

Colorado Probation Research in Brief

The Targeted Reading Intervention: Face-to-Face vs. Webcam Literacy Coaching of Classroom Teachers

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Key Words: Coaching, in-person coaching, distance coaching

Summary/Conclusions

This study sought to determine the differences between in-person coaching and coaching utilizing webcam technology. The population studied were rural kindergarten and first grade teachers who were implementing reading instruction strategies for struggling students. To assess the differences in coaching methods, schools were randomly assigned to control or experimental groups. Teachers were assessed on implementation quality, exposure, and self-efficacy. Measures found promising differences with webcam coaching, with no loss of program fidelity, in all areas measured.

Limitations of Information

The current study was conducted in early childhood education settings in four different states outside of Colorado. Additionally, the study does not account for variability in coaching, including advanced coaching proficiency developed throughout the study. Due to differences in baseline outcomes scores for both teachers and students, the control and experimental groups are only comparable via descriptive summaries.

Caveat: The information presented here is intended to summarize and inform readers of research and information relevant to probation work. It can provide a framework for carrying out the business of probation as well as suggestions for practical application of the material. While it may, in some instances, lead to further exploration and result in *future* decisions, it is not intended to prescribe policy and is not necessarily conclusive in its findings. Some of its limitations are described above.

Webcam vs Live Coaching—Differences in Outcomes

Coaching has been used in various professions to enhance skill development and program fidelity. Geographical challenges can impede the accessibility of traditional face-to-face coaching. Webcam and phone technologies offer a possible solution to address long distance limitations. Researchers in North Carolina examined the impact of in-person and webcam coaching during the implementation of an early childhood literacy program. The study strived to answer what impacts the different methods of coaching had on program, fidelity, impact of teachers' efficacy, and the impact of coaching on student gains in reading skills.

The study included Title 1 rural schools from North Carolina, Texas, New Mexico, and Nebraska. These schools implemented Targeted Reading Interventions with kindergarten and first grade students. Teachers and students participated in the study for one year. Fifty-eight teachers participated in the study. Fourteen of the 58 teachers received in-person coaching, and the remainder received webcam coaching.

The results found that webcam coaching took less time, resulted in cost savings, and feedback was more concise. Different coaching modalities did not result in differences in implementation quality. Teachers who participated in webcam coaching reported higher levels of implementation efficacy. Mode of coaching (webcam coaching) was positively correlated with an increase in one

in five reading comprehension scores, and there was no significance between coaching groups and other reader outcome measures.

Practical Applications

- ✓ Gain coaching skills by participating in training, such as Elicit-Provide-Elicit (EPE) training, offered by the Division of Probation Services.
- ✓ Take advantage of opportunities to practice coaching (e.g. volunteer to coach at the Probation Academy or volunteer to be a member of a Local Implementation Team as new initiatives are adopted and implemented).
- ✓ Use performance feedback QA and CQI tools to structure coaching.
- ✓ Consider asking a colleague trained in coaching techniques to coach you on your coaching.
- ✓ Talk to staff about which skills (e.g. assessments, case plans, LSIP, SBC) they want to improve and then make an appointment to observe and provide feedback on those skills.
- ✓ As officers learn to blend several different skills into their case management strategies, provide ongoing feedback on skill integration (e.g. assessment, case planning, IBA, SBC, MI).
- ✓ Consider using distance coaching that utilizes technology (e.g. phone, video conferencing, face time) to overcome geographic obstacles.