



Making the Grade: Assessing the Evidence for Integrated Student Supports

Presentation to National Prevention Science Coalition

September 17, 2014



Acknowledgements

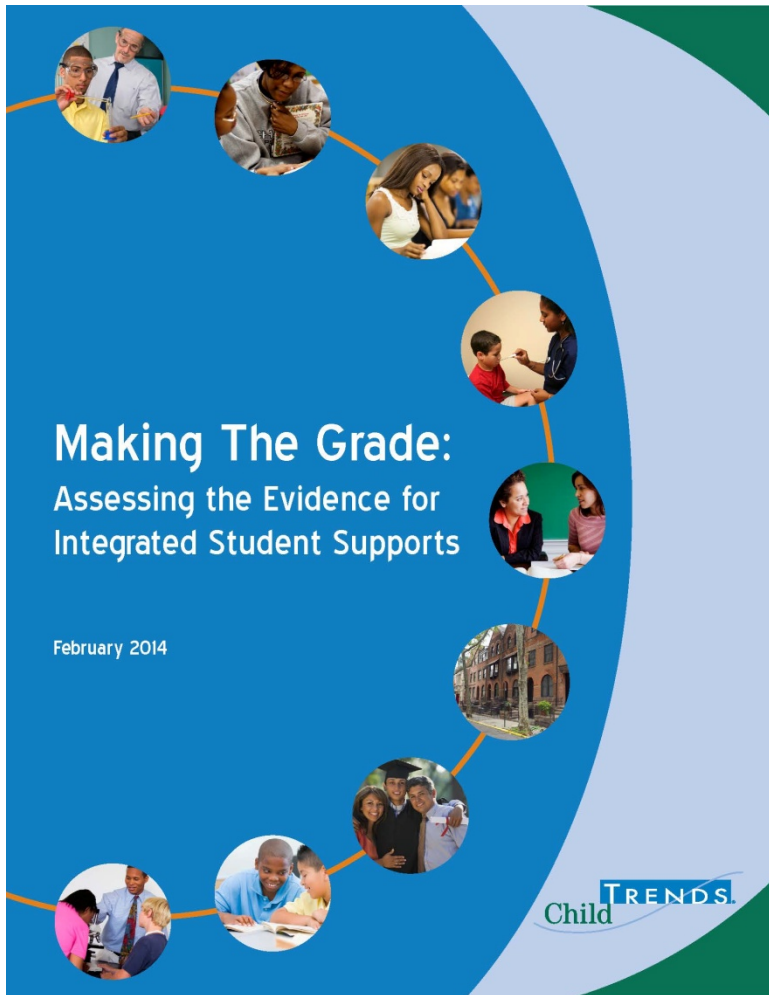
Bloomberg Philanthropies
AT&T Foundation

About Child Trends

- Founded in 1979
- Nonprofit, nonpartisan research center
- Approximately 100 staff in Colorado, Maryland, Minnesota, North Carolina, New York

Research Areas:

- Child Poverty
- Child Welfare
- Early Child Development
- Education
- Fatherhood and Parenting
- Hispanic Children and Youth
- Indicators of Child Well-being
- Marriage and Family
- Positive Youth Development
- Teen Sex and Pregnancy



A Review of the Findings

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What are Integrated Student Supports?

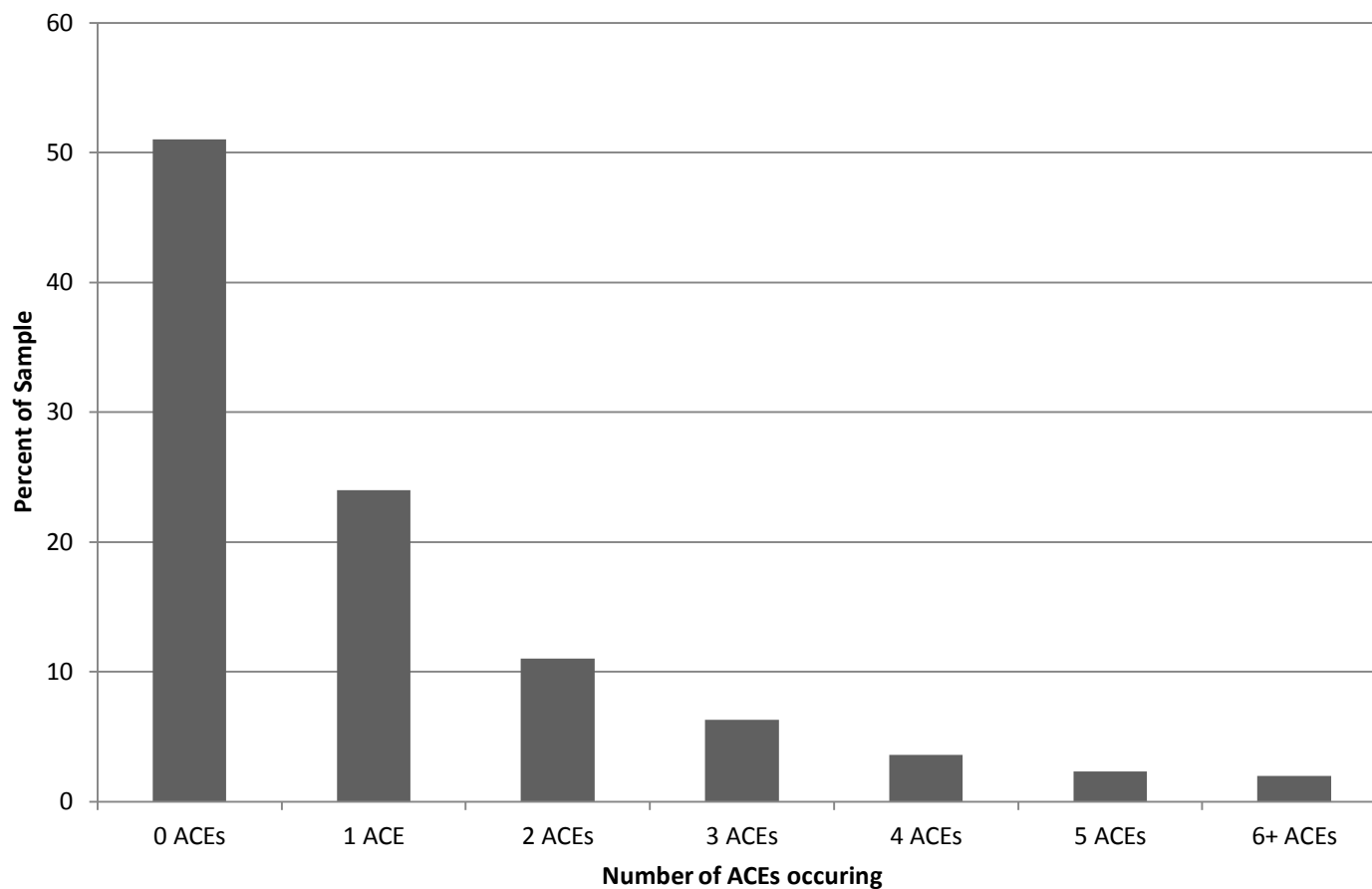
ISS is an emerging field of practice, which relies on the coordination of prevention and intervention services for students and families to:

- Remove academic and non-academic barriers to learning
- Increase chances of school success
- Expand opportunities for positive youth development

Why Examine ISS?

- Proliferation of integrated student support/community school/wrap-around programs
- Low educational achievement and disparities
- Evidence of difficulties and disadvantages among U.S. children
 - ACES (Adverse Childhood Experiences):
 - Parent died, or divorce/separation, jail/prison
 - Lived with someone with mental health/suicide, substance use; experienced economic hardship
 - Witnessed violence in household or neighborhood

Prevalence of Adverse Childhood Experiences



Key Findings

1. There is emerging evidence that ISS models can contribute to student academic progress
2. Preliminary studies find a positive return on investment
3. ISS, as a student-centered approach, is firmly grounded on child and youth development research
4. ISS is aligned with empirical research on the varied factors that promote educational success
5. Understanding of ISS core elements is general (not specific) but high-quality implementation is important to achieve positive outcomes

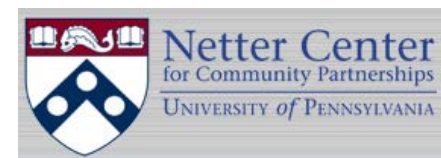
This Review of ISS Involved:

- Examination of ISS models in practice
- Synthesis of educational research
- New empirical analyses of high school graduation and post-secondary attendance
- Assessment of alignment with child development theory
- Review of outcome evaluations
- Examination of cost-benefit analyses
- Assessment of implementation evaluations

ISS Approaches Reviewed

Nine ISS approaches were reviewed. These are national models that:

- Operate in multiple states and school districts
- Serve an estimated 1.5 million at-risk students
- 75 percent of students are black or Hispanic



CoZi Initiative

Similarities and Differences Across the Models

Similarities :

- Have common core components
- Target needs and offer supports for students, schools and families
- Supports are tailored to the needs of the community, school, and/students

Differences

- Implement the core components in different ways

Common Elements

INTEGRATED STUDENT SUPPORTS

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Examples of Common Supports

Student-Level

Physical and mental health interventions

In-school academic and expanded learning time opportunities

Family-Level

Social services for families in need

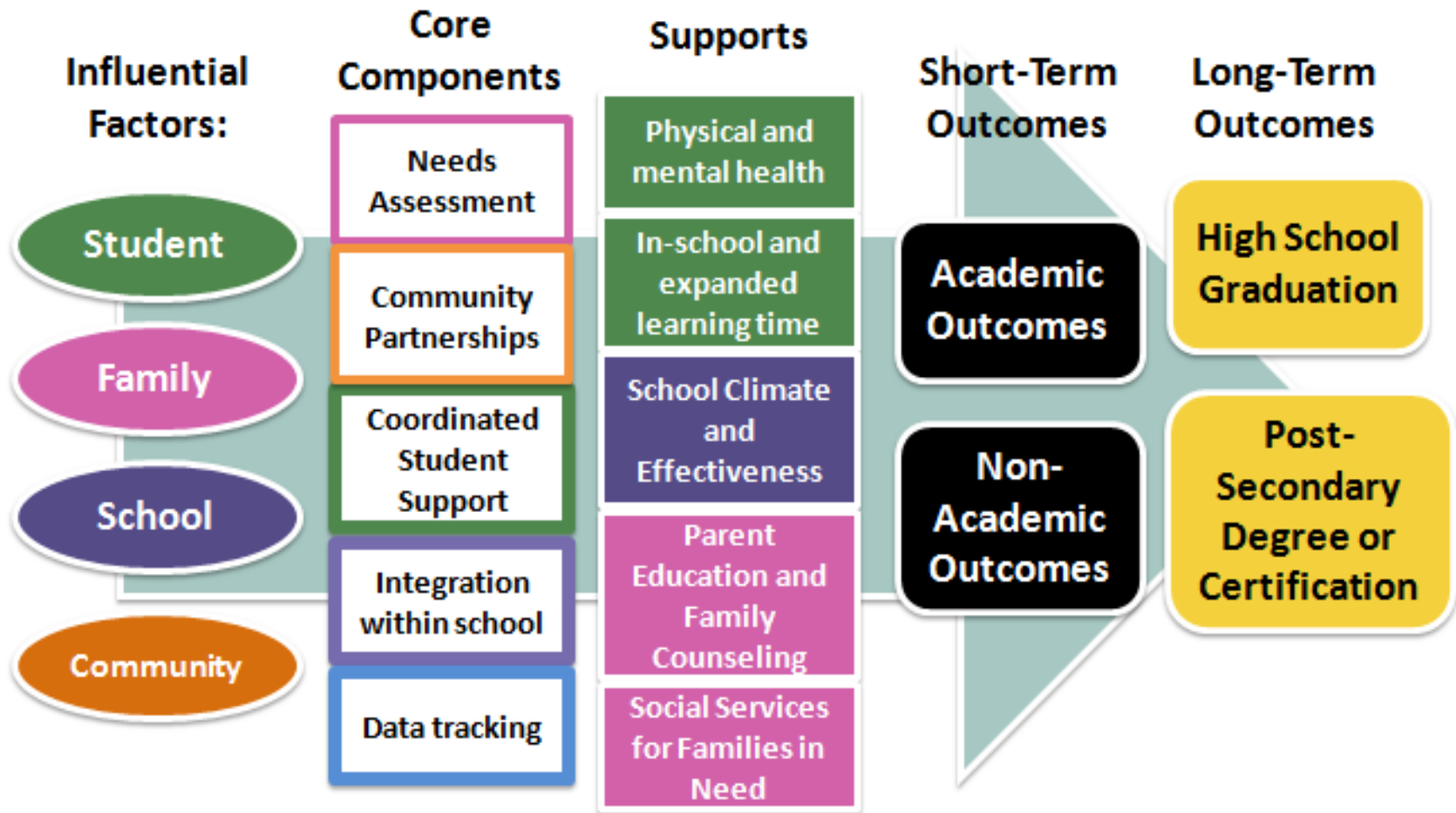
Parent education and family counseling

School-Level

Efforts to improve school climate

Efforts to improve school effectiveness

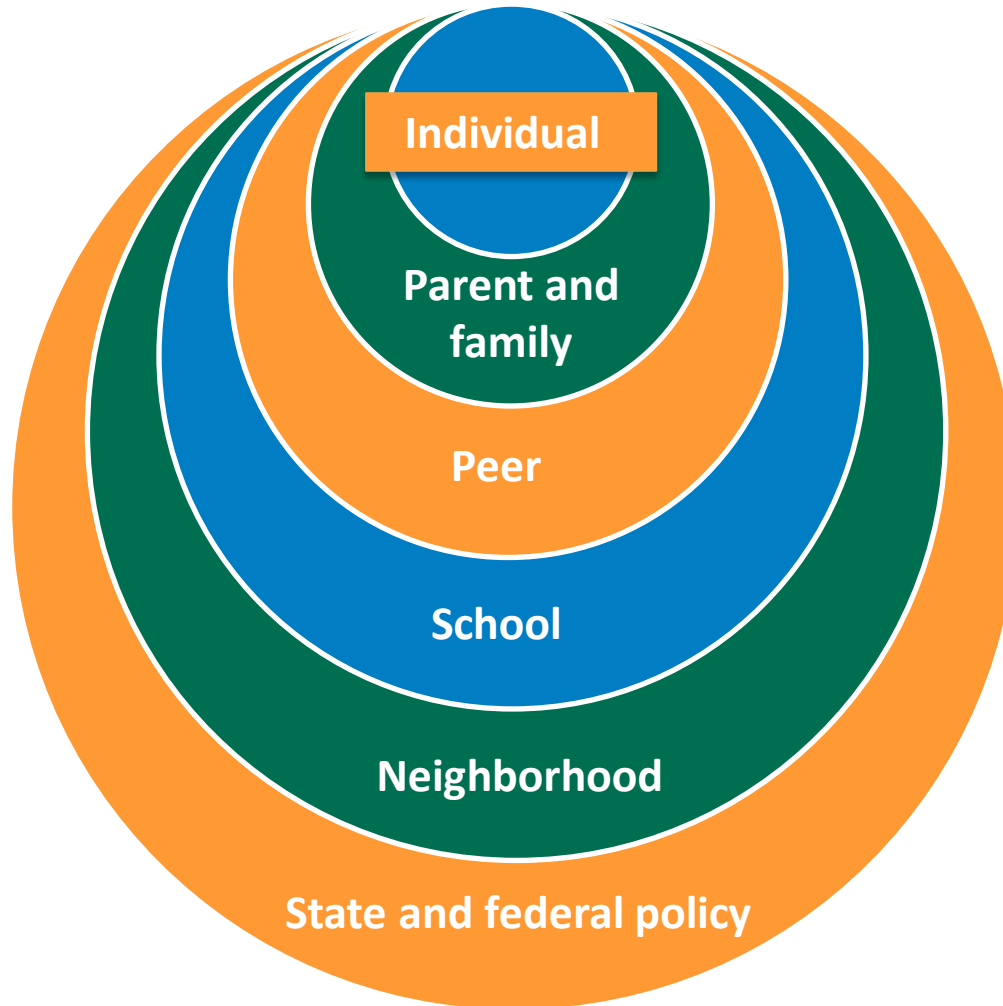
ISS Theory of Change



Aligned with Child/Youth Development Theory

- Child-centered approach
- Lifecourse perspective
- Positive youth development approach
- Whole child perspective
- Prevention focus
- Ecological theory

What Factors Lead to Educational Success?



Conclusions from Educational Research and Original Analyses

Many factors influence school success

- Factors span domains, not just in-school factors
- Individually, factors have relatively small effects
- Collectively, they shape students' futures

This provides empirical evidence for the comprehensive ISS approach

Review of Evaluations

Do ISS models improve academic and non-academic outcomes?

To assess this, we:

1. Identified evaluations of ISS models
2. Examined the study rigor of each evaluation using specific criteria, and
3. Summarized program effects on academic and non-academic outcomes

We Found Nearly a Dozen Rigorous Evaluations

Out of the 36 outcome evaluations reviewed,

- 11 met criteria and 25 did not

Of the 11 evaluations included in our review,

- 4 were RCTs and 7 were QEDs
- 8 evaluated full ISS models (1 RCT, 7 QED) and 3 evaluated partial ISS models (level 2 vs 1) (all RCT)

Findings for Academic Outcomes are Promising ...

Some improvements in:

- Student school progress
- Attendance
- Math and reading/ELA
- Overall grade point average

- **Most effects found in quasi-experimental studies.**
- **Non-academic outcomes have few evaluations and few results.**

Effects on Academic Outcomes

Outcome Measures	Random Controlled Trials	Quasi-Experimental Design
✓ Student progress	0 out of 2 with at least 1 sig. impact	3 out of 4 with at least 1 sig. effect
✓ School attendance	1 out of 4 with at least 1 sig. impact	3 out of 3 with at least 1 sig. effect
✓ Reading and ELA achievement	0 out of 3	4 out of 6 with at least 1 sig. effect
✓ Math achievement	1 out of 4 with at least 1 sig. impact	4 out of 6 with at least 1 sig. effect
✓ GPA	0 out of 4	2 out of 2 with at least 1 sig. effect

Review of Cost Effectiveness



Return on Investment

Three studies estimate long-term payback for \$1 invested:

\$11.60



**\$10.30 for elementary,
\$14.80 for middle**



\$4.40/\$9.96



Return on Investment

Complex assumptions and methods

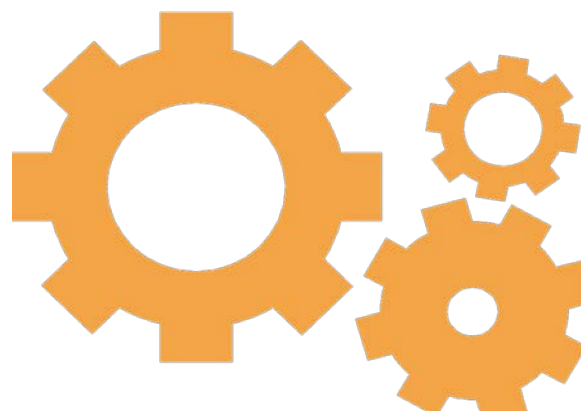
One particularly critical assumption:

- Services and programs provided by the ISS models are included as a cost but;
- Services in the community are not considered a cost
- Aligned with ISS theory of change

Unexamined questions:

- Do communities really have unused capacity that needs to be accessed?
- Are there really no incremental community /taxpayer costs?
- Does the ISS model provide efficiencies, which lower costs?
- **Nevertheless, the return on investment is >\$1**

Review of Implementation Evaluations



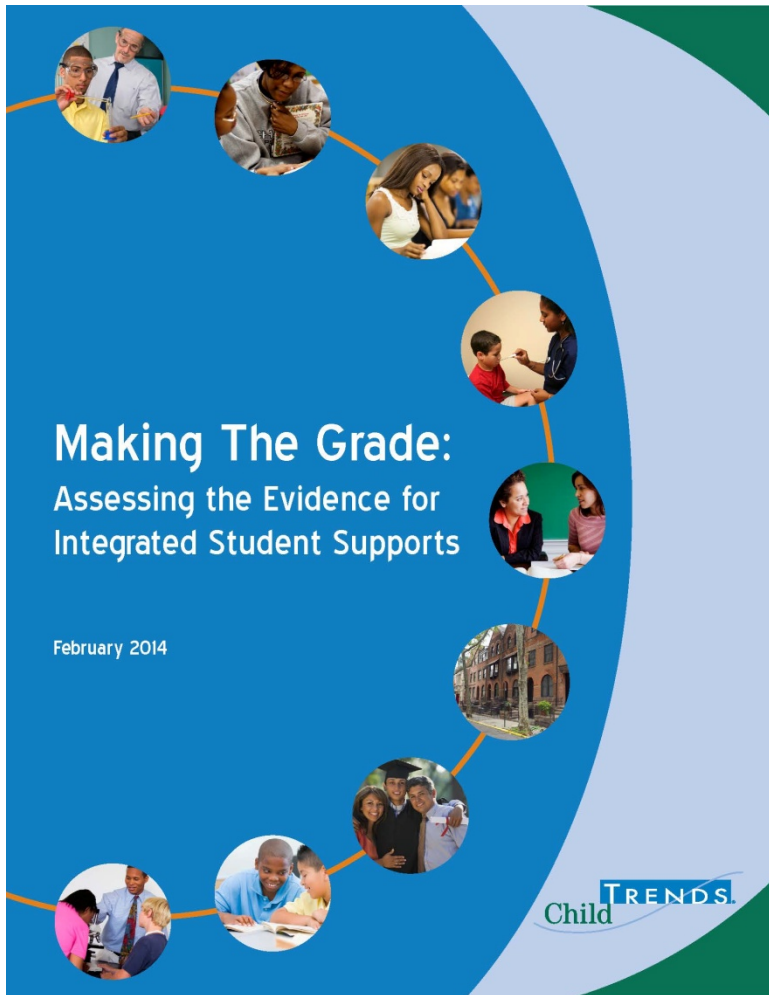
Findings Regarding Implementation Quality in ISS Models

- The CIS study found that low-quality implementation is no different than no program
- High-quality implementation is key, but
- It is not yet clear what services affect what outcomes and which students are most likely to benefit.

In Sum:

Across ISS models, the details differ, but the overarching approaches are quite similar:

- ✓ Comprehensive services are offered (not just academic)
- ✓ Integrated (not just co-located) supports
- ✓ Person-based/student-focused, as much as place-based
- ✓ Needs assessments are conducted
- ✓ Ongoing data and monitoring are emphasized
- ✓ Families and communities are engaged



For full report, white paper and slides, please visit childtrends.org/ISSreport

Thank you!