

From: Jon Baron <jbaron@coalition4evidence.org>
To:
Date: 9/17/2014 1:52:07 PM
Subject: Coalition for Evidence-Based Policy: Two New Social Programs Meet "Near Top Tier" Evidence Standard

Promoting School-community-university Partnerships to Enhance Resilience (PROSPER) – "Near Top Tier"

Found To Reduce Youth Drug Use Initiation by 10-35% In Long-Term Follow-Up (End of 12th Grade)

Teacher Performance Pay in India – "Near Top Tier"

Low-Cost Program in Primary Schools Found To Increase Student Achievement by 6-13 Percentile Points, Over 2-3 Years

The **Top Tier Evidence initiative** – a validated, impartial resource for identifying social programs meeting the Congressional Top Tier evidence standard – has identified two additional programs as "Near Top Tier": Promoting School-community-university Partnerships to Enhance Resilience (PROSPER) and Teacher Performance Pay in India. The initiative's expert **panel** (i) found evidence, from well-conducted randomized controlled trials, that these programs produce sizable, sustained effects on important life outcomes; and (ii) believes that each program needs just one additional step to qualify as Top Tier – a replication trial to confirm the initial findings and establish that they generalize to other sites (hence the designation *Near Top Tier*).

What follows are highlights of the panel's findings for the two programs. The panel's previous findings, for other programs, are shown on the Top Tier **website**. The Top Tier Evidence initiative is administered by the nonprofit, nonpartisan **Coalition for Evidence-Based Policy**, a national leader in evidence-based policy reform with no affiliation to any program.

PROSPER

- **Intervention:** A program-delivery system in which universities partner with community teams to implement evidence-based programs for preventing youth substance abuse and other problem behaviors.
- **Evaluation Methods:** A well-conducted randomized controlled trial.
- **Key Findings:** At the 6.5-year follow-up (end of 12th grade) –
 - (i) Community-wide reductions of 10-35% in illicit drug use initiation by youth who were non-users in 6th grade (prior to program delivery); and
 - (ii) Moderate reductions in substance use for the full sample – non-users and users (e.g., 14% lower likelihood of past-month cigarette use).
- **Other:**
 - (i) These findings are based on the use of the PROSPER system to deliver a specific set of evidence-based programs, and may not generalize to the system's delivery of a different program set.
 - (ii) A study limitation is its relatively small, homogeneous sample – 28 rural towns and small cities in two states. Thus, replication of these findings in a second trial, in another setting, would be desirable to confirm the initial results and establish that they generalize to other settings where PROSPER might be implemented.

See the full evidence summary [here](#).

Teacher Performance Pay in India

- **Intervention:** A low-cost performance pay program for primary school teachers in rural India, which awards them an annual bonus of about \$13 for each percentage point gain in their students' math and language test scores.
- **Evaluation Methods:** Well-conducted randomized controlled trial with a large, representative sample of rural schools in the Indian state of Andhra Pradesh.
- **Key Findings:** The program produced gains in all four subjects measured (math, language, science, and social studies), increasing the average achievement score by between 6 and 13 percentile points in performance pay schools compared to control schools, over a 2-3 year period.
- **Other:** A study limitation is that schools in the sample were all located in one Indian state. Thus, replication of these findings in a second trial, in another setting, would be desirable to confirm the initial results and establish that they generalize to other settings where the intervention might be implemented.

See the full evidence summary [here](#).

The Coalition is grateful to the MacArthur Foundation for funding support for this effort. If you'd like to support our work, please consider making a tax-deductible [donation](#) to the Coalition.

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