Creating learning environments for disengaged boys: Bridging the gender gap with universal design for learning

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Abstract:
Outcomes related to academic and social engagement for boys identified by their teachers as being disengaged and requiring tier two instructional supports were investigated when the Three Block Model of Universal Design for Learning (Katz, 2012a) was implemented. The mixed-methods study involved twelve grade 3 boys and their teachers in a rural school division in Manitoba, who were divided into treatment and control groups. Students were assessed pre and post intervention for the development of general self-esteem, academic self-esteem, liking of school, enjoyment of school, and engaged behavior. Ecobehavioral measures of task assigned, groupings, and interactions were also taken. Data were collected and analyzed using both thematic analysis for qualitative data and a MANCOVA for quantitative analysis. The intervention significantly increased students’ engaged behavior, particularly active engagement and promoted social engagement through increased peer interactions, student autonomy, and inclusivity.

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