



RESEARCH FOCUS: Rural Schools

Teachers and Parents as Partners, known as TAPP, is an innovative, effective approach that helps educators address challenging behaviors and academic problems for long-term success. Decades of research have shown that TAPP consistently improves children's academic, social and behavioral outcomes, while building partnerships between parents and teachers.

Why Does This Matter?

Rural schools have many strengths, but often face the challenge of limited resources to provide services for students who need additional support. In particular, educators in many rural school districts report feeling unprepared to adequately support a student's social-behavioral skills. Family-school partnerships may provide unique opportunities for increasing support to students in rural communities.

What We Learned

TAPP is a highly useful approach that effectively supports students, educators, and families in rural schools. It capitalizes on parent-teacher relationships and is accessible and flexible to address individualized student needs in schools where support services may be limited.

Supporting Findings

- Relative to similar rural individuals who do not participate in TAPP:
 - students whose parents and teachers participated in TAPP demonstrate significant improvements in social, adaptive, and academic skills.¹
 - parents report significantly improved parent-teacher relationships after participating in TAPP.¹
 - parents report a significant increase in their effectiveness at helping their child succeed.¹

- teachers and parents report significant increases in their ability to problem-solve.^{1,2}
- teachers report significant increases in their use of positive attention and positive consequences.²
- Post-TAPP improvements in rural students' adaptive skills, social skills, and school problems are maintained at 1-year follow-up.³
- Post-TAPP improvements in parent-teacher communication and problem-solving competency are maintained at a 1-year follow-up.⁵
- In a technology-delivered TAPP intervention for rural schools, off-task behaviors of rural students decrease across home and school.⁴

Takeaways

- Rural schools utilizing TAPP experience significant benefits for students, parents, and teachers.
- Participating in TAPP improves parent-teacher relationships in rural schools.
- Parents who participate in TAPP in rural schools may experience benefits that promote ongoing improvements in student outcomes and parent-teacher collaboration.
- Rural teachers who participate in TAPP may experience improvements in their teaching practices that support their students beyond participation in the intervention.

Citations

1. Sheridan, S. M., Witte, A. L., Holmes, S. R., Coutts, M. J., Dent, A. L., Kunz, G. M., & Wu, C. (2017). A randomized trial examining the effects of Conjoint Behavioral Consultation in rural schools: Student outcomes and the mediating role of the teacher–parent relationship. *Journal of School Psychology, 61*, 33-53. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jsp.2016.12.002>
2. Sheridan, S. M., Witte, A. L., Kunz, G. M., Wheeler, L. A., Angell, S. R., & Lester, H. F. (2018). Rural teacher practices and partnerships to address behavioral challenges: The efficacy and mechanisms of conjoint behavioral consultation. *The Elementary School Journal, 119*(1), 99-121. <https://doi.org/10.1086/698694>
3. Sheridan, S. M., Witte, A. L., Wheeler, L. A., Eastberg, S. R. A., Dizona, P. J., & Gormley, M. J. (2019). Conjoint behavioral consultation in rural schools: Do student effects maintain after 1 year? *School Psychology, 34*(4), 410-420. <https://doi.org/10.1037/spq0000279>
4. Witte, A. L., Schumacher, R. E., & Sheridan, S. M. (2022). The effectiveness of technology-delivered conjoint behavioral consultation: Addressing rural student and family needs. *Journal of Educational and Psychological Consultation, 33*(3), 254-279. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10474412.2022.2083624>
5. Sheridan, S. M., Witte, A. L., Holmes, S. R., Coutts, M. J., Dent, A. L., Kunz, G. M., & Wu, C. (2017). A randomized trial examining the effects of Conjoint Behavioral Consultation in rural schools: Student outcomes and the mediating role of the teacher-parent relationship. *Journal of School Psychology, 61*, 33-53. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jsp.2016.12.002>