Handbook of Implementation Science for Psychology in Education

Implementation science is the science of making programs and interventions effective in real-world contexts. This book is an indispensable, highly innovative, and evidence-based resource aimed at using implementation research findings in psychology to improve all aspects of education, from individual teaching programs to organizational development. It addresses the widespread confusion and disappointment about the lack of effectiveness of real-world psychology and provides 27 chapters offering proven policies, strategies, and approaches for designing, supporting, and improving interventions in schools. Collectively, the chapters go beyond the realm of psychology and education, tackling concerns about how to promote positive change in any context and covering topics from epistemology through statistics to examples of implementation approaches, frameworks, and protocols. This book creates an immensely relevant body of information and evidence for any practitioner or organization facing the challenges of change. It is essential reading for practitioners, policymakers, stakeholders, and funders in psychology, education, and beyond.

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Handbook of Implementation Science for Psychology in Education

Edited by

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To Richard, Adam, and Sarah – as always.

With very many thanks to Professor James Boyle for his invaluable input and to trainees and colleagues at Strathclyde University and Glasgow Psychological Service for their reflections and encouragement.
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Foreword

Robert E. Slavin

Throughout the world, enlightened nations spend substantial amounts to improve the lives of children and vulnerable adults. Yet, until recently, government-sponsored programs were created, widely disseminated, or discontinued with little regard to their demonstrated effectiveness. Instead, programs have been enthusiastically instituted based on political or social factors. Then tastes or politics change, and programs are terminated in a pendulum of boom-to-bust change that fails to advance practice or research itself.

In recent years, this dynamic is beginning to change. In areas from education, to social services, to delinquency prevention, promising solutions to persistent problems are increasingly being put to the test, often in large-scale randomized, or quasi-experimental evaluations. These are not the small, brief, often artificial experiments of the past but sophisticated evaluations of realistic alternatives in practical settings on a scale that matters. As a result of these experiments, we are learning not only about “what works” but also about why various programs do or do not work, for whom and under what conditions they work, what is needed to scale up proven programs, and what policy supports are needed to scale them up without losing their effectiveness.

This book represents the current state of the art in this emerging implementation science. Investigators from many disciplines and several countries share their perspectives and findings on implementations and outcomes of a diverse set of interventions. This book could not have been written as recently as five years ago, so rapidly is this field developing.

The application of rigorous scientific methods to evaluate social programs has great potential to advance society. This volume makes an important contribution in assembling cutting-edge research and methods in one place to represent the potential and accomplishments of implementation science.