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# **Measurement of Best Practices in Mental Health Services in Special Education to Promote Educational Success**

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# Education and the Economy

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Successful products of the nation's public education system ...

- become gainfully employed after matriculation
- contribute to society
- boost the economy

(Alliance for Excellent Education, 2001)

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# Education and the Economy

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"Improving educational outcomes creates a wave of economic benefits that include boosting individual earnings, home and auto sales, job and economic growth, spending and investment, and tax revenue in the state (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2001)."

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## Poor Preparation in Education

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- Only 1 out of 3 students graduate high school
- Less than HALF of these graduates are prepared for college

(The National Assessment of Education Progress, 2009)

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# Mental Health in Education

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- 20% of all elementary and secondary students currently have mental health needs that create barriers to learning (Ferguson, 2008)
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# Poor Preparation Among Students with EBDs

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- Students with Emotional Behavior Disorders (EBDs) graduate at a lower rate than their counterparts, and of those that do graduate, less than half graduate on time (Cheney 2008).
  - Students with EBDs have reported dropout rates of 55% (Cheney 2008).
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# Mental Health and Education Quality

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- Distribution of resources (i.e. one on one instruction) (Cheney 2008).
    - 5% of the schools' population; 50% of teachers' and administrators' time.
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# Mental Health and Education- Need for Treatment

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- Need more funding for mental health treatment programs to enhance classroom management (National Association of School Psychologists 2008).
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# Dollars for Education

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- little to no Return on Investment (ROI)
    - measurement of successful learning per dollar spent on education (Center for American Progress, 2011)
  - Dollars spent on public education: \$506.8 billion
    - \$8.3 billion on other programs (including programs such as community services and adult education)
    - \$5,447 on special education, specifically (U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2009).
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# The Study

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- best practices for mental health in education
  - cost effective mental health services
  - modeling special education programs after existing mental-health treatment programs
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# Previous Research - Successful Programs

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- Educational approach which accommodates individual students - "Individualization" (National Institute for Urban School Improvement, 2000)
  - Nurturing teacher-student relationship (American Institutes of Research, 2006)
  - Teacher Training (National Joint Committee on Learning Disabilities (2006)
  - Counseling in Schools (American Academy of Pediatrics 1994).
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## The Study - Limitations

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Population sample: Special Education Instructors in the Baltimore/Washington D.C. area

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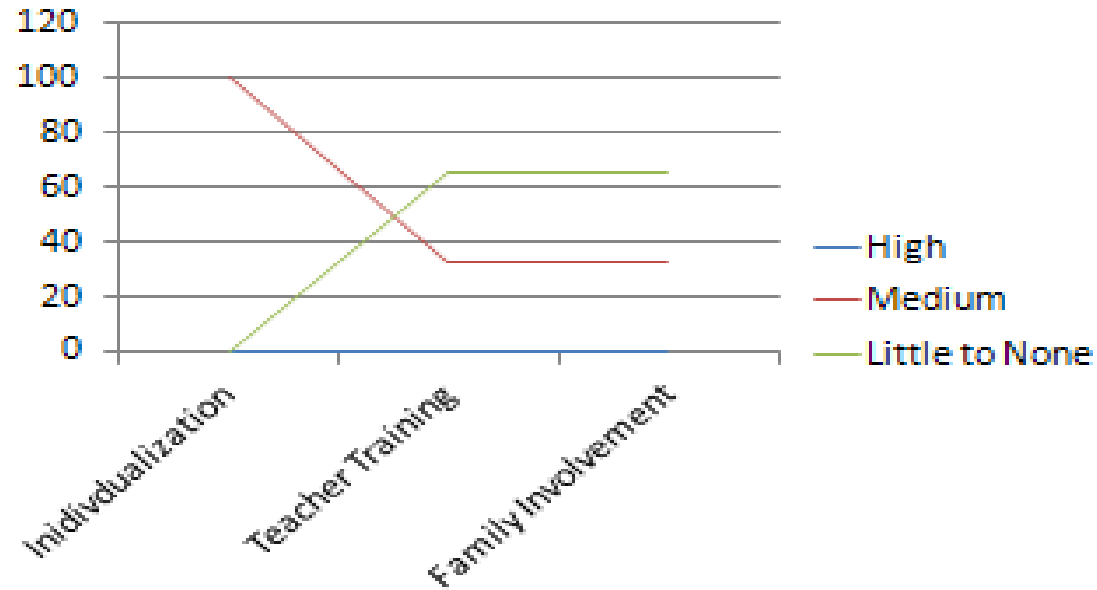
# Results

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- Individualization - *"sometimes"* - 100%
  - Training - *"Strongly disagree"* - 66%
  - Family Involvement - *academic, but not behavioral*
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# Results

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# Recommendations

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- More support and resources for teachers
  - Individual attention to students
  - Teacher Training
  - Increase family involvement
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# Conclusion

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- costly solutions:
    - therapy, training, hiring more teachers for a lower teacher/student ratio
  - free solutions
    - parent involvement
  - worth the investment
    - more qualified graduates to stimulate the economy
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