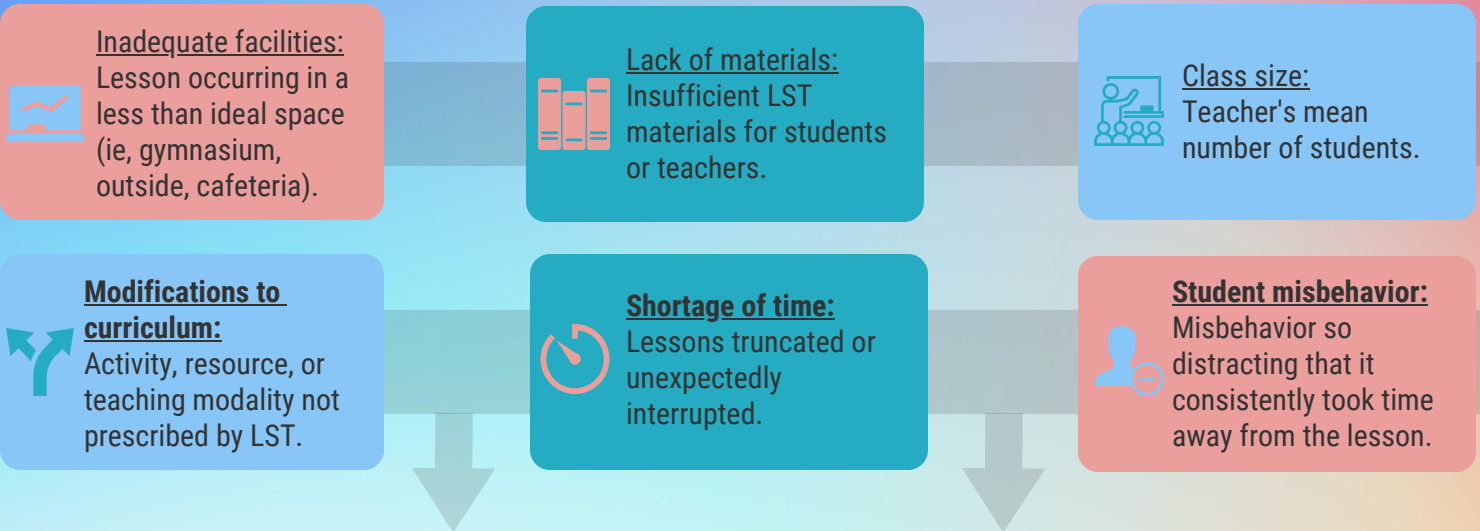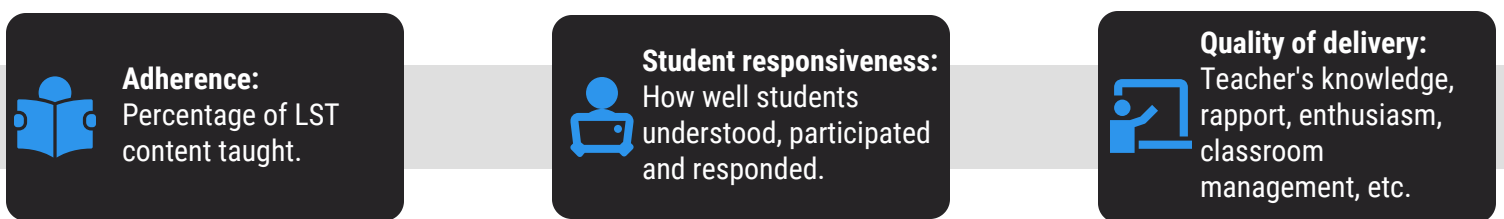# What classroom factors are most important when implementing an evidence-based intervention (EBI) in schools?

As an evidence-based intervention (EBI) becomes more widely disseminated, how well the EBI is implemented often declines. This study sought to identify malleable factors within the classroom (i.e., things that a teacher has some control or influence over) that could be targeted to optimize resources as school-based EBIs are implemented in real-world (aka not always ideal) settings. This study examined the effect of six malleable classroom factors on how well an EBI is implemented as measured by adherence to the curriculum, student responsiveness, and quality of delivery. We used process evaluation data from a national dissemination project of the Botvin LifeSkills Training (LST) middle school program, a universal prevention intervention shown to reduce substance use, which included 1,626 teachers in 371 schools across 14 states.

The classroom factors we examined were:

Inadequate facilities: Lesson occurring in a less than ideal space (ie, gymnasium, outside, cafeteria).

Lack of materials: Insufficient LST materials for students or teachers.

Class size: Teacher's mean number of students.

Modifications to curriculum: Activity, resource, or teaching modality not prescribed by LST.

Shortage of time: Lessons truncated or unexpectedly interrupted.

Student misbehavior: Misbehavior so distracting that it consistently took time away from the lesson.

How well the EBI was implemented was measured as:

Adherence: Percentage of LST content taught.

Student responsiveness: How well students understood, participated and responded.

Quality of delivery: Teacher's knowledge, rapport, enthusiasm, classroom management, etc.

Results: Three of the six factors had statistically significant associations with adherence to the curriculum, student responsiveness, and quality of delivery. Modification of the curriculum, student misbehavior, and shortage of time negatively affected implementation.

Takeaway: Findings indicate that carefully vetting modifications, supporting classroom management strategies, and ensuring sufficient class time for implementation of highly interactive EBIs such as LST are important considerations.

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