

WITS Program Evaluation

The WITS Primary Program aims to reduce peer victimization and enhance social responsibility among children in Grades 1 to 3. The WITS acronym gives children simple strategies to make safe and positive choices when faced with peer conflicts. The term "Using your WITS" can give their school, community and family environments a uniform voice to promote positive conflict resolution strategies.



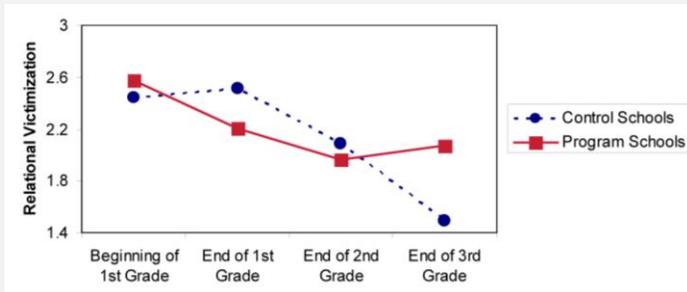
Evaluation 1: 2000-2003

The figures below show findings from a three-year evaluation of the WITS Primary Program, examining children's ratings of:

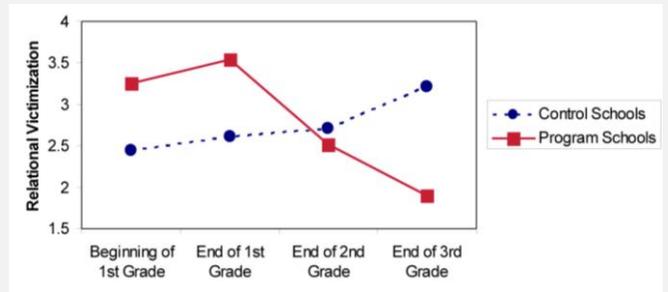
- Relational Victimization** (e.g. social exclusion, rumor-spreading)
- Physical Victimization** (e.g. hitting, pushing)

The figures show data from 11 program schools and six control schools. Data were collected in fall 2000 (beginning of Grade 1), spring 2001 (end of Grade 1), spring 2002 (end of Grade 2) and spring 2003 (end of Grade 3). The data are divided by school levels of poverty (based on the school district's average of 10% of students on income assistance). Low poverty schools have 3-10% of students on income assistance. High poverty schools have 11-24% of students on income assistance.

Average Levels of Relational Victimization in Low Poverty Schools

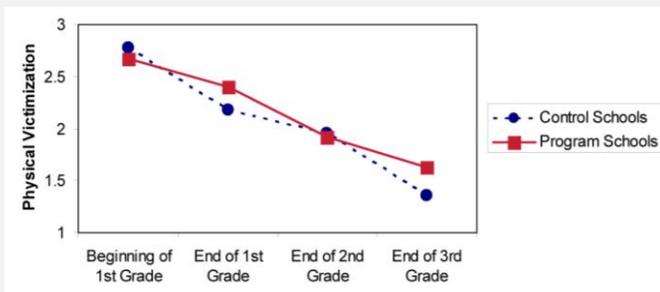


Average Levels of Relational Victimization in High Poverty Schools

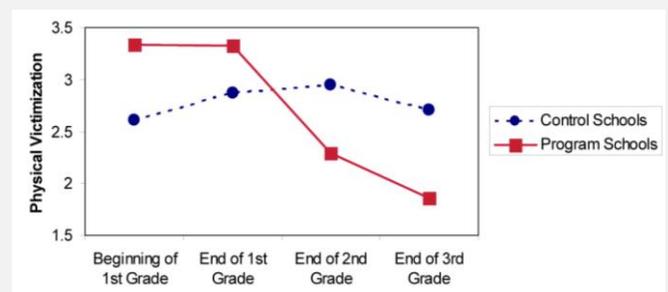


Relational victimization decreased in all the *program* schools and in the low poverty *control* schools, but increased in the high poverty *control* schools.

Average Levels of Physical Victimization in Low Poverty Schools



Average Levels of Physical Victimization in High Poverty Schools



Physical victimization decreased in all *program* schools and in the low poverty *control* schools, but increased in the high poverty *control* schools.

Reference: Leadbeater, B. J., Hoglund, W. L. & Woods, T. (2003). Changing contexts? The effects of a primary prevention program on classroom levels of peer relational and physical victimization. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 31, 397-418.

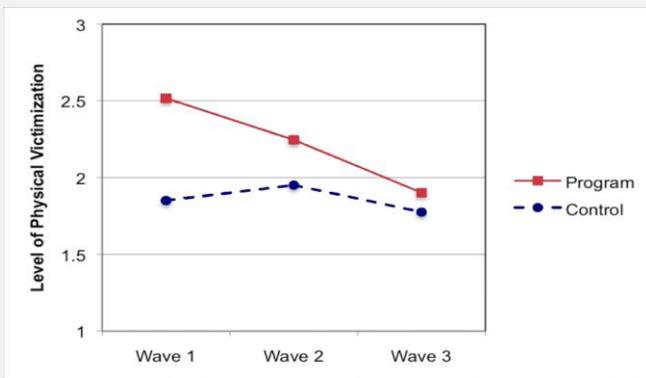
Evaluation 2: 2006-2008

Data were collected from six program schools and five control schools in fall 2006 (Wave 1), fall 2007 (Wave 2) and spring 2008 (Wave 3). The following figures show findings for:

-  **Physical Victimization** (e.g. hitting, pushing)
-  **Relational Victimization** (e.g. social exclusion, rumour-spreading)
-  **Peer Support** (e.g. receiving help, being cheered up by classmates)
-  **Social Responsibility** (e.g. giving help to others, solving problems in peaceful ways)

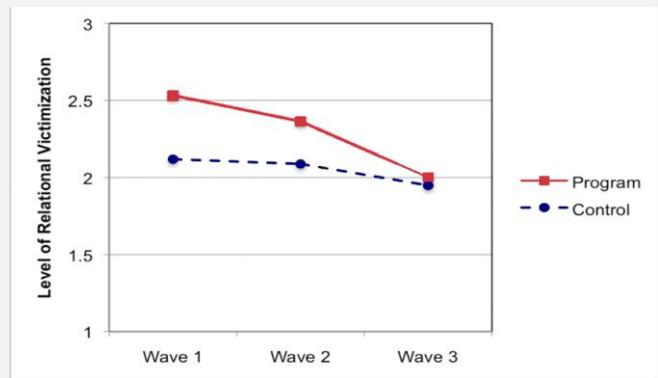
Children rated their experiences of physical and relational victimization, and peer support on 15 items (0 = 'never', 1 = 'sometimes', 2 = 'almost all the time'). The average scores for physical and relational victimization were low (between 'sometimes' and 'never'). Average scores for peer support were high (between 'sometimes' and 'always'). Teachers rated five items tapping students' levels of social responsibility (0 = 'not yet within expectations', 1 = 'meets expectations', 2 = 'fully meets expectations', 3 = 'exceeds expectations'). Average scores were high overall ('meets' or 'fully meets' expectations).

Average Levels of Physical Victimization



The rate of decline in physical victimization was significantly greater in *program* than *control* schools

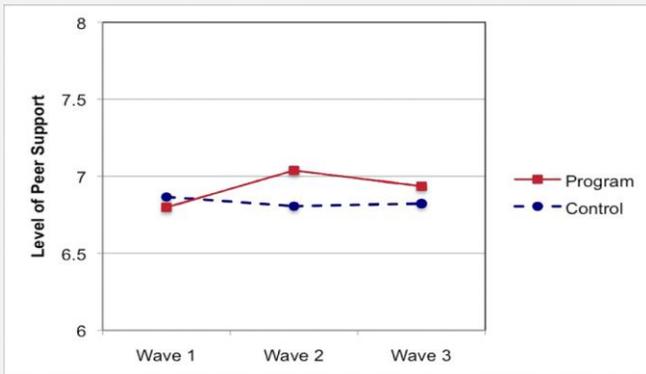
Average Levels of Relational Victimization



The rate of decline in relational victimization was also greater in *program* than *control* schools

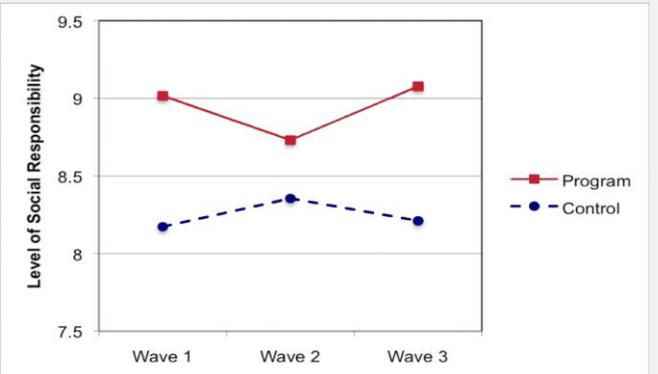
Note: Children in *program* schools reported higher initial levels of physical and relational victimization, possibly due to a greater awareness of victimization created by the WITS Program

Average Levels of Peer Support



Levels of peer support did not significantly differ in *program* and *control* schools

Average Levels of Social Responsibility



Teachers of *program* school children reported higher average levels of social responsibility at each time point, compared to *control* schools.

Reference: Leadbeater, B. J. and Sukhawathanakul, P. (2010). Multi-component programs for reducing peer victimization in early elementary school: A longitudinal evaluation of the WITS® Primary program. Manuscript submitted for publication.