

AIMS/GOALS OF RESEARCH

- 1** **ADAPT, IMPLEMENT, and EVALUATE** the effect of Link for Equity on school violence disparities.
- 2** **EVALUATE** how Link for Equity changes teachers' attitudes about racism.
- 3** **EXPLORE** how the effects of Link for Equity on school violence are changed by stress and connectedness mechanisms.



How are participants protected?

This research has been reviewed and approved by an Institutional Review Board (IRB), a group of people that look at the research before it starts to evaluate the research goals and look out for the protection of people participating in research.

Why is this study focused on students of color?

In Minnesota, we have significant education outcome and discipline disparities. We are missing this group of students and need to develop targeted interventions for supporting their success.

While this intervention does not include white students, if applied with fidelity, this will likely improve the school environment and increase relationship building capacity for all students. This is the heart of equity. We commit to doing what serves students best, not giving all students the exact same thing.

CONTACT US

Link for Equity is a collaboration between the **University of Minnesota School of Public Health** and the **Emory University Rollins School of Public Health**.



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BUILDING CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE SCHOOLS



Link for Equity is a **tiered trauma-informed system of support** composed of trauma informed care and cultural humility staff training. Link for Equity provides psychological first aid support for participating students of color who have adverse child experiences, symptoms of stress, have high discipline referrals, or frequent school health office visits.

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WHY IS THIS RESEARCH BEING DONE?

This study is being done to find out more about how Link for Equity helps children deal with challenging life experiences like bullying, racism and discrimination. Link trains staff to speak to children of color in a culturally sensitive way. We are evaluating Link for Equity to see whether it will reduce school violence and discipline referrals among children of color. Researchers will evaluate if Link for Equity improves racism-related attitudes and reduces inequitable discipline referrals.

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS

LINK for Equity is partnering with your school district.

To get to know the culture of each district, we will hold **focus groups** with school staff, students of color, and parents of students of color.

We are also growing our **Community Advisory Board** as the study progresses. This board is made up of student, parent, education, mental health, community, and research partners. This group will inform research study development and implementation to ensure community involvement and benefit at each stage of the research project.

SCHOOL STAFF WILL RECEIVE TRAINING:



LINK 1: TRAUMA INFORMED CARE AND CULTURAL HUMILITY TRAINING

This training, for all staff, will introduce cultural humility as a framework that supports building authentic and trusting relationships with students of color who have experienced trauma.



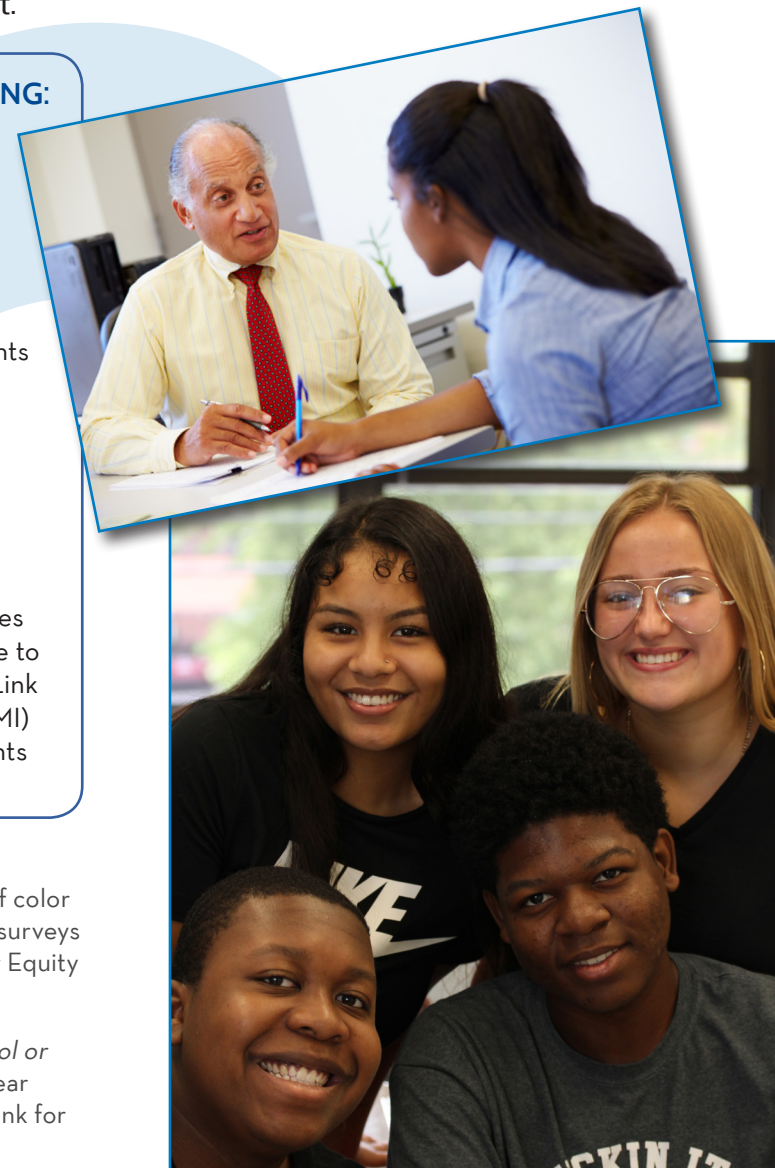
LINK 2: MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING

Link 2 training, for a small group of staff, provides safety, stabilization, coping support, and linkage to services. The Psychological First Aid (PFA) in Link for Equity uses the Motivational Interviewing (MI) communication approach to learn about students and understand their unique circumstances.

SURVEYS AND DATA USAGE:

Surveys will be administered to staff and students of color in the fall and spring of each year. Data from these surveys will help researchers evaluate the impact of Link for Equity on staff and students over time.

Secondary data (*data already collected by the school or the state of Minnesota*) will be obtained over a 10 year period (2013-2024) to help evaluate the impact of Link for Equity over a broader time frame.



MARIZEN RAMIREZ, PHD

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Dr. Ramirez's research focuses on society's most vulnerable populations at risk for violence (especially bullying) and injuries: children, persons with disabilities, agricultural workers, minorities, and rural populations. For over 20 years, she has studied childhood injuries and violence in schools from California, Iowa, Minnesota, Illinois, and Maine. She is particularly interested in identifying the most effective strategies for responding to and supporting children impacted by trauma.

BRIANA WOODS-JAEGER, PHD

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Dr. Woods-Jaeger's research examines social and structural processes that link the experience of child trauma and adversity to mental and physical health disparities. Her work focuses on partnering with communities to identify ways to prevent adverse childhood experiences, support different systems in understanding and responding to the needs of trauma-exposed youth, and improve access to culturally responsive, evidence-based psychological interventions for youth exposed to trauma and chronic stress.