

# **Adapting a Universal Prevention Program to Fit the Response to Intervention Multi-tiered System of Support Framework Utilized in Schools**



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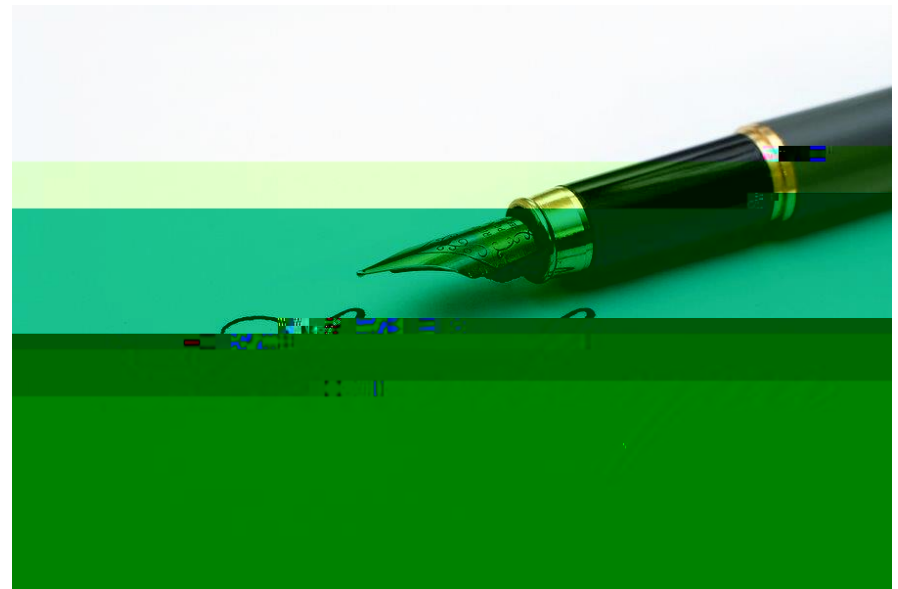
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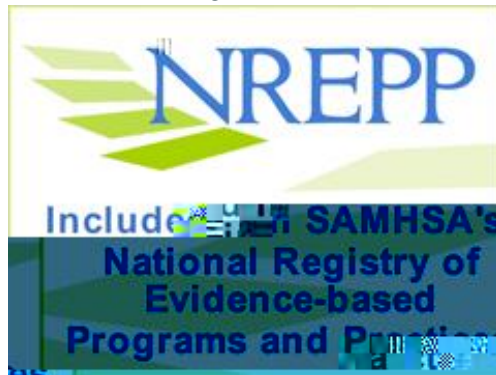
# Acknowledgements

- Project Mentors Dr. Moore and Kim Menendez
- Mendez Foundation Staff
- Hillsborough County School District
- Institute for Translational Research in Adolescent Behavioral Health
- National Institute for Drug Abuse



# Mendez Foundation

- Founded in 1964, Mendez Foundation provides evidence-based universal prevention education programs called *Too Good for Drugs* and *Too Good for Violence-Social Perspectives* for children and adolescents k-12 grades.
- *Too Good* programs provide students with social and emotional learning skills they need to refuse substances, refrain from violent behavior, maintain positive self-image, and develop healthy relationships.

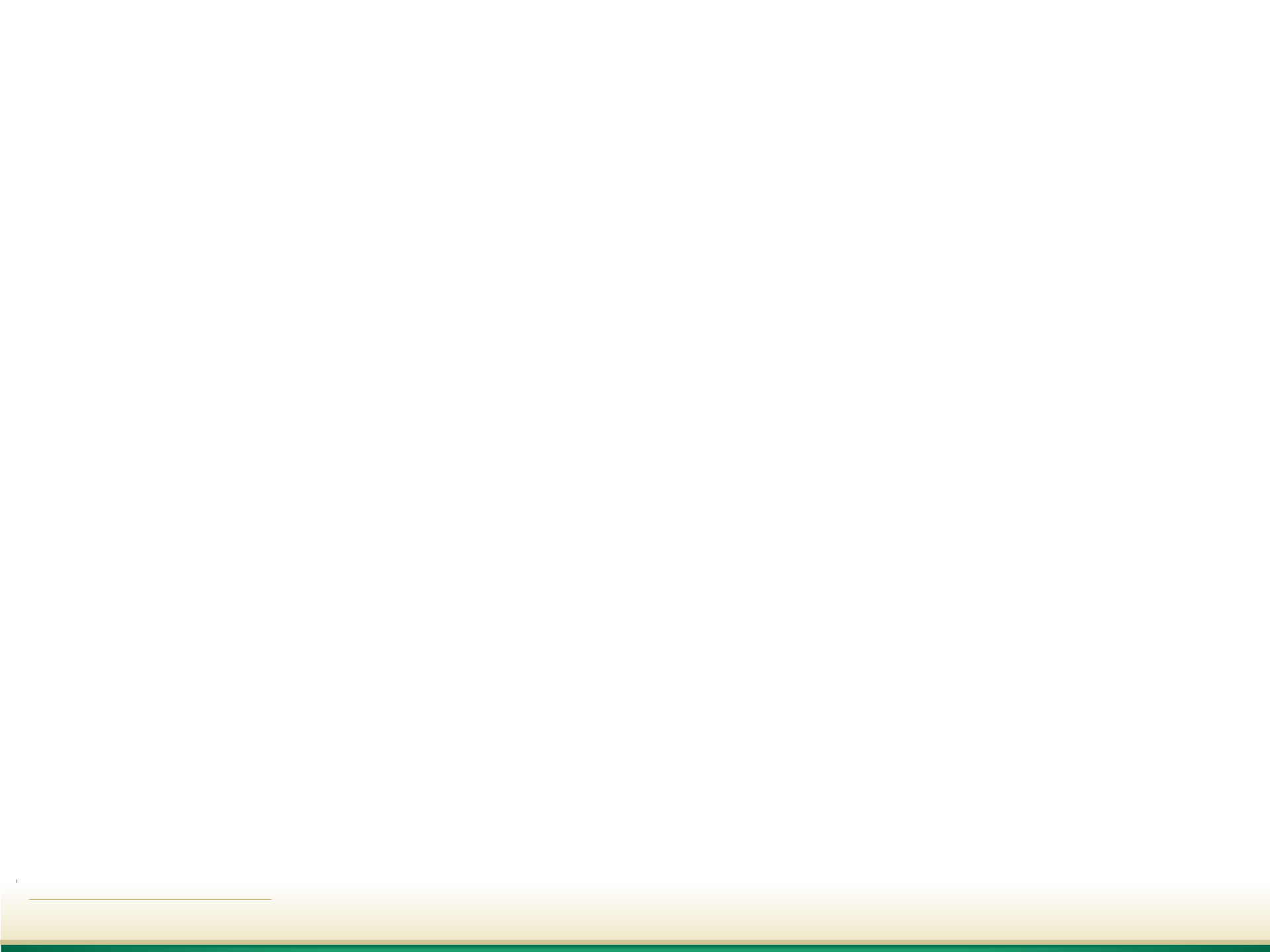


# Response to Intervention

Revisions to the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) have led to a proactive approach to addressing student need called Response to Intervention (RTI).

The three key components of RTI include:

- A continuous application of a structured problem-solving process
- An integrated data system to use for problem-solving
- A multi-tiered model of service delivery





# Adaptation

- One component of Project Prevent employs utilization of the Mendez Foundation's universal *Too Good* programs as a targeted Tier 2 intervention for small groups.
- *Too Good* programs are intended to be delivered in their entirety in a “universal” classroom setting over the course of 10 weeks.
- In the Tier 2 format, school staff must adapt elements of the curriculum to meet specific needs of students and account for challenges associated with addressing behaviors during the school day.

# **Mendez Foundation Collaboration with Hillsborough County Schools**

- Over the course of 18 months, Mendez Foundation staff including executive directors Collaboration with





# Methods

## Quantitative

Disseminated a survey to 15 mental health staff who attended

# Quantitative Data

# Survey Results

Variables	% and Range
School Setting:	
Elementary	4.5%
Middle	68.2%
High	27.3%
School Profession:	
Counselor	53.3%
Psychologist	33.3%
Social Worker	6.6%
Success Coach	6.6%
Experience (Years)	7.5 (range 1 - 22)
Implementation	
Bi-weekly	11.8%
Weekly	82.3%
Monthly	5.9%
Number of Students Served	
1 - 10	13.3%
11 - 20	26.7%
21 - 30	6.7%
> 30	53.3%

# Survey Results

- All agree that training was helpful
- 93% received additional help
  - Additional training regarding adaptations and curriculum
- 38% anticipate significant barriers
  - Training of future staff
  - Time
  - Testing conflicts

# Qualitative Data

# Middle Schools in Pilot

Five schools with a high volume of discipline referrals participated in the initial implementation pilot.

	Jennings	Madison	McLane	Greco	Sligh
Battery	8	2	1	3	0
Drug Use	7	5	11	2	1
Fighting	14	25	30	31	81
Threat/Intimidation	2	8	12	4	11
Weapons	4	1	4	1	2

# Training

Participants stated they enjoyed the training sessions



# Identification

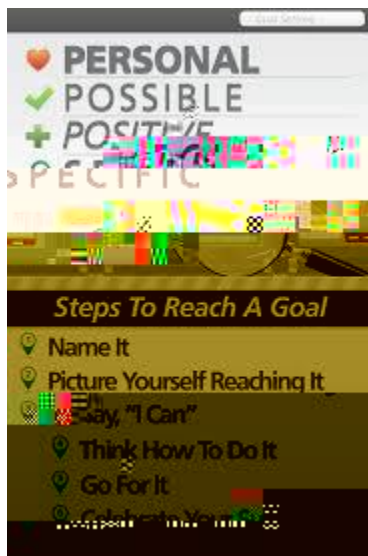
- All

# Operations

There was variety in how *Too Good* programs were delivered at each school site.

- D

# Targeted Behaviors & Social and Emotional Learning



The 5 schools targeted the following behaviors:

- Anger
- Violence
- Drugs
- Communication
- Goal setting
- Decision Making
- Deescalation



## SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING

Mendez staff and the school-based mental health staff generally shared the same sentiment on the importance of teaching the social and emotional learning (SEL) lessons.

- Four out of the five schools strongly supported the use of these lessons.
- The Mendez staff expressed that these lessons “enhance student’s self-efficacy, resiliency, and overall respect for one’s self.”

# 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Overlap



In 7<sup>th</sup> grade, *Too Good* programs are delivered in the universal classroom format, in conjunction with the program being used in the Tier 2 format. As a result, we asked participants their thoughts on the overlap.

- 2 participants reported that they couldn't comment because they were "not sure" or "didn't know" if the 7<sup>th</sup> grade universal program was already being implemented at their school
- 1 participant stated that the overlap caused an issue because the 7<sup>th</sup> grade students had already completed the activities
- 2 participants stated that they enjoyed the overlap because students need the repetition, in order for the concepts stick with the Tier 2 students who have been identified as needing additional support

# Discussion

## Strengths

*Too Good* curriculum

- user-friendly, fun, and interactive
- a deeper understanding of the material takes place in the Tier 2 setting

## Challenges

- Competing with academic instruction time
- Difficult to pull students from class, which created difficulty in implementation
- Poor communication was another challenge mentioned by several participants

## Suggestions/Solutions

- Create implementation plans at each school that consider minimizing interference with academic instruction time
- Explain the aims of Project Prevent to the entire staff at each participating school
- Ensure that the administrative leadership team at each school display enthusiasm and support for the initiative

# Limitations and Future Directions

## Limitations

- Time frame
  - Early implementation
- Sample size
  - Only 5 middle schools were selected for pilot

## Future Directions

- Elapsed time allows for opportunity to provide a more thorough program evaluation
- Possibly expand the project to incorporate more schools and elementary and high school
- Attend more trainings and distribute additional surveys to include more participants

# Implications for Adolescent Behavioral Health

- The bulk of the adaptation literature is concerned with cultural adaptations to evidence-based programs, rather setting-based adaptations.
- Only a few studies have discussed adapting