

4-13-2022

Happy and Healthy: A Positive Mental Health Program for Early Elementary School-Aged Children

Haleigh Freeman

University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences

Angela L. Blackwell

University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences

Erik Pérez

University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences

Follow this and additional works at: <https://soar.usa.edu/otdcapstones-spring2022>



Part of the [Health and Physical Education Commons](#), [Mental and Social Health Commons](#), and the [Occupational Therapy Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Freeman, H., Blackwell, A. L., & Pérez, E. (2022, April 13). Happy and Healthy: A Positive Mental Health Program for Early Elementary School-Aged Children. Poster presented at the Virtual OTD Capstone Symposium, University of St Augustine for Health Sciences. Retrieved from <https://soar.usa.edu/otdcapstones-spring2022/27>

This Poster/presentation is brought to you for free and open access by the OTD Capstone Symposia at SOAR @ USA. It has been accepted for inclusion in Spring 2022 Virtual OTD Capstone Symposium by an authorized administrator of SOAR @ USA. For more information, please contact soar@usa.edu, erobinson@usa.edu.

Happy and Healthy: A Positive Mental Health Program for Early Elementary School-Aged Children

Haleigh Freeman; Angela Labrie Blackwell, PhD, OTR & Eric Pérez, OTD, OTR

Background

Approximately 17% of children from the ages six to 17 in the U.S. have a treatable mental health disorder, however, of those children, 70% have not received appropriate mental health care to address their mental health problems (MHP) (American Academy of Family Physicians, 2019; Mental Health Foundation, 2016). The severity of MHP identified within the literature points to a distinct need for mental health promotion, prevention, and intervention to address those needs (Albuquerque et al., 2020). Specifically, the need for school-based and after-school based mental health services continues growing at alarming rates (Map, 2013). However, school systems often lack provisions of appropriate mental health services for a variety of reasons, leaving gaps in mental health services focused on positive mental health or the state of mental well-being in which children are able to achieve occupations and activities (Bazyk, 2011; Mental Health Foundation, 2016). Therefore, after-school programs provide a unique environment to implement mental health services while bypassing some of the barriers typically presented in a school setting.

Problem

Schools and after-school programs lack a focus on promoting positive mental health, as it is often under-recognized and under-treated, which interferes with children's success at school, home, and community.

Purpose

The purpose of this capstone is to develop a sustainable after school-based, positive mental health program to promote the success of all children, including those at-risk, in school, at home, and in the community.

References



Methods

Orientation Phase

- Observations/Interviews
- Assessments
- Policy Review
- Presentation

Program Development Phase

- Collaboration
- Selection of Materials/Activities

Program Implementation Phase

- Observations
- Trialing/Analysis/Modification

Program Evaluation Phase

- Observations
- Assessments
- Comparison/Analysis

Program Sustainability Phase

- Collaboration
- Creation of Action Plan

Program

Theoretical Frameworks:

- Synthesis of Child, Occupation, Performance, and Environment, In-Time (SCOPE-IT)
- PERMA (Positive Psychology)
- Social Emotional Learning (SEL)

Program Goals:

- Occupational performance (short term)
 - Self-awareness
 - Self-Management
 - Social Awareness
 - Relationship Skills
 - Responsible Decision Making
- Occupational participation (medium term)
- Quality of life and well-being (long-term)

Assessment Tools:

- Devereux Student Strengths Assessment
- The Inventory of Practices for Promoting Social Emotional Competence by Vanderbilt University

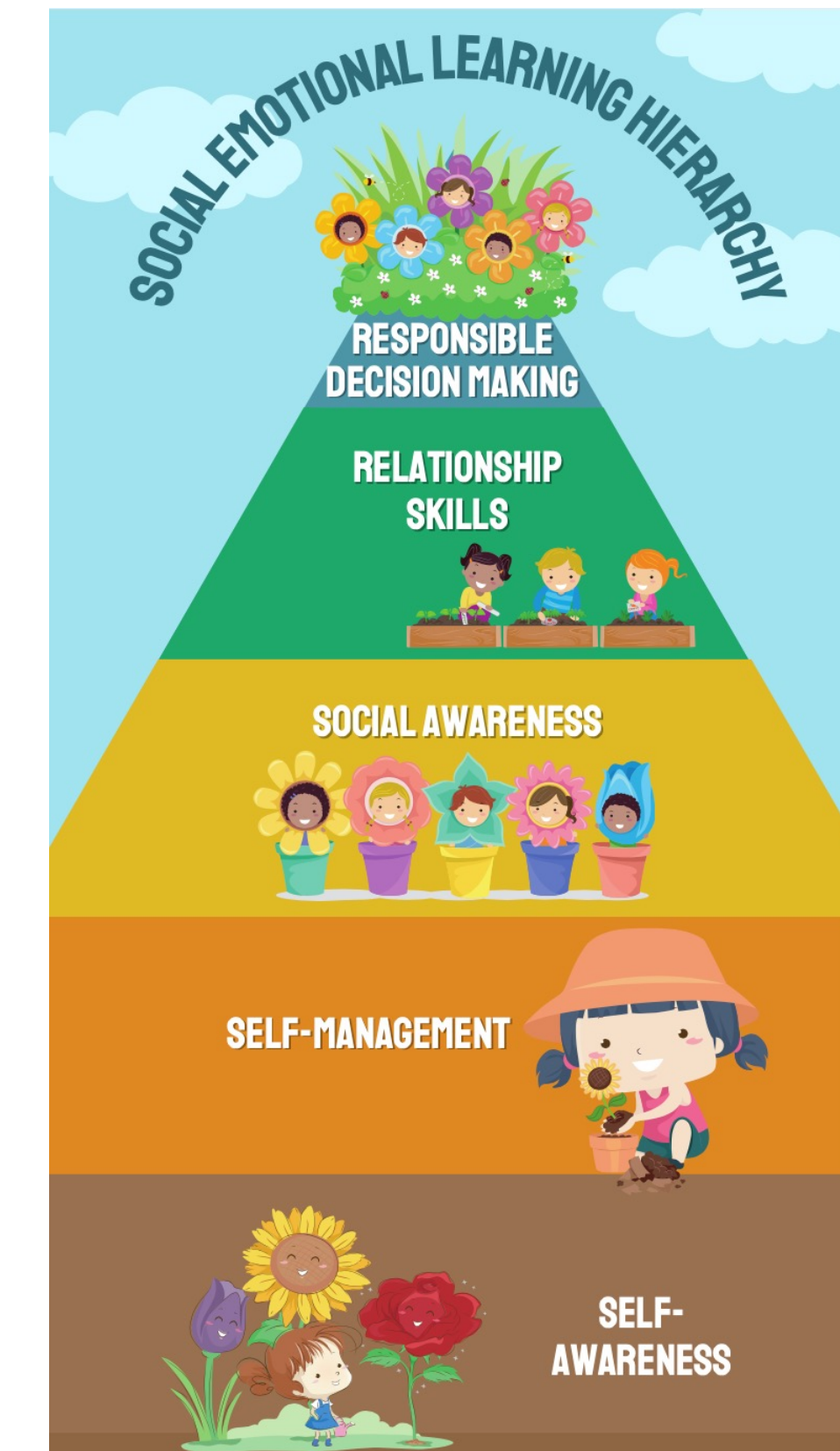


Capstone Products:

- SOAR Analysis Presentation
- Happy and Healthy Program
- ASP Stakeholder Presentation
- Sustainability Action Plan

Program Details:

- 28 Activities
- 25 Books



Discussion

Strengths:

- Flexibility
- Measurable goals
- Comprehensible

Limitations:

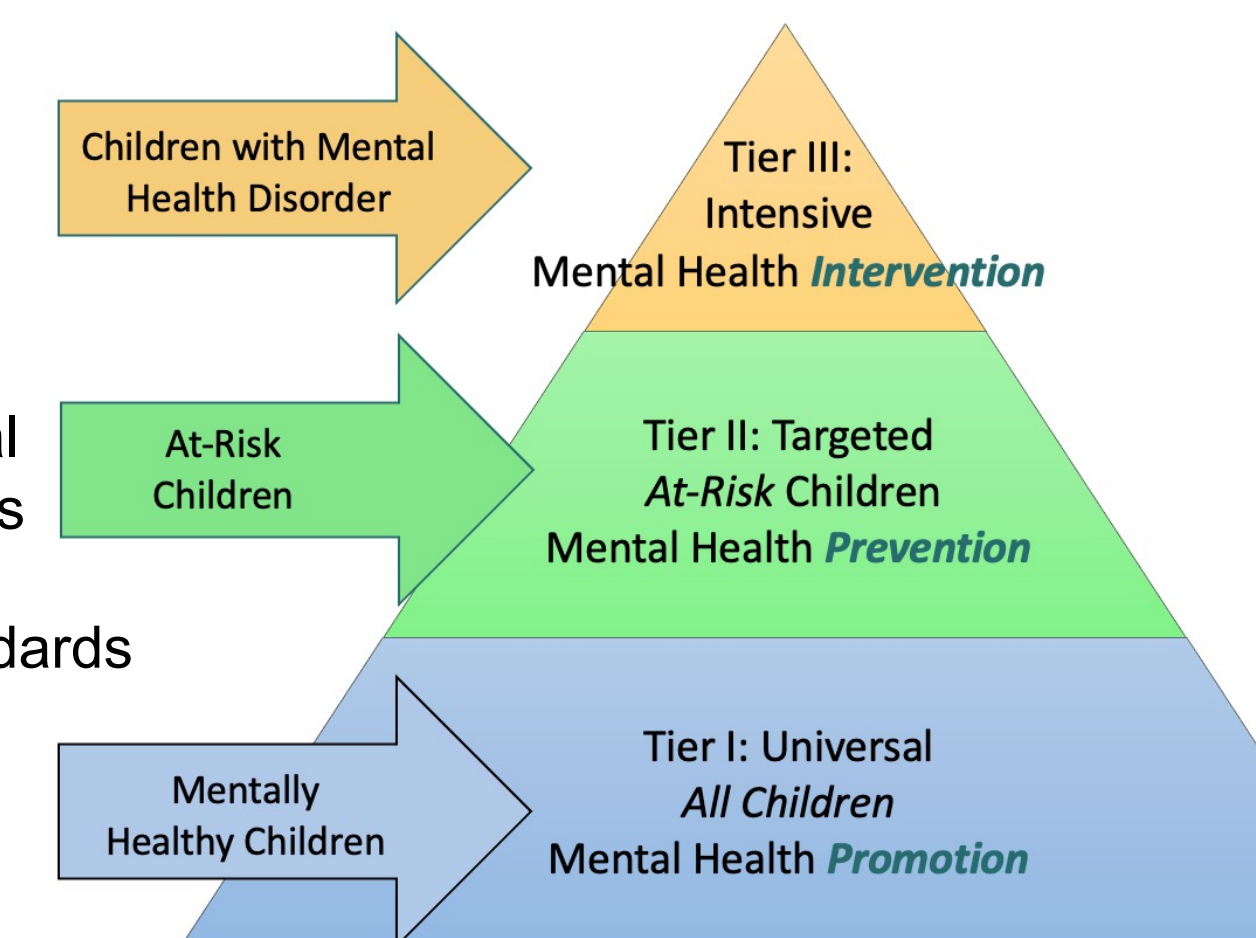
- Staff perceptions/willingness
- Participant age/grade

Implications for Practice and Research:

- Conduct formal research
- Disseminate at conference
- Expand Happy and Healthy program
- Add coaching module

Significance:

- Evidence-based
- Literature-based
- Inclusivity
- SEL focus
- Sequential, hierarchal
- Multi-tier interventions
- Success focused
- Texas Learning Standards
- After-school program



Acknowledgements: Thank you to Shana Chung, and the EACY Team for their support, guidance, and encouragement throughout the capstone process