![Institute for the Professional Development of Adult Educators logo](ipdae) **INSTITUTE FOR THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF ADULT EDUCATORS**
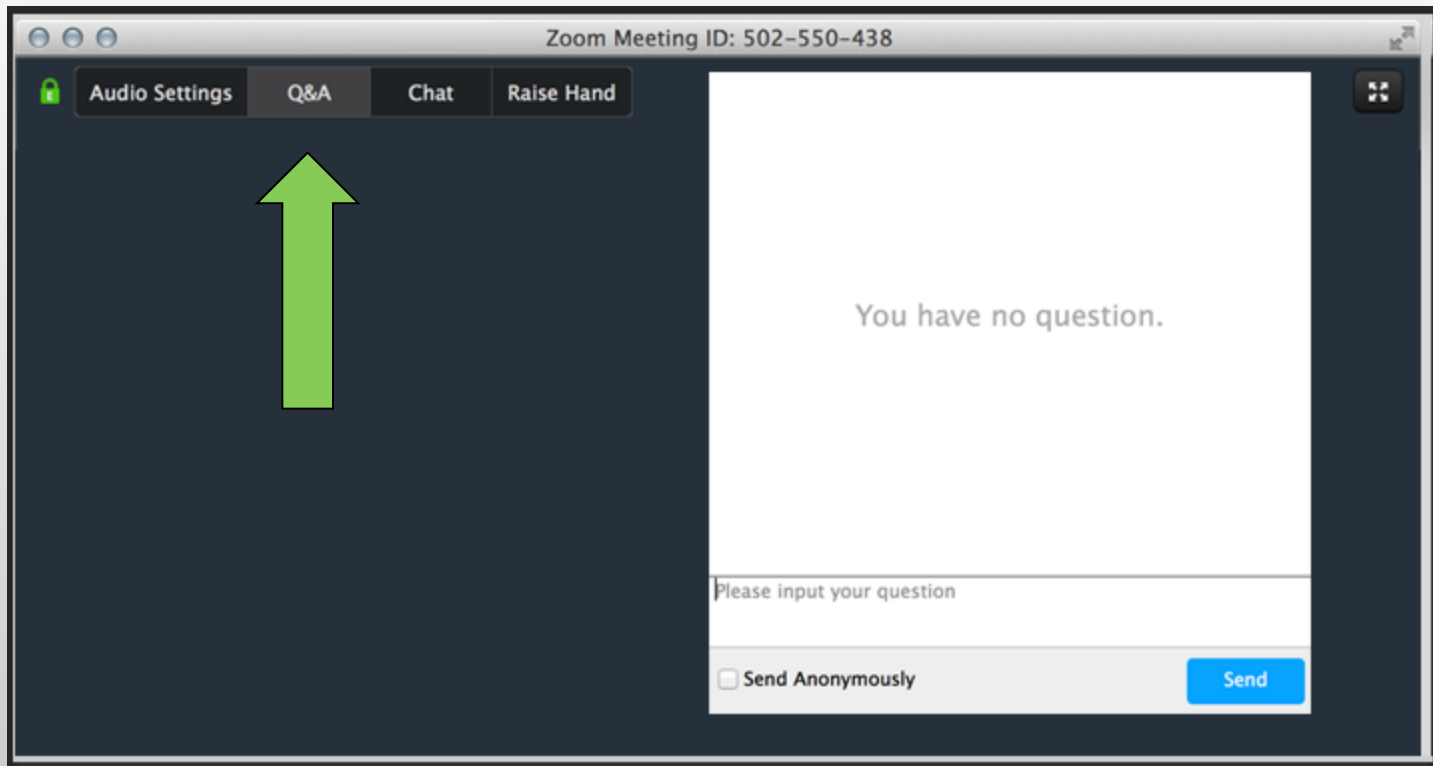
A Discussion on the Implementation of Evidence-Based Adult Education Retention Strategies

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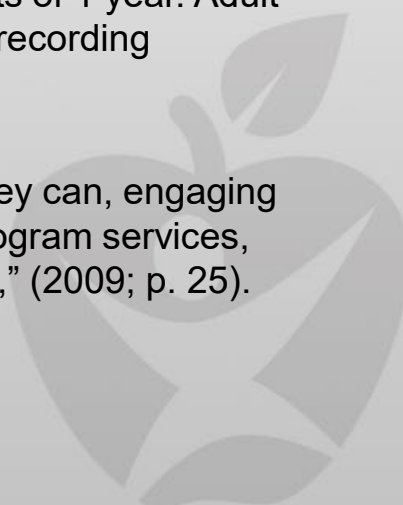- If you have question, please type it into the **Q&A** option.

- Attendee microphones will be muted. You will be in **listen only** mode.
- Today's presentation is being **recorded** and it will be archived and available on the IPDAE website within 48 hours.

Researchers in the Adult Education field have noted that adult literacy practitioners often make important decisions about program design and practice based on opinion, prior experience, and trial and error (Beder & Medina, 2001). Advisors and researchers in Adult Education suggest that practitioners need coaching to become better consumers of research and active partners, "in the process of connecting research and practice" (Comings & Soricone, 2007). Making evidence-based decisions is viewed as both relevant and important in supporting improvements in the field.

Defining Persistence in Adult Education

"Persistence can be seen as being comprised of two parts: intensity (the hours of instruction per month) and duration (the months of engagement in instruction). Persistence rates are reported as hours of instruction during a specific period of months, usually in increments of 1 year. Adult education programs often refer to persistence as retention and measure it by recording participation in formal classes or tutoring sessions," (Comings, 2009; p. 24).

Comings defines persistence as, "adults staying in programs for as long as they can, engaging in self-directed study or distance education when they must stop attending program services, and returning to program services as soon as the demands of their lives allow," (2009; p. 25).

Findings from one mixed methods study point toward a few markers of success in Adult Education programs that may help increase student persistence. The following program directed activities focus on keeping adult education students engaged toward educational advancement and success:

- Teacher knowledge and implementation of evidence-based instructional strategies

- Strong teacher-student interactions

- Views on standardized assessments focused on the use of data to inform instruction and track student growth

- The ability of the program to tap into student motivational factors

(Tighe, Barnes, Connor, & Steadman, 2013)

One characteristic consistently differentiated effective classrooms from less effective ones: whether students stated that their teachers were vital to their success. Whereas most students indicated that their teachers were available to help them pass the tests, there was a deep sense of gratitude and allegiance echoed in student statements of more effective teachers than statements about less effective ones.

Effective teachers were described as being knowledgeable, encouraging, supportive, approachable, and accessible. Some teachers fully embraced the notion that adult learners wished to be left alone to learn; however, there was a striking difference in the levels of student enthusiasm in classrooms with greater teacher involvement (higher value-added scores). Across these classrooms, teachers strove to develop supportive and collaborative learning communities for their students. These teachers articulated the importance of setting long-term goals, developing life skills, recognizing and increasing students' self-worth, and valuing and supporting classmates.

If teachers consistently interact with adult learners in ways that the students perceive as supportive and encouraging, then teachers also serve as an important source of motivation for some learners.

(Tighe, Barnes, Connor, & Steadman, 2013)
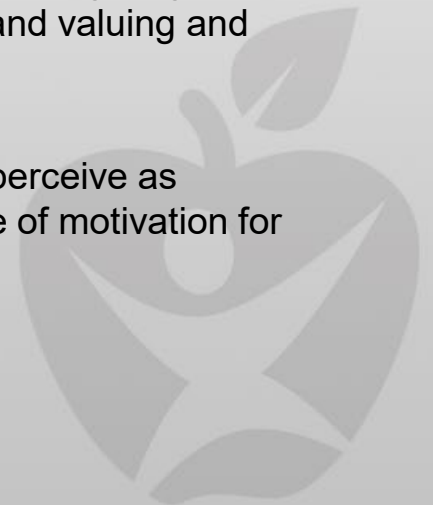
Teaching students about the formation and attainment of goals was a priority at high value added adult education sites.

One teacher explained, "Many of our students come in not knowing what a goal is, how to set a goal, or even how, after they have that goal, how to establish a plan to attain that goal. What we found in the past is that after students have received their diploma, they don't know where to go from there. What is the next step? It has been our goal as teachers to involve the host site counselors, the testing staff, to come in and talk to our students several times a year. Tell them about the trades, the financial aid, the testing. We have also asked the host site staff to take the students on a field trip to the different trades because it's one thing to hear about it or read about it, but it is another thing to go into a classroom and see the teachers asking questions, see the setup of the classroom, and that motivates them to pursue those goals rather than just thinking about them."

(Tighe, Barnes, Connor, & Steadman, 2013)

Findings from a literature review provide implications for Adult Education programs that may help increase student persistence. The following program directed activities focus on keeping adult education students engaged toward educational advancement and success: Addressing student negative attitudes toward education

Starting intake, orientation, and instruction with student goal setting and matching students to classes and classwork is based on their needs. It is especially important that this connection is made clear within the first three weeks of instruction.

Teacher/program ability to track student progress through the use of valid and reliable assessments is important for adult education student persistence.

(Quigley, 1997; Quigley, 2000; Smith, Lee, Lampkin-Osborne, & Rall, 2020)

Adult education programs should have a plan in place to use criteria for selecting interventions and curricula that have been shown to have a positive effect on student achievement.

Programs and teachers should also ensure that instructional practices are selected and used that are shown through empirical evidence to increase student achievement.

(Smith, Lee, Lampkin-Osborne, & Rall, 2020)

Findings from a literature review showed that effective persistence plans provide student support and improve instruction. The following components of persistence plans were found to be beneficial:

- Including a strong message in persistence plans that the program exists to help students reach goals

- Allowing program adjustments to accommodate new student goals as they arise

- Setting criteria for measuring persistence that include hours of attendance, student achievement, student goal attainment, and improved completion rates

(Tracy-Mumford, 1994)

The literature review presented elements of a student persistence plan that weaves persistence strategies into all aspects of program structure:

- Recruitment methods should provide enough information for potential students to make informed decisions about enrolling

- Intake and orientation procedures should help students understand the program, set realistic expectations, build working relationships with program staff, and establish learning goals

- Initial assessment tools should provide students and teachers with information on both cognitive and affective needs, be integrated with instruction, and form the foundation for measuring progress

- Programs and teachers should establish strategies for formally recognizing student achievement

(Tracy-Mumford, 1994)
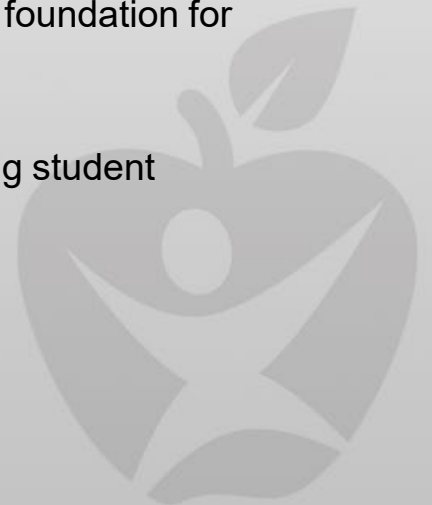
Brian Bush
Broward County

Challenges:

➢ Collaboration & Collective Decision Making

  o Do it because it's what's best for students not because somebody said you should. If not, they will check the box and go back to what they think is best.

Execute **MY** plan!

Challenges:

➢ Collaboration & Collective Decision Making

  o Don't jockey for position on the best idea, rather work to find common ground and include everyone. This is the hard part, but also where the investment comes.
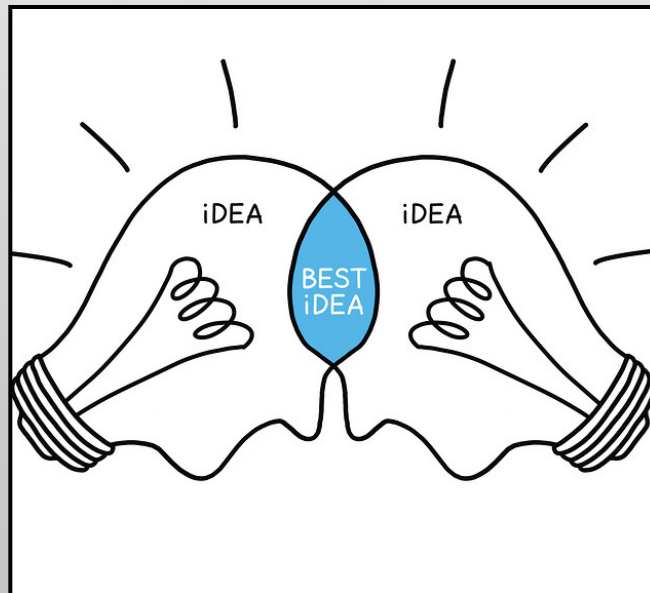
Challenges:

➤ Mindset Shift

  o Intentionally and strategically create a culture that is open to new strategies, approaches, and improvement. Push for change is not an indictment on current practice.

We Already Do This ✕

We Can Do This Better ✓

Big Four Research-Based Strategies:

➢ Build Connections with Students

- o Not just teachers, point of entry, clerical, registrars, testers, advisors, customer satisfaction, exceed expectations mentality.

- o Became more difficult through the pandemic and student reluctance to participate in on-campus activities. Requires more intentional effort, and searching out ways for above and beyond to stand out.

  - o Avoid Student Hot Potato

  - o Remote Registration

  - o Virtual (Synchronous) Orientation

  - o Teacher Welcome Letters
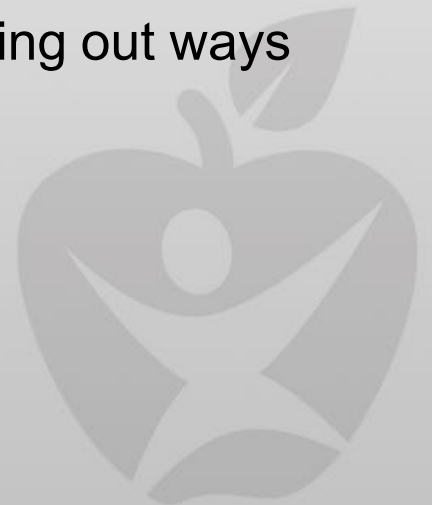
Big Four Research-Based Strategies:

➢ Goal Setting
➢ Cost-Benefit Analysis
    o "The real reason you came here for."

Big Four Research-Based Strategies:

➤ Clear connections between classroom learning and student goals.

- o Classroom planning and lesson delivery needs to be just as intentionally geared towards student short-term and long-term goals. Research has shown that if they don't see that connection, they are far less likely to perist.

- o Excellent entry-point into deeper development, alignment, and commitment to consistent workforce contextualization and Integrated Education and Training (IET) programming.
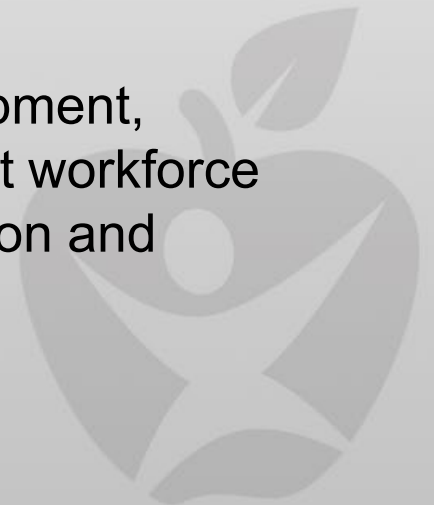
Ronald Cruz
Hillsborough County

Anne Morgan
Pinellas County

IPDAE BY EDUCATORS FOR EDUCATORS

Recruitment and Retention

Pinellas County Schools Adult Education 2/18/2019

Student Recruitment

Recruitment **Marketing**

MARKETING AND RECRUITMENT
PINELLAS COUNTY SCHOOLS ADULT EDUCATION
8-8-2019

❖ How do students learn about the program? Word of mouth from friends or family community members, flyers, ads.

❖ A sign, button, or promotion can trigger action

❖ Get the word out! Social media, signs, radio/television, internet searches

Spring 2020 District wide Training Participant Surveys

✓ Participants grouped by schools - asked to respond to 5 questions

✓ 103 teacher / administrator / coordinator responses

✓ 128 ideas, strategies, and instructional approaches to improve recruitment and retention best practices

Every Student Counts

It's Your Turn

Student Success Strategies

Every Student Counts

How do your student registration/intake procedures establish classroom and student expectations and how are these disseminated to the students and shared with other teachers at your school?

What strategies are you using to help students relieve stress and decrease self-doubt while ensuring that learning is engaging and encourages active participation for students, peer, and teachers?

Every Student Counts

Please check one:
ABE/GED/Adult High school_____
ESOL_____

Question 1

Question 2

Question 3

Question 4

Question 5

BY EDUCATORS FOR EDUCATORS

Every Student Counts

What is special about your classroom climate/environment that makes it a space in which students want to work and learn and what do you do to keep students participating in class, i.e., removing barriers for students to attend class or alternative study arrangements if a student has to "stop out"?

Every Student Counts

What strategies are you using to support students and foster educational resilience that promote positive interactions that they may not have experienced in the past?

Every Student Counts

What processes and methods do I use to assist students to establish goals, explain standards, review their progress and select dates for post-testing?
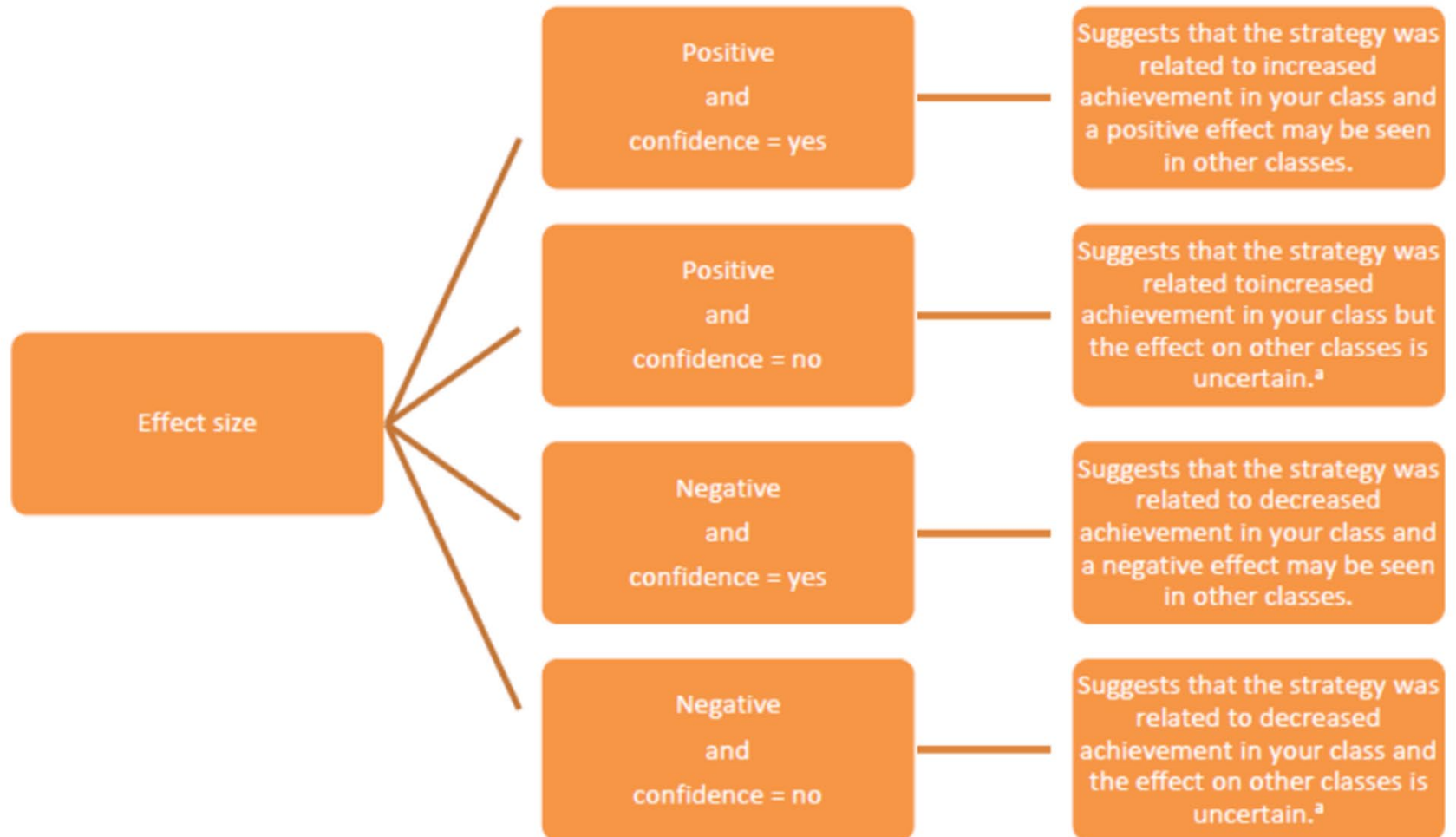
Recruitment and Retention - Next Steps

✓ Participation in an REL Research Study

✓ 4 teachers- 2 ESL 3 ABE/GED

✓ Opportunities to put teacher survey ideas into practice

✓ REL Strategy for Pinellas County:

Starting intake, orientation and instruction with goal setting and matching students to classes and classwork based on their needs. Addressing negative attitudes toward education.
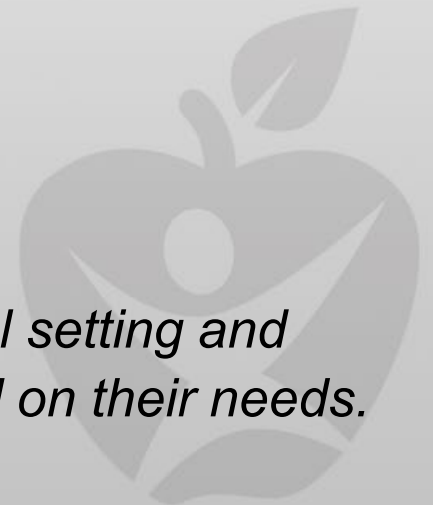
Strategy (fill out here)	Addressing negative attitudes toward education ; Starting Intake, orientation, and instruction with student goal setting and matching students to classes and classwork
Start/End Date (fill out here)	8/24/20-10/16/20

Results

Baseline equivalence determines whether groups had significant differences in achievement before you implemented your strategy.	The confidence is the certainty of the effect related to an estimate of the range of the effect size if repeated samples were taken. If the range crosses zero there is not much certainty that this effect would hold true in other samples.	Effect size shows differences in average scores between the control and experimental group.
Is there baseline equivalence?	Confidence in the effect size?	Effect Size
Yes	Yes	0.97

Refer to the *Reflection Worksheet* for additional information about how to interpret the results.

Results: Effect Size 0.97; Baseline equivalence=yes; confidence=yes

Effect size

Positive and confidence = yes — Suggests that the strategy was related to increased achievement in your class and a positive effect may be seen in other classes.

Positive and confidence = no — Suggests that the strategy was related to increased achievement in your class but the effect on other classes is uncertain.[a]

Negative and confidence = yes — Suggests that the strategy was related to decreased achievement in your class and a negative effect may be seen in other classes.

Negative and confidence = no — Suggests that the strategy was related to decreased achievement in your class and the effect on other classes is uncertain.[a]

Results: Effect Size 0.97; N=14

Interpreting results

NOTE: When compared to business-as-usual control groups, significant positive impacts are very rare.

Statistical significance
- p-value < .05 significant
- Effect size (Hedges' g)
- WWC designates ES > 0.25 and p-value > .05 as substantively important
- Conventional practice for interpreting effect sizes (Cohen, 1988)
  - 0.20 small
  - 0.50 moderate
  - 0.80 large