

What Works Clearinghouse



A trusted source of scientific evidence of what works in education

Who We Are

The What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) was established in 2002 by the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences to provide educators, policy-makers, researchers, and the public with a central and trusted source of scientific evidence of what works to improve student outcomes.

What We Do

Education decision-makers confront differing messages from high-quality research and from promotional claims. WWC is a decision-making tool for locating and understanding evidence that is credible and reliable.

WWC conducts systematic reviews of existing research. Reviews under way in 2006 cover seven topic areas selected because many WWC customers identified them as the most pressing issues in education:

- Beginning Reading
- Character Education
- Dropout Prevention
- Early Childhood Education
- Elementary School Math Curricula
- English Language Learning
- Middle School Math Curricula

WWC rates studies as “Meets Evidence Standards,” “Meets Evidence Standards with Reservations,” or “Does Not Meet Evidence Screens,” based on the relevance of the study to the review and the

strength of the study design and conduct. Based on all studies that “Meet Evidence Standards” or “Meet Evidence Standards with Reservations,” an intervention earns one of the following ratings:

- **Positive:** Strong evidence of a positive effect with no overriding contrary evidence
- **Potentially positive:** Evidence of a positive effect with no overriding contrary evidence
- **Mixed:** Evidence of both positive and negative effects
- **No discernible effects:** No affirmative evidence of effects
- **Potentially negative:** Evidence of a negative effect with no overriding contrary evidence
- **Negative:** Strong evidence of a negative effect with no overriding contrary evidence

The intervention ratings are a new feature of WWC Intervention Reports that pull together findings from several studies. They help WWC users focus on all the available evidence for an intervention. They build on and use the WWC Study Standards; they do not change or replace those standards.

Products and Services

Intervention Reports summarize the strength of the evidence from all studies reviewed for a particular intervention and provide an intervention-level rating.

Topic Reports build on Intervention Reports, summarizing findings on all interventions relevant to a particular topic.

The Registry of Outcome Evaluators is an online database of evaluators who conduct studies on the effects of educational interventions. Users

can search for evaluators by geographic region, individual, organization, content area experience, and target population.

The What Works Help Desk provides practical, easy-to-use guides for those sponsoring or conducting rigorous evaluations of educational programs, as well as resources for those seeking to identify evidence-based programs. (www.whatworkshelpdesk.ed.gov)

Neither the WWC nor the U.S. Department of Education endorses any interventions.

For more information, visit www.whatworks.ed.gov, email info@whatworks.ed.gov, or call 1-866-WWC-9799.