Researchers often assume that their programs or interventions will be implemented and received the same way each time. However, that is rarely the case; the way an intervention is implemented usually differs from the way it was designed. Computers stop working, facilitators go off script, and participants draw different conclusions from the same experience. Any one of these factors has the potential to undermine the effectiveness of an intervention. The extent to which an intervention or program is implemented and received as intended is known as intervention fidelity (a.k.a. program integrity, implementation fidelity).

**HOW INTERVENTIONS WORK: THE PROCESSES AT PLAY**

When an intervention or program is implemented, it will be effective to the extent that it instigates two types of processes:

- **Intervention Black Box**
- **Psychological processes**

**Intervention processes** are the core components of the intervention theorized to impact participants. Intervention processes impact key psychological processes within the participants.

**Psychological processes** refer to the changes in participants, such as changes in knowledge and attitudes. Psychological processes, in turn, lead to the desired outcome.

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**INTERVENTION EXAMPLES**

Intervention fidelity matters in many settings, including educational settings. Here we describe intervention fidelity in a scientific study conducted in a middle school setting.

**Guidance on how to talk to teen about importance of STEM**

**VALUE**

**Increased parent perceived utility value of STEM**

**Increased conversations with teen about utility of STEM**

**Outcomes**

**Increased STEM course enrollment and achievement in 11th and 12th grade**

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**FOR A SUCCESSFUL INTERVENTION, ASSESSING INTERVENTION FIDELITY CAN HELP PROGRAM DEVELOPERS, RESEARCHERS, AND PRACTITIONERS UNDERSTAND WHY AN INTERVENTION OR PROGRAM DID NOT WORK AS INTENDED.**

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**WANT TO LEARN MORE?**

**CONCEPTUAL OVERVIEWS**


**EMPIRICAL EXAMPLES**

- Pas, E., Johnson, S., Dehnam, K., Hullman, C. S., & Bradshaw, C.P. (In press). Examining the relative utility of PBS implementation fidelity scores in relation to student outcomes. Remedial and Special Education.