

Peer-to-Peer Teleconference: Implementing Second Step

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Introduction

Jennifer: Today, I'm here to facilitate a peer-to-peer discussion on the topic of Second Step. Most of you on the call are beginning the process of considering/implementing Second Step, or you are already implementing. The purpose of this call is to discuss the process of planning, building capacity, monitoring and supporting, evaluating, integrating the program into the system and sustaining the program.

The teleconference today is a follow-up to the initial one on December 7th. That call focused on basic information on Second Step, discussed examples from two grant sites that were implementing the program, and allowed some time for grantees on the call to ask questions. The materials from that first event are all available on the web link <http://learn.aero.und.edu/pages.asp?PageID=91512>. In response to feedback we

received, we want this Second Step teleconference to be an opportunity for those who were already implementing to present questions and challenges about the process. As a facilitator I will post some questions based on comments that you submitted during registration.

As we begin, I want to review with you what is available on the Committee for Children web link <http://cfchildren.org/>. There are several pieces that have more basic information, and others that might be useful as you implement, including information specific to adapting for other cultures. These resources might be references for you as you begin this process.

As I address the challenges that you posed, please feel free to discuss your thoughts at any time. Some of you on this call are just beginning to plan for Second Step, some are in the throes of training, and some are actually implementing. There is a range of settings: from early childhood daycare, to preschools, kindergarten through 8th grade, and even some select high school classes. Lessons are being delivered in classrooms, small groups, and in after-school programs by classroom teachers, guidance counselors, school counselors and other project staff.

Peer-to-Peer Discussion

Strategies for buy-in from administrators and teachers/academic standards:

Jennifer: In the registration section, Jared and Janet of Madison School District discussed their success with getting buy-in. Do you have a particular strategy that you have found successful to create buy-in that you can share with us?

Jared: We went about it two ways: first, we got the school board and superintendent on board. They had been looking for anti-bullying and anti-violence programs and were highly aware of a need for this program. The second thing that we did was to get people trained in the curriculum.

Jennifer: So the first step was to evaluate that there was a need for that program, and secondly you did a staff development training to give staff an opportunity to become familiar with the curriculum.

Jared: We also helped teachers realize how simply the program can be implemented.

Janet: At our school, all of the teachers received training, and it was sort of mandated. We connected with all of the principals, informed them, and then got the curriculum in their hands. We provided an in-service training for the teachers. I would say that most of the teachers are doing it, and they like the program. They think it's simple to deliver. That's probably the number one thing that I do here. I still have around 20 percent that are dragging their feet, that don't really want to do it.

Carol: Our (program) is not mandated, and I think that is a problem for us. It's really important to have the administration backing you. For teachers it's really easy for them to

put it at the bottom of the list, unless someone from the top is giving them some guidance.

Sandy: Initially we had a pilot program. And then we presented our findings to our board for adopting and did a presentation for our management team. We are currently in the process of training teachers. Basically, we have aligned the lessons with the California Language Arts Standards and teachers feel they have permission to teach it in their busy schedule because it addresses language arts and teaching standards.

Jennifer: So you broke down the standards to match the standards for language arts. Did someone else do that previously? Do you know if the Committee for Children has seen this? We have a number of sites in California, and that information would be very helpful. (For more information go to:
http://learn.aero.und.edu/Upload/925/92571/implement_ss_acstandards.pdf)

Jennifer: Are there others that would like to share about some of the successes they have had getting buy-in?

Jared: One of the things that helped us turn the heads of teachers who weren't excited about the program was the use of interns from the psychology department of the local university. I was able to place interns in the classrooms of the teachers who were not very excited about the program to deliver the lessons. Now these teachers like it. Hopefully, the skills will one day be transferred so that the teachers can deliver these lessons themselves.

Jennifer: Wonderful, so you found a resource for some personnel that could go into the class and help deliver the lessons and the teachers could be watching that and learning, in terms of later being able to implement the program themselves.

I know that one of you sent a comment about how it was helpful to have the ongoing support from the trainer as well as the funds to purchase the supplies so that everyone had access to the materials.

Joelle: Yes, having the financial resources to conduct a whole-day training for our elementary staff, in addition to the ability to purchase the kits, was a real unique experience. It made our staff realize that we were really serious about this program. We had a lot of buy-in because they understood and knew it was important. The way we were able to train them and hire substitutes to teach the classrooms is something that we aren't typically able to do.

Second Step in an after-school setting:

Lauren: I'd like to read a question that was emailed to us through Ask a Question Live: How have others been successful in implementing Second Step in after-school programs? What specific steps have you taken?

Unknown Speaker: I'd like to expand on the question. If this is a universal program that you implement during the whole day, would it then carry over into an after-school setting, or can you do it only after school?

Jennifer: I can't answer that directly, but I would say that it is important to talk to your developer and trainer to see if that would work in your community.

Lauren: In the classroom, there is a captive audience and the lessons are delivered by the same teacher. For an after-school program, if the group is consistent, it might be a very similar environment in which to deliver the lessons.

Jennifer: I guess it would be very important to look at the fidelity of implementation. Another factor is the question of whether students are being given opportunities to practice the lessons themselves. In an after school program where they are providing the lesson and asking students to practice their skills, that might be one way to enhance their level of development.

Family component/parenting workshops:

Janet: Has anyone implemented the family or "working with families" component?

Joelle: Yes, we are doing the parenting workshops. They are typically in the evening and we have the consultant who did the training come in to run them. They have been very well-attended with good feedback from parents. What has happened is that children come home and talk with their parents about this program, and generate interest because their children have been using the lessons at home. Then parents want to learn more about it.

Jared: Are you using the one- or six-lesson format?

Joelle: We have been doing the one night. Each building principal is scheduling his or her own meeting. We hope to have other additional sessions.

Jennifer: When I was with a Safe School project, and we did Second Step, we offered two kinds of support to families. We offered the six session lessons and we also were given permission by the developers to put the video on a student directed local channel so that people could watch that.

Involvement of law enforcement/juvenile justice personnel:

Lauren: We have an email question: Have any of the sites on the call had law enforcement or juvenile justice personnel involved in Second Step in any way?

Jared: We use our resource officers to deliver Second Step lessons, and it has been very successful. They bring a different perspective and insight into the program. One resource officer at the school actually had an office right next to mine and he expressed an interest. Having community involvement and using all of your resources goes a long way with the SS/HS grant. They [the resource officers] were more than willing to be in the classroom

and teach. In fact, that's where they prefer to be. There is a good working relationship between the SROs and the counselors. This was something that we need to teach, and everyone wanted to have a part in it.

John Rosiak: How was that officer trained?

Jared: I have been to the Train the Trainer program, and I was able to set aside some time and be a trainer for them.

Challenges – covering the curriculum and training issues:

Jennifer: Did anyone find it challenging to cover the entire curriculum? There are, obviously, a number of lessons in the curriculum for each grade level. We had some difficulty, particularly at the fourth grade level. There was really not a lot of time for the lessons, due to the amount of academic material covered at this grade level. We tried to find a better strategy and actually did further training and found creative solutions. In one school, the PE instructor was trained to deliver the lessons during the PE class.

Michelle: I am curious about how easy it was to access training and how many people do you have to get trained per school to get fidelity.

Janet: We sent two people who were counselors from our middle school and they went to the training. If I remember, the Committee for Children offers training pretty regularly.

Jared: I found the training very beneficial because you walk away with all of the materials that you need. The information that they give is very useful and I found it very helpful. Also it's a good idea to have at least two people trained per district. All of the materials are included in the cost per training.

Jennifer: Other tools that are offered include an implementation checklist, an evaluation of your training and worksheets about asking those who get the training where they might need the most support. They also offer checklists for evaluation and surveys for satisfaction of the program.

Unknown speaker: What would be the dollar figure for the materials?

Jennifer: Well, you really need to go on their Web site. It depends on how many people are being trained; you may want each individual staff member to have a kit. I know that a lot of teachers really want to have the materials in front of them because the basic lessons are contained within the kit.

Carol: What we do here is to meet with the teachers for about an hour to give them an introduction and provide them with the materials. Then we meet again to do some follow-up with them. We are doing this program throughout the school but it's a little difficult to pull teachers out of the classroom for a whole day. But they are willing to stay for an hour or so after school and then for another hour after they had some time to go through the materials.

Jennifer: In terms of tracking and offering support and coaching, can those of you on the phone share what you have found to be helpful? It seems like that's an issue that we have had in previous conferences.

Joelle: We are tracking implementation and lessons and asking how much time is being spent on a lesson per week and per month. So we are gathering data in the school buildings on that. The problem that we are running into is that teachers have completed the whole boxful of lessons and how do we now measure the afterward, the reinforcement part? We are struggling with that. How do we measure continued activities and going forward with reinforcing the program. We know they did the lessons, and are seeing some results, but how do we measure going forward.

Jennifer: I do know that in the material section on the Second Step site, there is a survey for students and teachers about extended learning. I guess beyond that, it might be observing to see what teachers are doing. I know that some people are collecting success stories and from parents and families. And that can be another discussion that we might like to have. But we are at the end of the call. So please email us if you have other questions and thank you for joining this discussion.