

Ability School Engagement Program Pre-K to 12 Education

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: The Ability School Engagement Program (ASEP) uses a group conferencing model to help parents, truant students, police, and school representatives collaboratively discuss and address issues contributing to the chronic absenteeism of the student. In a single, 90-minute conference, the school representative explains the stages that would occur with continued truancy by the student (e.g., warning letters, principal conferences). The participants also create a child-focused action plan intended to reduce future absenteeism. Students are monitored and expected to follow the action plan for six months. Students eligible for the program have 85% or less attendance in the three previous school terms with no legitimate explanation for their absences from school (e.g., medical illness).

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 |
| Crime | 1 | 44 | -0.115 | 0.211 | 14 | -0.268 | 0.207 |
| Truancy | 1 | 45 | -0.049 | 0.209 | 13 | -0.113 | 0.587 |
| School attendance | 1 | 49 | 0.089 | 0.280 | 13 | 0.206 | 0.484 |

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

- Mazerolle, L., Antrobus, E., Bennett, S., & Eggins, E. (2017). Reducing truancy and fostering a willingness to attend school: Results from a randomized trial of a police-school partnership program. *Prevention Science, 18*(4), 469-480.
- Mazerolle, L., Bennett, S., Antrobus, E., Cardwell, S.M., Eggins, E., & Piquero, A.R. (2019). Disrupting the pathway from truancy to delinquency: A randomized field trial test of the longitudinal impact of a school engagement program. *Journal of Quantitative Criminology, 35*, 663-689.

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