship as a mediator between the CBC intervention and child outcomes
Primary Research Questions

1. What is the effect of CBC on children’s externalizing, adaptive, and social behaviors?

2. What is the effect of CBC on teachers’ reports of the parent-teacher relationship?

3. Does the parent-teacher relationship mediate the effects of CBC on child outcomes?
Participants

- 203 K-3 students and their parents and teachers from 26 schools participated.

- Students with disruptive classroom behaviors (e.g., non-compliance, aggression) were selected based on teacher nomination, ratings on a short behavioral inventory, and the *Systematic Screening for Behavior Disorders (SSBD;* Walker & Seversen, 1990).
Research Design

- 3-cohort randomized design

- Within each cohort, small groups (one teacher and 2-3 parents) to which intervention was provided were randomly assigned to CBC or the control (treatment as usual) condition
  - 52 small groups (112 students) assigned to CBC
  - 42 small groups (91 students) assigned to the control condition
Three-Stage CBC Implementation

- Stage 1: Needs Identification and Needs Analysis (Building on Strengths)
  - Discuss objectives
  - Review strengths of student, family, and school
  - Prioritize 1-2 target behaviors per student
  - Identify and define needs, settings, and goals
  - Conduct functional behavior analysis
  - Discuss ways to gather information
  - Discuss and select strategies for change
Three-Stage CBC Implementation

- Stage 2: Plan Development (Planning for Success)
  - Discuss Objectives
  - Discuss information collected by parents and teachers about identified behaviors
  - Develop a plan to address student needs
  - Collect plan materials
  - Discuss support for the plan at home
Three-Stage CBC Implementation

- Stage 3: Plan Evaluation (Checking and Reconnecting)
  - Discuss progress made toward goals
  - Evaluate the plan(s)
  - Determine the need to continue or change the plan
Three-Stage CBC Implementation

- 4-5 conjoint consultation sessions occurred over 8-12 weeks in small groups with parents of 2-3 students and the classroom teacher.

- Consultants selected interventions for students’ behavioral plans from a *Behavioral Strategies Toolkit* with standardized protocols for evidence-based behavioral strategies.

- All students’ behavioral plans contained a *motivation component* (e.g., token economy, reward menu) and a *home-school communication system*.

- Additional contacts and training with parents and the teacher were scheduled as needed.
Pre-Post Measures/Data Collection

- Student behavior outcomes
  - Social Skills Rating System (SSRS; Gresham & Elliott, 1990)

- Parent-teacher relationships
  - Parent-Teacher Relationship Scale –II (PTRS-II; Vickers & Minke, 1995)

- Severity of student behavioral problems (control variable)
  - Teacher rating during screening (mild = 1; severe = 9)
Data Analyses

- Effect of CBC on child outcomes & parent/teacher relationships
  - 3-level multilevel model (time points within individuals within teachers) examining the fixed effect of time by treatment interaction ($\gamma$)

- Mediating effect of the parent-teacher relationship
  - Path analysis with a bootstrap method (Shrout & Bolger, 2002)
## Results

### Fixed Effect Estimation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effect</th>
<th>Estimate</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>DF</th>
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* p < .05, ** p < .01; T: Treatment (CBC), C: Control; Δ Slope (T - C): differences in change over time between CBC and Control conditions of practical interest
## Results

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**Descriptive Statistics**

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<td>(.80)</td>
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### Descriptive Statistics

- **CBC** M 3.66 3.78
- (SD) (.70) (.75)
- **Control** M 3.78 3.72
- (SD) (.80) (.81)

* * p < .05, ** p < .01; T: Treatment (CBC), C: Control; Δ Slope (T - C): differences in change over time between CBC and Control conditions of practical interest
Results

1. What is the effect of CBC on children’s externalizing, adaptive, and social behaviors?
   - CBC students had a greater decrease in externalizing problems and increase in adaptive skills (BASC-II)
   - CBC students had a greater increase in social skills (SSRS)
Results

2. What is the effect of CBC on teachers’ reports of the parent-teacher relationship?

- There was a greater increase in the reported quality of parent-teacher relationships for teachers participating in CBC
Results

3. Does the parent-teacher relationship mediate the effects of CBC on child outcomes?

- A mediating effect of the parent-teacher relationship accounted for the effect of CBC on the Adaptive Skills outcome (BASC-2)
Results

\[ \chi^2(2) = 1.65, \ p = .44 \]
\[ \text{CFI} = 1.00 \]
\[ \text{RMSEA} = .00 \]

*P < .05
Conclusions

- This is the first randomized trial to test the efficacy of CBC and processes that may mediate its effects.

- CBC had a positive impact on students and parent-teacher relationships.
  - Students participating in CBC had a greater decrease in externalizing problems and increase in adaptive skills and social skills.
  - Teachers participating in CBC reported greater improvements in their relationships with parents of children involved in CBC.

- A mediating effect of the parent-teacher relationship accounted for the positive CBC effect on children’s increased adaptive skills, suggesting that this relationship is important to consider in bolstering student outcomes.

- An ongoing investigation will help determine the efficacy of CBC on additional outcomes and additional possible mediators of CBC effects.