

Title: Evaluating the impact of COMPASS for Courage on 2nd and 3rd grade children's anxiety levels with college-aged mentors as a mediating factor

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Abstract: Anxiety impacts children of all ages in all circumstances. While interventions are frequently used on a case-by-case basis to assist students in navigating this disorder in school, few attempts have been made to address anxiety at a classroom level across various age groups. Research has indicated the promising impact of transdiagnostic preventative intervention methods that help individuals regardless of which diagnostic criteria they meet for anxiety. The purpose of this cross-sectional study is to address the deficit in anxiety interventions and treatment for clinical and subclinical anxiety in school-aged children. This will be accomplished by implementing a short-term interactive group anxiety education program called Our House for 2nd and 3rd grade children in an Auburn non-profit afterschool program. The specific emphasis of this project is the effectiveness of this kind of education on anxiety symptoms across the board, not just for those with diagnosed anxiety disorders or severely impaired cases. The question will test both the effectiveness of such education for this specific demographic of children in such a program and the mediating role that college-age volunteers can play in the program. A component of the research question is whether those volunteers actively participating in the program alongside the children will improve its effectiveness and the children's general retention of the material. This study will utilize the COMPASS for Courage curriculum from PBS, which has been extensively studied at Arizona State University and verified as a viable intervention for children struggling with anxiety. Results generated from this study will provide important information for afterschool programs, anxiety education instructors, mentor-based programs, and general children's anxiety intervention research in the future.