

**DISMANTLING BIAS:
TOOLS FOR THE
CLASSROOM**

**Fix School
Discipline
Webinar
Series**



“We do not see things as they
are, we see things as we are.”—
Anaïs Nin



Understanding Implicit Bias & How It Impacts Our Community

Chris Bridges and Zabrina Aleguire

Equal Justice Society

Keep the Following Words in Mind...

REST

DOZE

SNORE

BED

TIRED

SLUMBER

WAKE

NAP

AWAKE

DREAM

**Do your best to
remember the 10 words
that you have just seen.**

**We will come back to
them later.**

IS SEEING BELIEVING?



**100% Black
0% White**



**80% Black
20% White**



**60% Black
40% White**



**40% Black
60% White**



**20% Black
80% White**



**0% Black
100% White**

IMPLICIT RACIAL BIAS AND PERCEPTION

- Implicit biases can affect what we “see”
 - Correll study showed evidence of a “shooter bias” where people shoot more unarmed blacks than unarmed whites and fail to shoot more armed whites than blacks in a specialized video game



TOP 4 THINGS TO KNOW

- 1) Your mind plays tricks on you.**
- 2) Overt racism has given way to implicit bias and structural racism.**
- 3) Implicit bias has an undeniable impact on our policies and decisions.**
- 4) You can recognize your own biases and take steps to counteract them.**

GENERAL DEFINITION OF IMPLICIT BIAS

- Social scientists use the term implicit or unconscious bias to refer to stereotypes or attitudes that operate without an individual's conscious awareness.
- These attitudes or stereotypes can affect a person's thoughts, actions, and decisions in reference to the subjects of his/her biases, especially when the person is stressed, tired, or forced to make a decision quickly.



IMPLICIT ASSOCIATION TEST

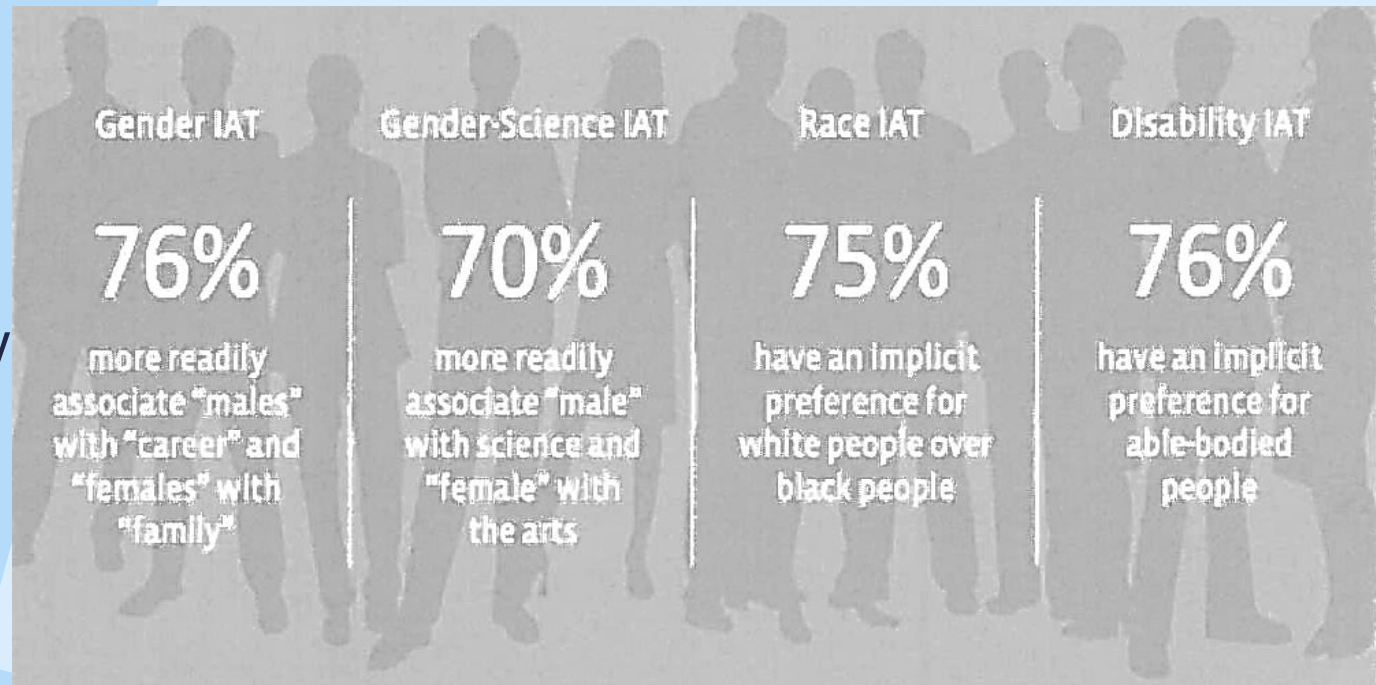
- The IAT measures the relative strength of association between a target concept (e.g., race) and an attribute concept (e.g., words with good meanings and words with bad meanings).
- The more strongly a test taker associates two concepts, the faster and more accurately he/she can pair them together



TYPES OF IMPLICIT BIASES

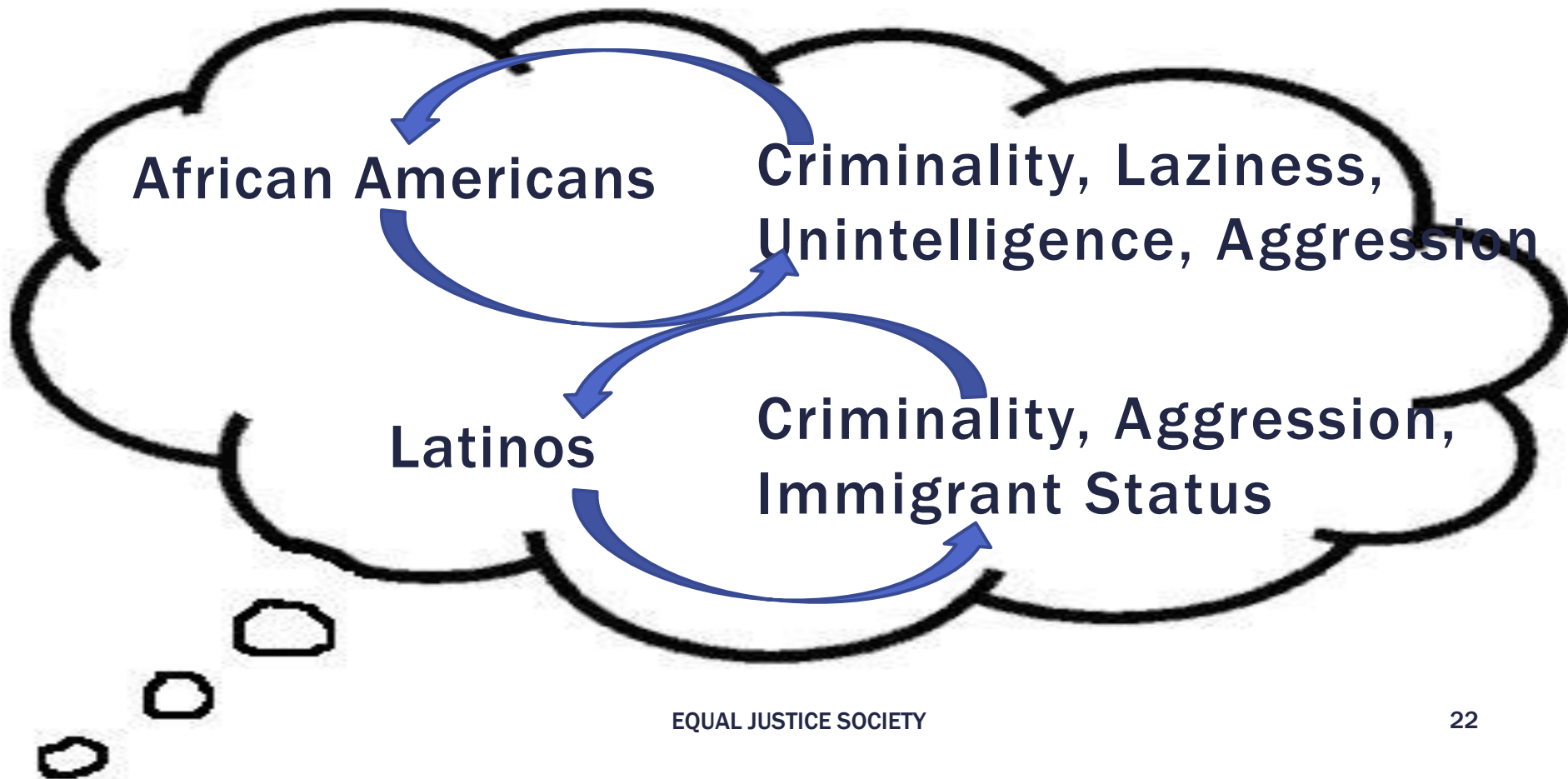
- Research shows that individuals experience implicit biases toward a broad range of historically disadvantaged groups with respect to characteristics such as:

- Ethnicity
- Gender
- Nationality
- Race
- Weight
- Age



IMPLICIT RACIAL BIAS

Implicit racial biases can serve as mental links between:



DEVELOPMENT OF IMPLICIT RACIAL BIASES

Children learn more
from what you are
than what you
teach.

• W.E.B. DuBois

- Psychological studies show that children develop an adult-like understanding of “race” around age 5.
- Associations about the characteristics associated with people of each race develop soon after, and a study found that around 80% of children had already developed pro-White/anti-Black sentiments by age 6.



EQUAL JUSTICE SOCIETY



HOW DID THOSE PICTURES MAKE YOU FEEL?

- **Anxious?**
- **Nervous?**
- **Did your heart start beating faster?**
- **Did your blood pressure increase?**

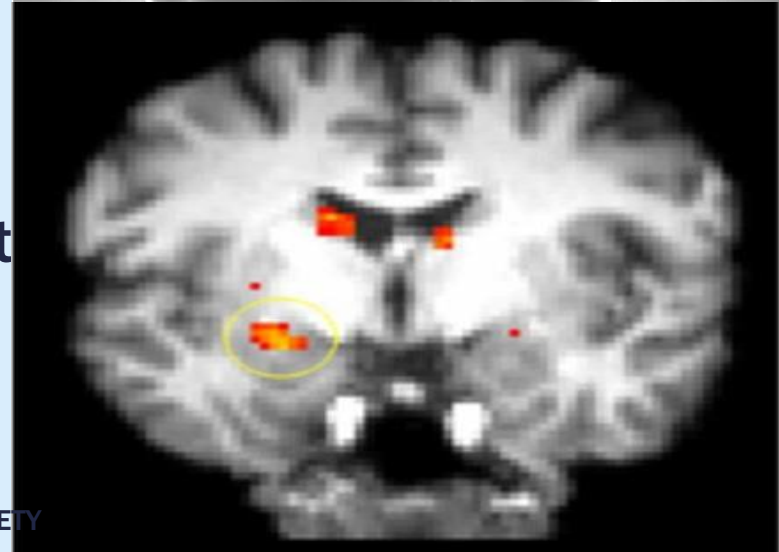
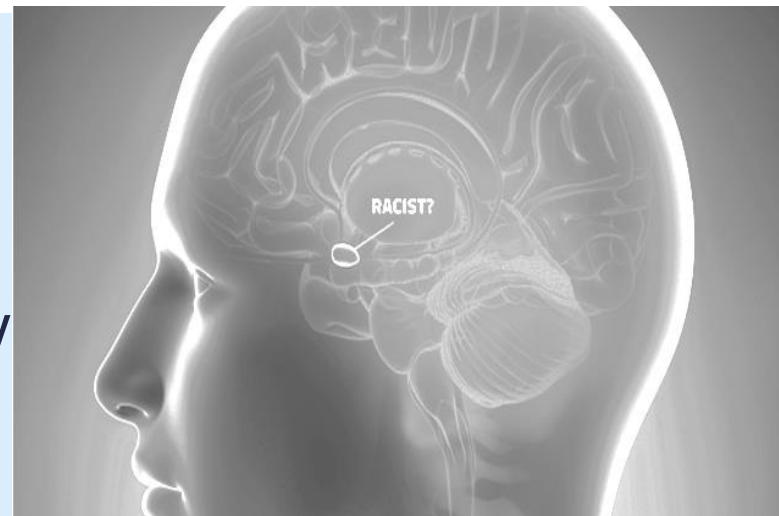


FEAR AND THE BODY

- When we are afraid, our bodies undergo a series of physiological changes that ready us to flee or attack (fight or flight response).
- This response is extremely quick; scientists estimate that it takes less than a tenth of a second for you to react once you are exposed to something that you fear.
- To be frightened in this context can be a positive thing (We have all heard stories of mothers who have lifted a car to save their child), but what if you are afraid of something that is actually non-threatening (like a person of color walking down the street or in an elevator)?

IMPLICIT RACIAL BIAS AND THE BRAIN

- People with diagnosed phobias of spiders have higher levels of amygdala activation in their brains when they view pictures of those fear triggers, and a pioneering study found similar brain activity when White participants viewed African American male faces as well.
- The level of amygdala activation correlated to subject performance on the Race Implicit Association Test (IAT).
 - Nationwide, 70 to 87 percent of people demonstrate bias against African Americans on the Race IAT.



NOW BACK TO OUR MEMORY TASK

Do you remember seeing?

REST

SNACK

DREAM

SNOOZE

SLEEP

REAL LIFE IMPLICATIONS OF IMPLICIT RACIAL BIASES

- Racially disparate outcomes are often the product of race neutral policies
- These outcomes can be seen on a wide range of issues
 - Housing
 - Employment
 - Medical Treatment
 - Criminal Justice
 - Education

IMPLICIT RACIAL BIAS AND EDUCATION: THE SCHOOL TO PRISON PIPELINE

- Youth of color are disciplined at significantly higher rates than White and Asian Americans.
- Students who have been punished by school officials are at a higher risk of falling behind their classmates academically, dropping out of school, and entering the juvenile justice system.

FROM SCHOOL TO PRISON

STUDENTS OF COLOR FACE HARSHER DISCIPLINE AND ARE MORE LIKELY TO BE PUSHED OUT OF SCHOOL THAN WHITES.

40%



OF STUDENTS **EXPELLED** FROM U.S. SCHOOLS EACH YEAR ARE BLACK.

70%



OF STUDENTS INVOLVED IN "IN-SCHOOL" **ARRESTS** OR REFERRED TO LAW ENFORCEMENT ARE BLACK OR LATINO.

3.5 X



BLACK STUDENTS ARE THREE AND A HALF TIMES MORE LIKELY TO BE **SUSPENDED** THAN WHITES.

2 X



BLACK AND LATINO STUDENTS ARE TWICE AS LIKELY TO **NOT GRADUATE** HIGH SCHOOL AS WHITES.

68%

OF ALL MALES IN STATE AND FEDERAL **PRISON** DO NOT HAVE A HIGH SCHOOL **DIPLOMA**.



Over the course of two studies, Jennifer Eberhardt and Jason Okonofua, a Stanford psychology professor and graduate student, respectively, presented a total of 244 K-12 teachers (53 in the first study, 191 in the second) from across the country with a fictional student's disciplinary records. The records were labeled with either a stereotypically black name (Deshawn or Darnell) or a stereotypically white one (Greg or Jake). In either case, the student had committed two minor offenses, insubordination and classroom disturbance. After reading about each infraction, the teachers were asked about their attitudes toward the student.

Though the two "students" were viewed similarly after only one infraction, teachers who had the black student's file were more likely to feel "troubled" by the student's behavior and to recommend more severe punishments for him after the second instance of misbehavior.

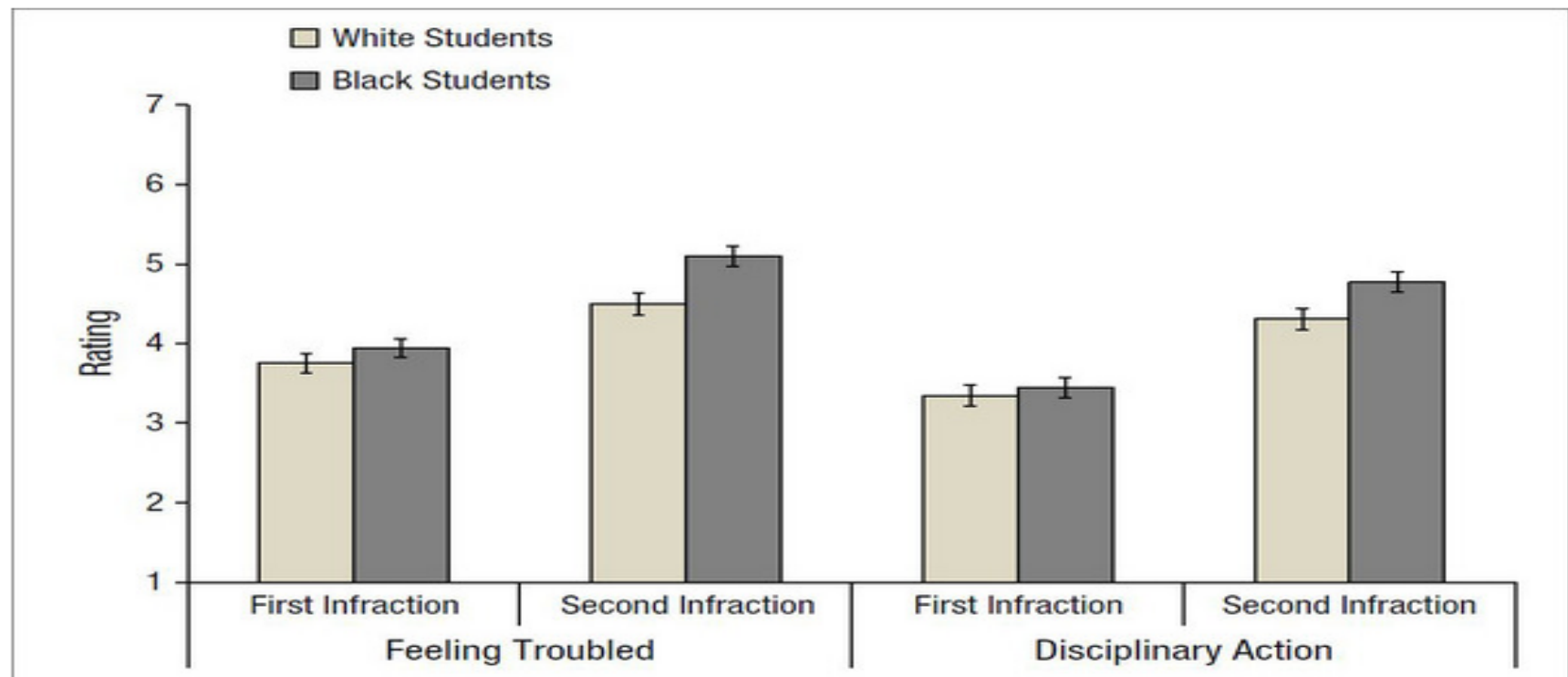
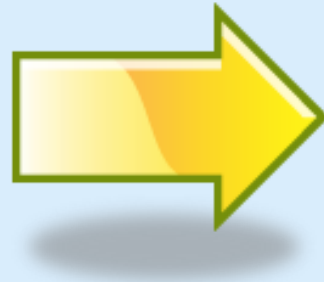
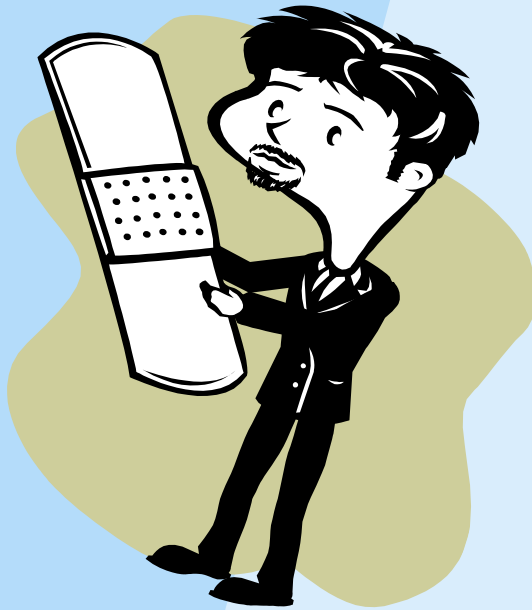


Fig. 3. Results from Study 2: mean ratings of how troubled teachers felt by students' misbehavior (left) and how severely they felt students should be disciplined (right) as a function of number of infractions and student race. Error bars represent standard errors.

SO WHAT CAN WE DO?



AS AN INDIVIDUAL

- **Be aware**
 - Take an IAT
 - Learn about your own implicit biases
- **Be motivated**
 - Learn new information and engage in activities to counter stereotypes (Ex. Having conversations across cultural boundaries or even a screen saver with counter-stereotypic images)
- **Be Proactive about not acting on your biases**
 - Example- A federal judge realized that he might be making biased judgments based on the photo of the Defendant in the pre-sentence report, so he began having the pictures taken out before he reviewed them.
 - Can you think of any way that this could apply in your own work?

IN OUR INTERACTIONS

- De-biasing Interventions often involve contact with out-group members. Focusing on similarities between yourself and the group that you are biased against can go a long way in reducing the effects of that bias
- Devine's 5 strategies of De-biasing:
 - Stereotype replacement
 - Counter-stereotypic imaging
 - Individuating
 - Perspective taking
 - Contact

STEREOTYPE REPLACEMENT IN OUR INTERACTIONS

- **Recognizing stereotypic responses w/in oneself and society, labeling them, and replacing them with non-stereotypic responses**
- **Examples??**

COUNTER-STEREOTYPIC IMAGING

- Imagining examples of out-group members who counter popularly held stereotypes
- Examples??

INDIVIDUATING

- Viewing others according to their personal, rather than stereotypic characteristics
- Examples??

PERSPECTIVE TAKING

- Adopting the perspective in the first person of a member of a stigmatized group.
- Examples??

CONTACT

- **Increasing exposure to out-group members.**
- **Examples??**

IN OUR INSTITUTIONS

- Identify subjective policies and practices that leave room for implicit bias to operate and change them
- Litigate against implicit bias
 - Equal Justice Society
 - Civil rights and legal strategy group based in Oakland
 - Works at the intersection of law and social science to bring mind science into the court room
 - Give declarations and tell your story in a current lawsuit about disparate treatment in KHSD
- Outside legal context, a growing number of businesses are seeking trainings to counteract implicit bias

TARGETED INTERVENTION TO ENCOURAGE EMPATHIC DISCIPLINE HALVES SUSPENSION RATES AMONG ADOLESCENTS

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Walton, PhD



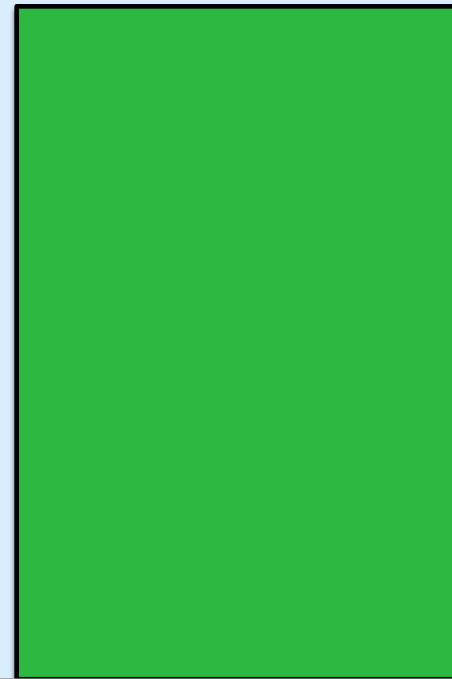
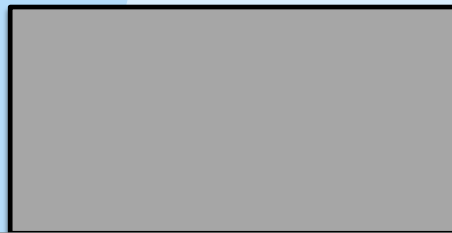
U.S. SUSPENSION RATES

□ 1974 ■ 2011

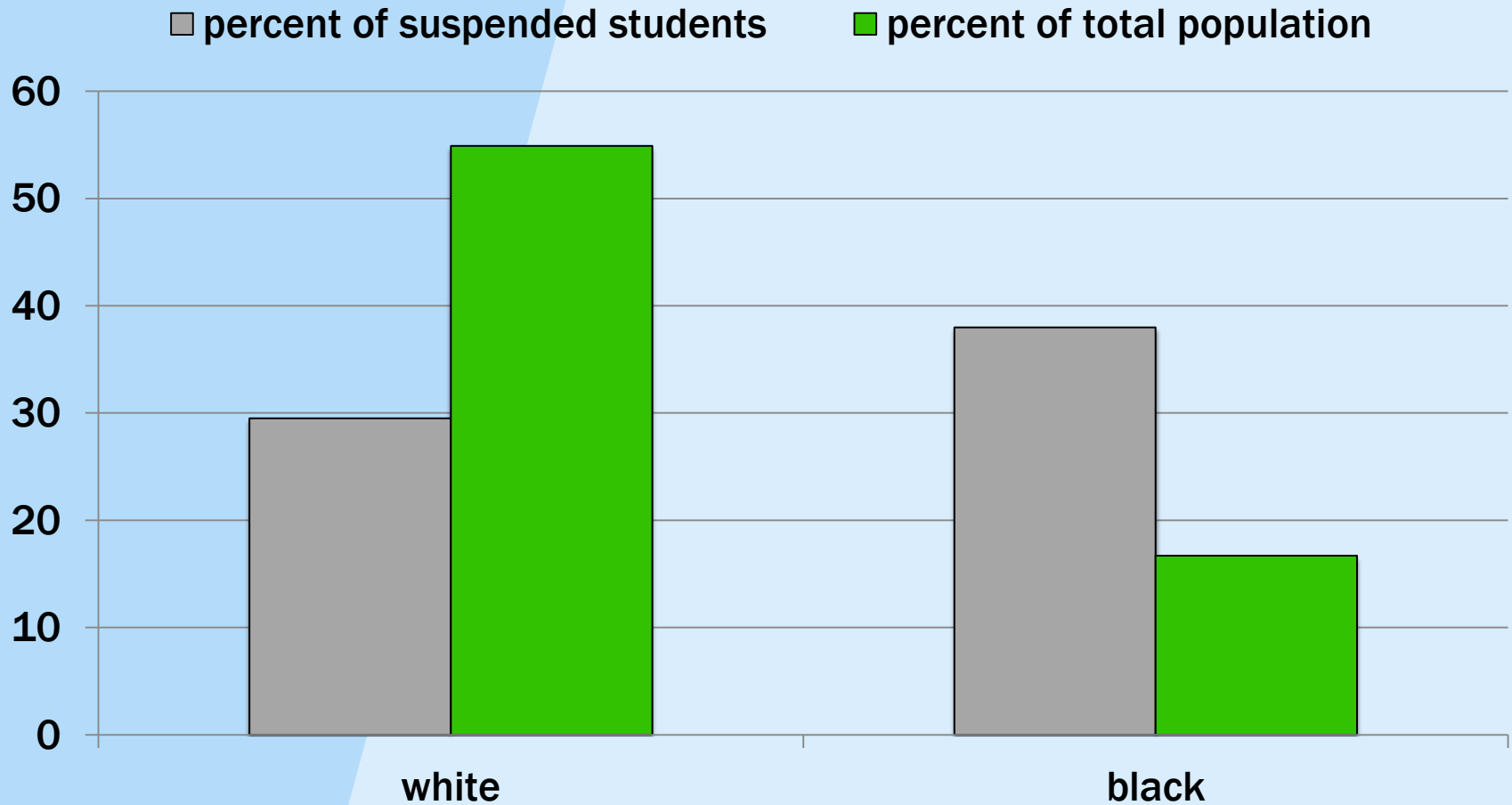
3.70%

11%

Suspensions



OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUSPENSIONS



Department of Education, 2012

BACKGROUND

- **Discipline problems are consequential**
 - **For teachers**
 - Can hinder them from maintaining control over class
 - Can dishearten them & increase likelihood of attrition
 - **For students**
 - Can cause disengagement from school, alienation
 - Can increase likelihood of drop-out and incarceration

Balfanz, Spiridakis, Neild & Legters, 2003; Fenning & Rose, 2007; Hirschfield, 2009; Johnson, Yarrow, Rochkind, & Ott, 2009; Monahan, VanDerhei, Bechtold, & Cauffman, 2014; Pettit & Western, 2004; Rocque & Paternoster, 2011; Western, 2006; Also see McFadden, Marsh, Price & Hwang, 1992; Office for Civil Rights, 2012; Shaw & Braden, 1990; Skiba et al., 2011; Skiba, Michael, Nardo, & Peterson, 2002; Wu, Pink, Crain, & Moles, 1982

BACKGROUND

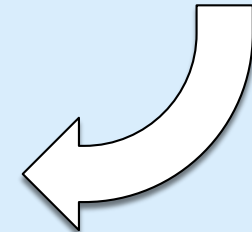
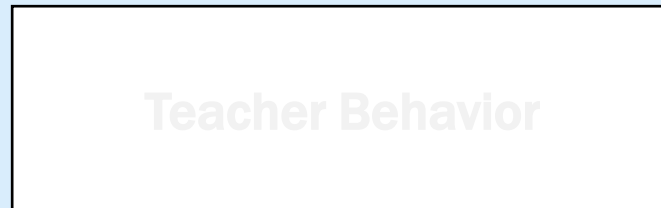
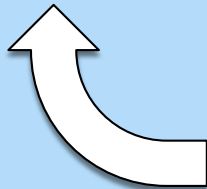
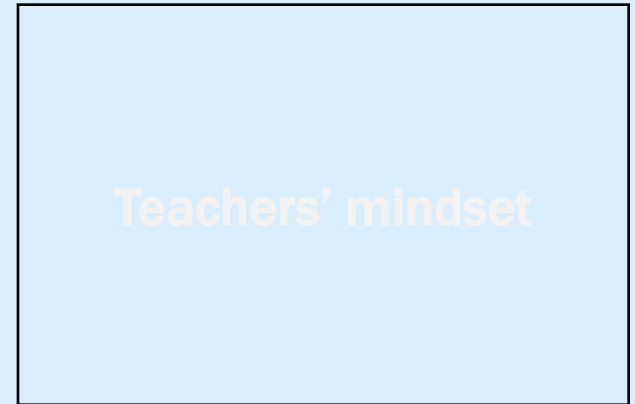
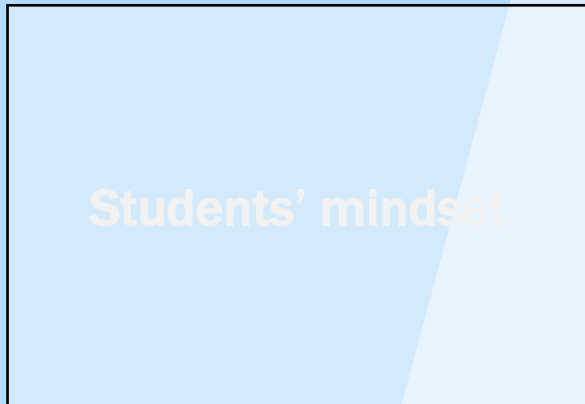
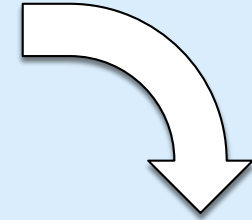
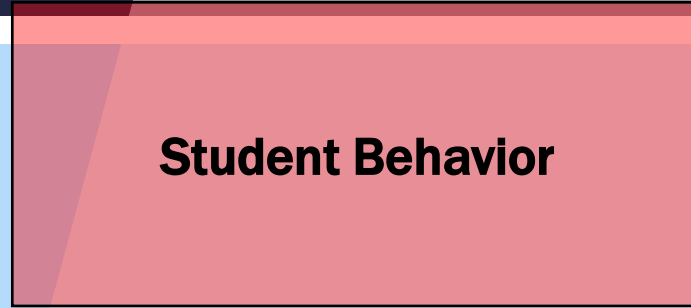
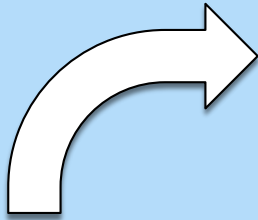
- After students repeatedly misbehave, teachers come to think of the students as troublemakers.
 - Teachers want to discipline “troublemakers” more severely
- After teachers discipline students in a punitive way, students come to feel less respected and have less respect for their teachers.
 - Student’s want to cooperate less

Working Model of Recursive Processes

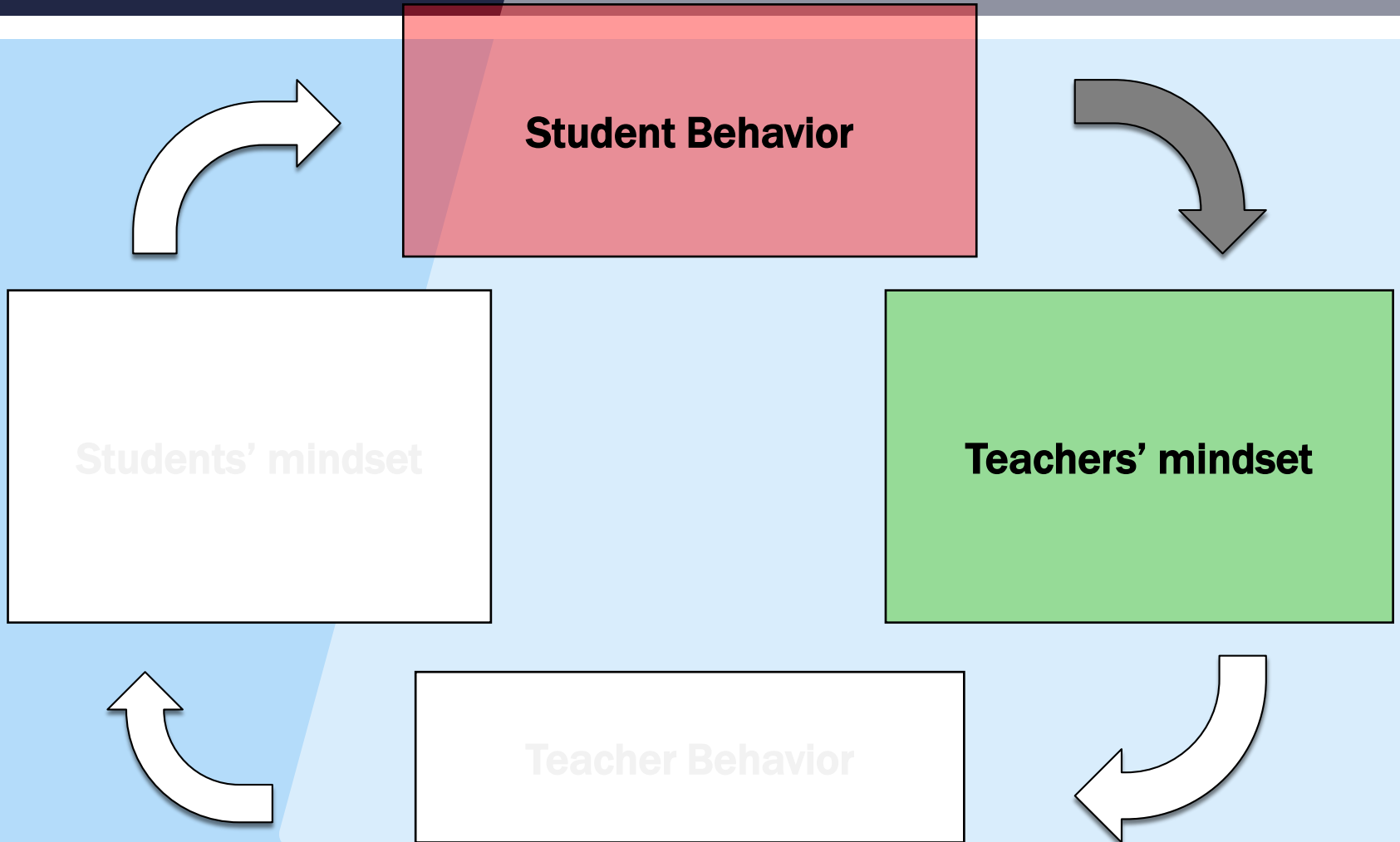


Okonofua, Walton, & Eberhardt, in press
Perspectives on Psychological Science

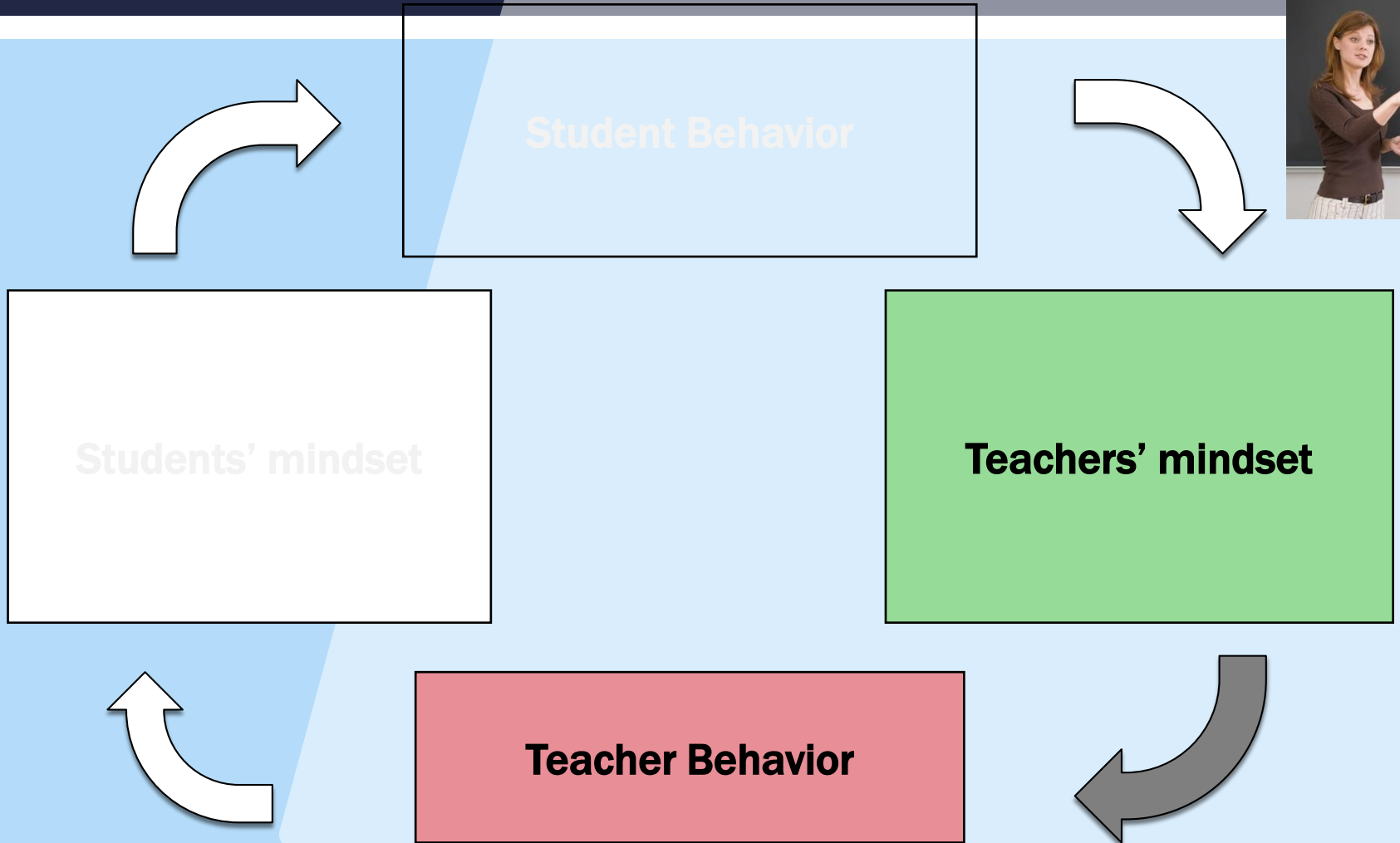
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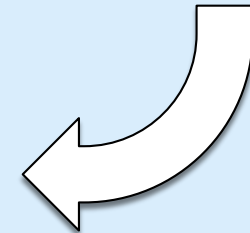
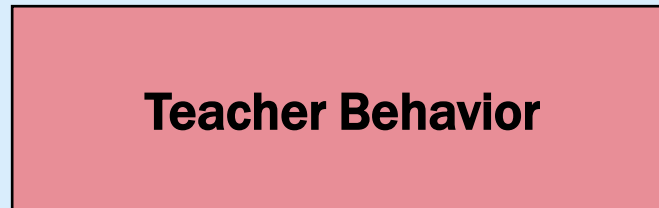
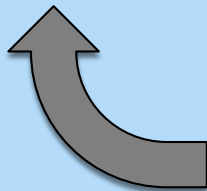
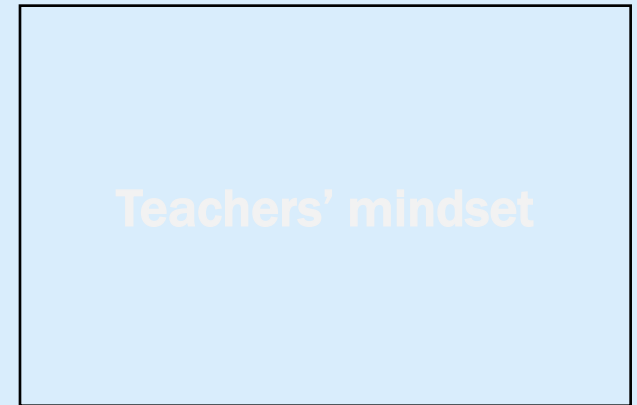
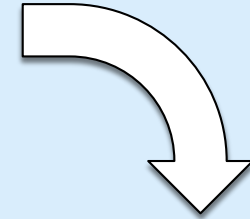
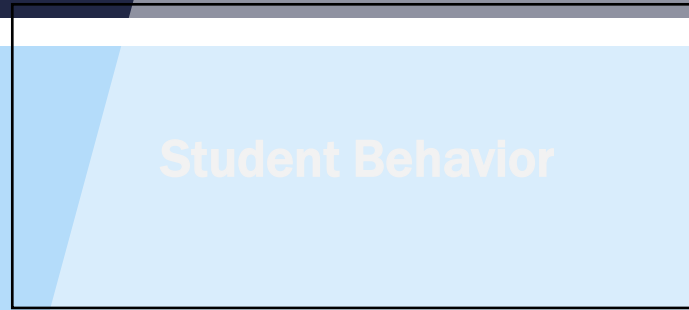
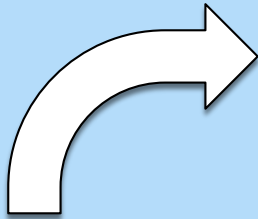
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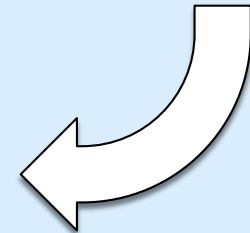
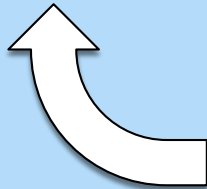
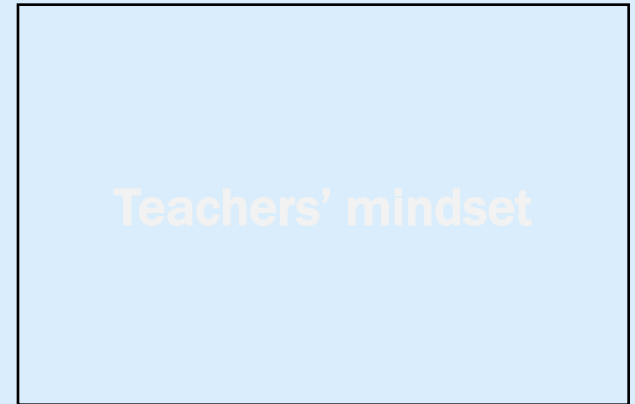
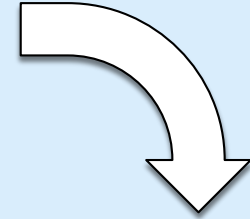
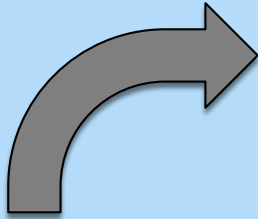
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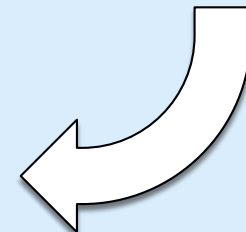
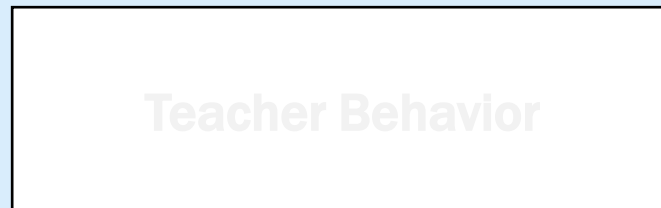
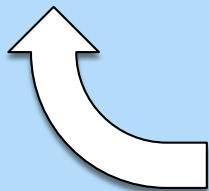
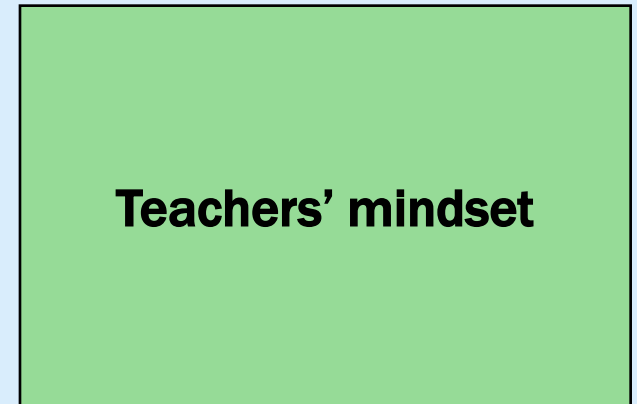
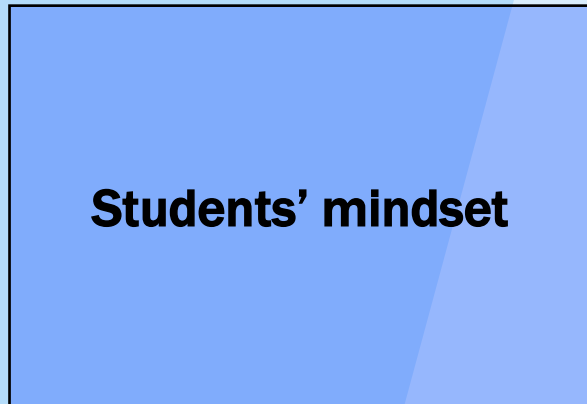
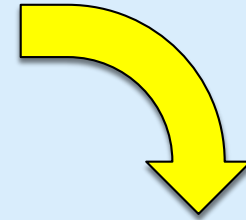
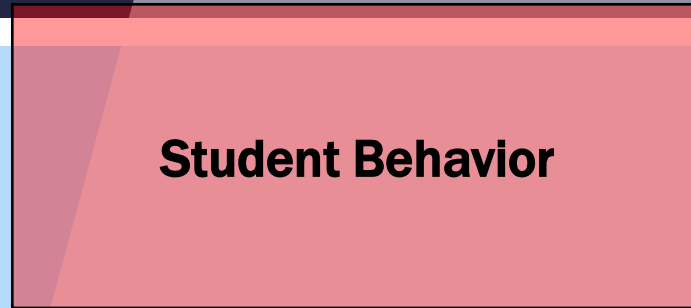
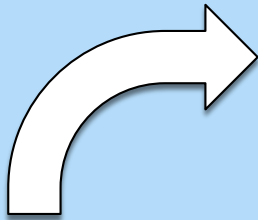
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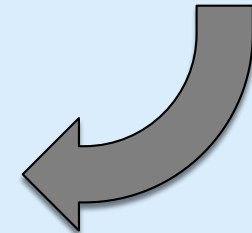
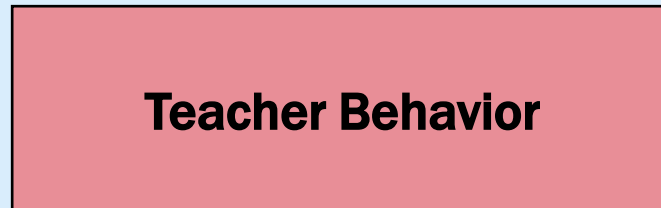
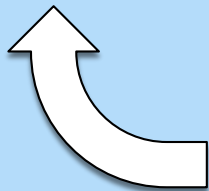
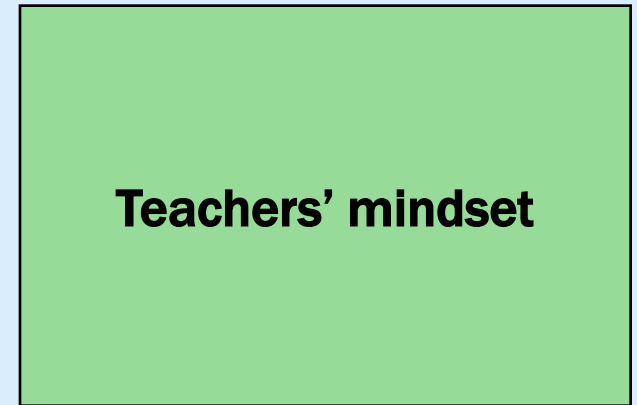
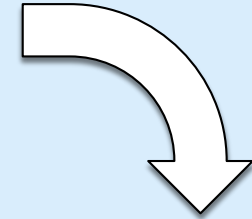
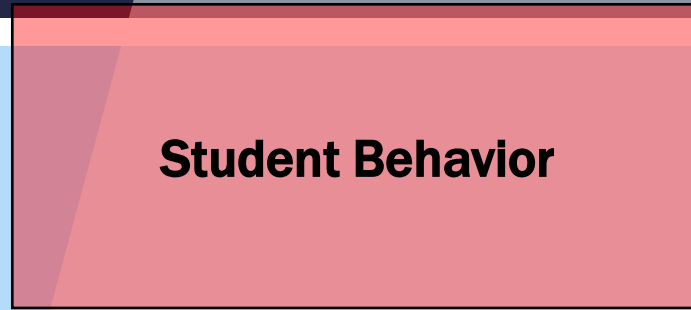
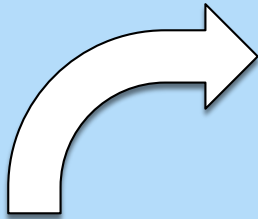
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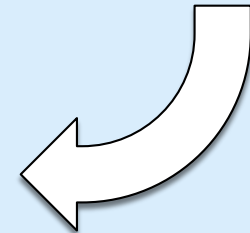
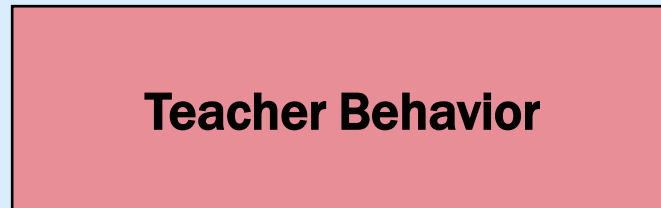
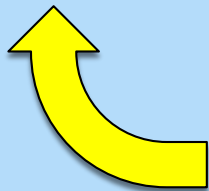
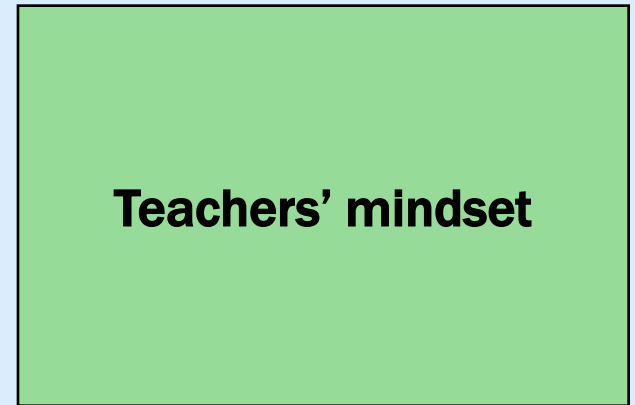
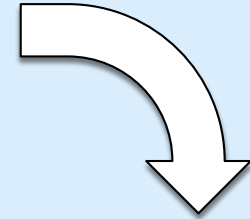
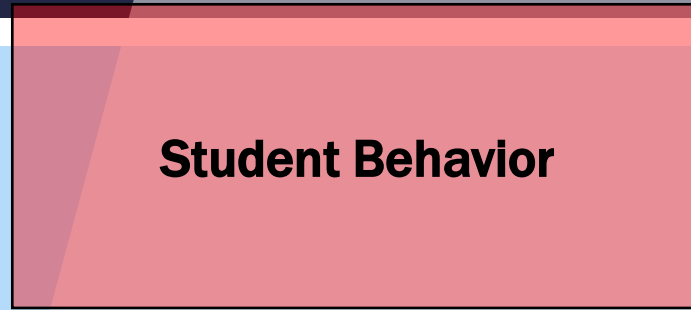
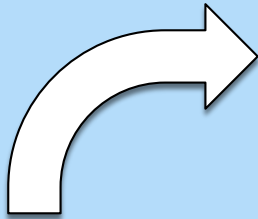
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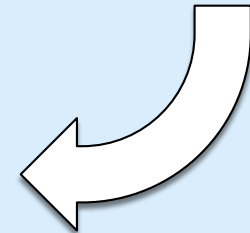
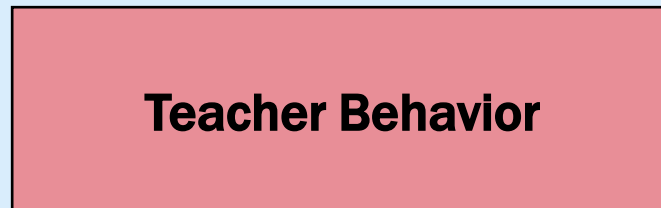
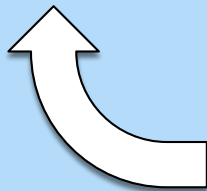
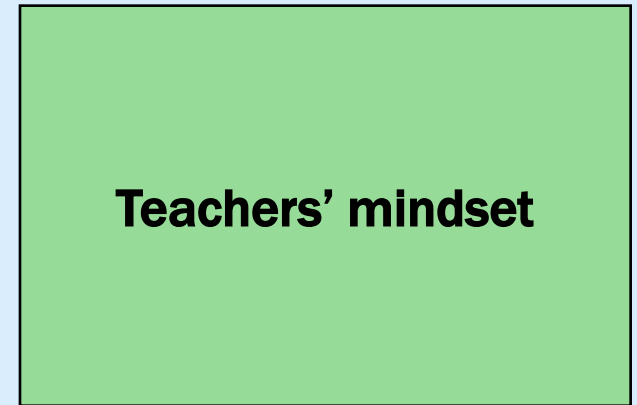
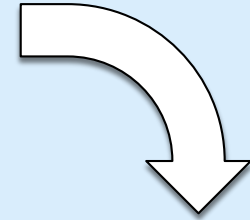
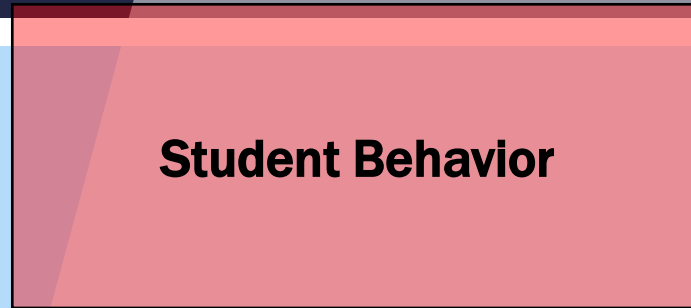
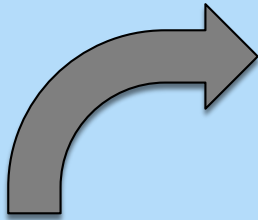
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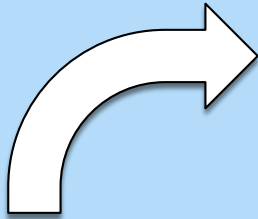
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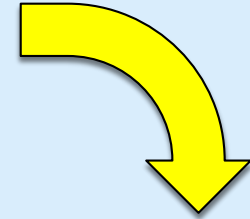
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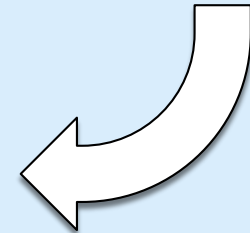
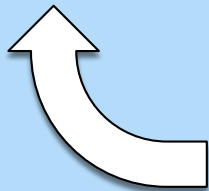
Student Behavior



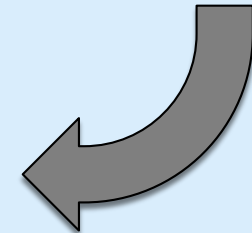
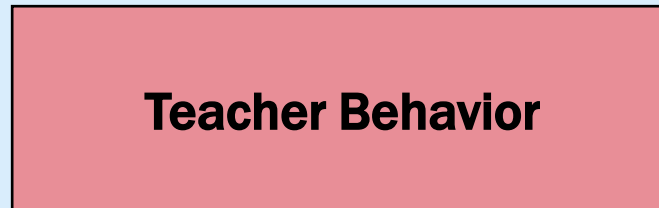
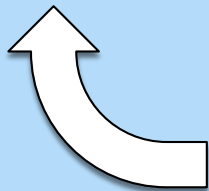
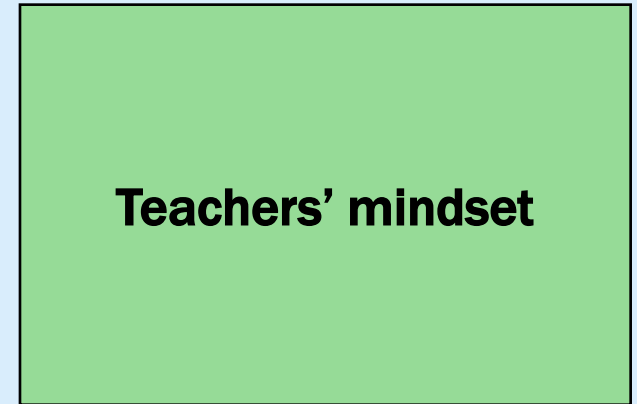
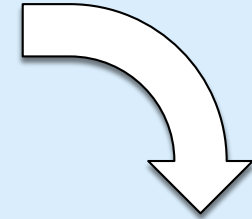
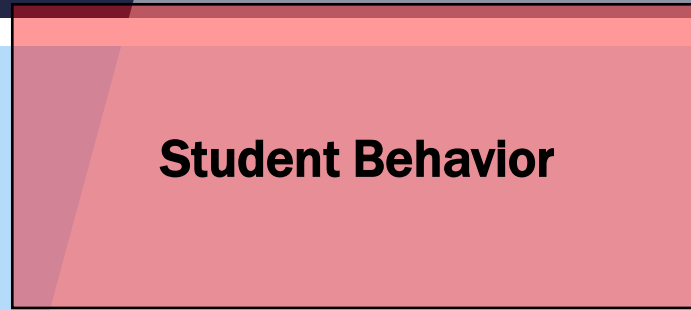
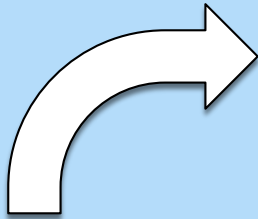
Students' mindset

Teachers' mindset

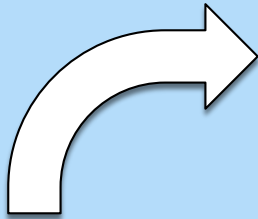
Teacher Behavior



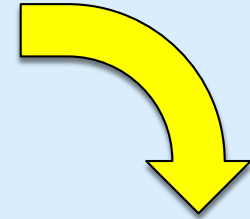
Working Model of Recursive Processes



Working Model of Recursive Processes

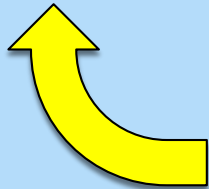


Student Behavior

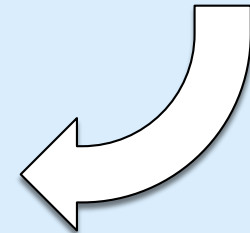


Students' mindset

Teachers' mindset



Teacher Behavior



INTRODUCTION

■ Theory

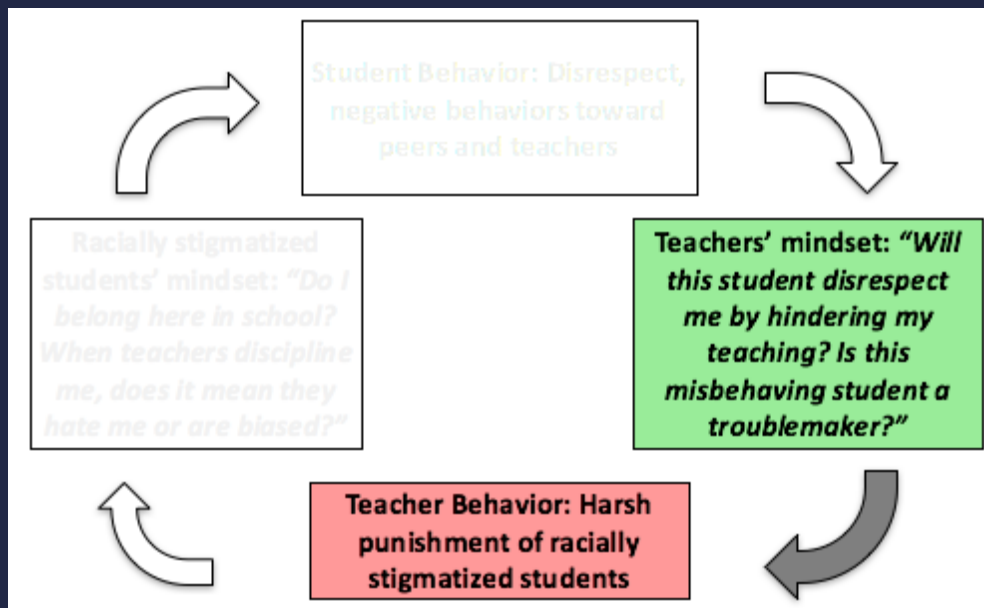
- Exclusionary discipline arises, in part, from deteriorating teacher-student relationships
 - Okonofua & Eberhardt, 2015

■ Hypothesis

- Refocusing discipline as an opportunity to nurture relationships with students could reduce suspension rates among students
 - Okonofua, Walton, & Eberhardt, In Press

TEACHER MINDSET

Laboratory Experimentation



TEACHER STUDY

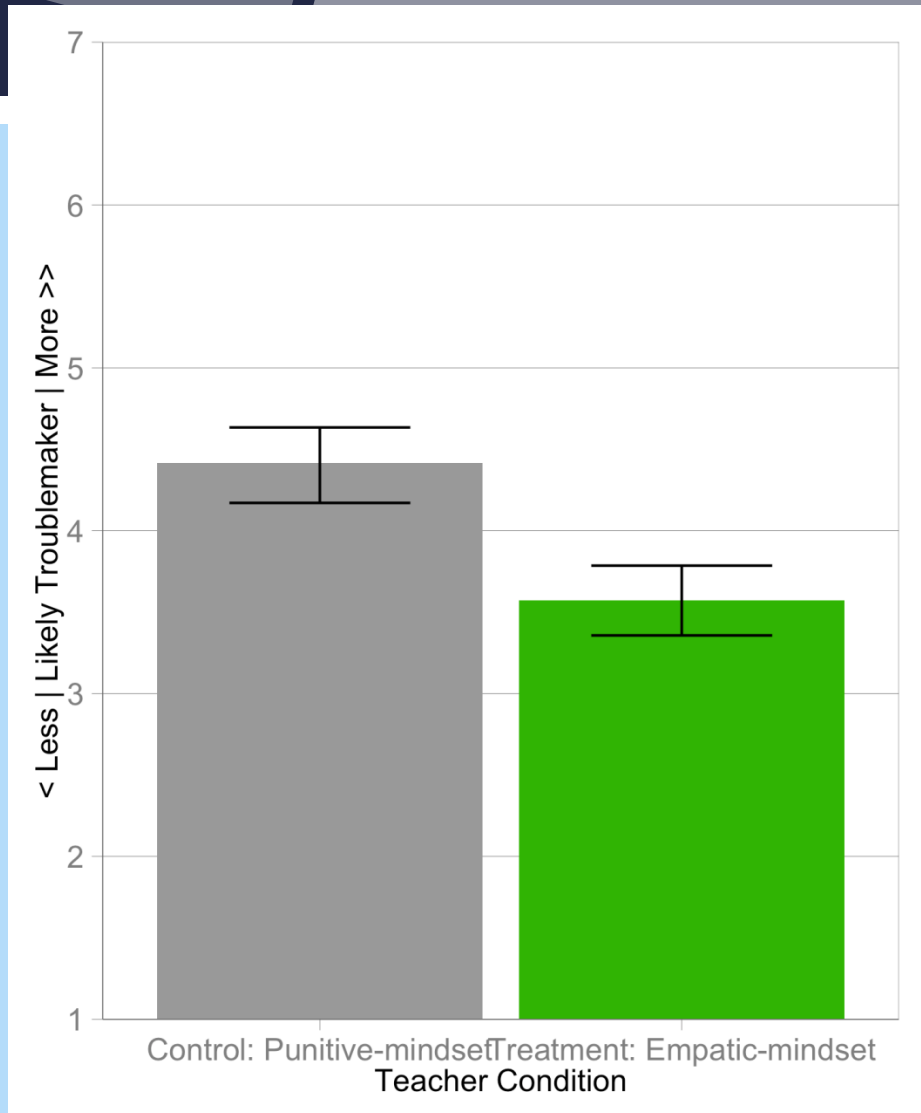
- **41 teachers**
 - **36 White; 1 Asian; 3 Black; 1 Unknown**
 - **73% male**
 - **Avg. Experience: 14 years; Age: 41**
 - **2 removed for missing data**

Conditions: **punitive-mindset** v. **empathic-mindset**

TREATMENT MESSAGE

- **Good teacher-student relationships are critical for students to learn self-control in the classroom at times.**

TROUBLEMAKER

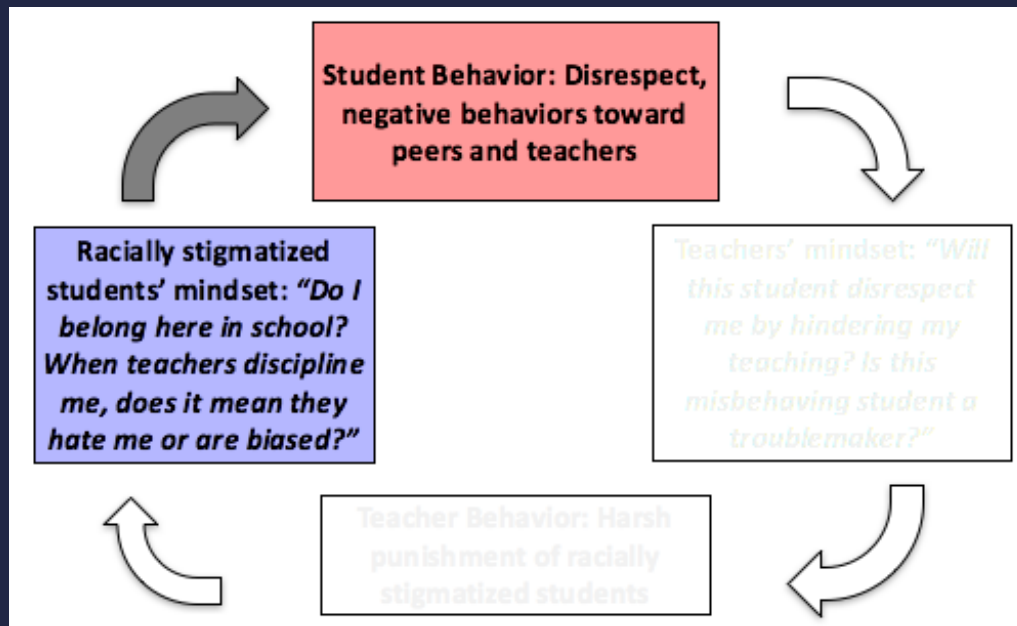


RESULTS

- **Punitive Themes**
 - Threaten student
 - Assign detention
 - Involve principal
- **Empathic Themes**
 - Ask why student misbehaved
 - Adjust context

STUDENT MINDSET

Laboratory Experimentation



STUDENT PERSPECTIVE STUDY

- 302 participants (credit pool)
 - 153 females & 147 males
 - 144 White; 41 Asian; 57 Black; 38 Mixed or Native; 18 Other

Conditions:

punitive-discipline v.
empathic-discipline

SAMPLE MATERIALS

■ Control

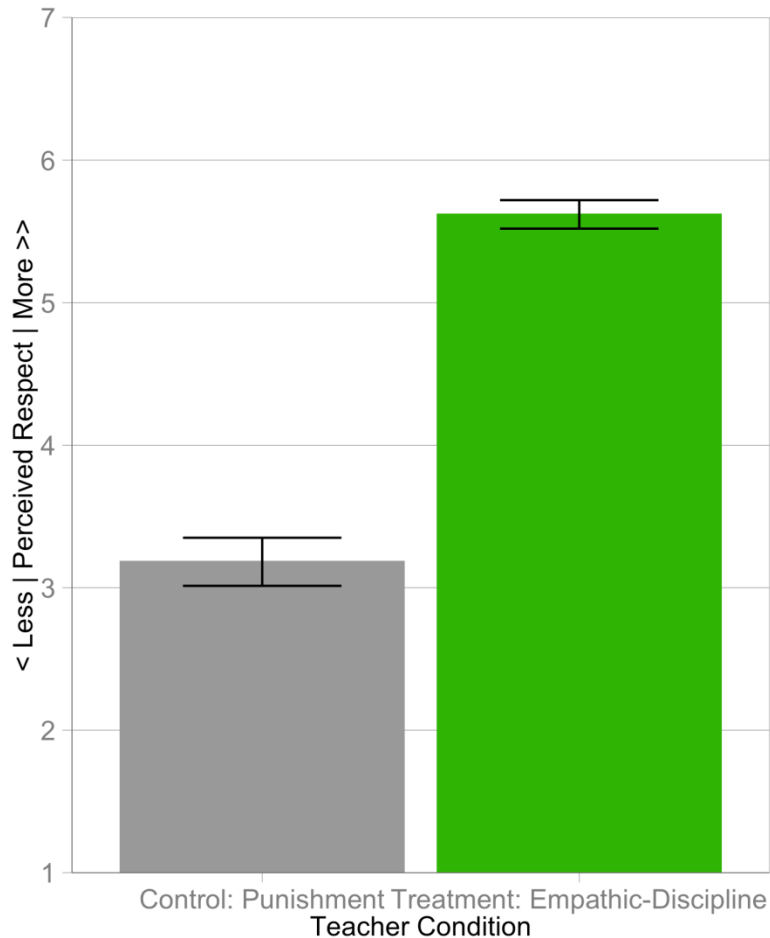
- You leave your seat to get tissues from the tissue box multiple times during a 50 minute class. **Mrs. Smith assigned two days of detention to you and threatens to tell the principal about your misbehavior.**

Later, you get up and throw items away in the wastebasket on the other side of the room. **Mrs. Smith asks has the principal talk to you about your misbehavior.**

■ Treatment

- You leave your seat to get tissues from the tissue box multiple times during a 50 minute class. **Mrs. Smith asks you why you are moving around the class so much.** Later, you get up and throw items away in the wastebasket on the other side of the room. **Mrs. Smith rearranges the room so that the wastebasket and tissue box are closer to your desk.**

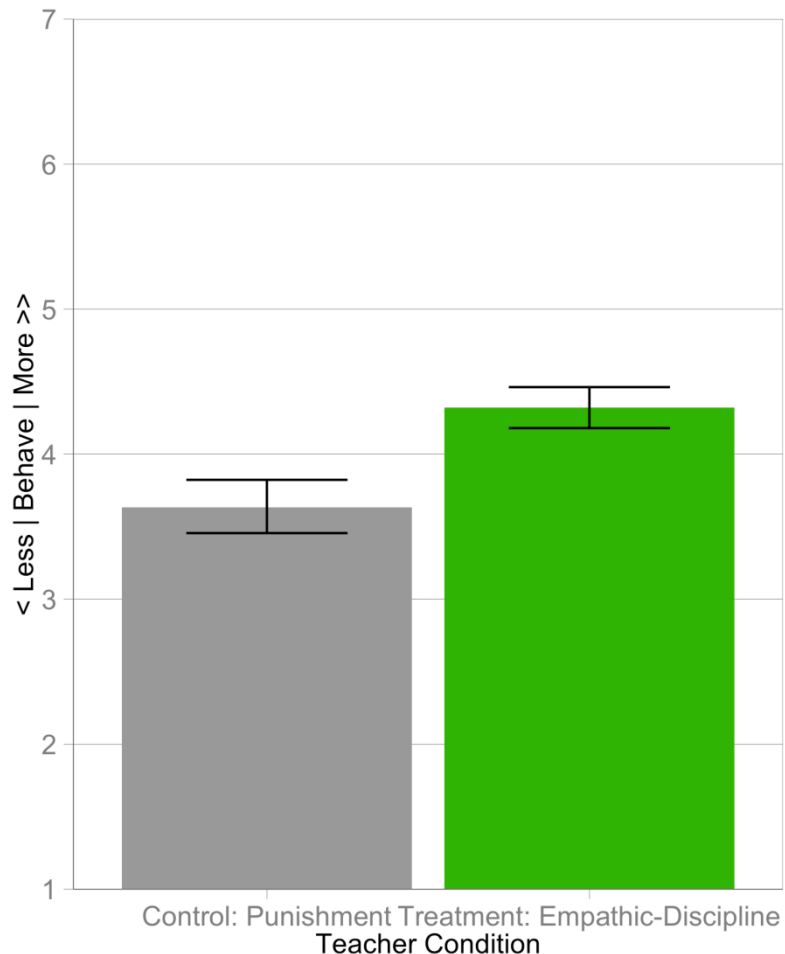
DESERVED RESPECT



Indicate the extent to which you agree... I think Mrs. Smith deserves my respect

(1 = Strongly Disagree - 7 = Strongly Agree)

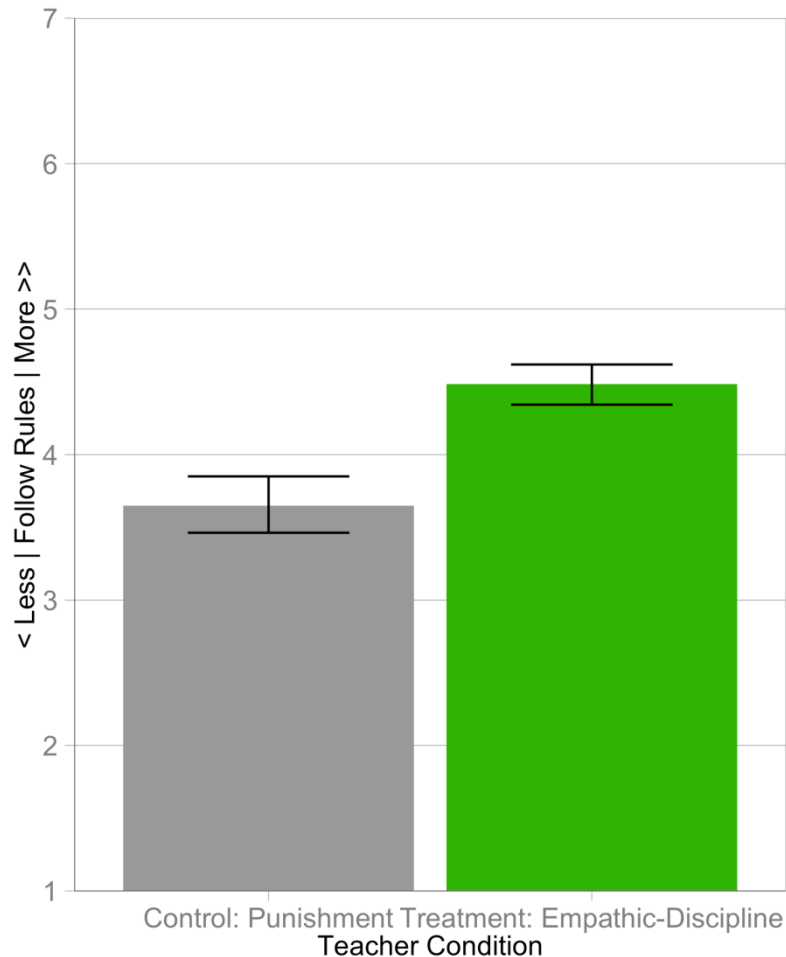
MOTIVATION TO BEHAVE WELL



Indicate the extent to which you agree... I want to behave in this class

(1 = Strongly Disagree – 7 = Strongly Agree)

MOTIVATION TO FOLLOW RULES



Indicate the extent to which you agree... It is important to me that I follow rules in this class

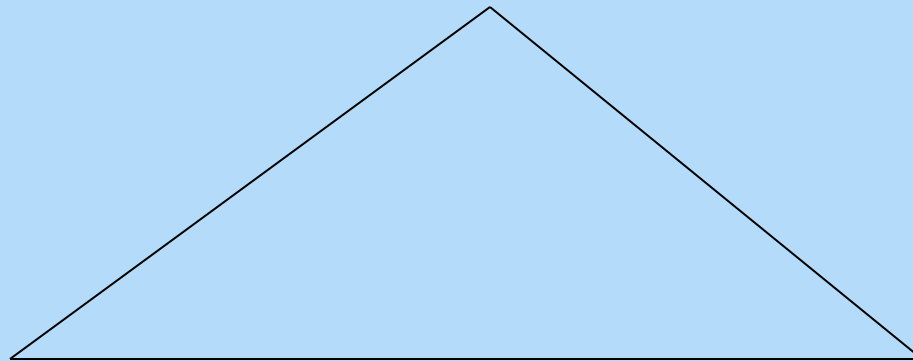
(1 = Strongly Disagree – 7 = Strongly Agree)

PERCEIVED PATTERN OF MISBEHAVIOR

Respect

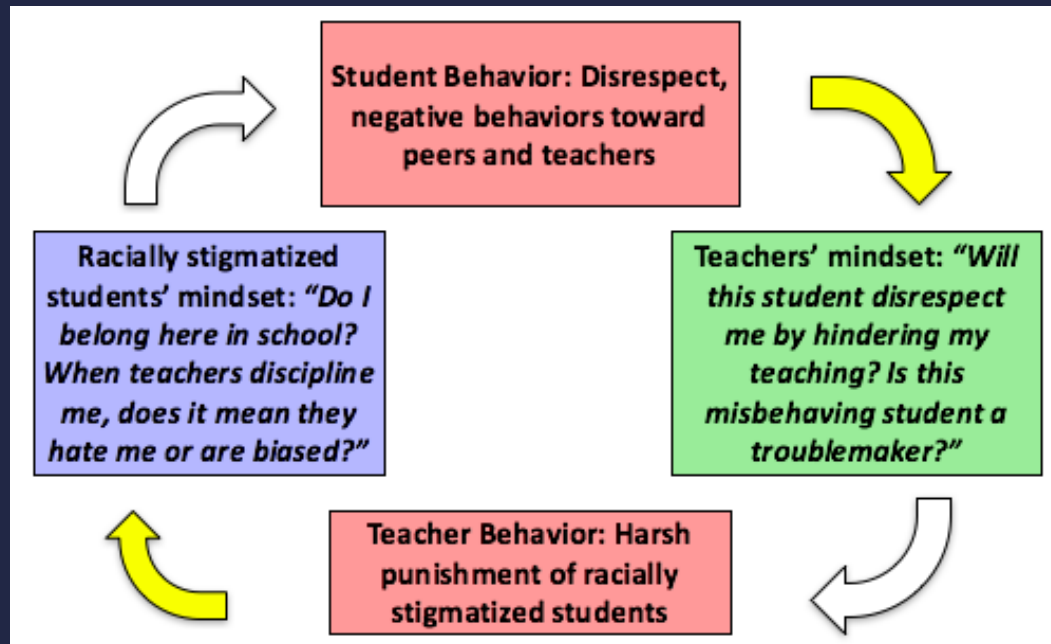
Discipline
Mindset

Behave
Well



TEACHER-STUDENT MINDSETS

In The Real World



PARTICIPANTS

- **5 schools across 3 school districts**
- **36 Teachers**
 - **32 completed all materials**
 - **7 Male; 24 Female; 1 NA**
 - **19 White; 5 Asian; 2 Latino; 2 Black; 2 Other; 2 NA**
 - **1,580 Students**
 - **Mostly Latino**

INTERVENTION SCHEDULE

Late-Fall

Session 1

- 45-minutes
- Empathic-Mindset v. Technology-Control Teacher Survey

Early-Winter

Session 2

- 25-minutes
- Booster Materials by condition
- Follow-up Student Survey

End of School Year

Data Collection

- Collect Suspension Records

EMPATHIC-DISCIPLINE MATERIALS

- Relationships with students are important
 - They shape students attitudes about school and behavior
- Empathize with students
 - Students worry about being treated fairly and with respect
- What teachers can do about misbehavior
 - Misbehavior is an opportunity to nurture relationships with students

EMPATHIC-DISCIPLINE MATERIALS

“In middle school, I didn’t feel like I belonged. It seemed like the teachers always called on the other students. So I didn’t pay attention in class and sometimes I got in trouble. One day I got detention and instead of just sitting there, my teacher talked with me about what happened. He really listened to me. And then he told me that he had trouble sometimes in middle school but that it gets better. It felt good to know I had someone I could trust in school.”

-- 7th grade student



EMPATHIC-DISCIPLINE MATERIALS

“In middle school, **I didn't feel like I belonged.** It seemed like the teachers always called on the other students. So I didn't pay attention in class and sometimes **I got in trouble.** One day I got detention and, instead of just sitting there, my teacher talked with me about what happened. He really **listened to me. And then he told me that he had trouble sometimes in middle school but that it gets better.** It felt good to know I had someone I could trust in school.”

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EMPATHIC-DISCIPLINE MATERIALS

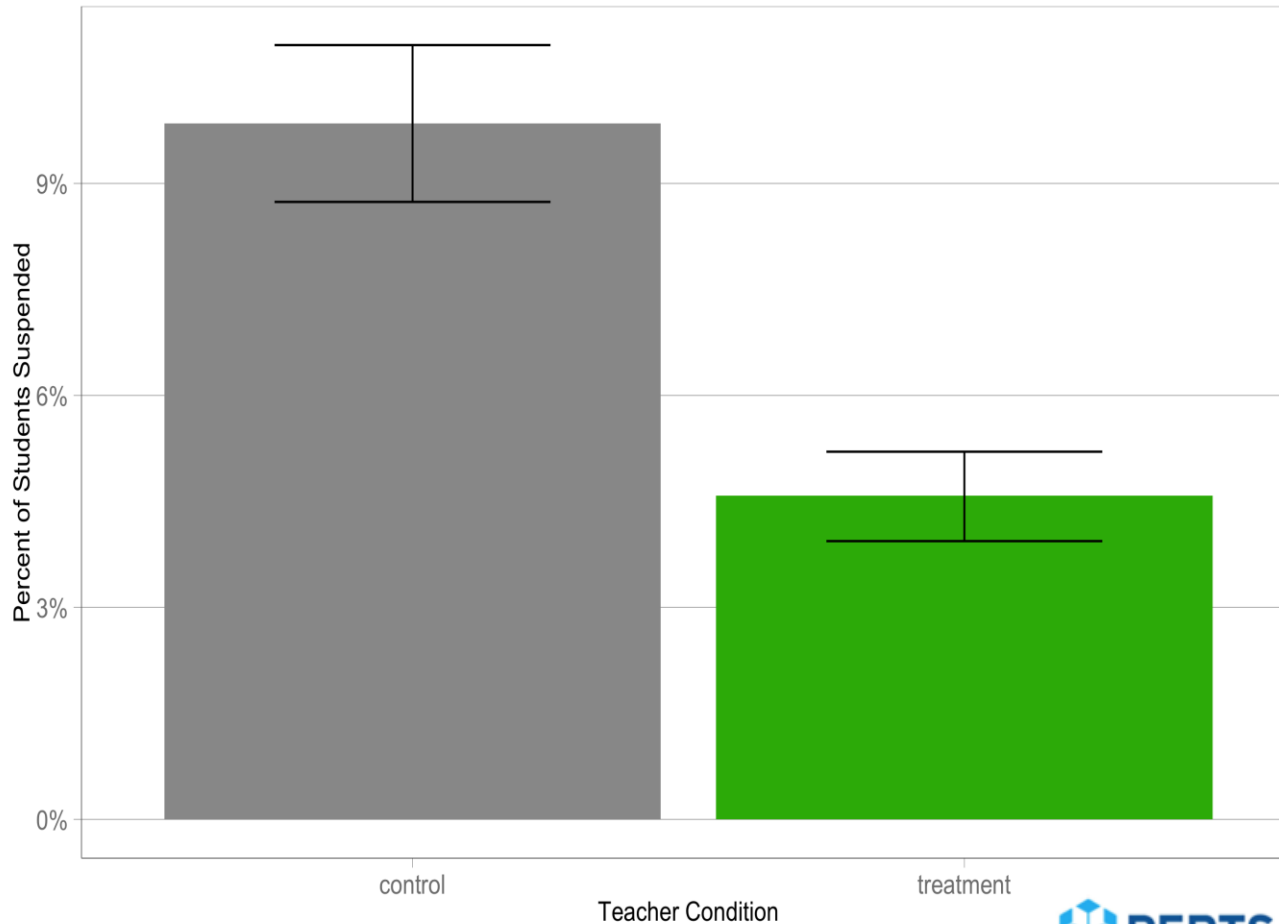
“When I was a child, I remember worrying about how I would be treated by teachers at my school. But I will always remember Ms. McBride, who treated me with respect and trust. She showed me that teachers could make all the difference in how students feel about school. Now, I make a point of treating my students with respect and I find that they respect me more in return.”

EMPATHIC-DISCIPLINE MATERIALS

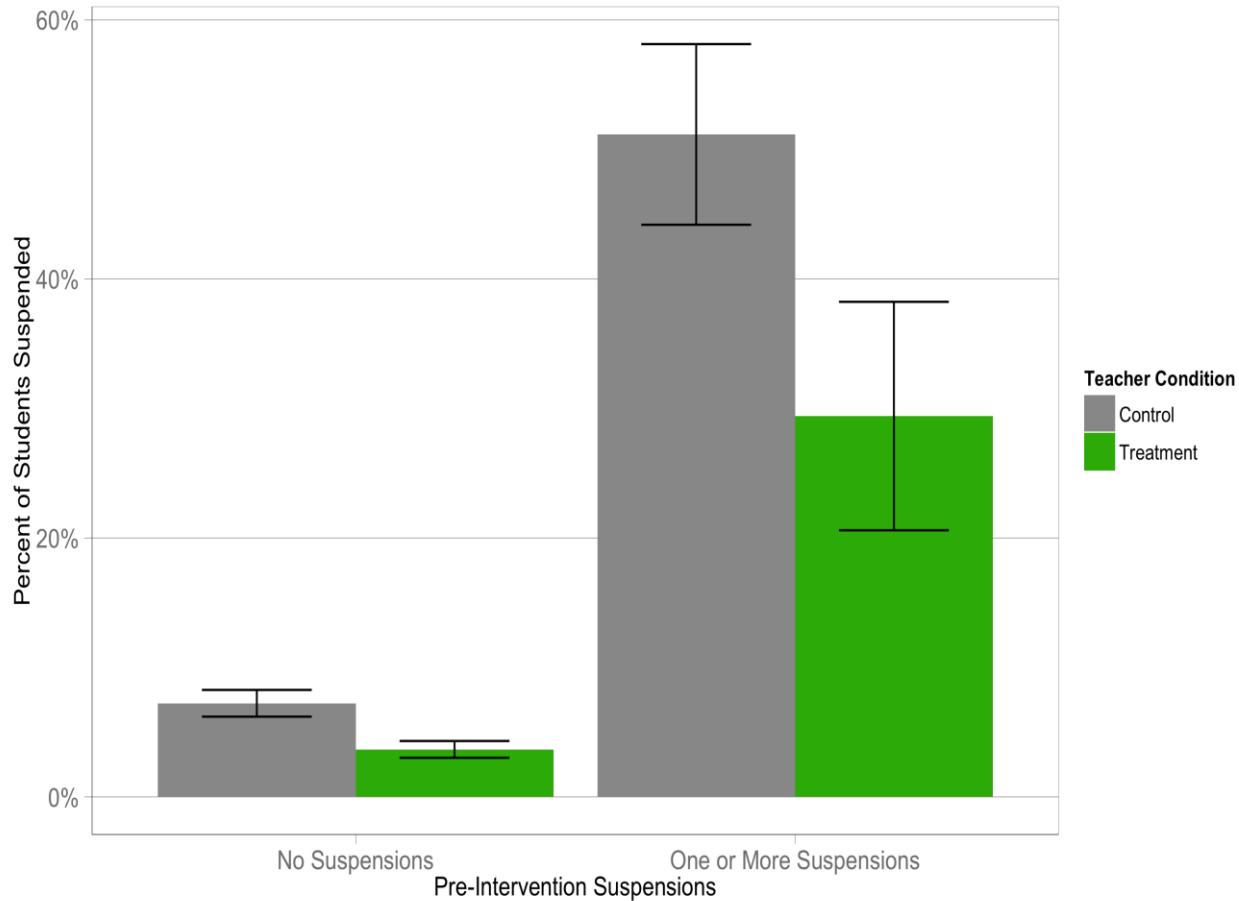
Intervention: Example Teacher Quotation

“When I was a child, I remember worrying about how I would be treated by teachers at my school. But I will always remember Ms. McBride, who treated me with respect and trust. She showed me that **teachers could make all the difference in how students feel about school.** Now, I make a point of **treating my students with respect and I find that they respect me more in return.**”

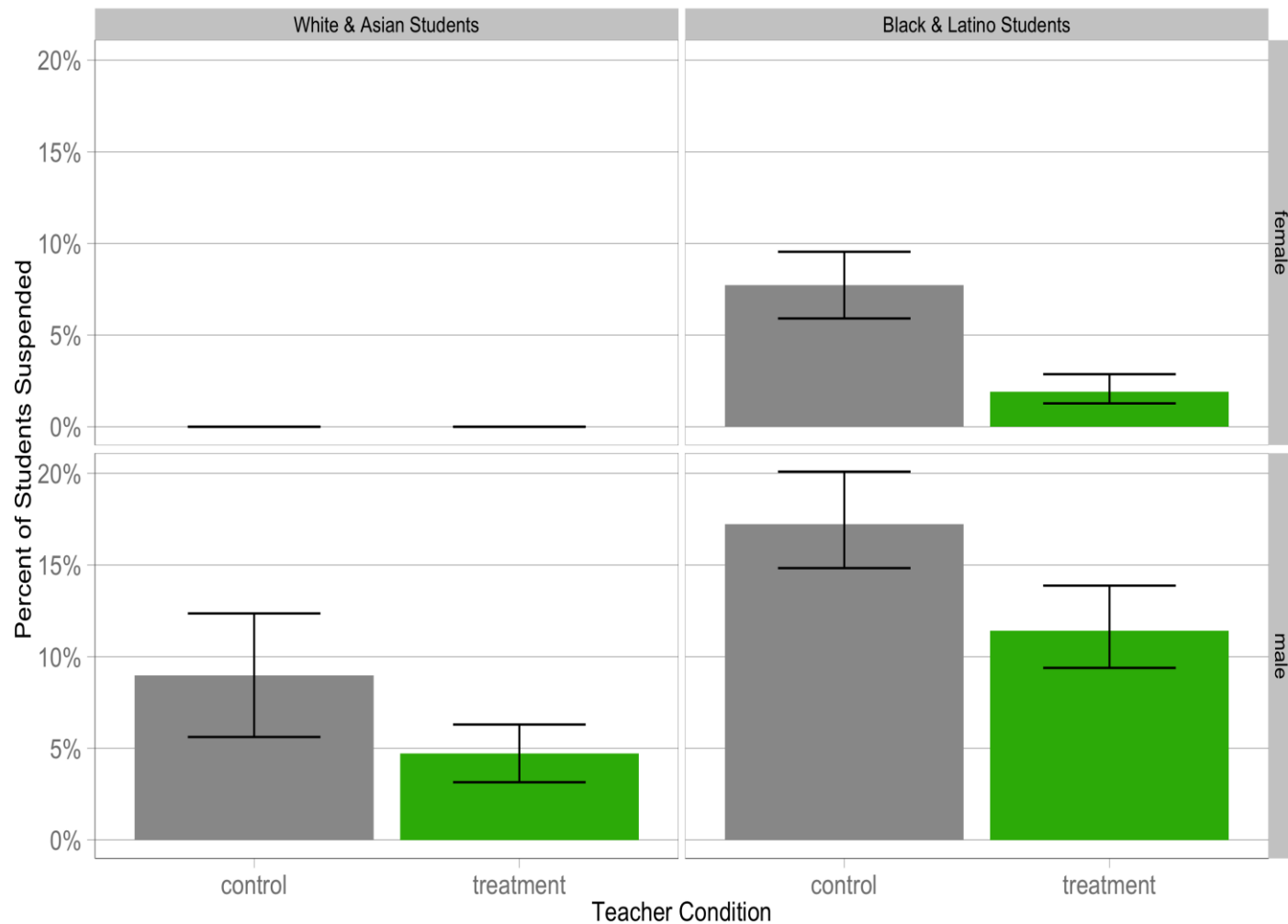
OVERALL EFFECT (SUSPENDED V. NOT)



EFFECT BY PRE-POST



EFFECT BY RACE & GENDER



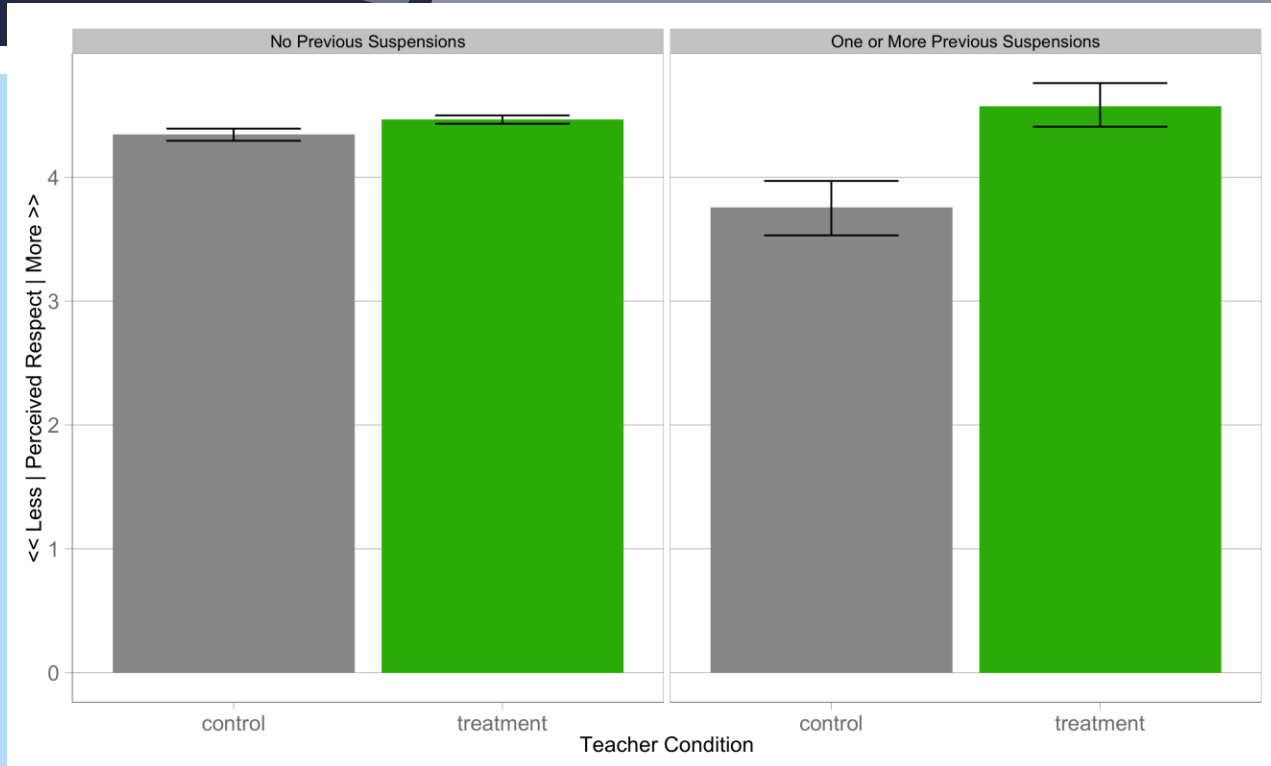
SAMPLE TREATED TEACHER RESPONSE

To build positive relationships I...

- Greet every student at the door with a smile every day no matter what has occurred the day before.
- I NEVER hold grudges. I try to remember that they are all the son or daughter of someone who loves them more than anything in the world. They are the light of someone's life!

RESPECT STUDENTS PERCEIVE

<< 1 = Strongly Disagree - 6 =
Strongly Agree >>



Indicate the extent to which you agree...
Teachers and other adults at my school treat me with respect?

OTHER INTERVENTIONS

- **Growth mindset**
 - **Carol Dweck**
- **Values-affirmation**
 - **Geoffrey Cohen**
- **Sense of Purpose**
 - **David Yeager**
- **Belonging Uncertainty**
 - **Gregory Walton**

OTHER RESOURCES

- ProjectImplicit.org
- PERTS.net
- [Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack](#) by Peggy McIntosh
- [Check your Privilege](#) (Buzzfeed quiz mentioned during webinar)

THANK YOU!

- **Dr. Jason Okonofua**

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