

# Tools for Getting Along

No studies of *Tools for Getting Along* that fall within the scope of the Children Classified as Having an Emotional Disturbance review protocol meet What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) evidence standards. The lack of studies meeting WWC evidence standards means that, at this time, the WWC is unable to draw any conclusions based on research about the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of *Tools for Getting Along* on children classified as having an emotional disturbance (or children at risk for classification). Additional research is needed to determine the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of this intervention.

## Program Description<sup>1</sup>

*Tools for Getting Along* is a 26-lesson curriculum designed to help upper elementary school teachers establish a positive, cooperative classroom atmosphere. Lessons are intended to reduce disruptive and aggressive behavior by helping students develop anger management skills. Students use problem-solving steps to generate, implement, and evaluate solutions to problems. The curriculum incorporates direct instruction, modeling, guided practice, independent practice, and skill generalization.

## Research<sup>2</sup>

The WWC identified four studies of *Tools for Getting Along* published or released between 1989 and 2012 that focus on children classified as having an emotional disturbance (or children at risk for classification).

One study is within the scope of the Children Classified as Having an Emotional Disturbance review protocol but does not meet WWC evidence standards. This study was a randomized controlled trial in which differential attrition cannot be determined, and the intervention and comparison groups were not shown to be equivalent at baseline.

One study is out of the scope of the Children Classified as Having an Emotional Disturbance review protocol because it does not use a sample aligned with the protocol.

Two studies are out of the scope of the Children Classified as Having an Emotional Disturbance review protocol because they are not primary analyses of the effectiveness of an intervention.

### References

#### Study that does not meet WWC evidence standards

Daunic, A. P., Smith, S. W., Brank, E. M., & Penfield, R. D. (2006). Classroom-based cognitive-behavioral intervention to prevent aggression: Efficacy and social validity. *Journal of School Psychology, 44*(2), 123–139. The study does not meet WWC evidence standards because it is a randomized controlled trial in which differential attrition cannot be determined and the subsequent analytic intervention and comparison groups are not shown to be equivalent.

#### Studies that are ineligible for review using the Children Classified as Having an Emotional Disturbance Evidence Review Protocol

- Daunic, A. P., Smith, S. W., Garvan, C. W., Barber, B. R., Becker, M. K., Peters, C. D., ... Naranjo, A. H. (2012). Reducing developmental risk for emotional/behavioral problems: A randomized controlled trial examining the Tools for Getting Along curriculum. *Journal of School Psychology, 50*(2), 149–166. The study is ineligible for review because it does not use a sample aligned with the protocol—the sample includes less than 50% students at risk for emotional disturbance or classified as emotionally disturbed.
- Smith, S. W., & Daunic, A. P. (2006). *Managing difficult behaviors through problem-solving instruction: Strategies for the elementary classroom*. Boston, MA: Pearson/Allyn and Bacon. The study is ineligible for review because it does not examine the effectiveness of an intervention.
- Smith, S. W., Graber, J. A., & Daunic, A. P. (2009). Review of research and research-to-practice issues. In M. J. Mayer, J. E. Lochman, & R. Van Acker (Eds.), *Cognitive-behavioral interventions for emotional and behavioral disorders: School-based practice* (pp. 111–142). New York: The Guilford Press. The study is ineligible for review because it is a secondary analysis of the effectiveness of an intervention, such as a meta-analysis or research literature review.

### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> The descriptive information for this program was obtained from a publicly available source: the program's website (<https://education.ufl.edu/behavior-management-resource-guide/tools-for-getting-along-curriculum/>, downloaded November 2012). The WWC requests developers to review the program description sections for accuracy from their perspective. The program description was provided to the developer in May 2012, and the WWC incorporated feedback from the developer. Further verification of the accuracy of the descriptive information for this program is beyond the scope of this review. The literature search reflects documents publicly available by April 2012.

<sup>2</sup> The studies in this report were reviewed using the Evidence Standards from the WWC Procedures and Standards Handbook (version 2.1), along with those described in the Children Classified as Having an Emotional Disturbance review protocol (version 2.0). The evidence presented in this report is based on available research. Findings and conclusions may change as new research becomes available.

### Recommended Citation

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### Glossary of Terms

<b>Attrition</b>	Attrition occurs when an outcome variable is not available for all participants initially assigned to the intervention and comparison groups. The WWC considers the total attrition rate and the difference in attrition rates across groups within a study.
<b>Clustering adjustment</b>	If intervention assignment is made at a cluster level and the analysis is conducted at the student level, the WWC will adjust the statistical significance to account for this mismatch, if necessary.
<b>Confounding factor</b>	A confounding factor is a component of a study that is completely aligned with one of the study conditions, making it impossible to separate how much of the observed effect was due to the intervention and how much was due to the factor.
<b>Design</b>	The design of a study is the method by which intervention and comparison groups were assigned.
<b>Domain</b>	A domain is a group of closely related outcomes.
<b>Effect size</b>	The effect size is a measure of the magnitude of an effect. The WWC uses a standardized measure to facilitate comparisons across studies and outcomes.
<b>Eligibility</b>	A study is eligible for review and inclusion in this report if it falls within the scope of the review protocol and uses either an experimental or matched comparison group design.
<b>Equivalence</b>	A demonstration that the analysis sample groups are similar on observed characteristics defined in the review area protocol.
<b>Extent of evidence</b>	An indication of how much evidence supports the findings. The criteria for the extent of evidence levels are given in the WWC Procedures and Standards Handbook (version 2.1).
<b>Improvement index</b>	Along a percentile distribution of students, the improvement index represents the gain or loss of the average student due to the intervention. As the average student starts at the 50th percentile, the measure ranges from -50 to +50.
<b>Multiple comparison adjustment</b>	When a study includes multiple outcomes or comparison groups, the WWC will adjust the statistical significance to account for the multiple comparisons, if necessary.
<b>Quasi-experimental design (QED)</b>	A quasi-experimental design (QED) is a research design in which subjects are assigned to intervention and comparison groups through a process that is not random.
<b>Randomized controlled trial (RCT)</b>	A randomized controlled trial (RCT) is an experiment in which investigators randomly assign eligible participants into intervention and comparison groups.
<b>Rating of effectiveness</b>	The WWC rates the effects of an intervention in each domain based on the quality of the research design and the magnitude, statistical significance, and consistency in findings. The criteria for the ratings of effectiveness are given in the WWC Procedures and Standards Handbook (version 2.1).
<b>Single-case design</b>	A research approach in which an outcome variable is measured repeatedly within and across different conditions that are defined by the presence or absence of an intervention.
<b>Standard deviation</b>	The standard deviation of a measure shows how much variation exists across observations in the sample. A low standard deviation indicates that the observations in the sample tend to be very close to the mean; a high standard deviation indicates that the observations in the sample tend to be spread out over a large range of values.
<b>Statistical significance</b>	Statistical significance is the probability that the difference between groups is a result of chance rather than a real difference between the groups. The WWC labels a finding statistically significant if the likelihood that the difference is due to chance is less than 5% ( $p < 0.05$ ).
<b>Substantively important</b>	A substantively important finding is one that has an effect size of 0.25 or greater, regardless of statistical significance.

Please see the [WWC Procedures and Standards Handbook \(version 2.1\)](#) for additional details.