

Incredible Years Teacher Classroom Management

Reviews: March 2017; September 2021

Note on provider involvement: This provider has agreed to EIF's terms of reference, and the assessment has been conducted and published with the full cooperation of the programme provider.

The Incredible Years Teacher Classroom Management (IY-TCM) programme is a universal classroom management programme for teachers of children between the ages of four and eight.

The programme aims to improve teacher competencies in supporting children in the classroom, and developing children's social, emotional and problem-solving skills. Incredible Years group leaders work with teachers to develop specific skills include proactive teacher strategies around behaviour management.

Evidence
rating: **3+**

Cost rating: **1**

EIF Programme Assessment

Incredible Years Teacher Classroom Management has evidence of a **short-term positive impact** on child outcomes from at least one rigorous evaluation.

Evidence
rating: **3+**

What does the evidence rating mean?

Level 3 indicates **evidence of efficacy**. This means the programme can be described as evidence-based: it has evidence from at least one rigorously conducted RCT or QED demonstrating a statistically significant positive impact on at least one child outcome.

This programme does not receive a rating of 4 as it has not yet replicated its results in another rigorously conducted study, where at least one study indicates long-term impacts, and at least one uses measures independent of study participants.

What does the plus mean?

The plus rating indicates that this programme has evidence from at least one level 3 study, along with evidence from other studies rated 2 or better.

Cost rating

A rating of 1 indicates that a programme has a low cost to set up and deliver, compared with other interventions reviewed by EIF. This is equivalent to an estimated unit cost of less than £100.

Cost rating: **1**

Child outcomes

According to the best available evidence for this programme's impact, it can achieve the following positive outcomes for children:

Supporting children's mental health and wellbeing

Reduced emotional symptoms (teacher report)

Based on study 2

Improved emotional self-regulation (teacher report)

Based on study 3

Improved social competence (teacher report)

Based on study 3

Enhancing school achievement & employment

Reduction in child off-task behaviour and teacher commands

Based on study 1

1.45-point improvement on the Teacher-Pupil Observation Tool (off-task behaviour – coded observation)

Improvement index: **+18**

This means we would expect the average participant in the comparison group who did not receive the intervention (ie, someone for whom 50% of their peers have better outcomes and 50% have worse outcomes), to improve to the point where they would have better outcomes than 68% and worse outcomes than 32% of their peers, if they had received the intervention.

Immediately after the intervention

10.22-point improvement on the Teacher-Pupil Observation Tool (teacher commands – coded observation)

Improvement index: **+18**

This means we would expect the average participant in the comparison group who did not receive the intervention (ie, someone for whom 50% of their peers have better outcomes and 50% have worse outcomes), to improve to the point where they would have better outcomes than 68% and worse outcomes than 32% of their peers, if they had received the intervention.

Immediately after the intervention

Reduced child negatives to teacher

Based on study 1

1.28-point improvement on the Teacher-Pupil Observation Tool (negative behaviours towards the teacher – coded observation)

Improvement index: **+16**

This means we would expect the average participant in the comparison group who did not receive the intervention (ie, someone for whom 50% of their peers have better outcomes and 50% have worse outcomes), to improve to the point where they would have better outcomes than 66% and worse outcomes than 34% of their peers, if they had received the intervention.

Immediately after the intervention

Increase in child compliance

Based on study 1

6.37-point improvement on the Teacher-Pupil Observation Tool (child compliance – coded observation)

Improvement index: **+14**

This means we would expect the average participant in the comparison group who did not receive the intervention (ie, someone for whom 50% of their peers have better outcomes and 50% have worse outcomes), to improve to the point where they would have better outcomes than 64% and worse outcomes than 36% of their peers, if they had received the intervention.

Immediately after the intervention

Preventing crime, violence and antisocial behaviour

Improved prosocial behaviour (teacher report)

Based on study 3

This programme also has evidence of supporting positive outcomes for couples, parents or families that may be relevant to a commissioning decision. Please see the 'About the evidence' section for more detail.

Key programme characteristics

Who is it for?

The best available evidence for this programme relates to the following age-groups:

- Preschool
- Primary school

How is it delivered?

The best available evidence for this programme relates to implementation through these delivery models:

- Group

Where is it delivered?

The best available evidence for this programme relates to its implementation in these settings:

- Primary school

The programme may also be delivered in these settings:

- Primary school
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How is it targeted?

The best available evidence for this programme relates to its implementation as:

- Universal
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The classification of universal is based on the two UK-based studies contributing to the evidence rating. However, the intervention has been evaluated both as a targeted selective prevention (high-risk schools) and targeted indicated prevention (teachers with children with a diagnosis of conduct problems).

Where has it been implemented?

England, Ireland, Jamaica, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Scotland, United States, Wales

UK provision

This programme has been implemented in the UK.

UK evaluation

This programme's best evidence includes evaluation conducted in the UK.

Spotlight sets

EIF includes this programme in the following Spotlight sets:

- school based social emotional learning
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About the programme

What happens during delivery?

How is it delivered?

- IY-TCM is delivered to groups of teachers in six full-day sessions over the course of six months.
- IY Group Leaders work with the groups of teachers over the six sessions.

What happens during the intervention?

- IY-TCM aims to teach teachers how to develop a positive relationship with children through child-directed play, academic, persistence, social and emotional coaching methods and using a positive discipline hierarchy with an emphasis on use of prompts, reminders, redirects, planned ignore and proximal praise for minor inappropriate behaviours. In addition throughout all the workshop sessions teachers are helped to promote positive social skills and emotional literacy and problem-solving.
- The methods used during the sessions include videotape modelling through the use of vignettes, practising and rehearsing through role-plays and discussions, developing individual behaviour plans, and giving homework assignments at the end of every session so that teachers can practise new skills in their own classrooms between sessions.
- During every session, discussions include how teachers can involve parents in promoting positive behaviours at home and developing a strong parent-teacher partnership to strengthen academic outcomes as well as social and emotional competence. Parents are included in behaviour plans.
- As teachers learn specific skills in the group-based training, they are then followed individually by a coach who conducts classroom observations, provides performance feedback, and assists with problem-solving, goal-setting, and implementation of strategies and behaviour plans developed in workshops.

What are the implementation requirements?

Who can deliver it?

- The two practitioners who deliver this programme are professionals with an education or psychology background with QCF-6 level qualifications.

What are the training requirements?

- The practitioners have six days of programme training. Booster training of practitioners is recommended. The practitioners are trained by IY Group Leaders.

How are the practitioners supervised?

- It is recommended that practitioners are supervised by two host agency supervisors qualified to QCF-7/8 level with two days of programme training.
- It is also recommended that practitioners are supervised by three programme developer mentors and trainers qualified to QCF-7/8 level with two days of programme training.

What are the systems for maintaining fidelity?

- Training manual
- Other printed material
- Other online material
- Video or DVD training
- Face-to-face training
- Fidelity monitoring
- An accreditation process

Is there a licensing requirement?

Yes, there is a licence required to run this programme.

How does it work? (Theory of Change)

How does it work?

- Social, emotional, and behavioural problems in young schoolchildren can pose significant challenges for teachers in the classroom, but with appropriate training, teachers can learn to better manage these kinds of problems and promote more positive social behaviour, thereby creating more effective (and calmer) learning environments and more positive educational outcomes.
- The IY-TCM programme aims to strengthen teachers' classroom management strategies and promote children's prosocial behaviour and school readiness, whilst reducing children's classroom aggression and non-cooperation with peers and teachers.
- Intended short-term outcomes include increased social and emotional competence with peers in classroom, increased child problem solving skills, reductions in behaviour problems, increased academic readiness, on task, focused behaviours and cooperation with teachers and peers.
- In the longer term, the programme aims to reduce a range of antisocial behaviour. This includes reductions in aggressive & destructive behaviour, inattention & conduct problems, reduced likelihood of involvement with deviant peer groups, reduced special education referrals, reduced likelihood of dropping out of school, increased academic achievement, reduced likelihood of involvement in criminal activities and reduced drug and alcohol use.

Intended outcomes

Supporting children's mental health and wellbeing
Enhancing school achievement & employment
Preventing crime, violence and antisocial behaviour

Contact details

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About the evidence

IY-TCM's most rigorous evidence comes from an RCT that was conducted in Wales. This study identified statistically significant positive impact on a number of child outcomes.

This programme has evidence from at least one rigorously conducted RCT along with evidence from an additional comparison group study. Subsequently, the programme receives a 3+ rating overall.

Study 1

Citation: Hutchings et al. (2013)

Design: RCT

Country: Wales

Sample: 170 children from 3 to 7 years recruited on the basis of SDQ scores

Timing: Post-intervention (one academic year after baseline)

Child outcomes:

- Reduction in child off-task behaviour and teacher commands
 - Reduced child negatives to teacher
 - Increase in child compliance
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Other outcomes:

- Reduced teacher negatives Reduction in teacher commands
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Study rating: 3

Hutchings, J., Martin-Forbes, P., Daley, D., & Williams, M. E. (2013). A randomized controlled trial of the impact of a teacher classroom management program on the classroom behavior of children with and without behavior problems. *Journal of School Psychology, 51*(5), 571–585.

Available at <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/24060060>

Study design and sample

This study involved random assignment of children to an IY-TCM group and a business as usual group.

This study was conducted in Wales, with a sample of 170 children between 3 and 7 years, recruited on the basis of SDQ scores.

Measures

The Teacher-Pupil Observation Tool (TPOT) was used to assess child behaviour in the classroom and teachers' interactions with the children.

Findings

This study identified statistically significant positive impact on a number of child and teacher outcomes using the TPOT. This includes improvements in child compliance, child negatives to the teacher, child off-task behaviour, total number of commands, and teacher negatives to children.

Study 2

Citation: Hickey et al. (2015)

Design: RCT

Country: Ireland

Sample: 445 children (mean age of 5.4 years) balanced in terms of low, medium and high levels of behavioural problems on the SDQ

Timing: Post-intervention (6 months after baseline)

Child outcomes:

- Reduced emotional symptoms (teacher report)
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Other outcomes:

- None measured
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Study rating: 2+

Hickey, G., McGilloway, S., Hyland, L., Leckey, Y., Kelly, P., Bywater, T., ... O'Neill, D. (2015). Exploring the effects of a universal classroom management training programme on teacher and child behaviour: A group randomised controlled trial and cost analysis. *Journal of Early Childhood Research*, doi: 10.1177/1476718X15579747.

Available at <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/1476718X15579747>

Study design and sample

This study involved random assignment of 22 teachers to an IY-TCM treatment group and a business as usual control group.

This study was conducted in south-west Ireland, with a sample of 445 children with an average age of 5.4 from 11 primary schools. These were comprised of eight urban schools, two semi-urban schools and one rural school. The sample included a selection of 'index' children designed to ensure a balance of children with high, medium and low levels of behavioural problems.

Measures

Self-reported frequency of teachers' use of positive and negative classroom management strategies, and the perceived utility of these strategies was measured using the Teacher Strategies Questionnaire (TSQ). Child behaviour and wellbeing was assessed using the teacher version of the SDQ and the Teacher-Pupil Observation Tool (TPOT) was used to provide observations of teacher and pupil behaviour.

Findings

This study identified a statistically significant positive impact on a child outcome. At follow-up, children in the treatment group were reported to show less emotional symptoms on the SDQ than those in the control group.

Study 3

Citation: Reinke, Herman & Dong (2016)

Design: RCT

Country: United States

Sample: 1,817 students from schools serving primarily African American students

Timing: Post-intervention (one academic year after baseline)

Child outcomes:

- Improved emotional self-regulation (teacher report)
 - Improved social competence (teacher report)
 - Improved prosocial behaviour (teacher report)
-

Other outcomes:

- Increase in proactive strategies
-

Study rating: 2+

Reinke, W. N., Herman, K. C., & Dong, N. (2016). The Incredible Years Teacher Classroom Management program: Outcomes from a group randomized trial. *Unpublished Manuscript*. Retrieved from (<http://incredibleyears.com/wp-content/uploads/Reinke-IY-TCM-Program-Outcomes.pdf>).

Available at

<http://www.incredibleyears.com/wp-content/uploads/Reinke-IY-TCM-Program-Outcomes.pdf>

Study design and sample

This study involved random assignment of children to an IY-TCM group and a wait-list business as usual control group.

This study was conducted in the midwestern United States, with a sample of 105 teachers and 1,817 children in kindergarten to third grade. The schools served primarily African American students.

Measures

Child disruptive behaviours, concentration problems, emotional dysregulation, and prosocial behaviour was measured using the Teacher Observation of Classroom Adaption-Checklist (TOCA-C). Teacher's perception of a child's prosocial behaviour, emotional self-regulation, and academic competence was measured using The Revised Social Competence Scale-Teacher version (T-COMP). Child ability in reading and mathematics was assessed using The Woodcock-Johnson III Normative Update Tests of Achievement (WJ III ACH).

Findings

This study identified statistically significant positive impact on a number of child outcomes. This includes prosocial behaviour, emotional dysregulation, and overall social competence (TOCA-C).

Other studies

The following studies were identified for this programme but did not count towards the programme's overall evidence rating. A programme receives the same rating as its most robust study or studies.

Baker-Henningham, H., Scott, S., Jones, K., & Walker, S. (2012). Reducing child conduct problems and promoting social skills in a middle-income country: Cluster randomised controlled trial. *The British Journal of Psychiatry*, 201(2), 101–108 - **This reference refers to a randomised control trial, conducted in Jamaica.**

Davenport, J., & Tansey, A. (2009). Outcomes of an Incredible Years Classroom Management Programme with teachers from multiple schools. Trinity College Dublin/National Educational Psychological Service - **This reference refers to a pre-post study, conducted in Ireland.**

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Ford, T., Edwards, V., Sharkey, S., Ukoumunne, O. C., Byford, S., Norwich, B., & Logan, S. (2012). Supporting teachers and children in schools: The effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of the incredible years teacher classroom management programme in primary school children: A cluster randomised controlled trial, with parallel economic and process evaluations. *BMC Public Health*, 12(1), 719 - **This reference refers to a randomised control trial, conducted in the UK.**

Hsueh, J., Lowenstein, A. E., Morris, P., Matterna, S. K., & Bangser, M. (2014). Impacts of social-emotional curricula on three-year-olds: Exploratory findings from the Head Start Cares Demonstration. OPRE Report, 78 - **This reference refers to a randomised control trial, conducted in the USA.**

Hutchings, J., Bywater, T., Gridley, N., Whitaker, C. J., Martin-Forbes, P., & Gruffydd, S. (2012). The incredible years therapeutic social and emotional skills programme: A pilot study. *School Psychology International*, 33(3), 285–293 - **This reference refers to a quasi-experimental design, conducted in the UK.**

Hutchings, J., Daley, D., Jones, K., Martin, P., Bywater, T., & Gwyn, R. (2007). Early results from developing and researching the Webster-Stratton incredible years teacher classroom management training programme in North West Wales. *Journal of Children's Services*, 2(3), 15–26 - **This reference refers to a mixed methods design, conducted in the UK.**

McGilloway, S., Bywater, T., Mhaille, G. N., Furlong, M., O'Neill, D., Comiskey, C., ... Donnelly, M. (n.d.). Proving the Power of Positive Parenting - **This reference refers to a randomised control trial, conducted in Ireland.**

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McGilloway, S., Lynda, H., Mhaille, G. N., Lodge, A., Kelly, P., Leckey, Y., ... Donnelly, M. (2010). Positive classrooms, positive children: A randomised controlled trial to investigate the effectiveness of the Incredible Years Teaching Classroom Management Programme in an Irish context - **This reference refers to a randomised control trial, conducted in Ireland.**

1

McGilloway, S., Mhaille, G. N., Bywater, T., Furlong, M., Leckey, Y., Kelly, P., ... Donnelly, M. (2012). A parenting intervention for childhood behavioral problems: A randomized controlled trial in disadvantaged community-based settings. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 80(1), 116–127 - **This reference refers to a randomised control trial, conducted in Ireland.**

1

Morris, P., Matterna, S. K., Castells, N., Bangser, M., Bierman, K., & Raver, C. (2014). Impact findings from the Head Start CARES Demonstration: National evaluation of three approaches to improving preschoolers' social and emotional competence. Executive Summary. OPRE Report 2014-44. MDRC - **This reference refers to a randomised control trial, conducted in the USA.**

Raver, C. C., Jones, S. M., Li-Grining, C. P., Metzger, M., Champion, K. M., & Sardin, L. (2008). Improving preschool classroom processes: Preliminary findings from a randomized trial implemented in Head Start settings. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 23(1), 10–26 - **This reference refers to a randomised control trial, conducted in the USA.**

Webster-Stratton, C., Reid, M. J., & Hammond, M. (2001). Preventing conduct problems, promoting social competence: A parent and teacher training partnership in Head Start. *Journal of Clinical Child Psychology*, 30(3), 283–302 - **This reference refers to a randomised control trial, conducted in the USA.**

Webster-Stratton, C., Reid, M. J., & Hammond, M. (2004). Treating children with early-onset conduct problems: Intervention outcomes for parent, child, and teacher training. *Journal of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology*, 33(1), 105–124 - **This reference refers to a randomised control trial, conducted in the USA.**

Webster-Stratton, C., Jamila Reid, M., & Stoolmiller, M. (2008). Preventing conduct problems and improving school readiness: Evaluation of the incredible years teacher and child training programs in high-risk schools. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, 49(5), 471–488 - **This reference refers to a randomised control trial, conducted in the USA.**

Guidebook

The EIF Guidebook provides information about early intervention programmes that have at least preliminary evidence of achieving positive outcomes for children. It provides information based on EIF's assessment of the strength of evidence for a programme's effectiveness, and on detail about programmes shared with us by those who design, run and deliver them.

The Guidebook serves an important starting point for commissioners to find out more about effective early interventions, and for programme providers to find out more about what good evidence of impact looks like and how it can be captured. As just one of our key resources for commissioners and practitioners, the Guidebook is an essential part of EIF's work to support the development of and investment in effective early intervention programmes.

Our assessment of the evidence for a programme's effectiveness can inform and support certain parts of a commissioning decision, but it is not a substitute for professional judgment. Evidence about what has worked in the past offers no guarantee that an approach will work in all circumstances. Crucially, the Guidebook is not a market comparison website: ratings and other information should not be interpreted as a specific recommendation, kite mark or endorsement for any programme.

[How to read the Guidebook](#)

[EIF evidence standards](#)

[About the EIF Guidebook](#)

EIF

The Early Intervention Foundation (EIF) is an independent charity and a member of the What Works network. We support the use of effective early intervention for children, young people and their families: identifying signals of risk, and responding with effective interventions to improve outcomes, reduce hardship and save the public money in the long term.

We work by generating evidence and knowledge of what works in our field, putting this information in the hands of commissioners, practitioners and policymakers, and supporting the adoption of the evidence in local areas and relevant sectors.

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