



UNIVERSITY of  
**SOUTH FLORIDA**

**College of Behavioral & Community Sciences**

**APPLYING IMPLEMENTATION SCIENCE TO  
SCHOOL MENTAL HEALTH AND VIOLENCE  
PREVENTION PROGRAMS**

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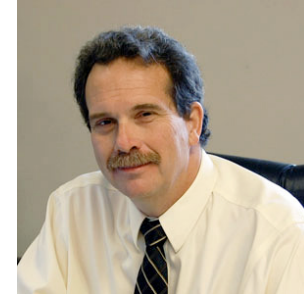
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# STUDY TEAM

# ABOUT THE STUDY

Funded by NIJ to  
study implementation  
of STOP Programs

Cross-site survey to  
assess broader  
experiences from a  
large sample

Case studies to  
understand local  
contexts and factors  
among smaller  
sample

# IMPLEMENTATION SCIENCE

# WHAT IS IMPLEMENTATION SCIENCE?

"The scientific study of methods to promote the systemic uptake of research findings and other evidence-based practices into routine practice"

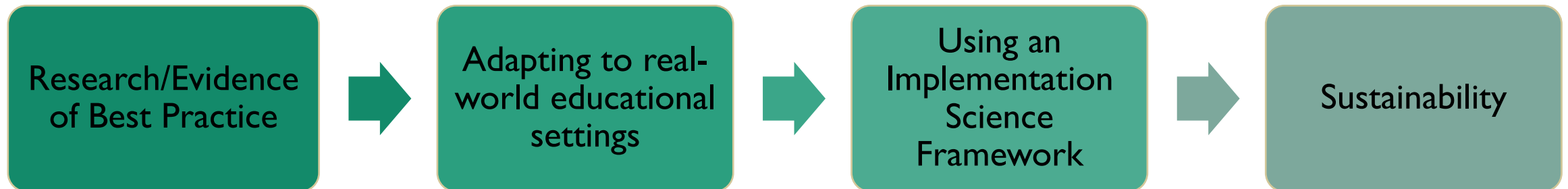
(Bauer, Damschroder, Hagedorn, Smith, & Kilbourne, 2015)



Bridging the gap between  
research and real-world  
practice

# IMPLEMENTATION SCIENCE IN EDUCATION / MENTAL HEALTH & VIOLENCE PREVENTION

“...attention to program implementation remains, for the most part, an **optional** consideration...” (Nordstrum, et al., 2017)



# HOW WAS IS USED FOR OUR STUDY?



# NIRN MODEL



## NATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION RESEARCH NETWORK (NIRN) FRAMEWORK

- Four Stages: Exploration, Installation, Initial Implementation, and Full Implementation
- Continuous process/non-linear
- As time passes and organizational changes occur, the stages of implementation should be re-addressed

# IMPLEMENTATION STAGES

## Exploration

- Assess Needs
- Examine Intervention Components
- Consider Implementation Drivers
- Assess Fit

## Installation

- Acquire Resources
- Prepare Organization
- Prepare Implementation Drivers
- Prepare Staff

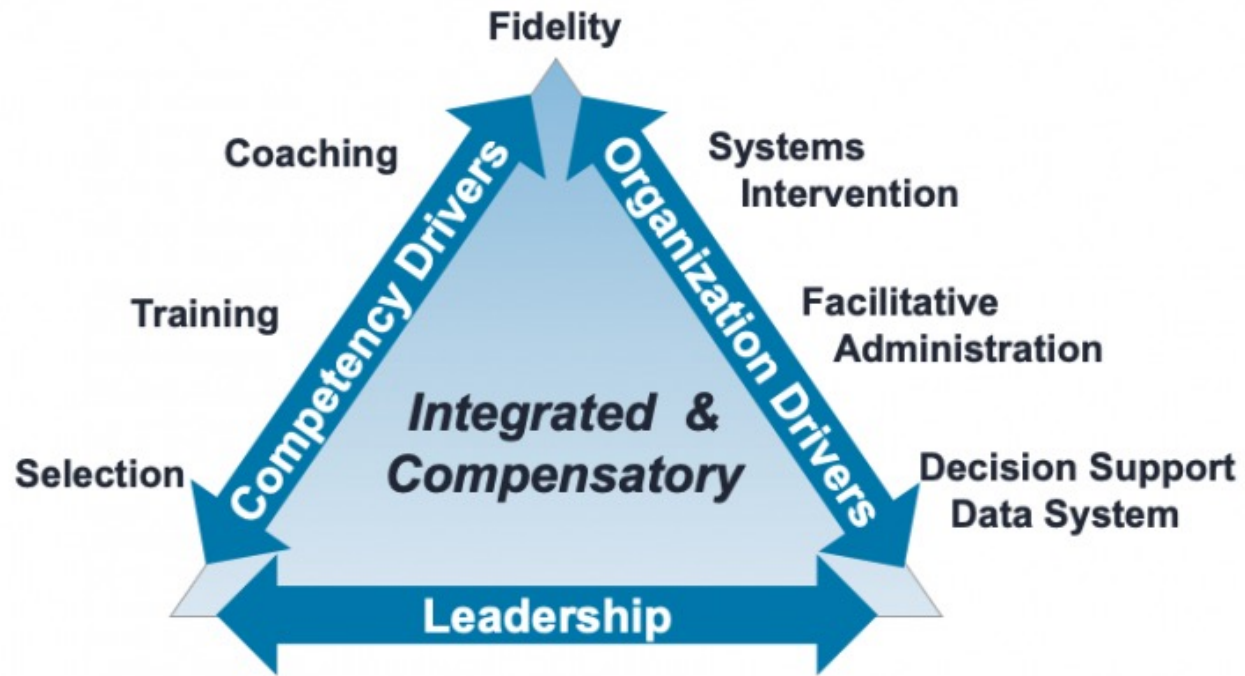
## Initial Implementation

- Adjust Implementation Drivers
- Manage Change
- Deploy Data Systems
- Initiate Improvement Cycles

## Full Implementation

- Monitor & Manage Implementation Drivers
- Achieve Fidelity & Outcome Benchmarks
- Further Improve Fidelity and Outcomes

## Implementation Drivers

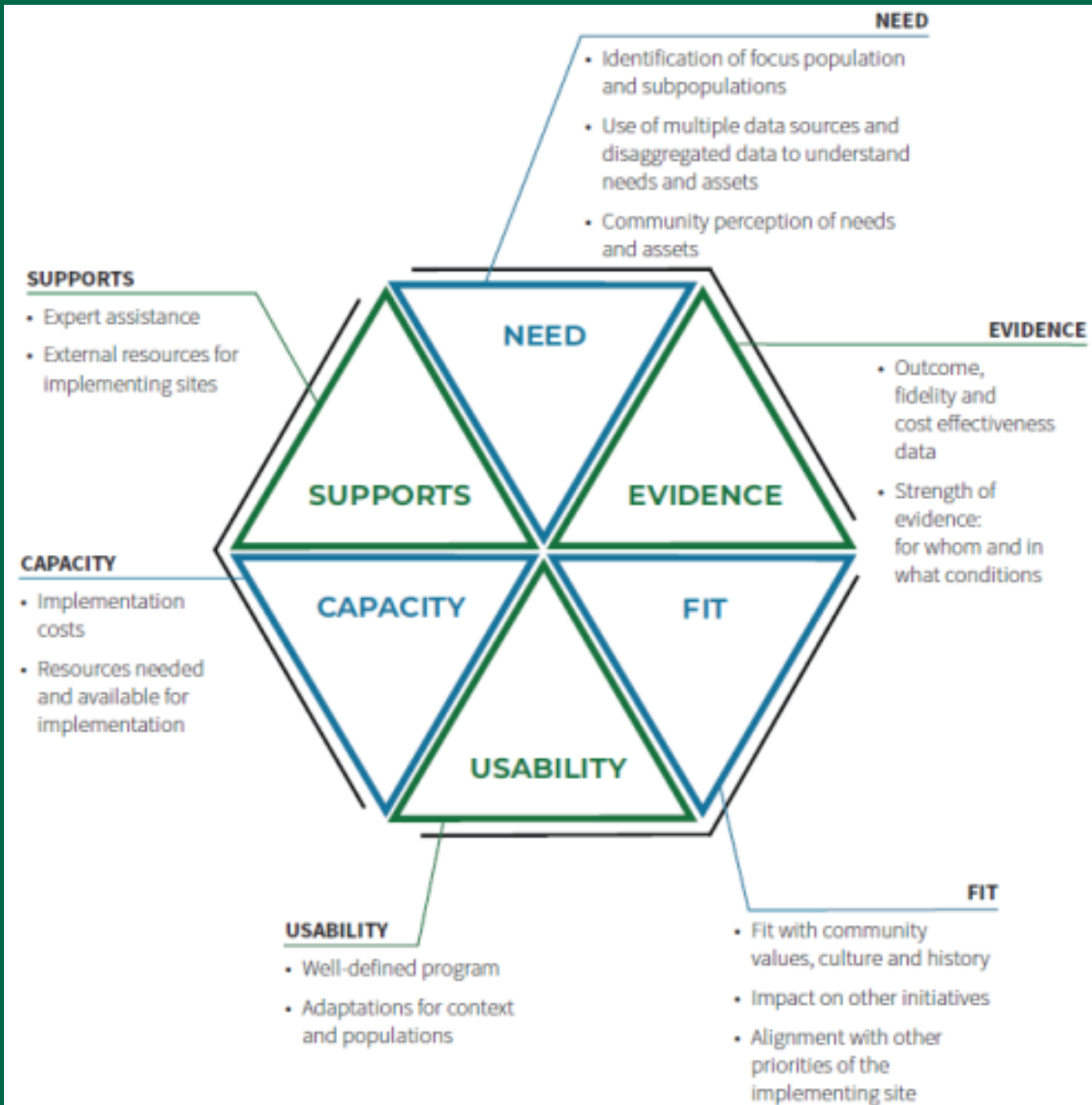


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**IMPLEMENTATION  
DRIVERS**

<https://nirn.fpg.unc.edu/ai-hub>

# USING NIRN HEXAGON TOOL TO DEVELOP SURVEY



# FINDINGS

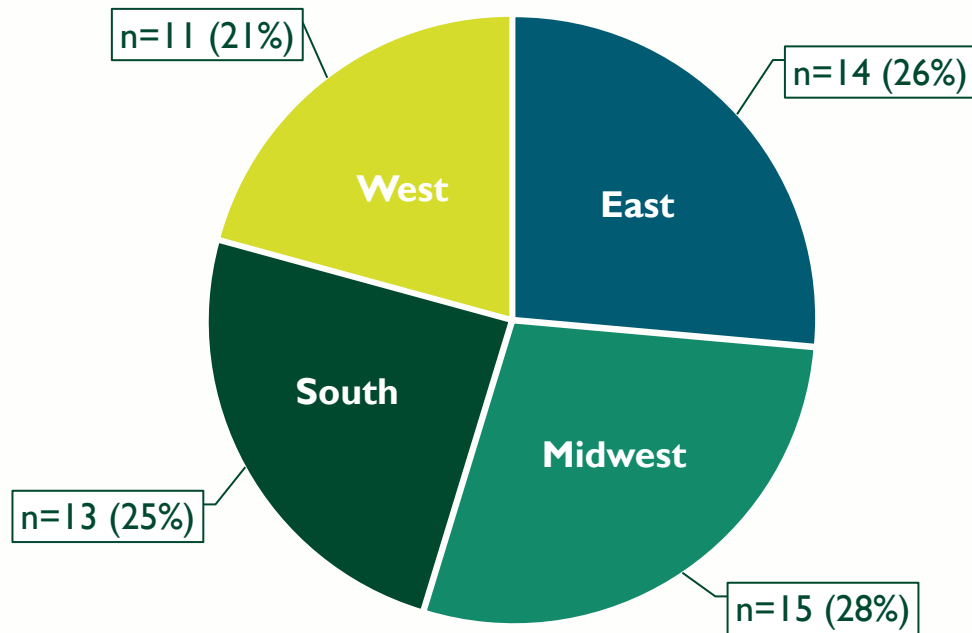
## QUALITATIVE INTERVIEWS

- Case study interviews across six sites
- Participants were at differing levels of implementation
- Most reported a limited knowledge of implementation science
- Participants rated the effectiveness of their programs implementation a six or higher
- Participants highlighted the benefits of strong communication as a facilitator to the strength of implementation

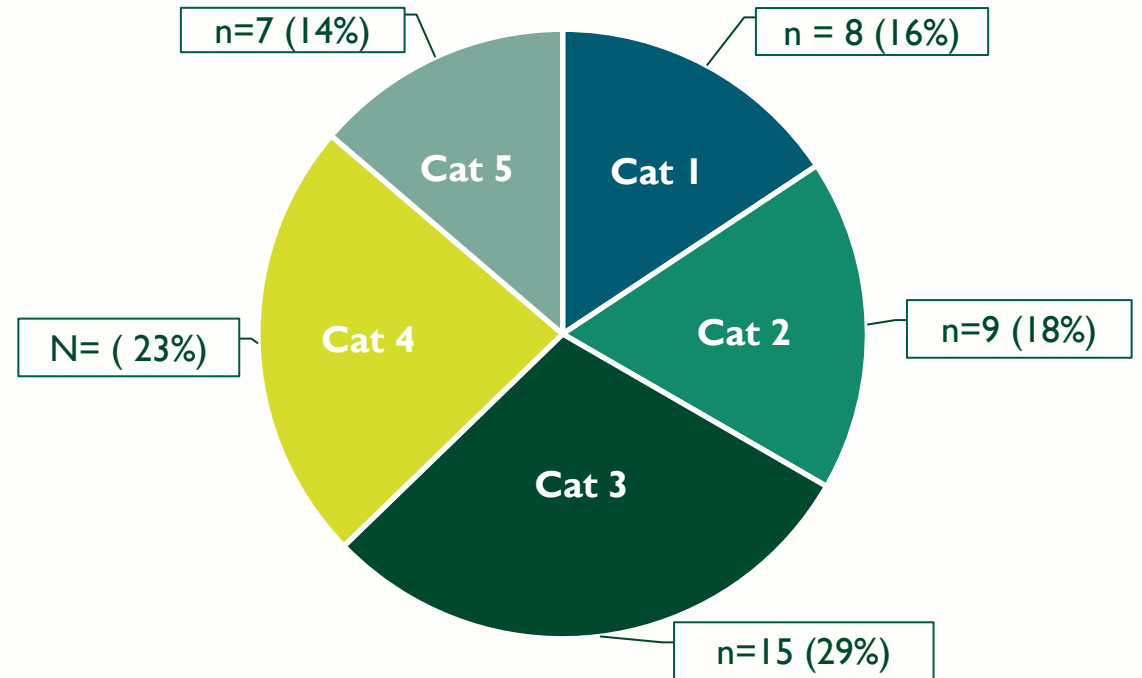
# SURVEY FINDINGS

# GRANTEE PARTICIPATION IN SURVEY (N = 52)

By Region



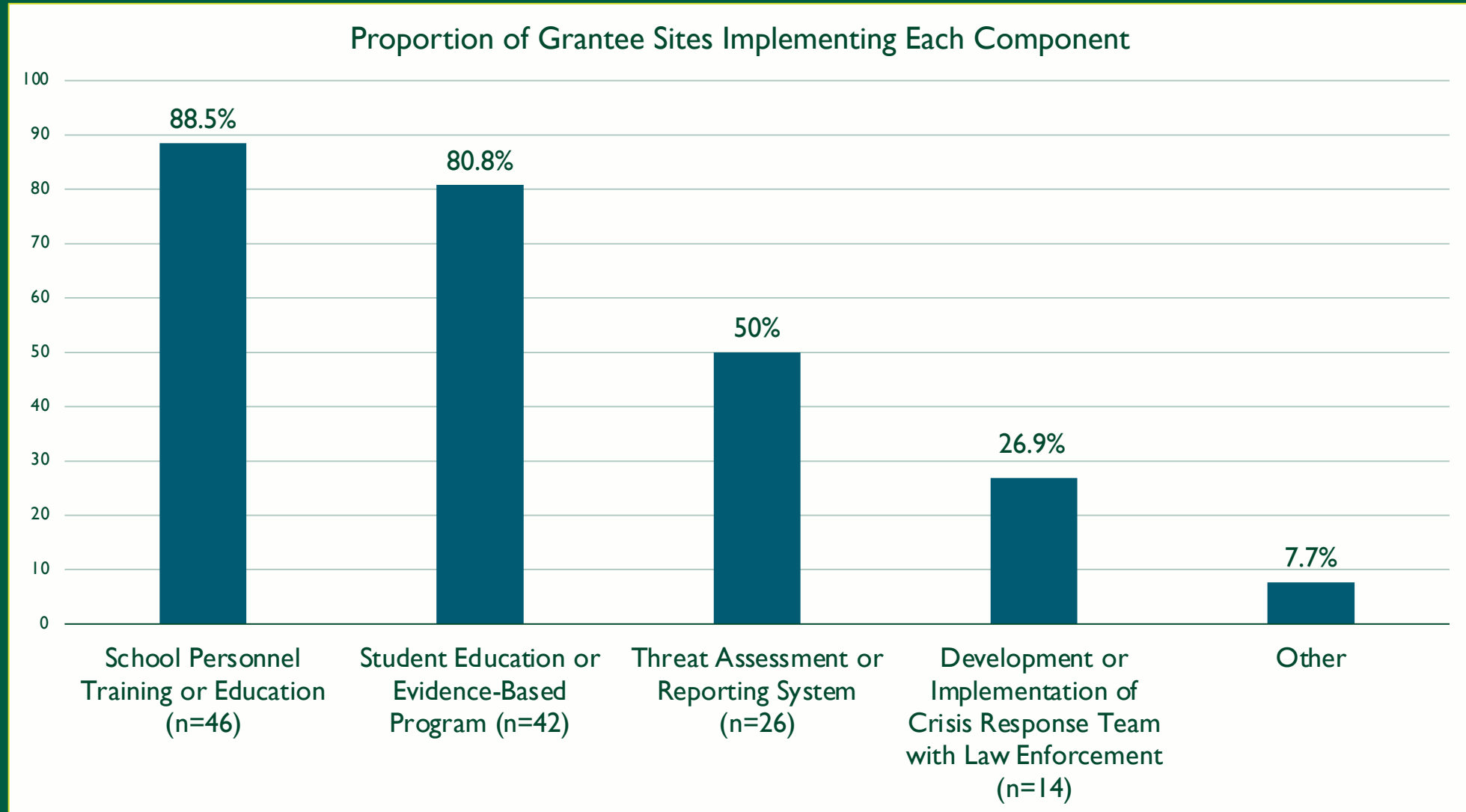
By Population Category



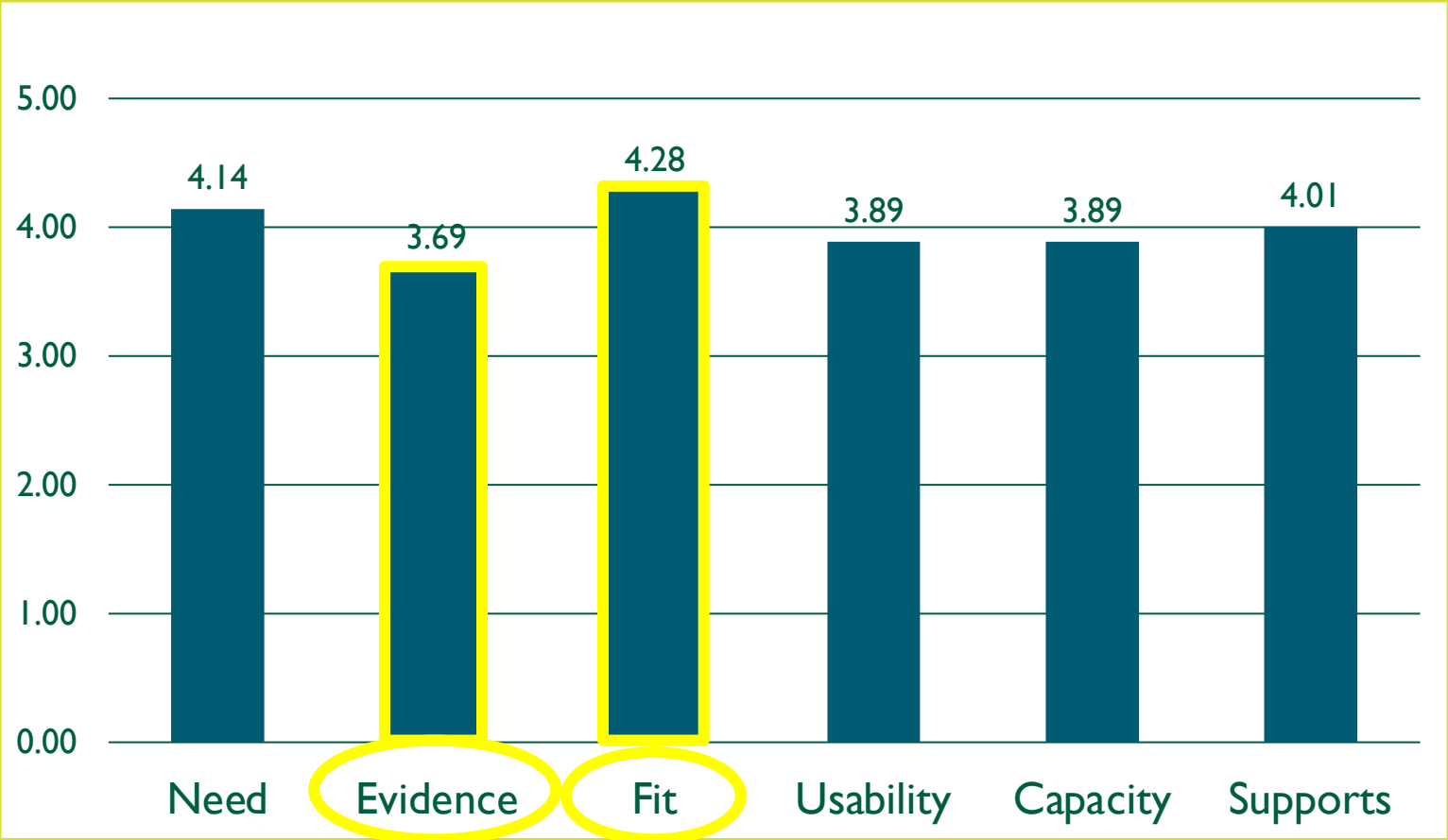
- Category 1 = state, pop > 5mil
- Category 2 = state, pop < 5mil
- Category 3 = urban area/large county, pop > 500k
- Category 4 = suburban area/medium county, pop 100k – 500k
- Category 5 = rural area/small county, pop < 100k



# PROGRAM COMPONENTS

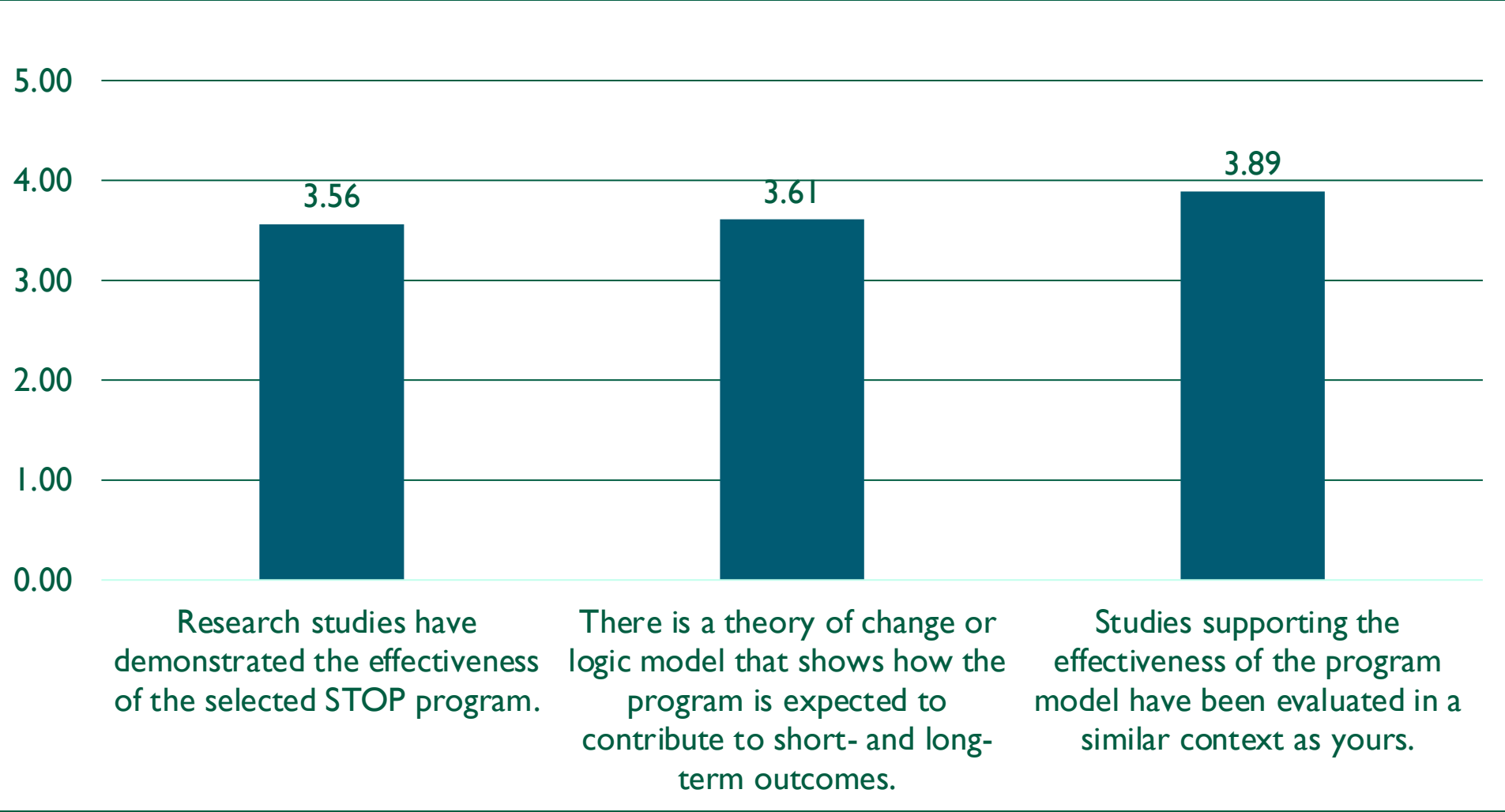


# IMPLEMENTATION FACILITATORS AND BARRIERS



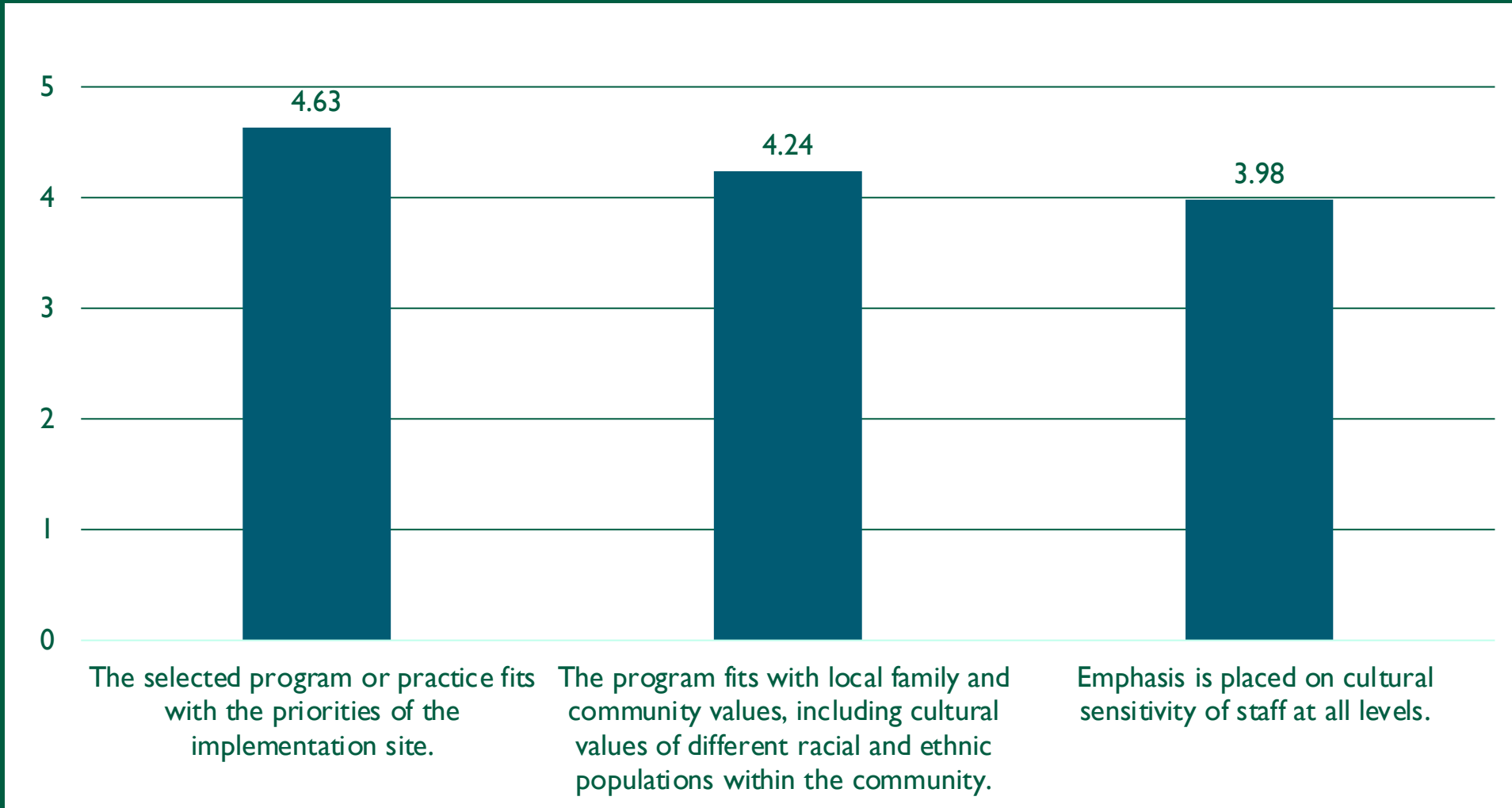
The following scale was used: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree

# EVIDENCE



The following scale was used: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree

# FIT



The following scale was used: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree

# BARRIERS AND FACILITATORS

## Barriers

Social and emotional impacts of pandemic on students

Staff turnover and lack of buy-in from staff and administrators

Prioritization of academics over social and emotional learning

Racial unrest and need to address social equality as part of school safety

## Facilitators

Training in mental health, trauma, risk behaviors, SEL, and intervention strategies

Addressing inclusion by enhancing social supports and connections for students

Developing resource centers and providing funding for concrete needs

Implementing collaborative initiatives and partnering with local agencies

# COVID IMPACT

## Challenges

- Lack of in-person meetings
- Training cancellations
- Stress and anxiety among teachers and students
- Inadequate staff to address mental health

## Strengths

- Prioritization of mental wellbeing
- Enhanced innovation
- Inter-school collaborations
- New uses of technology

## Opportunities

- Hiring additional personnel
- Prioritizing professional development
- Establishing crisis responses
- Developing clear goals and plans

# INFORMING SCHOOL INITIATIVES

# LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE STUDY

Few sites were aware of implementation science – could this have improve experiences?

Population level or region didn't have significant impact on experiences

Adaptations to the pandemic led to re-assessment of core implementation components

Importance of collaboration was highlighted

Academics prioritized in many cases – implications for MH/VP programs





## APPLYING IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORKS



Plan school-based and collaborative initiatives (Odom, et al., 2014)



Build into grant proposals



Determine Readiness



Assess existing implementation efforts and determine needs



Understand barriers to effective implementation (Meagher, et al., 2021)

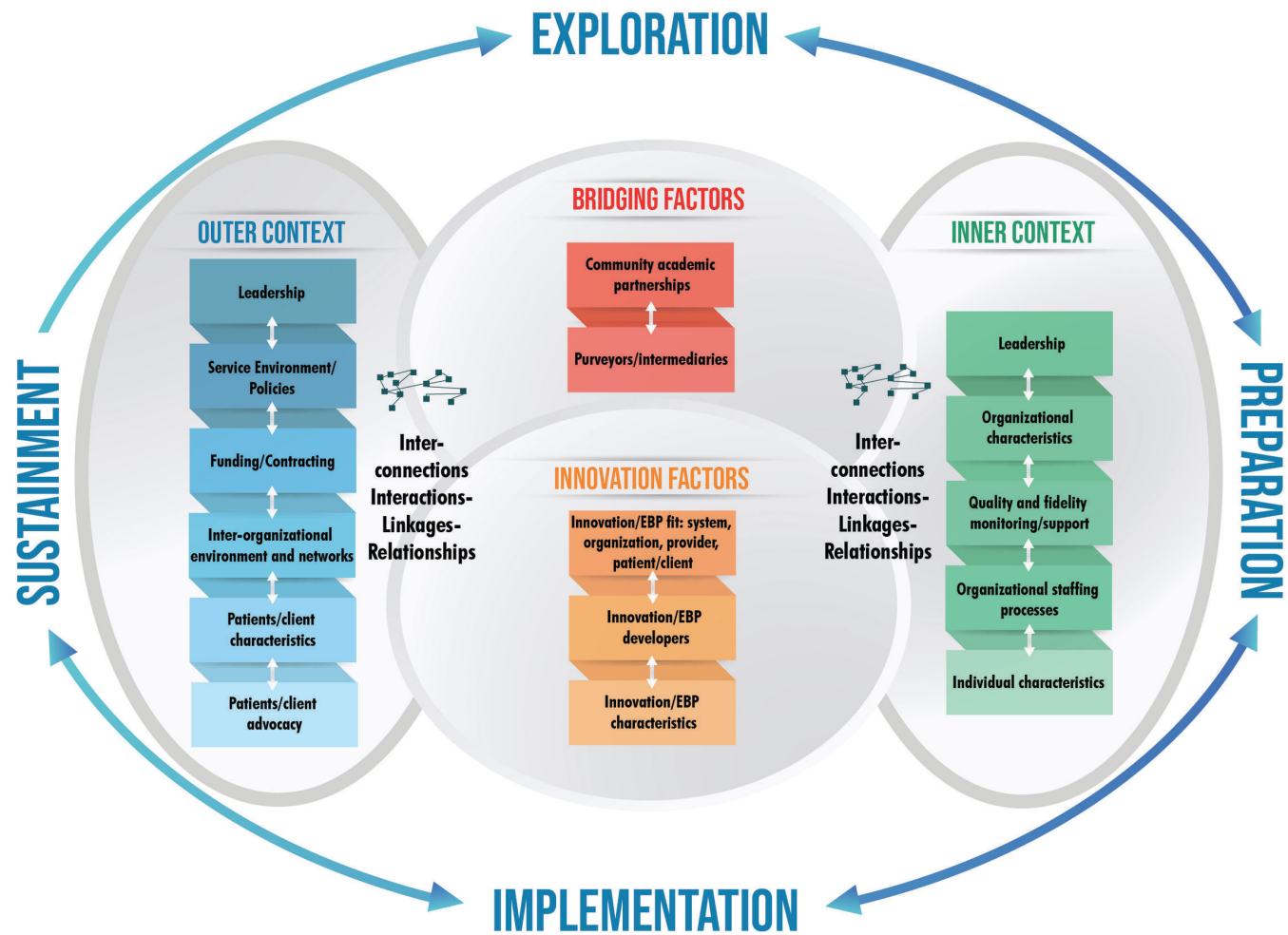


Enhance partnerships and community relationships



Provide quality assurance

**EPIS  
(EXPLORATION,  
PREPARATION,  
IMPLEMENTATION,  
SUSTAINMENT)**



# GIP (GENERIC IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK)

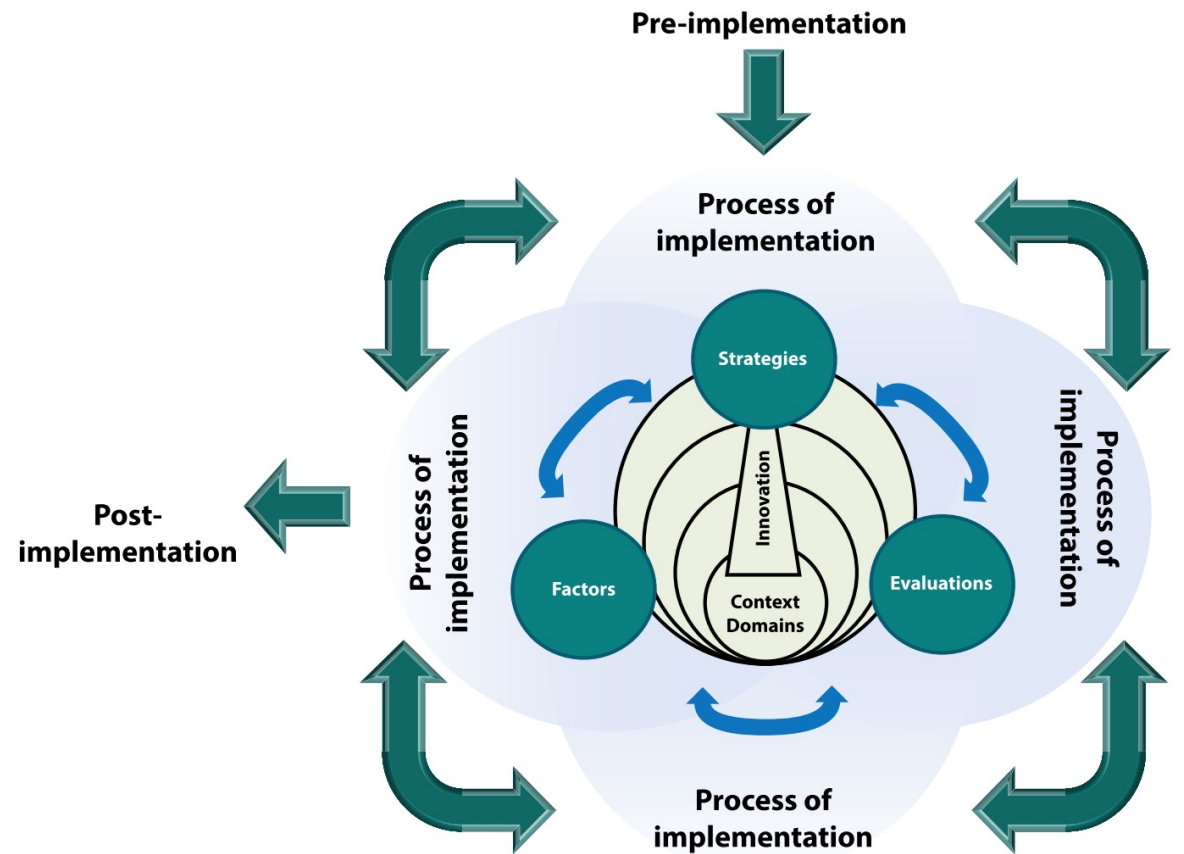


Figure 2 Generic Implementation Framework (GIF).



## Part of the SS/HS Framework Implementation Toolkit

I. Plan

2. Implement

3. Sustain & Expand

### Evidence-Based Module Series

#### Module #2 Preparing to Implement Evidence-Based Programs in School Settings

The following checklist can be used as a guide as you prepare to implement, evaluate, support, and sustain your evidence-based programs (EBPs).

I. *Establish Partner Roles*

- \_\_\_\_\_ Establish roles.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Create structure for effective decision making.

II. *Logic Model*

- \_\_\_\_\_ Define goals.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Summarize baseline data.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Develop objectives.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Name the EBP.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Describe partners' roles.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Specify process measures.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Specify outcome measures.

III. *Fidelity and Adaptations*

- \_\_\_\_\_ Determine process to measure fidelity.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Consider whether adaptations are necessary.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Consult with others about adaptations.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Pilot and document adaptations.

IV. *Implementation Team and Champions*

- \_\_\_\_\_ Identify a team to assist with logistics, personnel, data management, and linkages.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Identify EBP champions to enhance engagement.

# SAMHSA SAFE SCHOOLS HEALTHY STUDENTS IMPLEMENTATION TOOLKIT

<https://www.samhsa.gov/resource/ebp/safe-schoolshealthy-students-framework-implementation-toolkit>

# THANK YOU!

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

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