Children's Hospital of Philadelphia PolicyLab

# School-based Organizational Skills Training for Students in Grades 3-5: A Cluster Randomized Trial

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**Objective**: Research has demonstrated the effectiveness of interventions to reduce organizational skills deficits and homework problems, including the clinic-based Organizational Skills Training (OST-C) program (Abikoff et al., 2013). In this study, OST-C was adapted for schools as a small-group (Tier 2) intervention delivered by school partners (OST-T2).

**Method**: The study was conducted in 22 schools serving students from diverse backgrounds. Students (n = 186; 122 male) in Grades 3-5, ages 8-12 (M = 9.7 years; SD = 0.88) with organizational skills deficits referred by teachers were enrolled. Schools were randomly assigned to OST-T2 or treatment as usual with waitlist. OST-T2 consisted of sixteen 35-min child sessions, two caregivers, and two teacher consultations. Outcomes were evaluated with longitudinal mixed effects modeling at posttreatment, 5-month and 12-month follow-up using caregiver and teacher reports of organizational skills, homework, and academic performance.

**Results**: OST-T2 resulted in reductions in organizational skills deficits on caregiver and teacher report ($p < .001$) at posttreatment and 5-month follow-up (effect sizes [ES], Cohen's $d = 0.96, 1.20$). Findings also revealed a reduction in caregiver-reported homework problems at posttreatment and 5-month follow-up ($p < .001$, ES = 0.60, 0.72), and an improvement in teacher-rated homework at posttreatment ($p = .007$, ES = 0.64). Effects were attenuated at 12-month follow-up. The effects of OST-T2 on academic measures were not significant.

**Conclusions**: Findings provide evidence for the immediate and short-term effectiveness of OST-T2 delivered by school professionals.

## Journal:

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