

ENHANCING EDUCATOR CONFIDENCE IN ASSISTING MILITARY-
CONNECTED STUDENTS IN A MULTITIERED SUPPORT SYSTEM WITH AN
INSERVICE PROGRAM

by
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A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Degree of Master of Arts in Psychology

Middle Tennessee State University
December 2016

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I dedicate this research to my beautiful daughters Ryvre, Zoë, and Ivy. May you always believe in your own superpowers. Love, Mom aka Wonder Woman.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would first like to thank my husband, David, for his unwavering support as well as his humor and technical skills. All of this has kept me going through this long process. Without his support, I would have never been able to fulfill my dreams. I would also like to thank my late father, Larry Neal Morris, and late grandfather, Clyde Neal Morris, for their confidence in me. May my research honor their memories. To my mother, Loretta Louise Morris, I give the utmost respect and thanks. Without her sacrifices, in order to raise me as her own, I could not have become the woman I am or have accomplished the things that I have. I would also like to thank Pat Donahue, Professional Development Facilitator at Clarksville Montgomery County School System (CMCSS), and all of CMCSS for allowing me to work with their district. I would also like to thank Dr. James Rust, Dr. Monica Wallace, and Dr. Aimee Holt for their support with my research. Finally, I would like to thank Dr. Toto Sutarso for assisting me with my data analysis. I owe my success to my family, friends, and my team. Thank you all.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to assess perceived educator confidence in both identifying the needs of military-connected students and implementing interventions with military-connected students. Educators in the Clarksville-Montgomery County School System (CMCSS) in Tennessee participated in an interactive inservice presented by the primary researcher. The inservice focused on awareness of resilience, Tier I interventions, Tier II interventions, and Tier III interventions. Participants completed both the California Healthy Kids Survey- Staff Survey: Military-connected Schools Module (SSMCSM) pre- and postassessments regarding their perceived confidence when working with military-connected students. Each participant also completed the Enjoyment Survey to measure the participant's enjoyment of the inservice. The quantitative results revealed that not only did the educators enjoy the inservice, but their overall confidence in identifying military-connected need and implementing interventions increased.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Need for Thesis Project

A recent seminal study looked at district, community, and school stakeholder perspectives on the experiences of military-connected students (De Pedro, Esqueda et al., 2014). The study found four resounding themes that were consistent for the various stakeholders. The first theme was that military-connected students have unique challenges as well as potential strengths that need to be developed. Second, educators need to provide culturally sensitive interventions that support the unique needs of these students. Third, there was a poor responsiveness of public schools to challenges of military-connected students. Lastly, schools needed to be stable, welcoming, and supportive places for students that are military-connected (De Pedro, Esqueda et al., 2014). A keynote throughout the research was a gap in educator training on awareness and intervention implementation throughout the public school districts. There are very few training programs for public school educators around the United States on the subject of military-connected student need assessment and intervention implementation (De Pedro et al., 2011). De Pedro, Esqueda and colleagues (2014) believe that studies should explore the educators' perceptions of assessment and implementation of intervention for military-connected students.

The purpose of this study was to explore educators' confidence in the assessment of needs and implementation of interventions for military-connected students. I proposed to conduct an inservice program focusing on helping these students and their families. I

proposed to do this at a single meeting as per the approval of Clarksville Montgomery County School System's professional development committee (see Appendix D). It should be noted that according to (Nantais, Martin, & Barns, 2014) educators show the largest increase professional development skills when presented with multiple opportunities to learn a new skill. The first section presents an overview of this study's purpose. The second section addresses challenges facing all children in education. The third section looks at specific needs of military-connected students. The fourth section discusses student resilience. The fifth section addresses Tier I educational interventions for all students. The sixth section discusses Tier II educational interventions for military-connected students. The seventh, and final section discusses Tier III educational interventions for military-connected students.

Ecological Systems Theory

Students' academic successes are impacted by multiple environments where their families, peer groups, and schools influence their development (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). An ecological model addresses system-wide issues within a school district. The ecological approach allows for the needs of all the children to be addressed. It also adds more depth to a district's services in order to better serve students who need more intensive interventions (Burns, Warmbold-Brann, & Zaslofsky, 2015). Using an ecological model addresses systems issues while also providing a framework for addressing the needs of those students with the most severe challenges. Researchers such as De Pedro, Atuel, and colleagues (2014) found that educators have the unique opportunity to create an environment that facilitates support and understanding not only

for every student but particularly for at-risk groups of children such as military-connected children. However, educational systems often do not have the infrastructure, the capacity, or the coordination to improve the school climate to provide supports for military-connected children. As students spend most of their days in the classroom, the educational setting is an integral part of academic success (De Pedro, Esqueda et al., 2014).

Collective Teacher Efficacy Theory

Collective teacher efficacy (Hoy & Mickel, 2008) is defined as the educators' perceived confidence that together the system as a whole has a positive impact on students' educational experiences. The collective efficacy of a school equates to the combination of the individual efficacy of each educator therein. This collective efficacy of a school was found by Goddard, Hoy, and Hoy (2000) to have a greater positive impact on student achievement than the location of the school such as rural or urban, or individual student demographic variables such as socioeconomic status and ethnicity. Educators largely control the school environment, including school climate and student affect, and thus can positively or negatively impact student development and academic achievement (De Pedro et al., 2011).

Challenges Facing All Students

Pisano (2014) states that all students in every educational setting can be affected by issues that cause a negative impact on academic success. Students' academic successes are impacted by multiple environments where their families, peer groups, and schools influence their development (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Educators largely control

the school environment, including school climate and student affect, and thus can positively or negatively impact student development and academic achievement. Many students face challenges that impact their educational success such as poverty, inadequate attendance, and many other factors (De Pedro et al., 2011).

Findings from researchers such as De Pedro and colleagues (2011) conclude that poverty has long been known to be a barrier to academic success as it permeates every aspect of the student's life both at home and at school. Engle, Gallagher, and Lyle (2010) found that some students do not attain academic success because they are simply too far behind. This can be due to factors such as learning disability, physical disability, and transience from one school system to another during a given school year. Even with interventions some students will not be able to make enough academic gains to catch up with peers. Still, providing research-based interventions to at-risk students is a worthwhile endeavor (Engel, Gallagher, & Lyle, 2010).

Consistent attendance is crucial to academic success. A student must be regularly present in order to take full advantage of the educational process. Sometimes a child's physical health may be impaired enough that large numbers of absences are warranted. However, low attendance, increases the chances of academic failure (Alexander, Entwisle, & Dauber, 2003).

Keyes and colleagues have written extensively about health concerns of all children (Keyes et al., 2012). They pointed out that physiological well-being is not the only health concern that impacts a child's education; mental health is just as important a cornerstone to academic success as its physical counterpart. Parent involvement allows

the student to feel supported and encourages the collaboration of efforts between school and home. Lack of parental involvement in schools creates the opposite effect. Stress is something everyone and every student deals with during their lives. Students with major or chronic stress have a significant decrease in academic success (Keyes et al., 2012).

There are also issues that certain groups of students may face because of shared environmental factors. Military- connected students make up one such group whose members routinely face unusual stress. A military-connected child is defined as a child who has one or more parents or caregivers that have served or are currently serving in the military (Pisano, 2014).

Military-connected students have many social and emotional challenges in response to the stress of military life events. These stressors affect the social and academic success of military-connected students in public school systems (De Pedro, Esqueda, et al., 2014). Even though some environmental stressors of military families are outside the direct control of the school, educators are in a unique position to facilitate the adjustment of the military-connected students in their districts (Franklin, Harris, & Allen-Meares, 2013). Frequently military-connected students experience low academic performance associated with the multiple lengthy parental deployments. According to Richardson and colleagues (2001), educators can ease the impact of student stress and encourage a supportive atmosphere. That supportive atmosphere has been shown to improve academic outcomes associated with military- connected student challenges (Richardson et al., 2011).

The majority of military-connected students are attending public schools. In 2011,

90% of the military-connected students with parents serving on active duty in the United States attended a public school. Only 86, 000 of the 1.3 million school-aged children that had a parent serving on active duty in 2011 attended a Department of Defense Educational Activity (DoDEA) operated school (De Pedro, Atuel et al., 2014). One estimate of military-connected children attending public schools in 2014 was over 4 million (Astor & Benbenishty, 2014).

These numbers do not include military-connected students whose parents are serving on reserve duty, in the National Guard, or are veterans not currently serving. Dr. Joe Jerles reported that 6 years ago 70,000 children in public schools had parents serving in the reserve and National Guard branches of the military (2011). These children are attending solely non-DoDEA operated schools.

Challenges Facing Military-Connected Children in Education

The first step in supporting the academic success of military-connected students is to identify these children. The next step is to increase educator awareness of specific challenges facing the military-connected child. Standard military life events are sources of stress unique to the military-connected family. At every stage of enlistment including moving and transfers, deployments, post-deployment and veteran reintegration, the children may experience stressors that potentially negatively impact their academic success (Pisano, 2014).

Moving and transfers. The national rate of civilian households that moved at least once between 2005 and 2010 was approximately 34%. More than twice that amount of military families, just over 72%, moved between during this same time period

(U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2012). This large difference is because an active duty service member receives a new set of orders every 2-3 years. This new set of orders often includes a change of duty station and thus a move to a different base. A move could be to a different base located in the same geographical area, such as a change of duty station from Virginia Beach, VA to Norfolk, VA. The move could also be to the other side of the country or even out of country to a base in Japan or Germany. The family could be moving back to the U.S. and bringing their young children here for the first time since birth at an overseas base. This kind of a move brings with it emotional stress, that may be related to differences in school standards, difficulties with records transfers, and the loss of friends and support systems. Educators have the opportunity to promote the effective and smooth transition for these students both directly and indirectly (Garner, Arnold, & Nunnery, 2014).

According to Johnson (1987) moving and changing schools is ranked by The Coddington Life Events Record as being as stressful as hospitalization of a parent for a serious illness or having a parent in jail for more than 30 days. The emotional stress for military children is repeated often during their school-age years because of the frequency of military family moves. Since a change of duty station may occur during the year, these students also bear the burden of changing school midyear. Midyear moves bring challenges such as a new city, new house, new school, new teachers, new classmates, a difference in curriculum and a new pace at which class material is covered (Alexander et al., 2003).

Deployment. The deployment of the military parent is the most easily recognizable challenge that the military-connected child faces (Lester et al., 2010). During the last decade troops have been through multiple cycles of deployment both to Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF). During each deployment the service members' children experience great changes including a change in familial structure (e.g., only having one primary caregiver at home). It is the change in familial structure that is thought to particularly increase stress and anxiety, and to make students feel a sense of danger. These stressors are thought to permeate every setting of children's lives including their families, their military support communities, and their schools (De Pedro, 2015).

Jerles (2010) pointed out that the child of the deployed parent is often under tremendous stress stemming from fear about the well-being of the deployed parent. This fear is often in the form of concern for the absent parent's safety and life, the fear of being alone, and simply the fear of the uncertain future. These fears affect these children in every aspect of their everyday lives (Jerles, 2011). Military-connected students may also feel that their responsibilities at home have increased significantly with the absence of the deployed parent. Extra responsibilities may increase stress and infringe on time and effort previously used for academics thus impacting these students' school success. Extra responsibility can also be a source of independence and pride if the child is given proper support (Weiss & Coll, 2013).

Along with the length of combat deployment, the mental health of the deployed parent has been shown to be a primary indicator of child outcomes (Lester et al., 2010).

Another crucially important factor in a child's emotional and academic success is the mental health of the nondeployed parent. Poor stress management by the non-deployed parent has been shown to be a factor in child maltreatment (Weiss & Coll, 2013). During deployment instances of child maltreatment in military families have been shown to increase by 42% (Gibbs, Martin, Kupper, & Johnson, 2007). Child maltreatment and mental health have both been linked to poor student academic outcomes (De Pedro, 2015).

Surprisingly, deployment-related challenges are magnified for those students whose parents are National Guard or Reservists compared to active duty-connected children (Chandra, Martian, Hawkins, & Richardson, 2010). A particular stress for these part-time soldiers is that many National Guard and Reservists families live far from a military base and thus far from many of the support services that are available to full-time soldiers. National Guard and Reservist-connected children are often part of school districts that is ill prepared to support military-connected children because there may only be a handful of military-connected students in each school in those districts. This creates environments that lack support and foster feelings of isolation (Chandra, et al., 2010).

The Department of Defense found that the negative impact on mental health and academic success of deployment on families and children often decreased after the parent returned home. However, the cumulative impact of multiple parental deployments and prolonged deployments likely cause students in these families to fall far behind academically and may be irreversible (Engel et al., 2010). This means that

even when the parents are no longer deployed and stress levels eventually go down, the children who fell behind during the lengthy deployment may not be able to catch up with the curriculum. Instruction that was not mastered because of deployment-related stress, may continue to negatively impact the child's academic success.

Post-deployment/veteran. When the service member returns from deployment or reintegrates into the civilian population, military-connected children face new sets of challenges that may impact their academic outcomes. The military-connected parent may have physical and emotional injuries. Physical/emotional injuries and the stress of reintegration may create secondary or caregiver trauma for the nondeployed parent or children. If the service members are National Guard or Reserve-connected or if they are exiting the military, financial concerns can arise (Jerles, 2011).

Combat death has decreased significantly during the last 50 years. However, it is estimated that over 30,000 military-connected children currently in school have a parent who has been injured in combat. Out of the returning injured service members between 15-30% of returning Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom (OIF/OEF) veterans meet the DSM-IV-TR's criteria for PTSD; post-traumatic stress disorder (Weiss & Coll, 2013). Common features of PTSD include anxieties, comorbid substance abuse, and TBI (traumatic brain injury). These health issues affect the service members and their families. When a veteran's family must live with and care for someone who can no longer care for themselves, then the families can experience secondary trauma. These secondary traumas may be due to physical injury or to emotional symptoms, such as mood disturbance, substance abuse, and violent outbursts.

This happens when the veteran's trauma is transferred to the family members who then present with similar symptoms. This creates emotional and behavioral regulation issues in school-age children and increases rates of interpersonal violence and child maltreatment among parents both of which lead to poor academic performance (De Pedro, 2015).

Financial hardship and homelessness. As Jerles (2011) discussed, another concern for postdeployment veterans and their families is financial hardship. Reintegration into the civilian work force is not always smooth. Military skills may not translate into a civilian workforce equivalent. If military training is comparable to a civilian job, the drop in pay and family benefits, such as health care and basic housing allowance can be drastic. This of course adds to the financial and emotional strain of starting a new life outside the military. Returning National Guard and Reserve service members face compounding difficulties for themselves and their families. Workforce stability, career advancement, and educational opportunities are often missed or put on hold while the National Guard and Reserve members serve multiple overseas tours of duty (Jerles, 2011). Everyone in the family feels the financial strain. From food to school clothes, these families may not have enough money to make ends meet. In some cases the military-connected child may even be homeless (Tsai, Rosenheck, Kaspro, & Kane, 2015).

Veteran homelessness is a subject that many are aware of, but the issue of veterans with dependent children is a far less frequently addressed topic. Three recent, seminal studies compared differences in the demographics of homeless veterans who

are receiving VA services including those with and without dependent children (Tsai, Kaspow, Kane, & Rosenheck, 2014; Tsai, Rosenheck, & Kane, 2014; Tsai, Rosenheck, Kaspow, & Kane, 2015). Surprisingly even these seminal studies do not include participants who suffer three problems at once: being homeless, having children, and not receiving VA services. There is no known accurate estimate for that specific demographic group. In a study by Tsai, Kaspow, Kane, and Rosenheck (2014) of over 70,000 veterans who were defined as literally homeless, meaning they were living on the street without permanent shelter, nearly 22% had dependent children living with them. Female veterans were 2 times more likely to be homeless and almost 3.5 times more likely to have dependent children in their care as compared to male veterans. These female veterans have a harder time compared to their male counterparts finding shelter through the VA because, in part, they have a greater need for privacy for themselves and their children. Most of the VA housing is comprised of shelters designed primarily for a male population. This makes housing options through the VA unsuitable for a parent with any children in their care (Tasi, Rosenheck, & Kane 2014). Due to the greater financial burden of caring for minor children, those homeless veterans with children in their care have a hard time finding well-paying jobs that offer the pay and benefits needed to sustain the family (Tsai, Kaspow, Kane, & Rosenheck, 2014).

Another recent study looked at over 21,000 veterans housed in unstable circumstances, meaning they were relying on friends and family to house them temporarily or were living in hotels or similar living arrangements. Of these veterans almost 50% of the female veterans and 32% of the male veterans had at least one minor

child that they were financially responsible for. Of the 21,000 veterans in unstable housing 45% of the females and 18% of the males had children living with them (Tsai et al., 2015).

Each state is legally responsible for providing free appropriate public education to homeless children under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Act (2001). Among the large group of homeless children is a subgroup of homeless military-connected children. These homeless military-connected children have been shown to have high rates of developmental delay, emotional disturbances, behavioral problems, cognitive deficits, and health problems (Tsai et al., 2015). Many school districts across the country have unstably housed or homeless military-connected students. These students have unique educational needs and each school district with military-connected students has the chance to implement appropriate interventions for these students (Kabler, Weinstein, & Joffe, 2014).

Although each of the areas of challenge for military-connected students does not necessarily something educators can control, educators do have the opportunity to create an environment of support. The military-connected child's education can be positively impacted by proper awareness and intervention implementation (De Pedro, Esqueda et al., 2014). Knowing how the military-connected child's education is uniquely impacted allows for the educator to properly assess and intervene for these children while they are at school. The ways that schools address transfers, deployment, and postdeployment challenges directly or indirectly impacts the military-connected child's resiliency by supporting academic success (Jerles, 2011).

Resiliency

One of the most effective strategies for increasing academic success for at-risk students is fostering resiliency. Resiliency is the ability to recover from adversity. Though military- connected students have many risk factors, they also have remarkable strengths which translate into resiliency (De Pedro, Esqueda et al., 2014). Certain strengths within a person play vital roles in that person's ability to recover from adversity. Social competence, problem-solving skills, autonomy, and a sense of purpose are four influential attributes defined by Bernard (1991) that lead to resiliency. A caring environment, positive expectations, and participation within the child's family, school, and community are what form the foundation of resiliency in a child (Bernard, 1991).

Stress and adversity negatively impact children's resiliency and academic performance by negatively affecting such things as their executive functioning, achievement, and social-emotional health (Bruce, 1995). Educators can focus on preventative, proactive, and positive strategies that build resiliency. Three factors that educators can use to build resiliency are having a caring and supportive attitude toward their students, allowing for meaningful participation, and setting high expectations (Bernard, 1991). If educators strengthen the protective factors within the school environment, then they are fostering resiliency and increasing personal attributes that lead to academic success (Bruce, 1995). Behavioral as well as academic interventions can build resiliency and foster academic success even in the face of extreme challenges (Henderson & Milstein, 1996). Changing the focus from maladjustment to resiliency can also change the outcome from academic failure to academic success for all children including military-connected students. Educators' use of interventions both at the

system and classroom level can help increase student resiliency. One way to enhance resilience is to use a three-tiered model that provides appropriate support for all school children (Gresham, Sugai, & Horner, 2001).

Tier I Interventions

According to Pisano (2014), staff education focusing on the specific challenges of military-connected children at each grade level is crucial to providing support at each level of tiered service. Tier I interventions are referred to as universal interventions. These are intended to create an environment of support for academic success while simultaneously decreasing the risk for academic or behavioral problems (Holony, Hildbold, & Smith, 2014). Evidence-based professional development programs are a form of tier one services that allow the educators not only to become familiar with the challenges faced by military-connected students but also provide the knowledge needed to choose appropriate interventions or refer students to a more intensive tier of service. Educators may also have increased confidence in intervening when they have more knowledge about the possible challenges of their students (Pisano, 2014).

Universal interventions can focus on positive psychology principles. Diener and Seligman (2002) define positive psychology as the study of virtues and strengths that help the person and the community flourish by focusing on positive emotions, individual traits, and institutions. By focusing on positive emotions and traits, positive psychology builds resilience (Noltemeyer, 2014).

A positive support system is described as comprehensive as well as multifaceted. The system would include a variety of activities that address learning

barriers while also promoting healthy development (Adelman & Taylor, 2000). A Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports system (PBIS) is an example of an evidence-based, proactive resiliency building program (Molony, Hildbold, & Smith, 2014). PBIS can be implemented in a multitiered system with supports for all children including those at risk and those in need of specialized intervention. When implemented universally and with fidelity, 80-90% of the student population in a school have responded positively to PBIS (Gresham et al., 2001). Tier I interventions are designed to be universally implemented for all students in order to help support positive outcomes and decrease unwanted behavior or poor academic outcomes or the need for more intensive interventions..

The most important PBIS intervention is a positive student-educator connection. A positive relationship with an adult who genuinely cares about the child has been found to be the most influential resilience factor (Nicholson, Collins, & Holmer, 2004). In the early grades this adult can be the educator who spends up to 7 hr, 5 days a week with a student. Fostering a positive emotional relationship with a student is an essential Tier I intervention that supports resilience and thus academic success (Noltemeyer, 2014).

Universal interventions also involve universal screening for multiple possible barriers to education including homelessness according to Kabler and colleagues (2014). Since homelessness affects student academic success and has high rates in the military-connected student population, a homelessness screener, such as the McKinney-Vento Homelessness Screener, must to be given to all the students in the school according to

the McKinney- Vento Homeless Assistance Act (2001). Screening has been used effectively with homelessness (Kabler et al., 2014). The Universal Screening Measure of McKinney- Vento Services (Wynne, Ausikaitis, & Loyola University Home-School-Community Research Team, 2013) can be used to assess if any students are experiencing homelessness or are at risk of homelessness as defined by the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (2001). Under McKinney-Vento homeless children are required to receive free and reduced lunch as well as transportation to and from school (Kabler et al., 2014).

Tier I interventions that have been shown to have a positive impact on military connected students in particular according to Collins (2009) include developing a welcome packet, establishing a buddy program, encouraging parents to be active in the school, promoting participation in extracurricular activities, and encouraging parents and their children to become involved in organizations. A welcome packet should include information about the school district such as graduation and curriculum requirements, dress code requirements, clubs and organizations, map of the school, and the bell schedule. A packet for the family that includes school and community resources for military families, including workshops and transition activities can be given out as well (Collins, 2009).

According to Astor, Jacobson, and Benbenishty (2012) pairing new students with buddies before they arrive at the school or during their first day is another way to create a welcoming environment for students. Along with connecting students to resources and new people during the transition to a new school, connecting parents to a

school-support group is yet another part of building a strong Tier I support system (Astor et al., 2012).

Encouraging families to participate in school functions and to assist with homework are important for successful military-connected student outcomes (Mapp, 2009). Collins (2009) encourages educators to meet parents face to face and personally invite them to be an active part of home-school partnership activities such as the PTA and school planning teams. Promoting student participation in extracurricular activities and organizations allows the student to feel immediately connected to the new school and community (Collins, 2009).

Pisano (2014) states that Tier I services are designed to create a supportive environment for all students, including military-connected children. Tier I interventions are designed to be universally implemented for all students in order to help support positive outcomes and decrease unwanted behavior or poor academic outcomes or the need for more intensive interventions. However, even with a supportive Tier I framework in place there are students who will need more intensive services. Tier II supports provide the next level of support for those children.

Tier II Interventions

According to Pisano (2014), Tier II services are designed as an intermediate step between Tiers I and III. Tier II supports are for students who are at risk for academic or behavioral concerns. Challenges that military-connected children may be at a higher risk for are internalizing and externalizing problem behaviors, maltreatment, homelessness, and academic failure. There are many interventions available that are

effective for every student at risk for these specific issues. Out of those interventions that are appropriate for all students are specific interventions that are evidence-based, best practices for children who are military-connected students. Available interventions include many options such as complete programs that have been used and studies in military-connected districts around the United States that could be implemented in a district or school, as well as interventions that are readily available to teachers and use few resources to implement (Pisano, 2014).

Tier II interventions specific to at risk military-connected students that can improve both behavioral and academic outcomes include a military-connected student and family resource room. Tier II interventions can take Tier I interventions such as a buddy program or resource packets and make them specific to the Tier II military-connected students themselves (Pisano, 2014).

Pisano (2014) gives suggestions for classroom strategies specific to Tier II military-connected children. Tier II interventions may be used in the general education classroom even though only a handful of students are in Tier II at the time of the intervention (Pisano, 2014). Such Tier II interventions include teacher education about the deployment cycle and military-connected family stressors during deployment. This may allow the teacher to better understand what could be impacting student behavior. Integrating deployment themes into the instruction of the curriculum can help create a supportive environment for the military-connected students. Programs that allow for the class to write or even “adopt” a deployed soldier foster a positive sense of inclusion and understanding for military-connected students (Pisano, 2014).

According to Astor (2014) another Tier II intervention is a military- connected student and family resource room. These rooms can be a place where both students and families can gather information about school and community resources specific to their needs such as material dealing with deployment and post deployment supports. The room may include a computer that students or teachers could use to video call the deployed parent. This allows a way for that parent to stay connected to the child's life and academic progress as well as to keep up the home-school relationship with educators during deployment.

Tier II interventions allow for specific support for at-risk military-connected students. Although Tier II is more intensive than Tier I, there still is a need for supports and interventions that are even more targeted for a small percentage of military-connected students. Those are referred to as Tier III interventions and supports (Pisano, 2014).

Tier III Interventions

According to the U.S. Department of Defense (2010), educators such as classroom teachers who see a student on a regular basis may notice changes in behavior that last more than 3-4 weeks. These prolonged changes can alert the educators to a student that could benefit from Tier III services. Such changes in behavior can include an inability to resume normal classroom assignments and activities. The student may also continue to have high levels of emotional responses such as continued crying and intense sadness as well as continued difficulty concentrating. Any significant change in behavior after a major life event is an indication that the student may be at risk for

emotional problems and academic failure (U.S Department of Defense, 2010).

Tier III services are the most intense supports available in the general education program. They are specific and targeted to an individual military-connected child and the specific challenges that child is experiencing. Tier III services are not preventative but instead are intense interventions tailored to each child in need. Three tools help identify students needing Tier III. These include universal screeners, insufficient progress made towards goals set at Tier II, or a referral from a parent or teacher (Hess, Pejic, & Castejon, 2014). Effective Tier III interventions include the following: a strengths-based approach to dealing with these children, community outreach, face-to-face meetings with parents, making school programs relevant, and approaching student's problems with flexibility (Hess et al., 2014). There are successful interventions that employ these tactics for military-connected students at the Tier III level of support.

According to Pisano (2014), counseling with the school counselor or school psychologist may be appropriate especially if there is trauma such as the death or injury of a deployed parent or abuse. Crisis intervention plans for students are also an important part of Tier III supports. Partnering with the community mental health providers, the local military base, and the veterans clinic are also part of creating a personalized intervention plan for military-connected students with intensive needs (Pisano, 2014).

Not only do military families deal with trauma and other stressors, but as stated before homelessness is yet another concern for military-connected students. Since many

homeless veterans have minor children in their care (Tsai et al., 2015), they would want to take full advantage of the most intense services available. According to Kabler and associates (2014), there are also federally funded programs that allow access to free health, dental, and vision insurance for homeless children. It is the intensity of these interventions that makes them Tier III.

Along with these legally mandated medical interventions listed above (Kabler et al., 2014) suggest that educators can implement interventions using priority access to generally available community resources. Such interventions could include weekend use of the school's before and after school care facility to ensure a safe environment and weekend and evening use of the school's shower, laundry, and locker facilities. Individualized approaches to homework can also be implemented for each student such as shorter assignments to be completed during class time as well as access to telephones, computers, and other technology used to complete schoolwork. These allow for students to have a chance to succeed at school in the face of specific challenges they may be dealing with due to unstable housing or financial strains.

Because the impact of deployment can be profound on military-connected students, Pisano (2014) states that Tier III supports that are specific and intensive need to be in place for the small percentage of students who require them. Educators have many resources that can be used to create a personalized intervention plan for each student in need of Tier III services (Pisano, 2014).

Research Design

Two dependent variables were used for this study. The Enjoyment Survey was used to measure the first two hypotheses. The California Healthy Kids Survey: Military Connected Schools Module (SSMCSM) were used to measure my last four hypotheses.

A paired sample *t* test analysis was conducted with the SSMCSM scores being the dependent variables. All four scores are from the CHKS Survey: Military Connected Schools Module (SSMCSM). The Total score includes Items 1-32. Subtest 1 (Knowledge of MCS Challenges) includes Items 3-12 of the SSMCSM. Subtest 2 (Confidence in the School's Ability to Assist Military-Connected Students) includes Items 13-23 of the SSMCSM. And Subtest 3 (Individual Educator's Confidence in Assisting Military-Connected Students) Includes items 24-32.

Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1. First, it was hypothesized that The California Healthy Kids Survey: Military Connected Schools Module SSMCSM and the Enjoyment Survey used in the study would have acceptable internal reliability.

Hypothesis 2. It was hypothesized that after completion of the training workshop educators would rate the workshop above the midpoint (3) on the Enjoyment Survey that was administered to measure the participants' enjoyment of the workshop.

Hypothesis 3. Third, it was hypothesized that after completion of the workshop, the participants would increase their knowledge of stressors facing military-connected students. The dependent variable for Hypothesis 3 was Subtest 1 of the SSMCSM. It is

named: Knowledge of Stressors Shown to Impact Military-Connected Students: Items 3- 12 of the SSMCSM.

Hypothesis 4. Fourth, I hypothesized that after completion of the workshop the individual educators would increase their perceived confidence in intervening to assist military-connected students. The dependent variable for Hypothesis 4 was subtest 3 of the SSMCSM. It is named Individual Educator's Confidence in Assisting Military Connected Students. Hypothesis 4 also was measured with the same paired sample *t* test analysis described above. Specifically, I anticipated testing this hypothesis by comparing pretest and posttest scores of Subtest 3 that assess individual teacher's confidence in assisting military-connected students: Items 24-32 of the SSMCSM.

Hypothesis 5. Fifth, it was hypothesized that after completion of the workshop, the individual educators would increase their perceived confidence in their school's ability to assist military connected students. The dependent variable for Hypothesis 5 was Subtest 2 (Items 13-23) of the SSMCSM. It is named Confidence in the School's Ability to Assist Military-Connected Students. Hypothesis 5 also was measured with a paired sample *t* test Specifically, I planned to test this hypothesis by comparing pretest and posttest scores of Subtest 2, Individual Educators' Confidence in the School's Ability to Assist Military-Connected Students: Items 13-23 of the SSMCSM.

Hypothesis 6. Sixth, it was hypothesized that after completion of the workshop the individual educators would increase their perceived confidence in school climate specific to identification and intervention of military connected students. The dependent variable for Hypothesis 6 was the Total Score of the SSMCSM. Hypothesis 6 also was

measured with the same paired sample t test that I mentioned. Specifically, this hypothesis was tested by comparing pretest scores to posttest scores on the SSMCSM assessment (Items 3-32 of the SSMCSM).

CHAPTER II

METHOD

Participants

Educators in Clarksville Montgomery County School System (CMCSS) were given the opportunity to voluntarily attend a training workshop. The workshop dealt with military-connected student-need assessment and intervention implementation. Volunteers were offered continuing education credit for completion of the training. Prior to participation, each participant provided written consent and following consent, each participant completed one rating instrument twice and a second rating instrument once. Fifty-two CMCSS educators participated in the study. The group of educators was made of general education teachers from kindergarten through 12th grade, special education teachers, counselors, substitutes, and related educational services personnel.

Materials

Participants completed the California Healthy Kids Survey- Staff Survey: Military-Connected Schools Module (shortened to SSMCSM) both as a pretest and posttest measure. The SSMCSM measures the participants' awareness of military-connected student need, confidence in the school's ability to successfully implement interventions, and confidence in the professional development available specific to the military-connected child's needs. Permission was obtained from WestEd, the publishers of the SSMCSM, to use the survey for this research.

De Pedro, Esquada, and colleagues (2014) believe that studies should explore the educators' perceptions of needs and educational supports helpful for military-connected students. The SSMCSM is divided into three subtests named (a) Knowledge of MCS

Challenges (Items 3-12), (b) Confidence in the School's Ability to Assist Military-Connected Students (Items 13-23), (c) Individual Educator's Confidence in Assisting Military-Connected Students (Items 24-32). The Total Score consisted of Items 3-32. The Total Score of the SSMCSM measures school climate specific to assessing and intervening with military-connected students.

The SSMCSM uses a 6-point Likert scale consisting of ratings from A (almost none), B (few), C (some), D (most), E (nearly all), and F (don't know- n/a) for each item on Subtest 1. Participant responses were assigned numerical scores from 1-5 for A-E, respectively and assigned a 0 for F. Subtest 1 was designed to measure educator knowledge of stressors shown to impact military connected students. The SSMCSM uses a 5-point Likert scale consisting of ratings from A (not at all true), B (rarely true), C (sometimes true), D (usually true), and E (don't know- n/a) for each item on Subtest 2. Subtest 2 is designed to measure confidence in the school's ability to assist military connected students.

Subtest 3 used a 5-point Likert scale consisting of ratings from A (not a need), B (a little need), C (a need), D (a major need), and E (don't know- n/a). Subtest 3 is designed to measure individual educator's confidence in assisting military connected students. Participants chose the answer that best described their current perceptions. A post-training survey was administered to measure perceptions of participants regarding how effective the workshop was in addressing student need and intervention implementation.

I created a second measure (Enjoyment Survey) that judged how much the participants enjoyed the in-service program. The Enjoyment Survey consists of 5 items

and uses a 5-point Likert scale consisting of rating from 1 (not at all), 2 (somewhat), 3 (neutral), 4(good), 5(excellent) for each item to measure educator perceptions of the effectiveness and enjoyment of the workshop. The Enjoyment Survey includes only a total score and was completed only once following the inservice intervention. There are no subtests (see Appendix B for a copy of the Enjoyment Survey).

Procedure

An interactive in-service workshop of approximately 1 hr and 30 min in length was presented to Clarksville-Montgomery County School System (CMCSS) educators in conjunction with the Fort Campbell liaison office (see Appendix D). Participants signed consent forms, participated in the in-service, and completed both the SSMCSM pre- and post assessments regarding their perceived confidence when working with military-connected students. Each participant also completed the Enjoyment Survey to measure the participant's enjoyment of the in-service.

The in-service consisted of an interactive Power Point presentation with opportunities for group and individual brainstorming activities in each of the five in-service subsections. The five subsections focused on: a) awareness of military-connected student challenges, b) resilience, c) Tier I interventions, d) Tier II interventions, and e) Tier III interventions. These five subsections and the interventions included in each were chosen based not only on the research noted in the Introduction of this study, but also on the findings of De Pedro, Esquada, and colleagues (2014) about specific areas educators had indicated a lack of confidence in. Evidence-based interventions tailored to military-connected student challenges were presented.

Each section included learning objectives. The learning objectives for awareness of military-connected student challenges were: understanding the specific educational challenges for military-connected students when they change schools, understanding the specific educational challenges for military-connected students during a parent's deployment, and understanding the specific educational challenges for military-connected students postdeployment.

The learning objectives for resilience were: knowing what resilience is, knowing some of the risk and protective factors, and knowing how resilience impacts academic success. Tier I intervention learning objectives were: being able to describe Positive Behavior Interventions Supports, understanding the use of screening methods, and being able to name universal supports. The learning objective for Tier II interventions was describing specific Tier II interventions and their areas of potential usefulness. Tier III intervention learning objectives were: understanding who Tier III interventions target within the military-connected student population, knowing intervention tips for Tier III behavioral interventions for military-connected students, and knowing specific Tier III interventions for homelessness for military-connected students.

Brainstorming activities designed for individual and small-group work were built into the in-service program. As part of the inservice, I handed out a folder of the materials. The in-service folder contents are presented in Appendix C. It consists of worksheets for the brainstorming activity, Power Point slides, note pages, as well as a homelessness screener and intervention examples.

Dependent Variables

Two dependent variables were used for this study. The California Healthy Kids Survey: Military Connected Schools Module (SSMCSM) was used to measure Hypothesis 3, Hypothesis 4, Hypothesis 5, and Hypothesis 6. The Enjoyment Survey was used to measure Hypothesis 1 and Hypothesis 2. Four separate paired sample *t* tests were used to measure the last four hypotheses. Each subtest of the California Healthy Kids Survey: Military Connected Schools Module: SSMCSM was used for a paired sample *t* test. These subtests are; Subtest 1 (Knowledge of MCS Challenges: Items 3-12 of the SSMCSM), Subtest 2 (Confidence in the School's Ability to Assist Military Connected Students: Items 13-23 of the SSMCSM), Subtest 3 (Individual Educator's Confidence in Assisting Military Connected Students: Items 24-32).

CHAPTER III

RESULTS

Description of Data Points

Raw scores from the California Healthy Kids Survey- Staff Survey: Military-connected Schools Module (SSMCSM) and from the Enjoyment Survey were evaluated for the present study. The SSMCSM includes three subtests: (a) Knowledge of MCS Challenges (Items 3-12), report the max scores for each section maybe in the same table where you report what your sample score to provide a type of anchor for interpretation (b) Confidence in the School's Ability to Assist Military-Connected Students (Items 13-23), (c) Individual Educator's Confidence in Assisting Military Connected Students (Items 24-32), and a Total Score using Items 3-32. The Enjoyment Survey consists of 5 items to measure educator perceptions of the effectiveness and enjoyment of the workshop. The Enjoyment Survey included only a Total Score. There are no subtests.

Testing Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1. It was hypothesized that both the SSMCSM and the Enjoyment Survey used in the study had acceptable internal reliability ($.80 > \alpha \geq .70$). Hypothesis 1 was measured by calculating Cronbach's Coefficient alphas for the Total Score of the SSMCSM, for each subtest score of the SSMCSM, and the Total Score for the Enjoyment Survey. All internal reliability calculations were found to be acceptable ($.80 > \alpha \geq .70$), good ($.90 > \alpha \geq .80$), or excellent ($\alpha \geq 0.9$) using Cronbach's Coefficient alpha. Thus, Hypothesis 1 was supported (see Table 1).

Table 1

Internal Reliability Analysis for the SSMCSM

<u>Test Section</u>	<u>Number of Items</u>	<u>Cronbach's Alpha</u>
pretest Subtest 1	10	.84
posttest Subtest 1	10	.83
pretest Subtest 2	11	.79
posttest Subtest 2	11	.85
pretest Subtest 3	9	.94
posttest Subtest 3	9	.96
pretest Total Score	30	.90
posttest Total Score	30	.90
Enjoyment Survey	5	.93

Hypothesis 2. It was hypothesized that after completion of the training workshop educators will rate the workshop above the midpoint (3 on a scale of 1 to 5) using the Enjoyment Survey that was administered to measure the participants' enjoyment of the workshop (Appendix B). Hypothesis 2 was measured with a One-Sample t test with the score of 3 on the rating form (Range 1-5) as the comparison mean. The results of the t indicate that the participants ($N = 52$) rated the Enjoyment Survey above the midpoint (3) ($t = 30.8, p < .00001$). Thus, Hypothesis 2 was supported

Hypothesis 3. It was hypothesized that after completion of the workshop the individual educators would increase their knowledge of stressors facing military-connected students meaning that post-test scores would be significantly higher than pre-test scores. The dependent variable for Hypothesis 3 was Subtest 1 (items 3-12) of the SSMCSM. Hypothesis 3 was measured using a paired sample t test analysis. Specifically, this hypothesis was tested by comparing pretest scores to posttest scores on the SSMCSM assessment: Items 3-12. The results of the paired sample t test found there was a significant difference in the ratings for pretest Subtest 1 ($M = 29.3, SD = 8.5$) and posttest Subtest 1 ($M = 27.1, SD = 9.3$); $t(50) = 2.9, p = .006$. Thus, Hypothesis 3 was supported.

Hypothesis 4. It was hypothesized that after completion of the workshop the individual educators would increase their perceived confidence in intervening to assist military-connected students. The dependent variable for Hypothesis 4 was Subtest 3 of the SSMCSM. Hypothesis 4 was measured with the same paired sample t test analysis described above. Specifically, this hypothesis was tested by comparing pretest and post-

test scores of Subtest 3 of the SSMCSM: items 24-32. The results of the paired sample *t* test found that there was not a significant difference in the ratings for pretest Subtest 3 ($M = 22.7, SD = 7.1$) and posttest Subtest 3 ($M = 23.1, SD = 7.7$); $t(48) = -.494, p = .62$. Thus, Hypothesis 4 was not supported.

Hypothesis 5. It was hypothesized that after completion of the workshop the individual educators would increase their perceived confidence in school's ability to assist military connected students. The dependent variable for Hypothesis 5 was Subtest 2 of the SSMCSM. Hypothesis 5 also was measured with a paired sample *t* test analysis. Specifically, this hypothesis was tested by comparing pretest and posttest scores of Subtest 2 of the SSMCSM: Items 13-23. The results of the paired sample *t* test found that there was a significant difference in the ratings for pretest Subtest 2 ($M = 31.5, SD = 9.7$) and posttest Subtest 2 ($M = 28.0, SD = 9.7$); $t(50) = 3.5, p = .001$. Thus, Hypothesis 5 was supported.

Hypothesis 6. It was hypothesized that after completion of the workshop the individual educators would increase their perceived confidence in school climate specific to identification and intervention of military connected students. The dependent variable for Hypothesis 6 was the Total Score of the SSMCSM. Hypothesis 6 a was measured using a paired sample *t* test analysis.. Specifically, this hypothesis was tested by comparing pretest scores to posttest scores on the SSMCSM assessment: Items 3-32. . The results of the paired sample *t* test found that there was a significant difference in the ratings for pretest Total Score ($M = 82.6, SD = 18.3$) and posttest Total Score ($M = 78.6, SD = 19.7$); $t(50) = 2.0, p = .053$. Thus, Hypothesis 6 was supported.

CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION

General Findings

These findings support previous research findings that while educators may not have training on military-connected students their confidence, and thus school climate would improve with training (DePedro, Atuel et al., 2014). I predicted that the tests that I used would have acceptable internal reliability. I also predicted that my inservice would be enjoyable. Lastly, I predicted that educators would increase their overall confidence when identifying military-connected student need and implementing interventions for military-connected students. The current study's findings generally supported these predictions.

The data showed an increase in both educator knowledge of stressors facing military-connected students and educator perceived confidence in school climate specific to identification and intervention of military connected students. Both awareness of need and confidence in positive military-connected student school climate were both concerns brought up the research by De Pedro, Esqueda, and colleagues (2014). An increase in educator awareness of military-connected need as well as confidence in the school climate associated with those students was found as per the SSMCSM survey results.

This data supports pervious research that found increasing teacher confidence is a step towards creating empowered educators and a positive school climate (Hoy & Mickle, 2008).

Findings by Hypotheses

Data supported every hypothesis except Hypothesis 4. However, according to (Nantais, Martin, & Barns, 2014), educators show the largest increase professional development skills when presented with multiple opportunities to learn a new skill. Professional development has the best outcome when shorter, more frequent opportunities are presented to educators. Due to the time constraints of both the researcher's time in graduate school and the district's limited openings for professional development for the purpose of research, the training was only offered once before data was collected.

Conclusion and Summary

My main purpose in this study was to examine the impact of an inservice on educators' perceived confidence in military-connected student need and intervention implementation. Overall, I found that indeed the inservice did increase educator confidence in identifying specific needs of military-connected student needs, the school system's ability to implement interventions, and general educator confidence when working with military-connected students. Surprisingly the educators did not report a significant increase in their personal confidence in implementing interventions for military-connected students. However, this may reflect what Nantais and colleagues (2014) found about the effectiveness of one-time inservice model delivery. These findings support both the Ecological Systems Theory that states educators have a unique opportunity to create a supportive environment by making a more supportive school-based ecology for students (DePedro, Atuel, et al., 2014) and the Collective Teacher Efficacy Theory that states teacher confidence creates a positive school climate which in turn creates a positive impact on students (Hoy & Mickel, 2008).

My research that shows educators in a military-connected school district may not have the training or confidence to identify military-connected student need or implement interventions for those students. However, using professional development those teachers can increase their perceived confidence in military-connected student need and intervention implementation in a multitiered support system.

Limitations of the Study

My study had several limitations. First, the model of professional development was not best practices (Nantais, Martin, & Barns, 2014) since I was only able to give the inservice training at one time and could not follow up with further training within the district. Secondly, these results are limited to educators in the CMCSS school district who participated in the study and cannot be generalized elsewhere.

Recommendations for Further Research

Further research might look at educator perceived confidence in response to a more in-depth professional development training on military-connected student need and intervention implementation. Looking at a longer professional development program or a systems-level (school building, district, or state) approach to increasing educator confidence in assessing military-connected student need and intervention implementation would garner information on how well professional development in a best practices model would work.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: COPYRIGHT PERMISSION



Memorandum
Of
Understanding

2015-2016 School Year

Name: Roseanna M. Commiwi

This agreement outlines conditions to be met by the above named person/organization and the CHKS Regional Center.

This MOU is for the one time use of selected CHKS and CSCS survey items (Military Connected) for a research project.

Any rewording of items must be approved by WestEd.

The receiver will provide WestEd upon completion:

1. a listing of public presentations at professional meetings using results based off these data,
2. a listing of papers accepted for publication using these data, with complete citations
3. a listing of graduate students using WestEd's data for dissertations or theses. The titles of these papers, and the date of completion.

The California Department of Education and WestEd should be cited in all oral and written presentations using CHKS data.

Signature
Roseanna Commiwi
Printed name

Date 2/5/16

APPENDIX B: ENJOYMENT SURVEY

	Not at all	Somewhat	Neutral	Good	Excellent
How relevant was the information provided today to your role in the school system?	1	2	3	4	5
How would you rank the clarity of the presenter?	1	2	3	4	5
Did you enjoy the content of in-service that was provided today?	1	2	3	4	5
How would you rank your enjoyment of the participation activities today as part of the in-service?	1	2	3	4	5

APPENDIX C: INSERVICE

Resilience

Under each of the three areas below write *at least one* thing your school or classroom *already does* to implement the specific resiliency focus area OR what your school or classroom *could* possibly do for each area.

1. Preventative

Strategies a.

b.

c.

2. Proactive Stance

a.

b.

c.

3. Positive Support

a.

b.

c.

Example:

UNIVERSAL SCREENING MEASURE FOR MCKINNEY VENTO SERVICES

Name:

Contact:

Additional Info:

Number of children attending this school:

Number of Preschool age children:

Please circle the answer that best fits your situation

1. Do you live in a residence where your name or your partner's name is on the lease? YES NO
2. How many families do you live with?
Just mine One other Two others Three or more
3. Do you currently live in a motel, campground, or car? YES NO
4. Do you currently receive services from a shelter? YES NO
5. Do you find it hard to pay your mortgage or rent? YES NO
6. Are you in foreclosure? YES

NO
7. Are you worried about eviction? YES NO
8. Have you received a notice of eviction? YES NO

If you answered yes to some of the above questions then you may be eligible for

certain rights and services under a law called the McKinney Vento Act. If you have questions, please contact the school homelessness liaison _____ at _____.

YOUTH UNIVERSAL SCREENING MEASURE FOR MCKINNEY VENTO SERVICES

Name:

Please circle the answer that best fits your situation

1. Do you currently live with a parent or guardian? YES NO
2. If not, do you live with other relatives? YES NO
3. Have you been locked out of your parent or guardian's house? YES NO
4. Do you plan to return your parent or guardian's house? YES NO
5. Do you often sleep at relatives' houses? YES NO
6. Do you currently live in a motel, campground, or car? YES NO
7. Do you currently receive services from a shelter? YES NO
8. Are you currently living at a friend's house? YES NO
9. If so, how often?

Some nights a week	Most nights a week	Every night
--------------------	--------------------	-------------

If you answered yes to some of the above questions then you may be eligible for certain rights and services under a law called the McKinney Vento Act. If you have questions, please contact the school homelessness liaison _____ at

_____.

Welcome Packet Ideas

Customize the materials you would include for each of your students in your welcome pack. Build on the ideas from the Power Point to make both the student and parent packets special for your school or classroom. **You may use your smart phones/tablets to look up resources in your immediate community to include on your list.*

Student:

- Information about the school district
- Graduation & curriculum requirements
- Dress code requirements
- Clubs organizations
- Map of school
- Bell schedule
-
-
-
-
-
-

Parents

- School & Community Resources
- Workshops & transition activities
- PTA & school planning teams
-
-

MCS specific community resources to include*

-
-
-
-
-

How can you accommodate homeless MC students in your building?

Inservice Power Point Outline

1 MILITARY CONNECTED STUDENT NEED

Roseanna Commini
MTSU
For CMCSS educators

2 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Understand the specific educational challenges for MC students when they change schools
- Understand the specific educational challenges for MC students during a parent's deployment
- Understand the specific educational challenges for MC students post-deployment

3 DEPLOYMENT

Children of the Deployed

4 PERCENT OF FAMILIES THAT MOVED BETWEEN 2005-2010

5 TRANSITION IMPACT ON EDUCATION

- School & state differences in standards
- Records transfer
- Loss of social support system
- Emotional stress
 - (Garner, Arnold, & Nunnery, 2014)
-

6 DEPLOYMENT CHALLENGES

- Fear
 - Parent's safety and life
 - Fear of being alone
 - Uncertainty (Jerles, 2010)
- Increase in responsibility
- Non-deployed parental mental health
 - 42% increase in child maltreatment during deployment (Gibbs, Martin, Kupper, & Johnson, 2007)
-

7 DEPLOYMENT IMPACT ON EDUCATION

- 1 • Fear
 - Internalizing/Externalizing behavior
 - Academic success (Lester, Peterson, Reeves, Knauss, Glover,...Beardslee, 2010).
- Responsibility
 - Infringe on time and effort for academics
-
- 2 • Non-deployed Parental Mental Health
 - Academic success (Belsky, 2013)
- Ultimate Impact:
 - Prolonged deployment = continued academic impact even after reintegration (Engel, Gallagher, Lyle, 2008)

8 **POST DEPLOYMENT CHALLENGES**

- Physical & Psychological Injury
 - Caregiver/secondary trauma
 - over 30,000 military-connected children have a parent who has been injured in combat (Weiss & Coll, 2013)
- Financial Hardship
 - Reintegration
 - Military skill does not equal civilian equivalent (Jerles, 2010)
- Homelessness
 - Nearly 50% of veterans defined as homeless by Mickinney-Vento have a minor child in their care (Tsai, Rosenheck, Kaspro, Kane, 2015)

9 **POST-DEPLOYMENT EDUCATIONAL IMPACT**

- Developmental delay
- Emotional disturbances
- Behavior problems
- Cognitive deficits
- Health problems
- (Tsai, Rosenheck, Kaspro, Kane, 2015)

10 **NATIONAL GUARD/ RESERVE/ VETERAN**

- Every area of challenge is magnified
 - Far from military base
 - Civilian reintegration happens with EVERY deployment
 - (Jerles, 2010)

11 **CHECKPOINT**

- 1 • What percent of homeless veterans have at least one minor child in their care?
- a) 50%
 - b) 35%
 - c) 12%
 - d) 72%
-
- 2 MC student need

1 **RESILIENCE**

Roseanna Commini
MTSU

2 **LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

- Know what resilience is
- Know the risk and protective factors
- Know how resilience impacts academic success

3 **WHAT IS RESILIENCE?**

- A child's ability to adapt successfully in the face of danger or adversity
-
- Different from resiliency which is a personality trait
-
- It can be learned!
- (Esquivel, Doll, & Oades-Sese, 2011)

4 **INFLUENCES ON RESILIENCE****1** Risk Factors**2** • Community

- Violence
 - Residential Instability
 - Poverty
- School
 - Peer rejection
 - Conflictual teacher relationships

3 • Family

- Abuse
 - Poor parental monitoring
- Individual
 - Depression
 - Substance abuse
 - Major illness

5 **INFLUENCES ON RESILIENCE****1** Protective Factors**2** • Community

- Neighborhood cohesion
 - Community youth organizations
- School
 - Cohesive school climate
 - High quality curricula
 -

3 • Family

- Good communication

- Parental warmth and nurturance
- Individual
 - Social competence
 - Autonomy

6 **RESILIENCY'S IMPACT ON ACADEMIC SUCCESS**

- Executive Functioning
-
- Achievement
-
- Social-emotional health
-
- (Bruce, 1995).

7 **FOCUS ON RESILIENCY**

- Preventative Strategies
-
- Proactive Stance
-
- Positive Support

8 **FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE RESILIENCE**

- Having a caring and supportive attitude towards students
-
- Allowing for meaningful participation
-
- Setting high expectations
-
- (Bernard, 1996)
-
-

9 **EDUCATORS' IMPACT**

You are the most influential factor in a child's academic success

10 **3 MINUTE BRAINSTORM**

Small Group:
Resilience Handout

1 **TIER 1 INTERVENTIONS**

Roseanna Commini
MTSU

2 **LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

- Be able to describe PBIS
- Understand the use of screening methods
- Be able to name universal supports
-

3 **UNIVERSAL INTERVENTIONS**

- Are for EVERY child!
- Ideally: Low tech, low resource intensive
- Preventative

4 **WHAT IS PBIS?**

- Positive Behavior Intervention Supports
-
-
- Creates a *foundation* of positive behavioral support
-
-

5 **HOW EFFECTIVE IS TIER 1 PBIS?**

- When universal PBIS interventions are delivered *appropriately & consistently* 80-90% of the school's students will respond (Sugai et al, 2002).
- Improves *Internalizing & Externalizing Behaviors and Academic Outcome*
- These interventions *decrease the need for further, more intrusive forms of intervention* for MANY of the students, including MC students

6 **EXAMPLES OF TIER 1 PBIS**

- Consistent and predictable routines
 - Anxiety, depression
- Pair an anxious child with other children who are calm confident and supportive
 - Anxiety, depression
- Post simple and clear classroom expectations (classroom rules)
 - Behavior, academic outcome
- Develop home-school relationships
 - Behavior, academic outcome
-

7 **FURTHER TIER 1 INTERVENTIONS**

- Welcome Packet
- Buddy Program
- Encouraging Parents to be active in school
- Promoting Participation in Extracurricular Activities

8 **WELCOME PACKETS FOR STUDENTS**

What do they include?

- Information about the school district
- Graduation & curriculum requirements
- Dress code requirements
- Clubs organizations
- Map of school
- Bell schedule
- (Collins, 2009)

9 **WELCOME PACKETS FOR FAMILIES**

- What do they include?
 - School & Community Resources
 - Workshops & transition activities
 - PTA & school planning teams
 - (Astor, Jacobson, and Benbenishty, 2012)
 -

10 **UNIVERSAL SCREENING**

- Allows educators to identify needs without a student having to "wait to fail"
- Behavior (BASC-2: BESS)
- Academic (RTI screeners)
- Homelessness (Mickinney-Vento screener) **included in your packet*
-

11 **5 MIN**

Welcome Packet Building Activity
Small Group

1 **TIER 2 INTERVENTIONS**

Roseanna Communi
MTSU

2 **LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

- Describe specific Tier 2 interventions and their area of usefulness
-

3 **TIER 2 INTERVENTION CATEGORIES**

- Complete Programs
 - Pre-made, evidence based
 - District implemented
 -
- Readily Available- Teacher Implemented
 - Evidence based
 - Use few resources to implement

4 **TIER 2 COMPLETE PROGRAM INTERVENTION EXAMPLES**

- Building Capacity Project
 - San Diego, Ca MC school districts
 - Families Over Coming Under Stress (FOCUS)
 - Student to Student (S2S)
 - Parent to Parent (PtoP)
 - Part of research based resiliency training
 - (DePedro et al, 2011)

5 **TIER 2 INTERVENTION EXAMPLES**

- MC student/family resource room
- Develop a welcome packet additions specific to MC students
- Establish a buddy program for MC students at each school
-
-
- (Pisano, 2014)
-

6 **TIER 2 INTERVENTION EXAMPLES**

- Educator education about the deployment cycle & military connected family stressors during deployment
- Integrating deployment themes into the instruction of curriculum
- Allow a class to write to or "Adopt" a deployed soldier

7 **1 MIN**

Individual:

Brainstorm what you can do to in your school/classroom as a tier 2 intervention.
How can you integrate MC students into your everyday educational program?

1 **TIER 3 INTERVENTIONS FOR MC STUDENTS**

Roseanna Commini
MTSU

For Educators

2 **LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

- Understand who tier 3 interventions target within the MC student population
- Know intervention tips for tier 3 behavioral interventions for MC students
- Know specific tier 3 interventions for homelessness for MC students

3 **WHICH MC STUDENTS NEED TIER 3 INTERVENTIONS?**

- Tier 3 is not preventative, it is targeted and specific
- An MC student needing tier 3 services will have been identified by:
 - The school's screeners
 - Insufficient progress made towards goals at the two previous tiers
 - A referral
 -
 -

4 **AT-RISK SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS**

- Duration: 3-4+ weeks (U.S. Department of Defense, 2010).
- Has not been able to resume normal classroom assignments and activities
- Continues to have high levels of emotional responses such as continued crying & intense sadness
- Continues to have difficulty concentrating
- Any significant change in behavior after a major life event

5 **TIER 3 BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTION SHOULD INCLUDE:**

- Community Outreach
- Strengths based approach
- Face-to-face meetings with parents
- Making school programs relevant
- Approaching student problems with flexibility
 - (Hess, Pejic, & Castejon, 2014)
-

6 **TIER 3 INTERVENTION EXAMPLES**

- Counseling
 - With the Counselor or School Psychologist
- Crisis Intervention Plans
- Partnering with the community mental health providers, local military base, and the VA
-

7 **TIER 3 INTERVENTIONS FOR HOMELESSNESS**

- McKinney-Vento

- Free and reduced lunch
- Transportation to and from school
- Federally funded programs for: health/dental/vision
- Use of before and after school care to ensure safe and secure environment
- Use of school showers/lockers/laundry facility if available
-

8 TIER 3 INTERVENTIONS FOR HOMELESSNESS

- Flexibility and individualized approaches to homework
 - Access to telephones and computers
 - Shorter assignments that can be completed in class
- What other ways can you accommodate homeless MC students in your building? (Kabler, Weinstein, Joffe, 2014)
- [school resources for homeless families](#)
-

9 3 MIN SMALL GROUP ACTIVITY

- Brainstorm how you might accommodate homeless MC students in your school or classroom?

APPENDIX D: CMCSS APPROVAL

From: Dr. Kimi Sucharski 11.12.2015
CMCSS Accountability
612 Gracey Ave
Clarksville, TN 37040

To: Roseanna Communi

Subject: Request to Conduct Research in CMCSS

The Clarksville Montgomery County School System Research Committee has met and approved your request to conduct research in the District examining the difference in educators' perceived confidence in addressing the needs of military students before and after attending a workshop on addressing the military-connected student need and intervention in a multi-tiered support system.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dr. Kimi Sucharski".

Dr. Kimi Sucharski
CMCSS Accountability and Assessment
Kimi.sucharski@cmcss.net
(931) 920-7813 office

APPENDIX E: IRB APPROVAL

IRB
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD
 Office of Research Compliance,
 010A Sam Ingram Building,
 2269 Middle Tennessee Blvd
 Murfreesboro, TN 37129



IRBN001 - EXPEDITED PROTOCOL APPROVAL NOTICE

Monday, March 21, 2016

Investigator(s): Roseanna Commini (Student PI) and James Rust (FA)
 Investigator(s) Email(s): rnc5k@mtmail.mtsu.edu; james.rust@mtsu.edu
 Department: Psychology

Study Title: ***Educator perceived confidence in military-connected student need and intervention implementation***
 Protocol ID: **16-2182**

Dear Investigator(s),

The above identified research proposal has been reviewed by the MTSU Institutional Review Board (IRB) through the **EXPEDITED** mechanism under 45 CFR 46.110 and 21 CFR 56.110 within the category (7) *Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior*. A summary of the IRB action and other particulars in regard to this protocol application is tabulated as shown below:

IRB Action	APPROVED for one year from the date of this notification	
Date of expiration	3/21/2017	
Participant Size	300 (THREE HUNDRED)	
Participant Pool	Educators in Clarksville Montgomery County School System	
Exceptions	NONE	
Restrictions	Signed informed consent	
Comments	NONE	
Amendments	Date 3/21/2016	Post-approval Amendments NONE

This protocol can be continued for up to THREE years (3/21/2019) by obtaining a continuation approval prior to 3/21/2017. Refer to the following schedule to plan your annual project reports and be aware that you may not receive a separate reminder to complete your continuing reviews. Failure in obtaining an approval for continuation will automatically result in cancellation of this protocol. Moreover, the completion of this study MUST be notified to the Office of Compliance by filing a final report in order to close-out the protocol.

Continuing Review Schedule:

Reporting Period	Requisition Deadline	IRB Comments
First year report	2/21/2017	INCOMPLETE
Second year report	2/21/2018	INCOMPLETE
Final report	2/21/2019	INCOMPLETE