



Check & Connect

A comprehensive student engagement intervention

Check & Connect Mentoring Tier 2 and Tier 3 Interventions

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Driven to DiscoverSM



Agenda

- Brief overview of Check & Connect
- Identify indicators of student disengagement
- Monitor student data using “Check” procedures
- Determine appropriate types of “Connect” interventions based on disengagement subtype (behavioral, academic, cognitive, and affective)
- Questions and Answers



The Check & Connect Model of Student Engagement



Check & Connect

Check & Connect is a structured mentoring intervention to promote student success and engagement at school and with learning through relationship building and systematic use of data.



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Student Engagement

Observable Engagement

ACADEMIC

e.g., time on task,
credit accrual,
homework completion,
engaging in class
activities

BEHAVIORAL

e.g., attendance, suspen-
sions, participating in
school activities,
being on time

Internal Engagement

COGNITIVE

e.g., perceived
relevance of schoolwork,
personal goals and
autonomy, value of learning
and success in school

AFFECTIVE

e.g., identification with
school, sense of
belonging, school
connectedness

(Appleton et al., 2008)



Components of Check & Connect

1. **A mentor** who works with students and families for a minimum of two years
2. **Regular checks** utilizing data schools already collect on students' school adjustment, behavior, and educational progress (**Check**)
3. **Timely interventions**, driven by data, to re-establish and maintain students' connection to school and learning and to enhance students' social and academic competencies (**Connect**)
4. **Engagement with families** – mentors engage with parents and strive to foster parents' active participation in their child's education



Core Elements of Check & Connect

- **Relationships**
 - Focus on alterable variables
 - Personalized, data-based intervention
 - Long-term commitment
 - Participation in and affiliation with school
- **Problem solving and capacity building**
- **Persistence-plus**



Implementing Check & Connect



11 Implementation Steps

1. Determine indicators of student disengagement
2. Identify students at risk of disengagement or dropout
3. Select or hire mentors
4. Organize existing resources for intervention
5. Get to know students, teachers, and parents
6. Use “check” procedures and the monitoring form
7. Implement “connect” interventions
8. Strengthen the family-school relationship
9. Monitor the person-environment fit
10. Provide mentor support and supervision
11. Evaluate program implementation



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Implementing Check & Connect

STEP 2

**Identify Students at Risk of
Disengagement or Dropout**



Identify the Target Students

- What criteria will you use to identify target students for Check & Connect?
 - Use alterable risk variables
 - Emphasize academic and behavioral indicators of engagement – data which are readily available
 - **Behavioral**: absences, tardies, skipping class, office referrals, suspensions
 - **Academic**: reading below grade level, number of Ds and Fs, below proficiency on state tests, credit deficiency



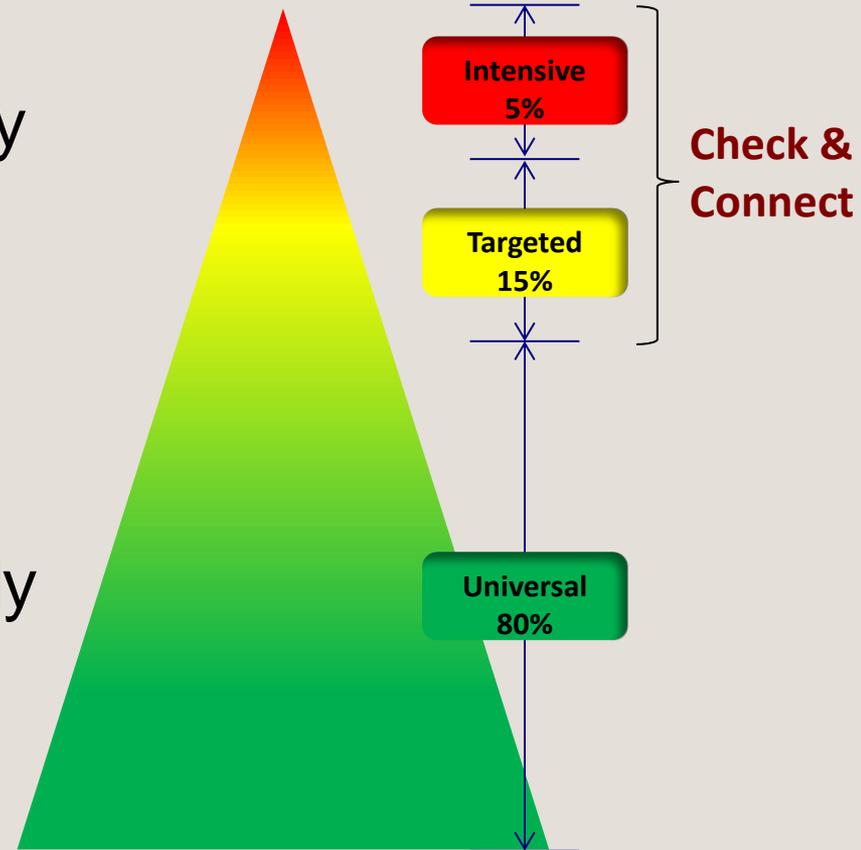
Identify the Target Students (cont.)

- Set specific criteria for selected indicators of disengagement
 - Sample criteria:
 - **Secondary school:** students who attend < 80-90% of the time, have 3 disciplinary referrals, and one or more failing grades in a semester
 - **Elementary school:** students with less than 88% attendance and performing academically in the bottom quartile of their class
- Identify the population of students who are displaying or have recently displayed these warning signs



Determine Prevalence and Capacity

- Determine prevalence of the target population and capacity to serve
 - One hour per 1.25 students/week (i.e., 25 students for a .5 FTE [20 hours/week] mentor)
 - With existing staff, 1-5 students/mentor
- Consider interventions already in place to support particular groups (e.g., special education)





How Are Participants Selected?

- Data screening
 - A pool of candidates meeting the criteria is generated by looking at school data
 - Students not receiving other intensive services and who are likely to benefit from C&C are invited to participate
- Referral
 - School personnel are made aware of the criteria
 - A referral process is established for referring students who meet criteria to Check & Connect



Implementing Check & Connect

STEP 6

Use “Check” Procedures and the Monitoring Form



Systematic Monitoring

- **“Check”** = systematically monitoring target students’ level of engagement and educational progress
 - Core component that is non-negotiable
 - Essential for students at risk of disengagement or dropout



Systematic Monitoring (cont.)

- What is checked? “Check” data are selected indicators of alterable risk for disengagement:
 - Absences
 - Tardiness
 - Missing assignments
 - Grades
 - Credits accrued
 - Behavioral referrals

- How are students' data generally accessed?
 - Online student information system
 - Student records
 - School personnel such as attendance clerks and teachers



Systematic Monitoring (cont.)

- How often is a student's performance checked?
 - At least weekly
 - More often, even daily, if the student is showing increased signs of disengagement
 - Ideally, mentors check in with students on different days of the week so that they don't associate mentor connection with the same day of the week and learn to attend school on that day



Systematic Monitoring (cont.)

How are indicators checked?

Check & Connect high school monitoring form



Student _____ ID _____ Grade _____

School _____ Mentor _____ Month _____

CHECK

Academic data	M	TU	W	TH	F	M	TU	W	TH	F	M	TU	W	TH	F	M	TU	W	TH	F
Number of Ds or Fs																				
Number of missing assignments																				
Cumulative grades	1st quarter grades ___Ds ___Fs					2nd quarter grades ___Ds ___Fs					3rd quarter grades ___Ds ___Fs					4th quarter grades ___Ds ___Fs				
Credit accrual	___ Credits earned out of ___ total possible															___ GPA				
Met state academic standards	Math: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No					Reading: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No					Writing: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No									
Behavior data	M	TU	W	TH	F	M	TU	W	TH	F	M	TU	W	TH	F	M	TU	W	TH	F
Tardy																				
Skipping classes																				
Unexcused/unverified absence																				
Excused absence																				
Behavior referral/infraction																				
Detention																				
Suspension (in school/out-of-school)																				



Assessing Student Risk

- Look for patterns in the data
- Total the number of incidents or check marks for each risk indicator and compare that number to site criteria for high risk
- “Check” data is then used to determine the appropriate level of intervention (“Connect”)
 - Not at high risk = basic intervention (Tier 2)
 - High risk = intensive intervention (Tier 3)



Activity

Mentee Monitoring

In pairs, using the criteria for high risk on p. 43 of the manual, determine whether each student is at high risk in the areas of academic performance, attendance, and/or behavior.



Implementing Check & Connect

STEP 7

Implement “Connect” Interventions



Personalized, Data-based Intervention

- **“Connect”** – personalized, data-based intervention
- As the basis for designing and ongoing monitoring of interventions, mentors consider:
 - “Check” data
 - Student’s needs and level of engagement with school
 - Student’s perspective
 - Family influences and circumstances
 - Available school and community resources



Basic Intervention

- A deliberate, structured conversation that typically includes:
 - Sharing “Check” data
 - Providing the student with feedback
 - Discussing the importance of staying in school
 - Problem solving about indicators of risk (at least monthly)
- Such conversations typically occur weekly



Basic Intervention Problem Solving

- To empower students to take control of their decision-making, use a problem-solving strategy such as (*August et al., 1992*):
 1. **Stop. Think about the problem.**
 2. **What are some choices?**
 3. **Choose one.**
 4. **Do it.**
 5. **How did it work?**



Intensive Intervention

- For students exhibiting high risk on one or more of the indicators, intensive interventions should be implemented.
- Intensive interventions...
 - Supplement basic intervention
 - Are personalized and driven by “Check” data
 - Are used to promote the student’s academic, behavioral, cognitive, and affective engagement
 - Should aim to achieve a person-environment fit for the target student



Intensive Intervention (cont.)

Intensive interventions can be organized by risk indicator and engagement subtype (academic, behavioral, cognitive, and affective)

Risk indicators:

- Tardiness, skipping class, absenteeism,
- Office referrals, detention, and suspension
- Incomplete assignments/failing grades



Activity

Problem Solving Conversation

- Two volunteers?
- As we read, think about where each step is occurring in the conversation.
- Discussion:
 - What are some of the reasons that Alex is absent from school?
 - How do they brainstorm about choices?
 - What engagement subtype was targeted?
 - What other engagement subtype could be targeted?



UMN Check & Connect Resources

- Research, blog articles, and more available on website <http://checkandconnect.umn.edu/>
- Join the community (via our website):
 - Sign up to join the Discussion list (for those implementing C&C or a similar student engagement program)
 - Sign up to join the Coordinator's Community of Practice (for C&C coordinators only)
 - Follow us on [facebook](#) and 
- Email checkandconnect@umn.edu or call 866-434-0010



Questions?