

Pyramid Club Secondary

Reviews: March 2017; January 2019

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.

Pyramid Club Secondary is a targeted programme for young people who are identified as being quiet, shy and behaviourally more likely to internalise. Pyramid Club Secondary is provided to children in the early years of secondary school, with activity content and material tailored to this group.

Pyramid clubs run once a week for 10 weeks. The clubs are run by trained leaders, usually as an after-school activity, but sometimes during the school day. Activities at the club are structured around circle time, art and craft, games and food.

Each session runs for 90 minutes with up to 12 young people and three club leaders.

Evidence
rating: 2

Cost rating: 1

EIF Programme Assessment

Pyramid Club Secondary has **preliminary evidence** of improving a child outcome, but we cannot be confident that the programme caused the improvement.

Evidence
rating: **2**

What does the evidence rating mean?

Level 2 indicates that the programme has evidence of improving a child outcome from a study involving at least 20 participants, representing 60% of the sample, using validated instruments.

This programme does not receive a rating of 3 as its best evidence is not from a rigorously conducted RCT or QED evaluation.

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-rated and child-rated)

Based on study 1

Preventing crime, violence and antisocial behaviour

Reduced total difficulties (teacher-rated)

Based on study 1

Reduced peer relationship problems (teacher-rated and child-rated)

Based on study 1

Improved prosocial behaviour (teacher-rated)

Based on study 1

Key programme characteristics

Who is it for?

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

- Preadolescents
- Adolescents

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:

- Secondary school

The programme may also be delivered in these settings:

- Secondary school

How is it targeted?

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

- Targeted indicated
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Where has it been implemented?

England, Northern Ireland, 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 programmes for children with recognised or possible special education needs
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About the programme

What happens during delivery?

How is it delivered?

- Pyramid Club is delivered in 10 sessions of 1.5 hours' duration each by three practitioners to groups of 8–12 young people.

What happens during the intervention?

- Pyramid Clubs begin and end with circle time. Circle time takes the form of collaborative group discussions which give children the opportunity to listen and speak.
- Clubs involve art and craft, which provides the opportunity to be creative.
- Games are played, which are typically team-based and promote negotiation and collaboration.
- Food preparation and sharing is also a core activity, which provides opportunities to develop skills, acknowledge different cultures, and understand people's likes and dislikes.

What are the implementation requirements?

Who can deliver it?

- Pyramid Club is delivered by a school or voluntary organisation staff member or volunteer with recommended QCF-level 3.

What are the training requirements?

- School or voluntary organisation staff have 10 hours of training and volunteers have 15 hours. Booster training of practitioners is recommended.

How are the practitioners supervised?

- It is recommended that practitioners are supervised by one external supervisor, qualified to QCF-level 7/8, who receives six hours of training per year.

What are the systems for maintaining fidelity?

Programme fidelity is maintained through the following processes:

- Training manual
- Other printed material
- Other online material
- Face-to-face training
- Fidelity monitoring.

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?

- Strong socio-emotional competencies will enable children and young people to achieve their full potential in school and in life.
- Pyramid clubs allow children to observe and practise coping skills and encourage effective social interaction with both peers and adults, developing increased socio-emotional competence.
- In the short term, children and young people who attend Pyramid clubs demonstrate better emotional self-management, improved peer interaction, and greater school engagement.
- In the longer term, improvements in socio-emotional competence in childhood reduce the likelihood of mental health problems and other difficulties in later life, such as failure in school and job instability.

Intended outcomes

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

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About the evidence

Pyramid Club Secondary's most rigorous evidence comes from a QED which was conducted in the United Kingdom.

This study identified statistically significant positive impact on a number of child outcomes.

This programme is underpinned by one study with a level 2 rating, hence the programme receives a level 2 rating overall.

Study 1

Citation: Jayman et al., 2018

Design: QED

Country: United Kingdom

Sample: -

Timing: Post-intervention; 12-month follow-up

Child outcomes:

- Reduced emotional symptoms (teacher-rated and child-rated)
 - Reduced total difficulties (teacher-rated)
 - Reduced peer relationship problems (teacher-rated and child-rated)
 - Improved prosocial behaviour (teacher-rated)
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Other outcomes:

- None measured
-

Study rating: 2

Jayman, M., Ohl, M., Hughes, B., & Fox, P. (2018). Improving socio-emotional health for pupils in early secondary education with Pyramid: A school-based, early intervention model. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*.

Available at [Jayman, M., Ohl, M., Hughes, B., & Fox, P. \(2018\). Improving socio-emotional health for pupils in early secondary education with Pyramid: A school-based, early intervention model. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*.](#)

Study design and sample

This study is a quasi-experimental study conducted in the United Kingdom. Pyramid Club participants were matched to control pupils – who did not receive the programme – on age, gender, and socio-economic status.

All pupils were between the ages of 11 and 14 (mean age 12.5 years), and were drawn from eight co-educational secondary schools in England and Wales. Pyramid groups scored higher on total difficulties than the general population, based on UK normative data.

Measure

The Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (teacher and child rated versions) was used to assess children's total difficulties, conduct problems, hyperactivity/inattention, emotional symptoms, peer relationship problems, and prosocial behaviour.

Findings

This study identified statistically significant positive impact on a number of child outcomes, including reduced total difficulties (teacher-rated), emotional symptoms (teacher and child rated), peer relationship problems (teacher and child rated), and prosocial behaviour (teacher-rated).

The conclusions that can be drawn from this study are limited by methodological issues pertaining to unequivalent groups and a lack of intention-to-treat analysis, hence why a higher rating is not achieved.

Due to the numerous and large differences between the Pyramid Club and comparison group, comparisons between them will not provide accurate estimates of the effectiveness of the intervention. However, there is evidence of pre-post improvement within the Pyramid Club group, which is sufficient to justify a rating of level 2.

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.

Jayman, M., Ohl, M., Hughes, B., & Fox, P. (2014). Improving the socio-emotional health of young people in early secondary education: preliminary findings from a study of the Pyramid intervention project - **This reference refers to a quasi-experimental design, conducted in the UK.**

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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