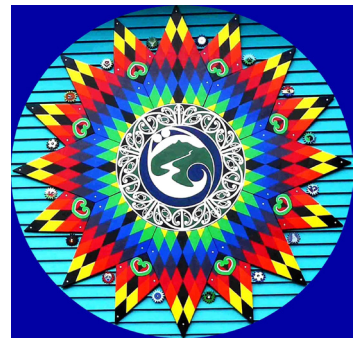# Benefits and barriers to the embedding and sustainability of IYT knowledge and strategies after facilitator support has ceased

Margaret Oxley

ABSTRACT

As a facilitator of the Incredible Years for Teachers Programme (IYT), I have found that the classroom management strategies participant teachers learned during the 6-month programme period have not been embedded and sustained in their use through time. This inquiry investigated the benefits and barriers to IYT being spontaneously, consistently and continuously used, embedded and sustained in classroom practice.

Sixteen teachers who had completed the IYT programme participated in an online survey and two of these participated in a follow-up interview. Thirteen participants reported that they found workshop attendance to be beneficial and 92% stated they were onfident in using the strategies. However, the survey results showed that most used only some of the strategies in their classroom practice and that there was a decline in their use through time. Potential barriers to use related to a lack of support once the workshops had been completed. The results suggest that teachers would benefit from continued support from their IYT facilitators after the programme has been completed. Implications of the inquiry findings for teachers, IYT facilitators and policy makers are discussed.

Research Paper

Key words: Inclusive practice, IYT

INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE

In New Zealand, the teaching force that uses yesterday's professional knowledge to prepare today's students for tomorrow's society can no longer be tolerated (Timperley, 2003).

I am employed as a Resource Teacher of Learning and Behaviour (RTLB) in New Zealand, working with teachers and students in Years 1–10 whose needs are varied and diverse. The focus of the RTLB role is working with teachers to bring about improved outcomes for students who experience difficulties with learning and/or behaviour. This work has been shown to make a significant contribution to the move towards more inclusive schools (Education Review Office (ERO), 2016). Education leaders build teacher capacity through carefully targeted professional learning and development (PLD), which in turn builds student capacity and resilience – where ako[1] is acknowledged (ERO, 2018).

Since 2011, New Zealand RTLB have been providing Webster-Stratton's Incredible Years for Teachers (IYT) Workshops (Webster-Stratton, 2012), part of her wider Incredible Years series of programmes, that aim to deliver evidence-based programmes and materials that develop positive parent-teacher-child relationships. IYT is a classroom-based behaviour management programme which underpins the Ministry of Education (MOE) initiative, Positive Behaviour for Learning School Wide (PB4L-SW) (MOE, 2015). PB4L-SW is an example of a systems approach which, if fully implemented, should reduce teachers' needs to identify appropriate behaviour strategies, as these have been agreed at the whole school level, releasing them to do other work and improving their work-based well-being. In contrast, IYT training is only available for teachers teaching children up to, and including, 8 years old, although in recent years teachers of older students may be included in the training at the school's request so that IYT strategies may be used throughout the school. IYT assists in preventing and treating behaviour problems and promotes social, emotional, and academic competence in students. Since 2011, 723 group leaders have been trained in IY, although not all of them are RTLBs, as outside agencies work with early childhood centres' children and their parents to facilitate this programme.

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[1] The concept of *ako* describes a teaching and learning relationship, where the educator is also learning from the student where educators' practices are informed by the latest research and are both deliberate and relative. *Ako* is grounded in the principle of reciprocity and also recognises that the learner and whanau cannot be separated (Ka Hikitia, 2008, p.20)

In my role as an accredited RTLB IYT facilitator, I work with groups of up to 18 teachers for once-a-month workshops over a 6-month period. RTLB share Webster-Stratton's philosophy of using behaviour strategies in their classrooms so that students can learn and achieve in a safe, harmonious environment. This provides opportunities for teachers to learn with and from each other as well as about the IYT philosophy (Webster-Stratton, 2012). In our local IYT regional fidelity hui, RTLB IYT facilitators meet as a group once a term with a number of outside agencies who facilitate early education IYT programmes to share, learn and collaborate. These meetings are very productive, allowing for a degree of adaptation of the US IYT-focused programme for New Zealand circumstances, although these changes are limited by an agreement to maintain programme fidelity.

I have noticed that there appears to be a decline in classroom use of IYT skills and strategies over time, once teachers have completed the training programme. This article identifies the benefits[2] and barriers[3] to IYT being spontaneously, consistently and continuously used, embedded[4] and sustained[5] once facilitator support has ceased, and, through collaboration and reflection[6], encourage and support teachers to use the IYT philosophy that they enjoyed learning and saw value in when training. In doing so, it has also helped me meet the more difficult challenge of how I – and potentially other RTLB IYT facilitators - can help/support teachers recognise and break down these barriers. The specific question that guided this inquiry was:

> *How can I, in my role as Resource Teacher of Learning and Behaviour (RTLB) Incredible Years Teacher programme (IYT) facilitator, support my previously-trained IYT teachers to retain IYT knowledge and strategies, and to embed them in order to sustain their use in their classroom practices?*

LITERATURE REVIEW
Professional Learning Development (PLD)

PLD is how teachers and leaders change their teaching and learning practices through evidence-informed inquiry to impact on student outcomes (MOE, 2017). Evidence suggests that the best type of teacher PLD should make a difference to both students and teachers. Teachers can learn with, and from, one another through purposeful reflection and discussion in an environment which can be either external, or internal (Bubb & Earley, 2007, 2009; Guskey, 2000; Timperley, Wilson, Barrar & Fung, 2008), although this expectation is not always evaluated after the event (Datnow, 2006; King, 2014; MOE, 2014). There is a large literature in the area of PLD[7] but there has been less attention paid to how successfully the PLD has been embedded into classroom teaching and its sustainment over time (Gersten, Chard & Baker, 2000; Timperley et al., 2007).

It is widely understood that not all PLD improves teacher knowledge, skills, attitudes and dispositions that are crucial for the success of the students they teach (Timperley et al., 2007). Stoll, Harris, and Handscomb, (2012) and Timperley et al., (2007) suggest that for PLD to be effective, successful and productive, the students and teachers learning needs must be considered, and where the impact of the changes made, needs to be dissected and evaluated.

Teachers learning with, from, and about each other, are the basis of the learning process, and through purposeful inquiry-based reflection and discussion using the principles of self-regulated learning (Muijs et al., 2014) in a collaboratively supportive environment, change of practice can occur (Beveridge, 2014; Stoll et al., 2012; Wenger, Trayner & De Laat 2011). If PLD is driven with no consideration of teacher-needs contemplated, then the PLD will not have a powerful impact on the staff or student outcomes (Sharratt & Fullan, (2012). Cordingley, Bell, Isham, Evans & Firth, (2007) and Stoll et al., (2012) conclude that PLD should be school-focused, school-based and school-led whilst drawing on external expertise, if appropriate.

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[2] For the purposes of this paper, as used in the IYT programme, benefits will be primarily considered in relation to positive student achievement, however there may be secondary benefits accrued by IYT trained teachers themselves which they may carry into their personal family lives.

[3] If anything inhibits the adoption of IYT strategies into classroom practices, it is classed as a barrier.

[4] Embedding PLD refers to situations where new learned knowledge is contextualized, integrated and transferred into interpretive frameworks and work practices. Unless new knowledge is embedded, it will be unevenly disposed and/or applied in limited ways leading to isolated and temporary benefit (Cranefield & Yoong, 2009).

[5] Timperley, Wilson, Barrar and Fung, (2007) consider sustainability of PLD to be an in-depth understanding of the theory of the curriculum, which serves as a tool to assist instructional decision making where the skills of inquiry enable teachers to judge the impact of teaching and learning and to identify the next learning steps.

[6] See Menter, Elliot, Hulme, Lewin, and Lowden, (2013).

[7] See for example, Bubb & Earley, 2007; Desimore, 2009; Timperley et al., 2008).

The literature supports the view that PLD is best located within schools, where it can be linked to classroom practices and is typically delivered by external experts in the areas of interest.

An Overview of the Incredible Years for Teachers (IYT) Programme in New Zealand

The Incredible Years Programme, funded by the MOE since 2011, aligns with the Māori Education Strategy, Ka Hikitia – Accelerating Success 2013 – 2017, (MOE, 2013) and also the Pasifika Education Plan 2013 – 2017 (MOE, n.d.). Fergusson, Stanley & Horwood (2009) acknowledge that IYT programmes are effective and culturally-appropriate for use in New Zealand, where collaborative practices are the core of cultural responsiveness[8]. The MOE's goal is for all teachers of priority learners[9] to have access to this programme.

The programme follows a collaborative model of training that makes extensive use of videotapes, role-plays, modelling and discussion. Between workshops, the teachers have homework and are expected to use the strategies suggested in the training sessions in their classrooms (see Figure 1). Group leaders support the teachers with writing a behaviour plan (BP) for a 'target' student and they are visited by the group leaders for in-class observations, feed-back and feed-forward. A BP is at the core of the IYT philosophy. The teachers are encouraged to set goals for themselves, as well as for the children they teach.

*Figure 1. I*YT Behaviour Pyramid (Webster-Stratton, 2012)

According to Webster-Stratton (2011), only when a positive foundation is in place within the classroom will strategies higher up the IYT Behaviour pyramid be effective (see Figure 1). The bottom of the pyramid shows behaviours and activities that should be liberally applied as teachers form the foundation for other skills and behaviours. A basic principle of the pyramid is that a positive relationship foundation precedes discipline strategies, and attention to positive behaviours should occur more often in effective classrooms than attention to negative behaviours.

IYT is a specific type of PLD where teachers from different schools, along with a buddy from their own school, meet to learn and collaborate with each other whilst learning new knowledge and strategies facilitated by accredited group leaders. Webster-Stratton explains that an effective group leader builds productive relationships with each individual, develops reciprocal group processes, and draws out people's ideas in a way that avoids an expert–novice position (Webster-Stratton, 2012). This practice is further acknowledged when the IYT regional fidelity hui group leaders from multiple agencies meet to collaborate to improve facilitation.

Although the programme is deemed a success by Wylie and Felgate (2016), they suggest that the outcomes of improved teacher behaviour management, improved child behaviour, and more positive relationships between teachers, parents and children, are often only short-term. They do acknowledge, however, that there is increased use by IYT trained primary teachers of some negative strategies (raised voice; making harsh criticisms) for managing behaviour after the programme has been completed. Furthermore, they conclude that further research into whether the projected long-term outcomes of a reduction in anti-social behaviour in adolescence and improved academic achievement are being realised. This research is necessary for the future of this programme in New Zealand (Wylie & Felgate, 2016).

Sustainability of PLD

Focusing on the notion of sustainability of PLD, Guskey, (2000), Stoll et al., (2012) and Timperley et al., (2007) emphasise that the conditions for sustainability, should be set in place during the professional learning, rather than at the end. They also suggest that teachers should be equipped to inquire further into the impact of their practice on students and to work and learn collaboratively with colleagues so that ongoing PLD will lead to continuing improvement. Bubb and Earley, (2009) emphasise that even when teachers share experiences of PLD, activities need to be embedded, continuous and sustained over time, to have an impact.

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[8] See (Wylie & Felgate, 2016; Webster-Stratton, Reid & Stoolmiller, 2008).

[9] Priority learners include Māori and Pasifika students, learners from low socio-economic homes and those with special educational needs (MOE, 2007).

King (2014) proposes that for sustainability of practices, teachers need to have conceptual knowledge or deep learning related to the practice. It is argued that some teachers never progress further than 'skimming over' new ideas and never go deeper than the routine levels (Baker, Gersten, Dimino & Griffiths, 2004). To fully understand and use new ideas, most teachers need some kind of support (Stoll et al., 2012). Support is best achieved within their own school with colleagues that they trust and can collaborate with (Beveridge, 2014; Guskey, 2000; King, 2014), and should be efficient and timely due to the environment and where the impact of new learning can benefit others (Beveridge, 2014; Timperley et al., 2008). The literature overwhelmingly reports that sustaining this knowledge is rarely assessed or evaluated (Gersten et al., 2000; Stoll et al., 2012).

Creating a culture that is conducive to embedding and sustaining PLD needs to be led by leaders who view that teachers never stop learning. Principals who join in and learn with their teachers during PLD play a critical role in whether the PLD will be effective. In an inclusive PLD process, leaders have the ability to nurture trusting and mutually respectful relationships which establish a culture of evidence-based inquiry. Timperley et al., (2007) also state that the learning environment (context) should allow extended time for teachers to engage with new ideas delivered by external experts.

It is unclear whether PLD, in general, is sustained or fully embedded, because there is little effective assessment. However, in some sense, it is worse than this in that the current practice seems to be to move onto the next PLD, rather than to look back and consider whether previously funded PLD has been effective (McLaughlin & Mitra, 2001).

The discussion above reinforces the idea that PLD is sustainable as long as the context is supportive of the in-school learning, and time is given for the teachers to meet and collaborate as change agents (Guskey & Sparks, 2004; Stoll et al., 2012; Timperley et al., 2007)[10]. As to the sustainability of PLD, the literature suggests that the whole-school approach is more likely to achieve this outcome.

Sustainability of IYT

Turning to IYT and the sustainability of IYT in particular, the conclusion from the existing literature is that the issue is very rarely addressed. The unique features of IYT as a form of PLD means it fits uncomfortably within the preferred whole-school approach to PLD as adopted in New Zealand, although the literature concludes that IYT, as a philosophy, is typically very positive. Although the success of IYT has been evaluated[11], there seems to have been little, if any, consideration given to any barriers to sustainably embedding IYT practices into classroom teaching, which would be a very fruitful area for future research.

METHODOLOGY

This inquiry used a mixed-methods methodology using qualitative data about teachers' approach to, and perspective of, IYT, and quantitative data to capture statistical information to identify any patterns (Gillham, 2008; Menter et al., 2013). I used an anonymous online questionnaire (including open, closed and numerical questions) to collect data from 16 teachers who had participated in IYT training in order to try and "ascertain whether the problem I identified for my research was actually a real one"[12] as well as conducting voluntary semi-structured interviews with two of these teachers. Following Hurmerinta-Peltomaki and Nummela (2006), I aimed to increase the validity of my research conclusions by using the collection of two data sources (questionnaires and interviews) and assist in informing practice[13].

The IYT trained teacher respondents who were invited to participate had trained in IYT between 2015 and 2018, and were from a different RTLB cluster to mine to allow anonymity in their diverse schools[14].
To ensure confidentiality, an intermediary acted on my behalf, liaising with principals to request permission to invite their teachers to participate in my inquiry. This initial contact also included information about the researcher and the project. The intermediary invited 70 IYT-trained class teachers of mixed gender

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[10] See (Wylie & Felgate, 2016; Webster-Stratton, Reid, & Stoolmiller, 2008)

[11] Priority learners include Māori and Pasifika students, learners from low socio-economic homes and those with special educational needs (MOE, 2007).

[12] Menter et al., 2013 p.106

[13] Odom, Brantlinger, Gersten, Horner, Thompson, & Harris, 2005

[14] Low socio-economic and high socio-economic; rural and urban schools; character schools; Kura and mainstream schools and state-integrated schools

[15] This inquiry adhered to the Massey University (2015) Code of Ethical Conduct for Research, Teaching and Evaluations Involving Human Participants, and received official approval to undertake this research from the University's Ethics Committee. Participants were given the option to withdraw from the inquiry. at any time and the questionnaire design ensured confidentiality, with no names or contact details recorded.

and experience who taught at different Year levels, to complete the questionnaire[15].

Google Forms was used to administer and collate the quantitative data in tables and diagrams in both raw and percentage form. Guided by Rabiee, (2004, cited in Menter et al., 2013), qualitative data was analysed manually, based upon a thematic method, and guided by the research question. However, as Rabiee (2004) emphasises, it is important to note that making sense of individual quotes is intertwined with being imaginative and analytical, to find relationships and links from all of the data.

The semi-structured interviews used open-ended questions (Fox, 2009) and were deliberately similar to the survey to encourage more teacher voice and freedom so as not to constrain their responses, which is supported by Quaglia and Lande, (2016)[16].

Questionnaire respondents had teaching experience ranging from two years to over 30 years and taught from Year 1 to Year 8. Eight of the teachers chose to attend the IYT programme and eight were told by management that they had to attend. All the teachers had trained in IYT within the past four years. The two interviewees taught in Years 1-3 in a middle-sized urban school, and were early in their teaching career with one having taught 7 years (T) and also fulfilling a tutor teacher role, and the other being a beginning teacher (BT). Both of the interviewee teachers were told by management that they had to attend the IYT programme, but they both were very keen to do this.

RESULTS

In the questionnaire, participants were asked to rate how beneficial they found being involved in the IYT programme was for them (see Figure 2). Most participants (13 out of 16) rated the benefit as at least 8 out of 10, with no participants rating below 6 (0 being not at all beneficial and 10 being very beneficial). The mean was 8.56. Additionally, both teachers interviewed found being involved in the programme was very beneficial to their practice and would highly recommend the PLD to other teachers One teacher could also notice the benefits to students' behaviour and learning practice, including students who understand what is being asked of them and who demonstrate superior social interaction.

Participants were asked which IYT positive management strategies they used most in their classrooms. Figure 3

shows that fourteen participants reported using 'building positive relationships with their students', ten reported 'being proactive in their use of teaching strategies' and thirteen reported 'giving attention, encouragement and praise in their practice'. Three of the participants used only two of the suggested strategies i.e. 'building positive relationships' and 'decreasing inappropriate behaviours' or 'promoting social skills and problem solving'. Both of the interviewed teachers said they were confident in using the strategies at the bottom of the pyramid (Figure 1).
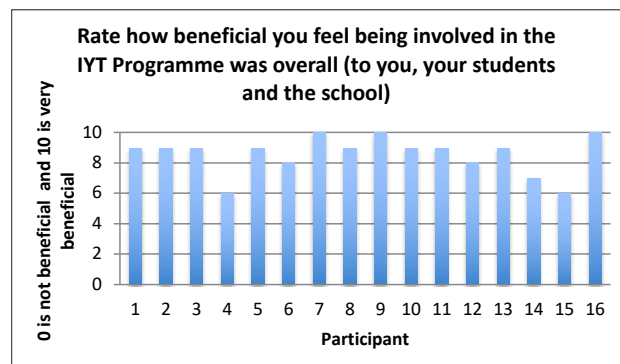
Figure 2. Overall benefits

Participants were also asked to rate their confidence in using the seven different strategies (see Figure 4). The strategies build upon one another, with 'building positive relationships' and 'using proactive teaching strategies' being learned in the first workshop. To enable other strategies to be meaningfully used, these two strategies are essential.

Most of the participants were confident using 'building positive relationships' with only one rating their confidence below 8 on the Likert scale of 0 to 10. Two participants did not use this strategy in their practice. In terms of using 'proactive teaching strategies', four participants rated themselves below 8, with three giving a score of 10. Ten teachers did use proactive teaching strategies in their classroom practice. Participants rated their confidence in using 'giving attention, encouragement and praise' with three rating below 8 on the Likert scale and thirteen between 8 and 10. Twelve used the strategy of 'giving attention, encouragement and praise'.

When asked to rate their confidence in 'motivating students through incentives', two rated themselves at 6 and two at 7, with twelve being 8 or above. Only nine teachers used incentives in their classroom

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[16] They assert that when teacher voice is present and action is taken as a result of this voice then there is an "abundance of potential". Ingersoll, (2007) also states that to permit teacher voice encourages a greater commitment to educational improvement and a higher satisfaction with professional development.
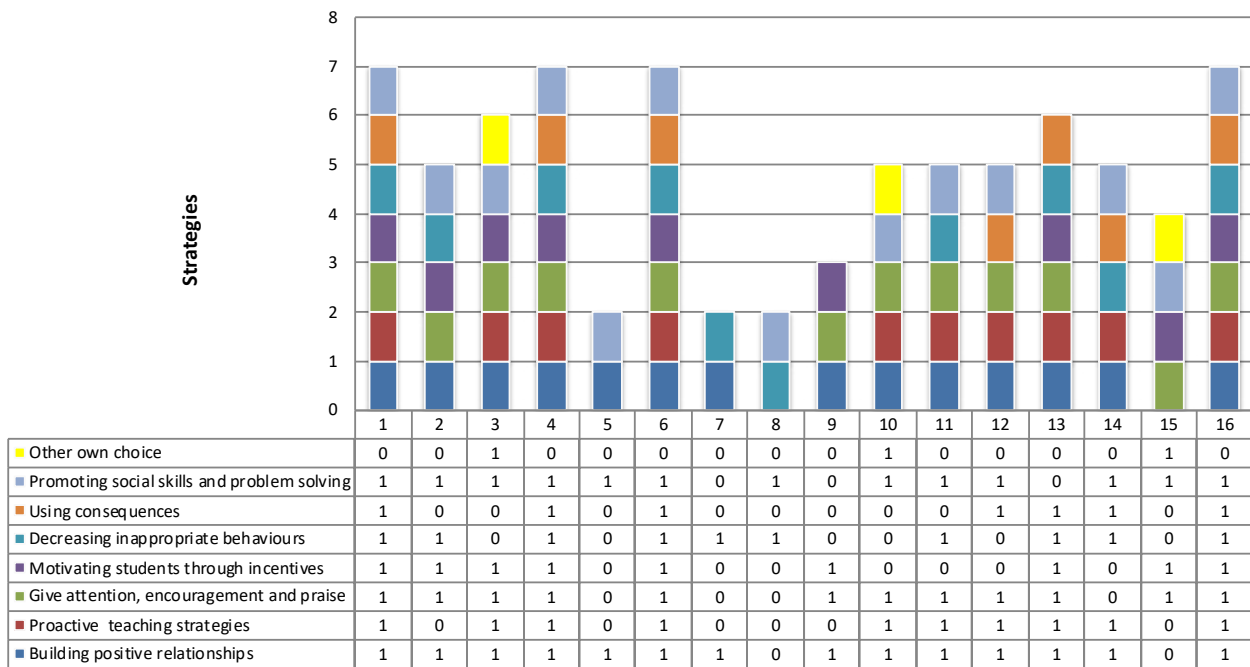
Figure 3. Use of positive management strategies

practice. Participants rated their confidence in using 'decreasing inappropriate behaviours' with eleven being 8 or above, and five between 5 and 8 on the Likert scale. Ten teachers used the strategy of 'decreasing inappropriate behaviours'.

The question on rating their confidence in 'using consequences' resulted in ten participants with 8 or above and six rating themselves between 3 and 7. Seven teachers used 'consequences' in their classroom management practice. The ratings for 'promoting social skills and problem solving' resulted in 13 participants choosing 8 or above, and three at either 6 or 7. Three teachers did not promote the teaching of social skills in their practice.

The interviewee teachers use different strategies with both being derived from the pyramid (Figure 1), but not necessarily in the order suggested by Webster-Stratton. This is linked to their confidence in utilising the strategies. For example, one teacher is driven by how confident she feels in using the specific strategy. This is evident in the strategies they use because they are more complex and found further up the behaviour pyramid. The other teacher admitted that if they have success with a strategy they will use it again.

This teacher used strategies which are less complex and found at the bottom of the behaviour pyramid. Neither of the teachers used all of the strategies.

Participants were asked if they have ever used an IYT BP and if they were currently using one[17]; more than half (56%) had never used an IYT BP since they completed the programme, and 12 (75%) were currently not using an IYT BP. However, when asked if they were confident in using a BP, 12 teachers started they were (between 7 and 10 on the confidence scale), with four rating 6 or below. The mean was 7.75. These results are presented in Figure 6.

The BPs discussed and developed at every workshop grow and work up the IYT behaviour pyramid (Figure 1) becoming more intense as the strategies and skills gained from each consecutive workshop are introduced and learned. The ultimate aim is that through the introduction and use of the lower pyramid strategies very few students will rise up the behaviour pyramid to need more complex intervention. The BPs are working documents that are referred to constantly and changed to highlight the changes in the student's behaviour.

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[17] An example of a blank IYT BP is presented in Figure 5 overleaf.

Participant	Building positive relationships	Use	Proactive teaching strategies	Use	Giving attention, encouragement and praise	Use	Motivating students through incentives	Use	Decreasing inappropriate behaviour	Use	Using consequences	Use	Promoting social skills	Use	Other	Use
1	9	Y	9	Y	9	Y	9	Y	9	Y	9	Y	9	Y		N
2	10	Y	10	N	9	Y	10	Y	8	Y	7	N	10	Y		N
3	10	Y	8	Y	8	Y	7	Y	7	N	9	N	8	Y	Coaching	Y
4	7	Y	7	Y	10	Y	7	Y	5	Y	7	Y	10	Y		N
5	10	Y	9	N	9	N	9	N	8	N	8	N	9	Y		N
6	10	Y	10	Y	10	Y	10	Y	8	Y	9	Y	9	Y		N
7	10	Y	9	N	8	N	8	N	10	Y	10	N	10	N		N
8	8	Y	8	N	7	N	8	N	9	N	9	N	9	Y		N
9	8	Y	7	N	8	Y	8	Y	7	N	5	N	7	N		N
10	9	Y	8	Y	9	Y	8	N	8	N	8	N	9	Y	Ignoring	Y
11	10	Y	9	Y	9	Y	6	N	8	Y	3	N	10	Y		N
12	8	Y	7	Y	7	Y	6	N	6	N	7	Y	7	Y		N
13	8	Y	8	Y	7	Y	9	Y	8	Y	9	Y	8	N		N
14	9	Y	9	Y	9	N	9	N	9	Y	9	Y	9	Y		N
15	8	N	7	N	9	Y	8	Y	6	Y	5	N	6	Y	When/ then & ignoring	Y
16	10	Y	10	Y	10	Y	10	Y	10	Y	10	Y	10	Y		N
MEAN	9.0		9.0		8.6		8.25		7.87		7.75		8.75			

Figure 4. Confidence in using strategies

The scale ranges from 1 to 10 where 1 relates to not being at all confident in using the strategy, to 10 where the teacher is very confident in using the strategy.

The 'mean of the means' (where the mean is taken from adding all the column means together and dividing by the number of strategies.
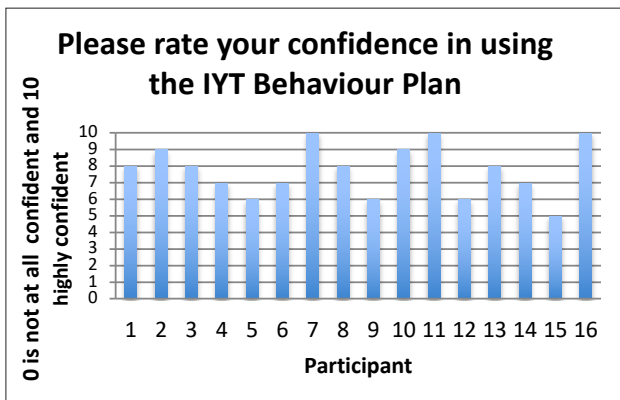

Figure 5. Behaviour plan

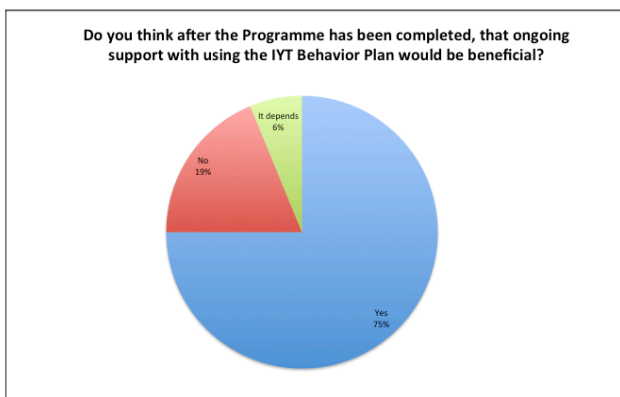*Figure 6.* Confidence in using IYT behaviour plan

Figure 7. Benefits of ongoing support

Figure 7 reports whether the participants felt that ongoing support with using the IYT BP would be beneficial. Twelve of the 16 participants reported that they would find ongoing support beneficial.

Both interviewee teachers felt well-supported by their school RTLB and were confident to ask for help or clarification when unsure. These RTLB were not IYT group leaders.

Participants were asked what support they were being given at present to ensure that they were using IYT strategies in their practice. The results ranged from one teacher receiving no support at all, to three of the participants being given support by different staff members in their workplace. (Figure 8)

Both teachers who were interviewed were using a BP with a target student and felt that IYT is kept alive through discussion with the other IYT-trained teachers in their team. The T admitted that as a staff there is no organised discussion about IYT strategies or behaviour students. The BT said that not all the teachers in her team are IYT trained, therefore IYT strategies are not often discussed. She also said that PB4L ideas were used and discussed.

Participants were asked if it would be beneficial if there was on-going discussion to support the use of IYT strategies. Eleven of the 16 indicated that it would
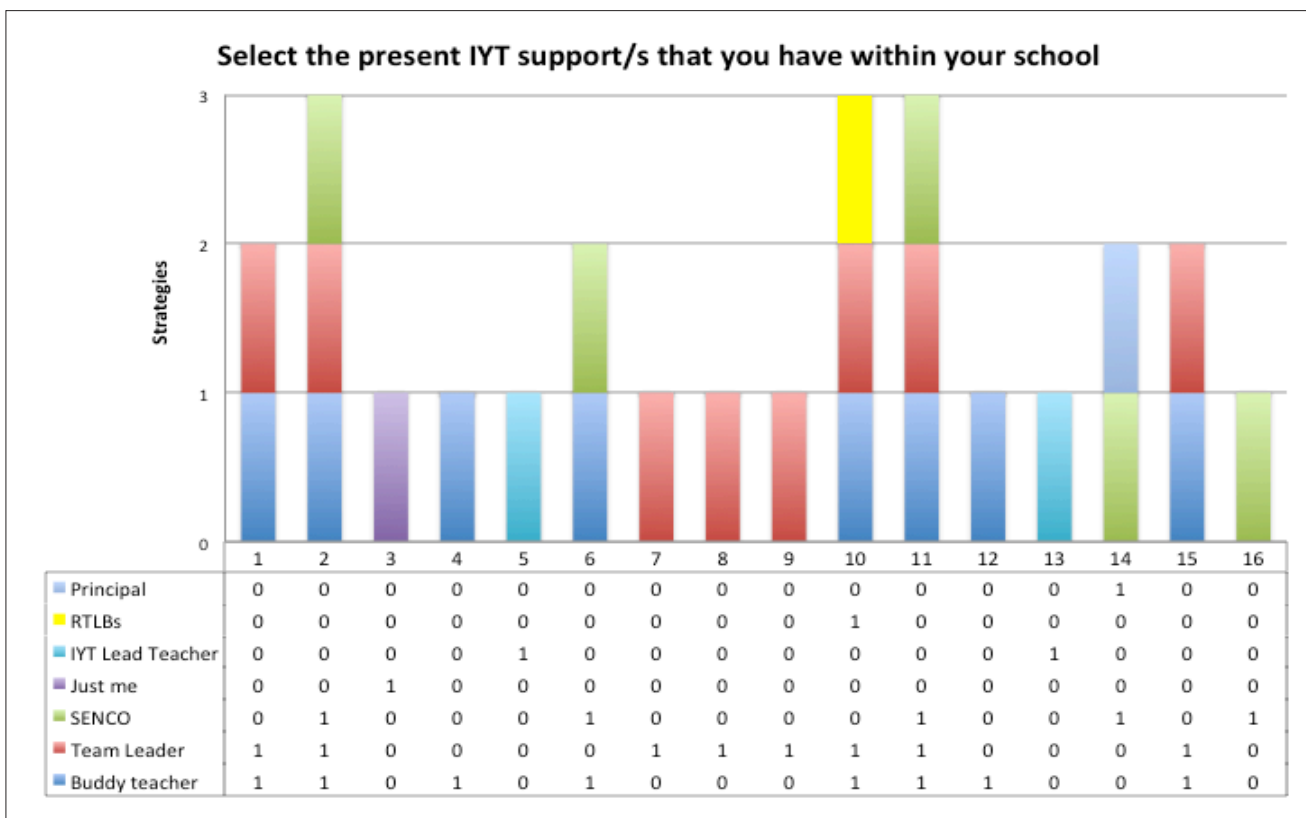

Figure 8. Current IYT supporter

be highly desirable to receive this support (scores between 7 and 10). (Figure 9)

Both of the interviewees were happy in the way that the other teachers in their teams were willing to discuss IYT strategies whenever they asked any questions. They also felt that they were very well supported by any of the RTLB who visited the school and they felt that they could ask any question in a safe environment. The BT interviewee stated that she does not use IYT strategies this year as her class is not badly behaved. The T reported that she worked very much on her own using ideas that she thinks may make a difference in behaviour with the strategies she has used often becoming natural.
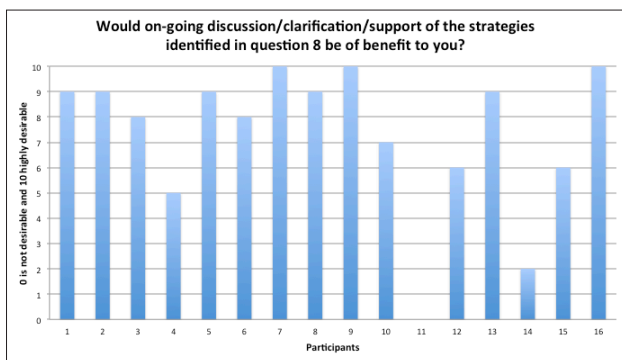
Figure 9. Benefit of ongoing support

The participants were asked if their strategy use reduced over time. Six of the 16 (37%) stated that their strategy use had dwindled with 10 saying that this is not the case (63%).

Similarly, both interviewed teachers felt that their use of IYT had changed over time: one teacher felt that she is still learning and finding out what best suits her and her present students compared to her previous class. The other (T) was finding that she reflects more about her teaching and the students, which encourages her to try different strategies with different students.

Participants were asked if they would find it beneficial to continue with RTLB facilitator support after the programme was completed. Twelve of the 16 indicated that they would find it very beneficial (scoring between 7 and 10), with four indicating it would not be beneficial (scoring between 2 and 6) (Figure 10). The mean score was 7.4.

Both of the interviewed teachers felt that continued support from their IYT group leaders could only be of benefit.
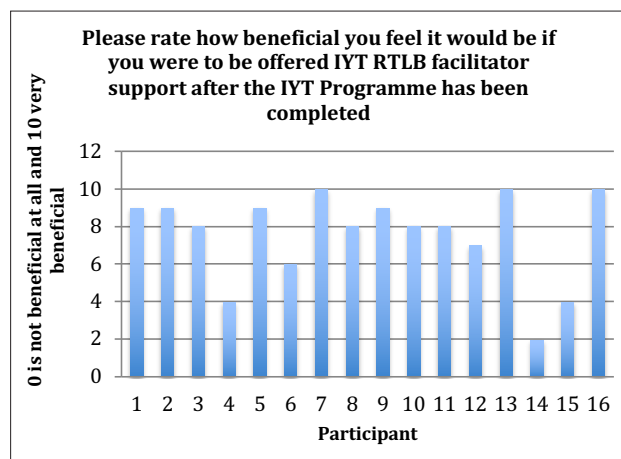
Figure 10. IYT RTLB facilitator support

The participants were asked to make suggestions as to what kind of support they would find helpful to embed and sustain IYT strategies. Figure 11 shows that staff/colleague meeting/discussions was the most popular suggestion (chosen by four participants), followed by reminder emails and time to reread their IYT manuals again (each chosen by three).

The interviewed teachers felt very well supported by any of the RTLB who were involved in the school. They were very happy to ask these RTLB any questions and were confident in the support given. Both teachers were using a BP with a target student and felt that IYT is kept alive through discussion with the other IYT trained teachers in their team. Although both teachers use an IYT BP they admit that IYT is not a focus, therefore rarely discussed.
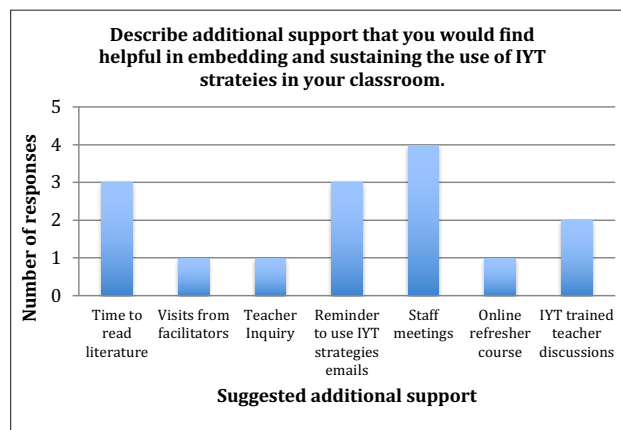
Figure 11. Additional support

The participants who answered the questionnaire also made some suggestions in the open-ended section of the survey as to what would improve the programme, shown in Figure 12. The suggestions ranged from

more time spent with interested and supportive colleagues to more time between workshops and more relevant New Zealand vignettes.

The teachers who were interviewed gave more feedback to the open question where they both felt that their use of IYT had changed over time. Both teachers interviewed found embedding and sustaining IYT difficult in their practice; one because there are so many other things to do and the BT, has as yet, little understanding of what embedding and sustaining means. Both teachers would find RTLB IYT facilitator support very beneficial once the programme had been completed to keep up discussion/keep IYT alive.
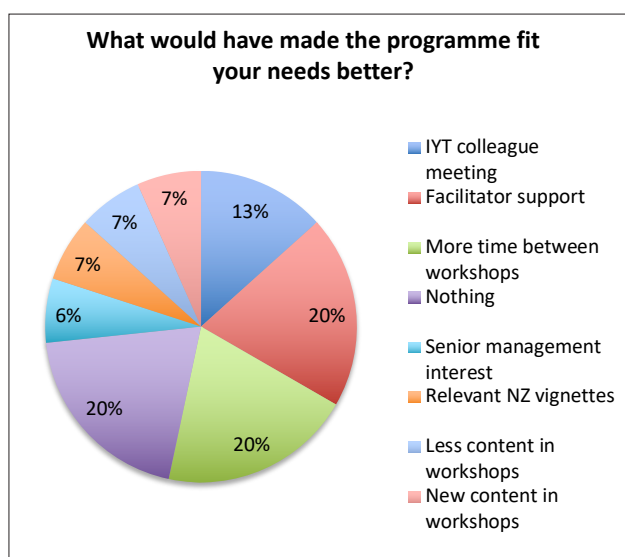

Figure 12. Improvement to programme

DISCUSSION

Research has shown[18] that early intervention with evidence-based programmes can prevent and reduce the development of behaviour problems, strengthen social and emotional competence and school readiness, and prevent school underachievement.

Although the IYT programme has been funded since 2011, the review of the literature shows that little or no research has been undertaken to consider whether the training is transferred into long-term improved outcomes in relation to classroom practice. Furthermore, what evidence exists is that far from being transferred and embedded into practice, what has been learned during the programme may have dwindled.

Although my use of the terms 'embedding' and 'sustaining' was informed by the relevant literature,

there is no clear and common understanding of the terms even when used in a narrow academic context, let alone in day-to-day conversation. Instead, a number of more common 'classroom type questions' were asked to allow cross checking and validation of their responses within the general area, and from these a set of inferences was derived from the results.

The only direct question that was asked relating to 'sustaining' was whether they believed IYT strategies had 'dwindled'. This particular question acted as an additional direct indicator of one element of my inquiry. If teachers felt that the programme was of 'little benefit' it would be understandable if they chose not to transfer its strategies into their classroom practice. The results might suggest that one barrier to adoption relates specifically to the teacher's level of confidence and perhaps understanding of the strategies.

The results suggest that there is no association between what year group participants teach and their confidence in teaching certain strategies and using these strategies in classroom practice. All these teachers state that they are confident in using all strategies, but seem, for whatever reason, not to do so. Menter et al., (2013) and Toomela, (2008), however, suggest that there is no way of knowing exactly what the participant was thinking at the time of answering the questionnaire and the exact response could mean different things to different people.

Using 'building positive relationships' strategies are fundamental to enable effective embedding of IYT and their absence is a sign that full embedding cannot be occurring. According to Govender (2016), non-use of strategies may be related to a teacher's perceived behavioural control over influencing factors i.e. the teachers view themselves as already being competent. She goes on to recommend facilitators spend time promoting the programme to motivate teachers and encourage attitude change.

Webster-Stratton (2012) states the purpose of the BP is for teachers to be precise and detailed in how they use the IYT tools to strengthen social, emotional and academic behaviours to enable fewer misbehaviours and enhance student achievement. This is supported by the MOE (2014) when they acknowledge that all students in all schools and kura should have teachers and leaders who are involved in PLD that scaffolds and challenges them to raise student achievement.

The bottom of the pyramid strategies are more common and easier to use by construction. This hierarchy of complexity can be observed from the

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[18] The teachers were confused between PB4L strategies and IYT strategies which was obvious when one talked about complicated Tier 3 strategies (PB4L).

interviews where the T is emotional-coaching as well as not buying into the banter where things do not matter while the BT tends to stick with the easier-to-use strategies found at the bottom of the pyramid which are also the ones that she is confident in using[19].

Based on the questionnaire data alone, it can be argued that the programme strategies are not being used as intended, hence full embedding is not occurring. However, all of the teachers include some elements of the use of IYT strategies in their classroom practice such that one might conclude that all are *partially embedding* IYT although the crucial BP is missing.

One potential barrier to embedding practices may relate to the degree of support participants receive in their workplace, however this does seem to be an issue. There is also no association between the experience of the teachers and their desire for discussion and support in using the IYT strategies and BPs[20]. Accredited facilitators are best placed to undertake ongoing support as they are required to continually demonstrate their best practice knowledge and are required to undertake PLD for them to retain their accredited status. The provision of ongoing coaching to facilitators following their own training has been shown to result in increased facilitator proficiency and fidelity[21] in delivery, as cited in Webster-Stratton et al., (2012).

CONCLUSION

The results of this research show that most participants found the IYT workshops beneficial and those who did not exhibited a level of confidence in understanding the strategies below the average of the group. Most participants reported receiving some support in their workplace, and when asked if additional support would likely be helpful, the majority reported that follow-up RTLB IYT facilitator support would be beneficial. The results indicate that full-embedding of IYT strategies is absent from the classroom practices of the vast majority of participants' practices.

For embedding to occur, a necessary condition is that the behaviour plan be in place. The results show that those who use a BP are not using all the other fundamental strategies of IYT such that, at best, they may be regarded as partially embedding IYT practices, but not fully embedding them. Without fully embedding IYT practices, it is hard to conclude that IYT principles can be regarded as being

sustainably in place and this conclusion is partially supported by their response to the direct question about 'dwindling'.

The analysis of the online questionnaire and interview results exhibited a lack of evidence that embedding and sustaining of the IYT practices learned in the workshops was occurring. To the contrary, the results showed that, in general, teachers are using some IYT strategies in their practice, but strategies and the BP are not being used in conjunction, therefore embedding and sustainability of the IYT programme is not occurring as one might have hoped or expected.

Based upon the results presented, some implications of the research include (i) suggestions that the voluntary follow-up Workshop 7 (3 months after Workshop 6) be made compulsory (ii) there be ongoing monitoring of the consistent and continuous use of IYT strategies by those who attend the programme; (iii) a formal RTLB-led support service be made available to all schools where IYT trained staff are employed (this should be recognised in RTLB workload and conditions of work); (iv) RTLB facilitators motivate teachers and encourage attitude change; (v) evidence on the benefits, barriers, embedding and sustaining of IYT practices remains an area that is under-researched and deserving of more extensive future research.

Some possible limitations of the study

The small-scale research with potential bias due to sample size, the restriction of the time period (2015 – 2018), the low number of voluntary interviews, and the possible pre-conceived notion of the researcher, are all limitations that need to be taken into consideration when deliberating the results of this inquiry. For future research, it would be of benefit to use a wider sample over a longer time span with the incorporation of more interviews.

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[19] Continued and additional support is necessary to maintain optimal levels of IYT implementation fidelity (Domitrovich et al., 2008, as cited in Govender, 2016) with Elder and Prochnow (2016) explaining that supportive leadership is essential for sustainability.

[20] Programmes need to be implemented with fidelity to be 'best' practice rather than 'actual' practice (Durlak et al., 2011).

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