

Reconnecting Youth

Public Health & Prevention: School-based

Literature review updated March 2020.

As part of WSIPP's research approach to identifying evidence-based programs and policies, WSIPP determines "what works" (and what does not work) to improve outcomes using an approach called meta-analysis. For detail on our methods, see our [Technical Documentation](#). At this time, WSIPP has not yet calculated benefits and costs for this topic.

Program Description: Reconnecting Youth, a school-based program for high school students, is designed to address a variety of behaviors, such as attendance, academic achievement, disruptive behavior, and substance use. Reconnecting Youth targets youth at-risk for school dropout and who exhibit other problem behavior such as drug-use or depression, as identified by school records or personnel. Once identified, students are placed into classes of 10 to 12 students and participate in social support and life-skills training during a daily, semester-long class using a 75-lesson curriculum. By building life skills, fostering a bond to the school and family, and encouraging self-esteem, the program aims to build positive resistance skills and decrease risk factors.

Meta-Analysis of Program Effects

Outcomes measured	No. of effect sizes	Treatment N	Adjusted effect size and standard error			Unadjusted effect size (random effects model)	
			ES	SE	Age	ES	p-value
Grade point average	1	55	0.416	0.193	15	0.416	0.031
Alcohol use before end of high school	1	615	0.019	0.071	15	0.019	0.784
Smoking before end of high school	1	615	0.182	0.071	15	0.182	0.010
Delinquent behavior	1	615	-0.099	0.071	15	-0.099	0.160

Meta-analysis is a statistical method to combine the results from separate studies on a program, policy, or topic in order to estimate its effect on an outcome. WSIPP systematically evaluates all credible evaluations we can locate on each topic. The outcomes measured are the types of program impacts that were measured in the research literature (for example, crime or educational attainment). Treatment N represents the total number of individuals or units in the treatment group across the included studies.

An effect size (ES) is a standard metric that summarizes the degree to which a program or policy affects a measured outcome. If the effect size is positive, the outcome increases. If the effect size is negative, the outcome decreases.

Adjusted effect sizes are used to calculate the benefits from our benefit cost model. WSIPP may adjust effect sizes based on methodological characteristics of the study. For example, we may adjust effect sizes when a study has a weak research design or when the program developer is involved in the research. The magnitude of these adjustments varies depending on the topic area.

WSIPP may also adjust the second ES measurement. Research shows the magnitude of some effect sizes decrease over time. For those effect sizes, we estimate outcome-based adjustments which we apply between the first time ES is estimated and the second time ES is estimated. We also report the unadjusted effect size to show the effect sizes before any adjustments have been made. More details about these adjustments can be found in our [Technical Documentation](#).

Citations Used in the Meta-Analysis

Cho, H., Hallfors, D.D., & Sanchez, V. (2005). Evaluation of a high school peer group intervention for at-risk youth. *Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology*, 33(3), 363-374.

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