

Evaluation of the *MBF Child Safety Matters*® Curriculum: A Randomized Control Trial Focused on Early Childhood

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BACKGROUND

The Monique Burr Foundation for Children's Child Safety Matters (MBF CSM) program educates students about bullying, cyberbullying, abuse, reporting, and digital safety. The program is supported by the Florida Attorney General and Department of Education and is used widely across the state.

The purpose of this study was to conduct a second evaluation of the knowledge and skills acquired by children who received the curriculum with a focus on early childhood using a randomized control design – the gold standard in assessing the effectiveness of an intervention.

METHODS

The Institutional Review Board at the University of Florida and participating school districts approved this study. Florida public schools, serving grades K-2, that had never implemented the curriculum or had not implemented the curriculum within the last four academic years were invited to participate in this study.

Schools were randomly assigned to one of three study conditions: implement the curriculum in two lessons, implement the curriculum in four shorter lessons, or implement the curriculum after study data collection (control). Two classrooms per K – 2nd grade were randomly selected to participate in the study.

Children with parental consent completed a researcher-created survey assessing their knowledge of risky situations using an electronic student response system at pre-test and post-test. All students were asked the same 20 questions. 1st and 2nd grade students were asked an additional four questions.

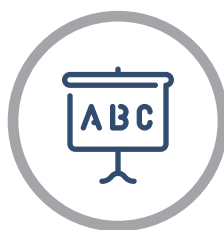
PARTICIPANTS



7 Counties



9 Schools



54 Classrooms



**826 Students
(at Pre-test)**



**725 Students
(at Post-test)**

RESULTS

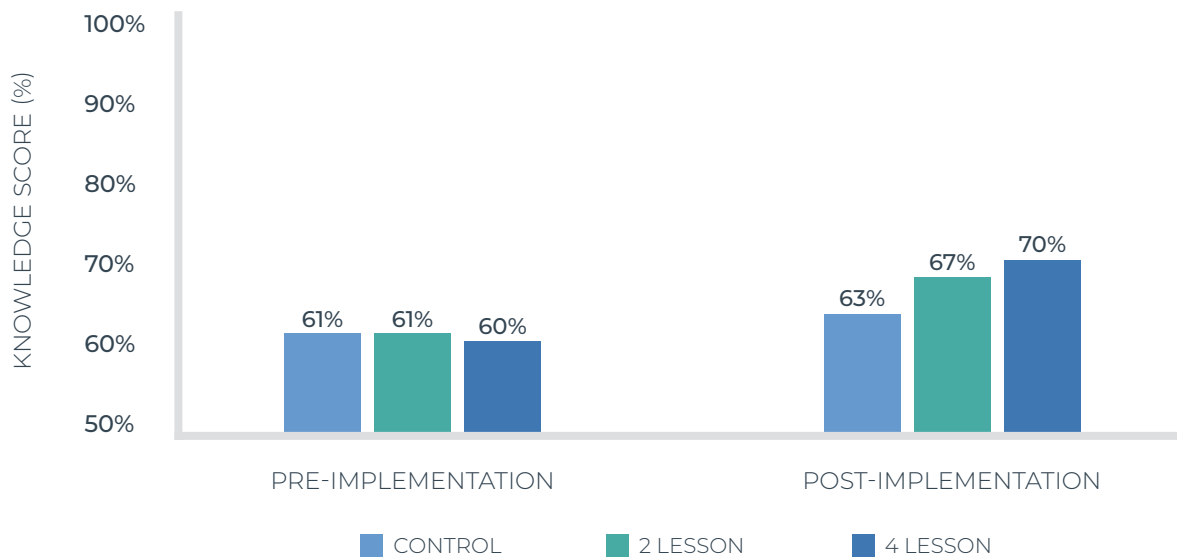
The sample size of the study at pre-test was N= 826 (Control n = 295, 2-lesson Treatment n = 280, and 4-lesson Treatment n = 251).

At post-test, sample decreased to N = 785 (Control n = 266, 2-lesson Treatment n = 260, and 4-lesson Treatment n = 259).

Knowledge was assessed with a questionnaire administered prior to the curriculum and then approximately 11 weeks later.

After receiving the lessons, students in both treatment groups (2 lesson and 4 lesson) had significantly higher scores than students in the control group.

Findings did show greater knowledge acquisition in the 4-lesson group compared to the 2-lesson group. This is consistent with other research study findings that repeated exposures in shorter lesson times leads to improved learning. Schools should be encouraged to implement in 4 lessons when possible.



Children in the 4-lesson group had significantly higher scores at post-test than did children in the 2-lesson group. Children in both treatment groups scored higher than did children in the control group.

SUMMARY

Children in grades K-2 who received the curriculum showed an increase in general knowledge of potentially risky and unsafe situations. These results are encouraging because of some concerns that younger children may have a harder time learning safety concepts.

