AN ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION OF

Glenda Jane Lundstedt Battey for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Exercise and Sport Science presented on December 11, 2008.

Title: Can Bullies Become Buddies? Evaluation of and Theoretical Support for an Experiential Education Bully Prevention Curriculum with Seventh Grade Students.

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Bullying behavior has problematic psychosocial ramifications for the bully, victim, and bully/victims; these included issues with self-conceptions, perceived social support, and affect. Research has found that, if one can influence these psychosocial components, one may be able to reduce the potential for being victimized. The Bully Prevention Challenge Course Curriculum [BPCCC] was created to address bully behaviors in a 7th grade middle school class. In this study, two Oregon middle schools, one that received the BPCCC and one that did not, were examined in regards to self-conceptions, perceived social support, affect, victimization, and knowledge about bullying behaviors. The four main purposes of the study were to determine the following: prevalence of victimization at the two schools; application of Harter's mediation model of self-worth to victimization; effectiveness of the BPCCC in changing self-conceptions, perceived social support, affect, victimization, and knowledge about bully behaviors; and, finally, effectiveness of the BPCCC in the words of the students and staff directly involved in the intervention. Results showed victimization was present at both schools, although at a low to moderate level; the data

did not provide a good fit with Harter's model of self-worth; the BPCCC was effective in changing only the knowledge base of bully behavior; and the students and staff involved found many benefits of the program including increased perceived social support, improved feelings of self-worth, and the creation of a common language and references to use between students and adults when talking about expected behaviors. Future studies should utilize larger sample sizes, test for bully behaviors in addition to victimization, differentiate between victims, bullies, and bully/victims, and perhaps use a broader measure of affect. Also, as recommended by the students and staff involved, the BPCCC should be continued and revisited throughout the school year by training teachers to be knowledgeable about facilitation techniques and activities.

Can Bullies Become Buddies? Evaluation of and Theoretical Support for an
Experiential Education Bully Prevention Curriculum with Seventh Grade Students

by
Glenda Jane Lundstedt Battey

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APPROVED:

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Dean of the Graduate School

I understand that my dissertation will become part of the permanent collection of Oregon State University libraries. My signature below authorizes release of my dissertation to any reader upon request.

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Glenda Jane Lundstedt Battey, Author

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DEDICATION

This research project is dedicated to those that have lost their lives or who have been permanently injured due to their involvement in a bully situation.

Can Bullies Become Buddies? Evaluation of and Theoretical Support for an Experiential Education Bully Prevention Curriculum with Seventh Grade Students

On April 20th, 1999 two students of Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado opened fire on their peers and teachers killing12 people and injuring 24 before killing themselves. In the nine years since, the Columbine shooting has become the epitome of school violence. Discussion about why the shootings happened revolved around bullying, violent movies, and music. In 2002, Brooks Brown, a peer of one of the shooters, wrote a book about his experience and understandings of the shooting in which he attributes the shootings to the daily bullying at Columbine (Brown & Merritt, 2002). More recently, on September 29th, 2006, in Cazenovia, Wisconsin a 15-year-old high school student brought two guns to school and shot and killed the principal. The youth reported to investigators, "a group of kids had called him names and rubbed against him, and he felt teachers and the principal would not do anything about it" (Richmond, 2006, September 30). In the final findings of the United States Secret Service's Safe School Initiative; Vossekuil, Fein, Reddy, Borum, and Modzelski (2002) state that one key finding in school violence is: "many attackers felt bullied, persecuted, or injured by others prior to the attack" (p. 35). According to the researchers, the taunting and suffering experienced by these school-aged victims would warrant possible legal ramifications for harassment and/or assault if they had occurred in a workplace instead of a school (Vossekuil et al., 2002).

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Understanding the Prevalence of Bully and Victim Behaviors

There is not one concrete definition of bullying also known as peer-victimization, however researchers (Crothers & Levinson, 2004; Mynard & Joesph, 2000; Nansel, Overpeck, Pilla, Ruan, Simons-Morton, & Scheidt, 2001; Olweus, 1993; Smith, Schneider, Smith, & Ananiadou, 2004; Solberg & Olweus, 2003) tend to agree that there are three main components: 1) the bully's objective is to do harm either by words, physical contact, gestures, or exclusion from a group; 2) the power between the bully and the victim is not equal; and 3) the behavior is repeated over time. The National Education Association [NEA] (2006) defines bullying as, "systematically and chronically inflicting physical hurt and/or psychological distress on one or more students" (p. 1). In addition, there are two main categories of bullying behaviors: direct, meaning physical contact and taking belongings, and relational, meaning involving peer relations in the form of name-calling, rumors, and group exclusion (Mynard & Joseph, 2000; Piek, Barrett, Allen, Jones, & Louise, 2005; Woods & White, 2005). Differences between gender in these different types of victimization have been found in that boys tend to experience more direct bullying and girls more indirect bullying (Brown, Birch, & Kancherla, 2005; Mynard & Joseph, 2000; Olweus, 1993; Olweus, 2003; Piek et al., 2005). Furthermore, Mynard and Joseph (2000) found these two categories are more specifically divided into four subcategories: physical victimization, social manipulation, verbal victimization, and attacks on property.

There has become less emphasis on a "kids will be kids" attitude with the realization that being bullied, being a bully, or even worse, being referred to as either a bully/victim or aggressive victim (Solberg, Olweus, & Enderson 2007) can develop into tragedy (Bowles & Lesperance, 2004). Bully behavior is becoming increasingly identified as a problem in middle schools and high schools; in fact, the Center for Diseases Control [CDC] (2003) calculates approximately 30% of American youth are involved in some form of bullying behavior either as a bully, a victim, or both. In their 1998 survey of 15,686 American students in grades 6-10, Nansel et al. (2001) found 19.4% self-reported moderate to frequent bullying behaviors, 16.9% self-reported being a victim sometimes to frequently, and 6.3% said that they engaged in both bullying behavior and being bullied. In addition to these findings, Nansel et al. (2001) found 6th through 8th grades (i.e., middle school in America) was the time when bullying occurred most frequently. According to the NEA (2006), one in thirty children complain about being treated poorly by their peers in school and one in five middle school children refuses to use the bathroom in school for fear of being a victim.

Bullies and victims have both distinct and common characteristics, which could potentially explain the bully/victim group of youth. Nansel et al. (2001) stated, "bullies, those bullied, and individuals reporting both bullying and being bullied all demonstrated poorer psychosocial adjustment than noninvolved youth" (p. 2097). Those who bully are more likely to engage in rebellious and disruptive behaviors such as peer violence, sexual abuse, criminal activities, and substance abuse (Brown et al.,

2005; Crothers & Levinson, 2004; Nansel et al., 2001; Olweus, 2003; Sanfran, 2007; Smokowski & Kopasz, 2005). Researchers (Bowles & Lesperance, 2004; Brown et al., 2005; Crothers & Levinson, 2004; Fox & Boulton, 2003; Nansel et al., 2001; Olweus, 2003; Sanfran, 2007; Smokowski & Kopasz, 2005) have found that being bullied can cause physical and psychological problems for victims including lack of sleep, bed-wetting, headaches, nervousness, nausea, low self-esteem, anxiety, depression, suicidal ideation, social isolation and rejection, and fear of school. In light of this finding, the NEA (2006) has established a bullying awareness campaign in order to eliminate bullying behaviors from schools in America and encourage public schools to get involved to stop violent behaviors in their schools. Vossekuil et al. (2002) also strongly encouraged the development and use of anti-bullying programs in schools. According to Oregon State Law, House Bill 3403, bully behaviors are prohibited; and, according to section 6 of the bill, "School districts are encouraged to form harassment, intimidation or bullying prevention task forces, programs, and other initiatives involving school employees, students, administrators, volunteers, parents, guardians, law enforcement and community representatives" (Bully Police USA, 2008). Such calls to action provide the impetus for this study recognizing that bullying is a disconcerting problem in need of a solution.

Bully Prevention Programs

Although there is limited empirical research on bully prevention programs specific to youth in America, programs that are in place implemented zero tolerance of bullying behaviors, student education on how to address bullies assertively not

aggressively, and counseling for bullies or victims (Hunt, 2007; Smith, 2004; Smokowski & Kopasz, 2005; Souter & McKenzie, 2000). Smokowski and Kopasz (2005, p. 108) stated, "Of utmost importance is constructing a culture of respect and recognition where bullying is not only not tolerated but is not necessary." Interventions should focus on creating an environment of pro-social values, including empathy, and an increased awareness of what constitutes bullying behavior and ways to combat those behaviors (Holt & Espelage, 2007; Leff, 2007; Reid, Monson, & Rivers, 2004; Smith, 2004; Unnever, 2005).

Reid et al. (2004) reviewed findings of pertinent literature addressing bully prevention programs that included working in cooperative groups, developing problem-solving skills, becoming self-sufficient, increasing self-worth, developing social skills, and developing an internal locus of control. Due to the characteristics of bullies and victims, Souter and McKenzie (2000) have found the use of non-violent peer mediation to resolve conflicts may reduce bullying behavior. Lodge and Frydenberg (2005) discuss the importance of teaching bystanders of bullying behavior how to cope with bullying through the existence of peer support systems. In addition, improving self-worth of youth may improve their coping mechanisms in that they provide more support for the victim and less attention to the bully (Lodge & Frydenberg, 2005). Children involved in bullying most frequently choose mediation and assertive skills as an intervention strategy to stop bullying; however, when placed in role playing situations, bullies and victims both choose retaliation behaviors to combat bullying. This may mean they think assertiveness is correct; however they do

not have the knowledge to act that way (Camodeca & Goossens, 2005). Nansel et al.
(2001) stated the successful findings of interventions in Europe and Norway, most
predominant being Olweus' anti-bullying school-based initiative (see Olweus, 1993),
had a focus on changing the school environment with increased awareness of bullying,
increased interaction of adults, and clear rules with established social norms against
bullying; however, "this approach has not been tested in the United States."(p. 2100).
Hunt (2007) cites studies using Olweus' program which have not produced successful
results. In addition, programs rarely focus on empowering the victim as an indirect
way to reduce bully behaviors but rather focus on behavior change of the bully, which
may or may not be feasible (Leff, 2007). Therefore, the development of a program that
develops pro-social behaviors, assertiveness skills, improves perceived social support,
and improves self-worth would help develop a group social norm that may prevent
bullying behaviors through empowering the victim.

Bully Prevention Challenge Course Curriculum

Haggas (2006) created and implemented a Bully Prevention Challenge Course
Curriculum [BPCCC] in a rural Oregon middle school. The program involves the
entire seventh grade attending a challenge ropes course which, "focuses on building
peer support groups along with building one's self-esteem and other personal skills as
a means of preventing and overcoming a bullying situation" (p. 1). A challenge ropes
course is a contrived environment with ropes, cables, logs, and poles that is used to
enhance learning through perceived mental, physical, and emotional risks and
challenging problem-solving tasks in a form of adventure-based learning (Rohnke,

Tait, Wall, & Rodgers, 2003). Adventure-based learning involves the utilization and reflection of fun and challenging games to promote the development of communication skills, cooperation, and trust (Rohnke & Butler, 1995). When studying challenge-course-specific programs, researchers (Conley, Caldarella, & Young, 2007; Larson, 2007; Sibthorp & Arthur-Banning, 2004; Smith, Strand & Bunting, 2002; Socha, Potter, & Downey, 2003) have found improved self-concept, development of peer groups, and empowerment/locus of control to be some of the positive psychological outcomes of these programs. In the BPCCC (Haggas, 2006), challenge course activities are designed to focus on creating a supportive environment in which students learn how to trust themselves and each other, as well as, learn how to communicate effectively to address bullying behaviors.

Adventure-based learning can further be found under the heading of experiential education which is "learning by doing with reflection" (Priest & Gass, 1997, p. 17). Theories of experiential learning (e.g., Joplin, 1981; Kolb, 1984; Pfeiffer & Jones, 1980; Walsh & Golins, 1976) emphasize the importance of reflection on experiences that may promote future change at the individual level. Luckner and Nadler (1997) devised a model of Adventure-based Learning in which individuals are placed in a novel physically and/or emotionally challenging situation in which they must rectify the challenge within themselves with the understanding that the environment they are in is supportive. The outcome of the experience and the emotions that coincide with the results are reflected upon in a facilitative manner directed towards change and the notion of transferability of the skills learned. The

BPCCC places students in the novel setting of the challenge course and encourages

students to take personal physical and emotional risks, in a supportive environment of

their peers, in order to successfully accomplish assigned tasks that metaphorically

represent appropriate behaviors in regards to bully prevention.

The BPCCC is unique in that it utilizes the theories of experiential education

and the Adventure-Based Learning Model to positively influence the school

environment on an individual level with regards to bullying. The Adventure-Based

learning model as presented in the BPCCC uses personal risk, both physical and

emotional, to push students past what is comfortable and into an area of disequilibria;

this is followed by reflective conversations which can then be used to transfer lessons

learned about themselves to how they address bully behaviors in their own life. The

BPCCC (Haggas, 2006, p. 13) has four main objectives:

> 1. To recognize different types of bullying that take place in schools everyday, 2.
> To learn strategies to prevent and overcome bullying that happens to students, 3.
> To build and enhance personal skills that can prevent and overcome bullying, and
> 4. To create friendships and peer support groups to help prevent bullying.

In the process of this self-learning, the expectations are that individuals will

develop a greater sense of self, increased social support, and a more positive affect;

three characteristics that are clearly needed to decrease victimization.

Psychosocial factors involved in bully-victim relationship

In order to understand how a challenge course intervention can lead to a

change in victimization one must first understand the psychosocial factors on an

individual level that may play a significant role. Fox and Boulton (2005) found self-,

peer-, and teacher-ratings identified that victims of bully behavior showed deficits in

social skills including looking scared, non-assertiveness, withdrawal, annoying other kids, and reinforcing the bully's behaviors by crying. In a more recent study, Fox and Boulton (2006) found that more "best-friends" was a moderator for less victimization as well as if one's best friend was socially accepted by peers. Egan and Perry (1998) found students with lower self-efficacy tended to be victims and this victimization perpetrated a lower self-efficacy thus creating a cycle of victimization related to level of self-efficacy. Nansel et al. (2001) found victims had a hard time making friends, had poor relationships, and expressed feelings of loneliness. Piek et al. (2005) found individuals who are victimized may have a lower perception of being liked and perhaps have a lower self-worth. Victimized students reported higher levels of insecurity, depression and anxiety, and lower levels of self-esteem; and if the bullying behavior continues these students may retaliate by becoming aggressive or demonstrating suicidal or homicidal behaviors (Nansel et al., 2001).

Nansel et al. (2001) also found those students who engaged in bully behaviors were more likely to display social deviant behaviors, have poor school achievement, and view their school's climate negatively. Holt and Espelage (2007) report that bullies with *low* social support were the most anxious/depressed. Consequently, the creation of a supportive environment at the student level may change the bully's perception of social support, their perception of the school's climate and decrease their negative feelings. Programs emphasizing the development of factors such as a positive sense of self and supportive peer relations may be able to reduce bully behaviors within the school as individuals will be less likely to be victimized if they feel good

about themselves and if they feel they have a social network within the school, thus reducing bully behavior at the school level.

Harter's Mediation Model of Self-Worth

Key psychosocial factors involved in the bully-victim relationship are depicted in Harter's model of self-worth (Harter, 1987, 1999). According to the model, approval by others added to perceptions of being competent in domains determined to be important by the individual lead to one's personal assessment of self-worth. In addition, the model posits that this sense of worth influences and is influenced by one's emotions from cheerful to depressed (see Figure 1). Thus global self-worth is a mediator between the model antecedents of perceived social support and self-conceptions and the model outcomes of affect and motivation (Harter, 1987). Harter (1999) found the assessment of one's self-worth based on affect is particularly strong among older children and adolescents. Adolescents define depressed mood as sad and angry and Harter's research found that adolescents with low self-worth tended to report depressed mood and interestingly, "those that report that depression precedes self-worth are more likely to report that their anger is directed towards others" (p. 227). Perhaps it is these individuals who are engaging in bully behaviors on some level. Therefore, according to this model, if one can improve one's perceived social support and feelings of competence in domains deemed important, one may improve one's sense of self-worth, and if one can do that, one can perhaps improve his or her affect as well. In regards to changing the school climate, by improving perceived competence and self-worth, increasing perceived social support, or obtaining a

positive affect within adolescents, the likelihood of adolescents being victimized may be reduced, and thus, the power of the bully removed.

Purposes of the Study

The first purpose of this study was to determine the prevalence of victimization with the 7th grade students participating in this study. It was hypothesized that all four types of victimization (physical victimization, social manipulation, verbal victimization, and attacks on property) would be present.

The second purpose was to test the goodness of fit of Harter's mediation model of self-worth in the context of victimization. It was hypothesized that through path analysis the data would fit the model and display: a positive correlation between self-conceptions, perceived social supports and global self-worth; a negative correlation between global self worth and affect; a positive correlation between affect and victimization, and finally a negative direct path from self-worth to victimization.

The third purpose was to determine the effectiveness of the BPCCC in changing self-conceptions, perceived social support, affect, and victimization. It was hypothesized that the treatment group, compared to the control group, would report significantly higher self-conceptions (scholastic competence, social acceptance, athletic competence, physical appearance, behavioral conduct, and global self-worth), higher perceived social support (parental support, classmate support, teacher support, close friend support), lower levels of depression, and lower rates of victimization (physical victimization, social manipulation, verbal victimization, and attacks on property). It was also hypothesized that the intervention group would score higher than

the control group on knowledge of bully behaviors after engaging in the intervention. These hypothesized differences in the treatment versus control group were expected to be evident immediately after the intervention and six months post-intervention. Analyses would include gender as an independent variable to explore possible differences in the impact of the intervention on male and female students.

Finally the fourth purpose was to qualitatively assess the BPCCC through the words of the students and the teachers immediately following the intervention and one month later. This was accomplished through the use of focus groups.

Methods

Participants

Research has found that the most frequent levels of bullying occurred in 6-8th grade (Bowles & Lesperance, 2004; Brown et al., 2005; Nansel et al., 2001; Solberg et al., 2007). For this study, the seventh graders were chosen because the seventh grade year is the first year in which the students are not in enclosed classrooms for the majority of the day and thus have more time without adult supervision. The NEA (2006) found bullying tends to happen where adults are not present. Thus, invited participants were 249 seventh grade students from two rural Oregon middle schools which were similar in size, demographics, and socioeconomic make-up. Students from one school received the intervention (n=120) and students from the other school were the control group (n=129). The number of initial participants for the treatment group was 89, when accounting for those who did not return consent forms, did not attend the challenge course, and did not complete the first data collection. The group was comprised of 46 males and 43 females with a mean age of 12.6 years. At post-data collection and follow-up data collection those who did not complete the complete battery of questionnaires were removed leaving n=65 after post-data collection, n= 50 at follow-up after also deleting 10 students involved in a focus group as part of the study. For the control group, after accounting for those who did not return consent forms nor complete the pre-intervention questionnaires, the initial number of participants was 72 (males=35, females=37) with a mean age of 12.7 years. The

number of participants dropped to 60 after deleting those who did not complete the post-data, and to 57 at follow-up.

In addition, 12 intervention students were selected to be involved in a focus group that met twice. The students were chosen first by core classroom and then by their pre-intervention scores on the victimization measure representing low, moderate, and high levels of victimization. Within these different levels of victimization, one student was randomly chosen for the focus group, resulting in three students from each of four classrooms for a total of 12 students. A second consent form was sent home to address the focus group and an assent form was signed at the first focus group resulting in $n=10$ (males=4, females = 6) at the first focus group and, due to illness, $n=9$ at the second focus group. All teachers and staff ($n=5$) directly involved with the intervention at the treatment school were invited to a focus group that also met on two occasions and those agreeing ($n=4$) included two core classroom teachers, a school counselor, and the vice principle in charge of discipline. All four had attended all or part of the challenge course days. All signed a consent form for their involvement in the focus group. One staff was called out for a meeting and couldn't attend the second focus group therefore reducing the participants to three.

Procedures

Students in the intervention school spent two 45-minute class periods in a core classroom and the remainder of their day free-roaming and intermixed. The control students had one 25-minute homeroom class and spent the rest of the day intermixed and free-roaming. Both principals agreed to have their schools be involved in the

study and received a detailed letter about the study and information about how to

contact the researcher. Upon completion of data collection, the control school was

offered a copy of the written BPCCC as well as support from the researcher to

implement the program in their school. Prior to study implementation, Oregon State

University's Institutional Review Board approved the study for use with human

subjects. Informed consent forms were sent home to the parents to be returned prior to

data collection for both schools. In addition, as required by the school and the

challenge course regardless of the research component, the intervention school

students were also sent home a packet that explained the BPCCC, a permission slip to

leave school, and an assumption of risk form for the challenge course itself. Students

of both schools also signed assent forms on the first data collection day.

Students in the treatment group engaged in the BPCCC (Haggas, 2006) with

their core class on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday of one week in October,

2007. The control group went about their daily routines that did not include the

BPCCC. October was chosen as it is more than a month after school has begun thus

giving students enough exposure to school to assess bullying behavior accurately

(Olweus, 1993). Unfortunately the entire seventh grade could not go together as there

are a limited number of participants allowed on the course and, in support of

experiential learning theories, small groups are needed to provide a supportive and

safe environment that allows for open discussion with potential transference (Priest &

Gass, 1997). The BPCCC was implemented by trained challenge course facilitators,

one of whom is their own Physical Education/Health teacher; the facilitators had a

range of 5 to 34 years of challenge course facilitation experience. The facilitators were briefed on the curriculum and techniques for decreasing bullying behaviors prior to the program. The researcher was not a facilitator, however was onsite to ensure continuity of information by the facilitators, which was confirmed through observation and facilitated discussions at the end of each day on the course.

The day on the course started with interactive name games and tag games to warm-up the students. These were followed by instructions from their Physical Education/Health teacher about how to identify bullying, how to address bullying and who to talk to about it, and whole group activities that focused on empathy and understanding of differences. Some of these activities included students standing to represent bully statistics and a silent walk across the circle of their peers if they were ever bullied, called names, teased, called others names, didn't allow others to sit with them, etc. (see Haggas, 2006). Next, the class was divided up into three small groups by their teachers to ensure mixed groups of gender and those who had displayed bully or victim behaviors in their classroom. The small groups were brought together by a facilitator to work on problem-solving initiatives and low course challenges, which are group challenges that require spotting and trusting each other as participants are off the ground but not high enough to be connected to a belay (Rohnke et al., 2003) and which, for this program, have an emphasis on group development and personal challenges. All facilitators followed the same metaphoric framing of initiatives and guided debriefing techniques that emphasized how to address bully and victim situations in school. For example, Stepping Stones is a game where a small group

traverses across an open space marked with a beginning and an end using only spot markers and each other to get across safely (see Rohnke, 2003). Stepping Stones was framed so that the open space represented the beginning and end of their school year which the students had to cross together using their "resources" and avoiding "bully behaviors." Their spot markers represented resources that the students identified as being available to them to help in a bullying situation. In addition, the facilitator blocked parts of the open space that they would traverse with items that represented obstacles that would cause problems for them during the school year. The game takes a group effort and support from their peers to successfully make it across the open space; if a spot marker was left unattended, that resource was removed. In reflection, students were asked, "How well did your group use your resources?," "Why are resources important to prevent bullying?," and "How does being a part of a group prevent bullying?"

After a lunch break, the group reconvened as a whole and engaged in high course elements, that is, individual challenges located high off the ground requiring an individual to be connected to a rope via a belay system for protection (Rohnke et al., 2003). Group belays were done in which four students would be in charge of the belay system to support one of their peers or teachers with a facilitator monitoring. In addition, the facilitator asked the individual who was climbing a particular question about their own bully or victim behaviors specific to the high element they were about to do. For example, for the "Dangle Duo" the question asked was, "How will you and your partner support each other up this ladder?" followed by, "How will you do this

back at school in order to prevent bullying?" Prior to jumping off the platform for the Zip Line, the participants were asked to complete the sentence, "When I zip off this platform, behaviors I am going to leave behind are…" After the high course, the students returned to their smaller groups to complete an end of the day debrief, the Human Web, in which they made a connection with each other by passing a string around the group after completing the statement, "To help prevent bullying, my hope for our school is….and I commit to…." .

For the treatment group, data collection occurred in their core classes and questionnaires were administered by the core teacher. Pre-data collection occurred on the Friday of the week prior to the days on the challenge course, post-data occurred immediately following each class's day at the challenge course, and three months following their challenge course experience. The control group collected data administered by their physical education teacher on the identical day as the treatment group for pre-data, one week later for post-data due to miscommunication about labeling the envelopes that held students completed questionnaires, and on the same day as the treatment group for follow-up. Teachers administering the measures were instructed to follow the protocol of each measure and were given written instructions to read verbatim to their class. Students were asked not to put their names on the measures but to put completed forms in the envelope with their name on it; the envelopes were destroyed once forms were coded for data connection.

Measurement

Demographics were collected on all students including gender, age, height, weight, and identification of core classroom for the intervention group and PE class for the control group. Harter's Self-Perception Profile for Children (SPPC, Harter, 1985a) was used to assess six self-conceptions including: scholastic competence, social acceptance, athletic competence, physical appearance, behavioral conduct, and global self-worth. Each subscale has six questions that were averaged for a total subscale value. In addition, the literature stresses not only competency but importance of the domain (Harter, 1987, 1999), thus perceived importance was measured using the 10 questions of the Importance Rating Scale [IRS]. These ratings were used with the competence scores to calculate a discrepancy score. The SPPC and the IRS are valid and reliable self-report measures appropriate for children in middle school (Harter, 1985a). Alpha reliability coefficients for this study ranged from .80 to .90 for all subscales for each time period.

Perceived social support (parental support, classmate support, teacher support, close friend support) was measured using Harter's Social Support Scale for Children (SSSC, Harter, 1985b). The measure includes 24 questions with six responses averaged for each of the four subscales. The SSSC is an established valid and reliable self-report measure appropriate for children in middle school (Harter, 1985b). Alpha reliability coefficients for this study ranged from .72 to .88 for all subscales for each time period.

Affect was measured with the Center for Epidemiological Studies Depression Scale for Children (CES-DC; Faulstich, Carrey, Ruggerio et al., 1986) designed to

assess depressive symptoms through a list of 20 questions addressing how children might have felt or acted during the past week. Possible scores range from 0 to 60 with a score of 15 or above having been documented as potential depressive symptoms. The CES-DC is valid, reliable, and appropriate for this age group.

Types of victimization were measured using the Multidimensional Peer-Victimization Scale [MPVS] (Mynard & Joseph, 2000). There are 16 items that create four subscales: physical victimization, social manipulation, verbal victimization, and attacks on property. Items are scored with a 0 for "not at all," 1 for "once," or 2 for "more than once" depending on how often children experienced the behavior in question during the current school year. The subscales are totaled with scores ranging from zero to eight with higher scores indicating higher levels of that type of victimization. Mynard and Joseph (2000) document convergent validity for the measure and internal reliability of each subscale ranging from 0.73 to 0.85, and the scale is appropriate for adolescent children. For this study alpha reliability coefficients ranged from .77 to .91 for all subscales for each time period.

Knowledge of bully behavior and what to do about bullying was ascertained by a 10 question multiple-choice and true/false quiz. The quiz was examined by a middle school health teacher to determine face validity.

Analyses

Data were analyzed for research Problem One and Three with SPSS 15.0, for Problem Two with Mplus 5, and for Problem Four an inter-rater thematic coding approach was utilized. Prior to any analyses data were screened by treatment group

and time period for accuracy including missing data, outliers, multicollinearity, and normality. Participants who did not complete all or a majority of the questions on a survey were not included in analysis that included that variable. In 6.7% of cases a participant was missing one answer to the questions that comprised a subscale and his or her average for the other answers of the subscale was entered and used to create the subscale. No extreme outliers were found based on all calculated z scores falling between -3.29 and 3.29, Mahalanobis D^2s were nonsignificant ($p<.001$), and Cook's Distance <1 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001; Kline, 2005). Bivariate correlations were all less than 0.70, Tolerance statistic all >0.1, and VIF all <10 indicating no multicollinearity. Data were found to be non-normal based on significant tests of normality, Kologorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk ($p<.001$); however tests of skewness and kurtosis were found to be non-significant (values >-1.64 and <1.64). Due to the large sample size (more than 20 per cell) the Central Limit Theorem helps protect against this violation and, therefore, unstandardized scores were used (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001).

Focus Groups

In addition to the questionnaires, 10 students from the intervention group engaged in two focus groups that were held during lunch one week after all groups had gone to the challenge course and one month after the challenge course ($n=9$ due to illness). Also four adults engaged in two focus groups at the end of the same day as the students. Focus groups were used to initiate open conversation about the BPCCC at the student and adult level. The importance of the focus group is an informal group

discussion that is ideal for adolescents because they "encourage participants to speak freely and completely about behaviors, attitudes, and opinions they possess" (Berg, 2004, p. 123).

The focus groups were led by the researcher, held in a conference room at the students' school, were tape recorded and transcribed. All participants were given pseudonyms to use during the focus groups. The 10 students involved in the focus group were deleted from the data analysis that used follow-up data as the conversations that occurred could have influenced questionnaire responses on follow-up data collection. The focus groups were guided by questions created by the researcher to address the BPCCC experience itself; specifically what went well, what could have been better, what did the participants learn, any changes they had already noticed, etc. The one month post-intervention set of focus groups addressed any noticeable changes that had happened at the school since the intervention or any things that had disappeared since the previous focus group. The transcriptions were read by a third party who identified themes and common trends. The themes were reviewed by the researcher and revised by the third party.

Results

The results are presented in order of the stated research problems. Specifically, the results address the prevalence of victimization, the goodness of fit of Harter's (1987) mediation model of self-worth in the context of victimization, the effectiveness of the BPCCC, and the qualitative account of the BPCCC from the perspective of the participants.

Problem #1: Prevalence of Victimization

Frequencies of the different types of victimization (physical, social, verbal, attacks on property) at pre-intervention were calculated to address the issue of prevalence of victimization with the 7th grade students who participated in the study. For both schools all four types were present considering the range of 0-2 is a low level of victimization, 3-5 is moderate victimization, and 6-8 is high victimization. All types of victimization averaged in the low to moderate level with none being high; however there is quite a bit of variance between scores. The means and standard deviation of the victimization subscales, as well as a total victimization score appear in Table 1.

There were no significant differences between schools at pre-intervention for any of the victimization subscales (p= .22, .80, .22, .47 respectively). There was a significant difference found across gender, regardless of school, for physical victimization (p <.01) with boys expressing more physical victimization than girls. For Total Victimization, a composite of all victim subscales, the complete range is 0-32 possible scores. For this sample the range was a low of 0 and a high of 31, thus covering the full spectrum of victimization. Breaking this further down into low (0-

10), moderate (11-21), and high (22-32); the prevalence of low victimization was 57% (*n*=88), moderate victimization was 31% (*n*=48), and high victimization 11% (*n*=18). Therefore those that fell into moderate to high victimization represented 43% of the sample (*n*=66).

Problem #2: Test of Harter's meditational model of self-worth

For the purpose of testing the fit of Harter's (1987, 1999) model, it was proposed that Structural Equation Modeling [SEM] would be used; however, SEM requires a minimum of 200 participants to avoid unreliable results (Li & Harmer, 2006) and total participants with completed surveys at pre-intervention was only 141. The number of subjects needed for a path analysis requires ideally 10 times the number of parameters and no less than 5 times the parameters (Kline, 2005); for the original model the number of parameters was 18 thus the sample size of 141 provides 7.8 times the parameters. Therefore a path analysis was used to test the original model proposed by Harter (1987) in relation to victimization. It was proposed that the discrepancy scores calculated from the Importance Rating Scores [IRS] would be used to test the model; however, as discrepancy scores are only calculated on participants whose IRS were 3.0, 3.5, or 4.0, the sample size was drastically reduced to 17, thus not feasible to use in the analysis. Therefore self-conception scores were used in the model. Correlations of all variables used in the original model can be found in Table 2.

It is recommended that for data to fit the hypothesized model χ^2 should be nonsignifcant, CFI should be >.90, and RMSEA should be <.06 for a good fit or <.08 for a moderate fit (Kline, 2005). The data were not found to fit the proposed model: χ^2

(18, n=141)=83.09, p<.00001, CFI =.72, and RMSEA =.16. Figure 1 provides the

hypothesized model with standardized β weights, significant coefficients are marked

with an asterisk. The significant path coefficients that supported the hypothesized

positive correlation between global self-worth and self-competence were physical

appearance and behavioral conduct. The path coefficients that supported the

hypothesized positive correlation between global self-worth and perceived social

support was parental support. The hypothesized negative correlation between affect

and global self-worth was supported with a significant path coefficient. The direct path

from global self-worth to victimization was found to be a significant positive

relationship which does not support the model and implies that as global self-worth

increases so too does victimization.

In consideration of the large number of paths, a modified model was examined

that used only global self-worth as a direct path to victimization and as an indirect path

through affect (see Fig. 1). This model was just identified thus fit indices cannot be

used to determine the fit of the model (Streiner, 2005). Again the direct path between

global self-worth and victimization was significant but positive, which is the opposite

of what would be expected. The path between global self-worth and affect was

significantly positive as found earlier.

Problem #3: Effectiveness of the BPCCC

In regards to self-conceptions and perceived social support, the effectiveness of

the BPCCC intervention was examined using two 2 (treatment / control) X 2 (male /

female) X 3 (pre-treatment/post-treatment/follow-up) repeated measures multivariate

analysis of variance [RM MANOVA]. Due to the findings of significant difference at Time One across gender for victimization, a 2 (treatment / control) X 3 (pre-treatment/post-treatment/follow-up) repeated measures multivariate analysis of covariance [RM MANCOVA] was used to test differences in victimization subscales with gender as the covariate. Finally two 2 (treatment / control) X 2 (male / female) X 3 (pre-treatment/post-treatment/follow-up) repeated measures analysis of variance [RM ANOVA] were used to test significant changes in affect and knowledge of bully behaviors.

At pre-intervention there were no significant differences between the intervention and control group on any of the self-conception scores, perceived social support scores, victimization scores, depression scores, or bully quiz scores. Means and standard deviations for each of the variables at each time period by gender are displayed in Table 3.

The first RM MANOVA tested differences in self-conceptions between the intervention and control groups across all three time periods using the discrepancy scores of the six subscales of the SPPC as the six dependent variables [DV]. The sample (n=113) provided adequate power based on Tabachnick and Fidell's (2001) recommendation that a minimum sample size is equivalent to the number of DVs per each cell of the design, therefore requiring a minimum of 72 students for this analysis. No significance was found for the 3-way interaction, $F(6, 104) = 0.91$, p=0.54, nor for the 2-way interaction of treatment and time $F(12, 98) = 1.51$, p=0.13 nor for the 2-way

interaction of treatment and gender $F(12, 98) = 1.47$, $p=0.15$. All of which indicates no change due to the intervention on self-conceptions.

The second RM MANOVA addressed perceived social support between the intervention and control groups across all three time periods utilizing the four subscales of the SSSC as the DVs. The sample ($n=106$) provided adequate power based on Tabachnick and Fidell's (2001) recommendation requiring a minimum of 48 for this analysis. Again no significance was found for the 3-way interaction, $F(4, 99) = 1.17$, $p=0.33$; nor for the 2-way interaction of treatment and time, $F(8, 95) = 0.21$, $p=0.99$ nor for the 2-way interaction of treatment and gender $F(8, 95) = 0.71$, $p=0.68$. Again these analyses indicate no changes due to the intervention for perceived social support.

A RM MANCOVA was used to identify changes in victimization between the intervention and control group across all three time periods with gender as a covariate due to the significant difference between boys and girls regardless of the intervention at Time 1. The four subscales of the MPVS were the four DVs. The sample ($n=105$) provided adequate power based on Tabachnick and Fidell's (2001) recommendation that required a minimum sample size of 48. Again no significance was found due to the intervention, $F(8, 95) = 1.20$, $p=0.31$.

The first RM ANOVA found no significant changes in depression using the score of the CES-DC as the DV for the 3-way interaction of time, intervention, and gender, $F(2, 104) = 0.64$, $p=0.53$; nor for the 2-way interactions of time and intervention, $F(2, 107) = 0.14$, $p=0..87$. Again the sample ($n=112$) provided adequate

power based on Tabachnick and Fidell's (2001) recommendation requiring a

minimum of 12 students.

The second RM ANOVA found a significant 2-way interaction in time and

intervention on bully quiz scores, $F(2, 112) = 3.39$, $p=0.04$, but not for the 3-way

interaction of time, intervention, and gender, $F(2, 112) = 0.99$, $p=0.37$. The sample

($n=117$) provided adequate power based on Tabachnick and Fidell's (2001)

recommendation that required a minimum of 12 participants. Post-hoc test, using a

Bonferroni adjustment of .05/2=.025 to account for the two ANOVA's, revealed a

significant increase in scores of the intervention group over those in the control group,

$F(1, 131) = 5.24$, $p=0.02$ immediately post-intervention but not at the follow-up

period, $F(1, 114) = 0.35$, $p=0.56$. This suggests that immediately following the

BPCCC those in the intervention (mean=9.15) scored higher on the bully quiz than

those in the control group (mean = 8.03). Effect size was calculated to determine

practical significance using the equation: $ES=(M_{treatment}-M_{control})/SD_{control}$ (Thomas,

Salazar, & Landers, 1991); (9.27-8,14)/1.54=0.73. Therefore the significant difference

in the bully quiz was also found to be practically significant as effect sizes >.7 are

considered large (Thomas et al., 1991).

The potential for masking effects was possible as theoretically the changes that

should occur due to the intervention would occur to those who had more experience

with victimization. Therefore, a post-hoc analysis of the data was run using only the

subset of the sample that reported moderate or high levels of their total victim score at

pre-intervention ($n=66$). To test changes in self-conception, a 2 (treatment / control) X

3 (pre-treatment/post-treatment/follow-up) RM MANOVA was used. Gender was

removed because no significant changes in gender were found initially on these

variables and to maintain adequate power (n=46 meeting the need for a sample size

>36). Again no statistical significance was found, $F(12, 33) = 0.96$, p=0.51.

To test changes in perceived social support, a 2 (treatment / control) X 3 (pre-

treatment/post-treatment/follow-up) RM MANOVA was used. Gender was again

removed as no significant changes in gender were found on these variables initially

and to maintain adequate power (n= 43 meeting the need for a sample size >24). The

analyses resulted in no significant differences, $F(8, 34) = 0.62$, p=0.78.

Finally a post-hoc test of affect was computed using a 2 (treatment / control) X

3 (pre-treatment/post-treatment/follow-up) RM ANOVA without gender as no

significant changes in gender were found on this variable initially and to maintain

adequate power (n= 43 meeting the need for a sample size >6). No significant

difference emerged, $F(2, 44) = 0.76$, p=0.47.

Problem #4: BPCCC Participants' Perspective

The first focus group for both the student (n= 10) and faculty/staff (n=4) was

semi-structured to find out what the participants liked and did not like about the

BPCCC, as well as to find out any lessons learned and/or implemented since returning

to school from the perspective of both the students and the faculty/staff. The second

focus group (student n=9; faculty/staff n=3), which occurred one month after the

challenge course experience focused on reflection of lessons learned, if any changes

were implemented or not implemented, and if they would or would not recommend continuation of the BPCCC.

All students actively participated; however, during both focus groups they did not speak in a conversation with each other despite being encouraged to do so and would only answer questions when called upon after raising their hand. Eventually the students would answer one at a time around the circle and occasionally would raise a hand to add to someone else's comment. The faculty and staff were able to converse with one another during the first focus group; however, the second focus group was flavored by some misunderstanding as to why there was a second meeting and a sense of frustration from two of the staff members. One faculty member answered most questions sarcastically and one left the room for a majority of the discussion. The findings from the four focus groups follow.

Student Perspective One Week Following the BPCCC

Initial assessment of the BPCCC. At the beginning of the first focus group, the students were able to recall and verbalize two main foci of the BPCCC: to learn facts about bullying and to change their thoughts and judgments of others. The students could readily recall that the reason for going to the challenge course was to learn about bully behaviors. Sue stated the purpose as, "trying to get through to people about bullying and learning about bullying" to which Jill added, "trying to prevent bullying from happening again."

Changing thoughts and judgments was the second major theme the students remembered about the BPCCC. Several students spoke about behaviors that lead to

bullying like, "giving others a reputation" and that the purpose was to reassess these judgments of each other. John informed us that the day was about, "being able to depend on other people to help you." In regards to making changes, Jill stated, "You may think someone isn't very nice but maybe if you took the time to know them you'd figure out that they were." and Jenny stated, "Like you think that some people weren't that dependable but then you realize that you can depend on them."

What the students liked the best. When discussing what the students liked the best about their challenge course experience, they were encouraged to explain why they liked a particular part. Four of the students referred to low course activities or teambuilding games as the part they liked the best because of having to trust and work with others to successfully accomplish the tasks. Six of the students chose high course elements as their favorite activities for the main reasons of fun and facing fears. Regardless of the activity chosen as their favorite part, three main themes emerged as the reason why they liked it: trust of peers, cooperation with peers, and conquering of fears.

Learning to trust their peers was expressed by students who liked both the low course elements and the high course elements. The students identified activities that they enjoyed, but they were also able to relate to the lessons learned. John liked the Wild Woosey because, "your friends hold you up…because your friends help you get across an obstacle and you can depend on them and stuff." Jeff liked Two Line Bridge because, "you had to like rely on your friends to belay you, you had to trust them to

not let you fall." Gregg referred to leaving the Power Pole, "when you jump off you are totally dependent on your person" (referring to the belayer).

Cooperation with peers was expressed through the use of team belays on the high course and as the reason some of them enjoyed the low course elements. Mary states, "…at first we didn't cooperate and it took us a long time before we could actually like say, 'ok well we got this plan so let's work together and just do it.'." Lisa liked the Giant's Ladder because, "I got to work with someone that I had like never really talked to before."

Conquering fear, and thus challenging themselves, was certainly a point a majority of the students expressed as a reason why they liked the high course elements. Jenny states, "I liked the zip line because it was really fun and I am sort of afraid of heights and kinda like conquered that fear."

What the students liked the least. Similar to what they liked best, students were encouraged to explain why they liked certain aspects of the BPCCC the least. Six of the students chose low course activities or teambuilding games and four choose high elements; despite the numbers being the opposite of what the students liked the best, they were not the same groups of six and four. The main themes as to why students did not like a particular activity were: feeling frustrated due to the lack of cooperation and overwhelming fear. Neither John nor Jenny liked the Helium Bar because for John, "it took us a while to get the helium bar down onto the stands and it kinda made me frustrated because people were just…they weren't listening to other people, it just kinda was hectic, so I was frustrated" and for Jenny, "everybody like we'd have one

idea and everybody would try and talk at the same time so we weren't cooperating." Gregg did not like Magic Carpet because, "everybody thought they were the leader and people just kept yanking it without communicating and I think we had to restart twice."

The high course elements produced a high level of fear for some and a questioning as to whether or not they could trust their peer group. Therefore, some students identified these activities as their least favorite because they didn't actually do them as Sue stated "like I was almost there but then I chickened out. That's why I don't like it that much because I chickened out and I didn't do it and because it was really high and it was kinda scary." Jeff agreed with not doing the Power Pole stating "I didn't do that one… I was kinda thinking that your belay team wouldn't be able to support you when you jumped."

Ironically, regardless of it being a frustrating teambuilding game or a scary high course element, the students were aware that they still worked through these emotions by eventually either completing the task or attempting a different element. In Mary's words, "The thing that I liked the least was when we had to put the helium bar on the cones because our group kinda kept blaming each other, not specifically like one person but they'd say, 'oh well this side is not listening to what we're saying, we have a good idea and you guys are not listening to it' and stuff like that, but in the end we ended up all working together and we got it like quickly." For Becky it was simply the dislike of climbing the ladder of the high elements stating, "climbing up the ladder…looking down it just looked bad"; however, she did end up completing several

high course elements and when asked how she kept climbing despite this fear she simply stated, "people…encouraging people."

Lessons learned from the BPCCC. On reflection of lessons learned through the day students spoke of: better communication, trusting others, trusting themselves, and having a fear of heights and/or falling. Many of the students spoke about their experience on the challenge course as an evolution of better communication allowing them to gain and give more trust. Jill stated when reflecting on the day's progression:

I actually felt like I knew the people better and I actually felt more friendly toward them, like I felt we could trust each other better and, um, we just got way nicer and we weren't as mean to each other and that was just in one day, which was really surprising to me.

Some of the students felt that as the risk increased, when they moved on to the high course, so did the level of communication. Gregg stated, "I think we ended up communicating better throughout the day because people had to learn how to belay each other and it wasn't just trying to move a can of bullies (referring to the game Toxic Waste) or flip a tarp (referring to the game Magic Carpet)." Jenny agreed with this notion, "At the beginning of the day everybody was thinking they were the leader and they needed to talk…as the day went on, they started listening more and I think it was because they had to…listen to their belay team and the people they were belaying otherwise they would have fallen."

Almost all of the students eluded to learning to trust others: Mark stated "Um, I learned I can trust people who I wasn't really friends with," Mary, "that a lot of people

trust me and I trust a lot of people," and Jenny, "I learned I could trust people more than I thought I could 'cause by the end of the day I trusted my belay team more than I did at the beginning." Trusting their peers and then being able to implement the new found trust was also a pinnacle lesson learned. Jeff simply stated, "I kinda learned to trust people more, to give it a try." While Sue found a lot of joy in being able to belay her classmates, "I kinda felt good being the belayer because it felt good to me that somebody else trusted me enough with their life up there and with their life in my hands and so it felt good that somebody else trusted me a lot to let me belay them."

Four of the ten students learned to trust themselves. Mark stated the lesson learned from jumping off of the Power Pole was, "that I could take the extra step. Bravery." Sue agreed with Mark stating, " kinda like Mark said that I could take the extra step and do what I never thought I could do before." Finally Becky clearly stated, "I definitely found out I was a lot more gutsy than I thought I was." Several students also connected fear with trusting others. Jill stated, "When I went in to the challenge course… I learned that I am really scared of falling. And so I knew if I could trust the belayers and I could trust the equipment, then I could do it."

Changes made after the challenge course. During the BPCCC, when students went off the Zip Line (of which all 10 had done) as well as at the end of the day, all students were asked a particular behavior they were going to change to help reduce bullying in their school. I asked them if they could recall those stated behaviors and all of their hands went up. Two common behaviors they shared they were going to change were: if they saw bullying, to stop it or to tell someone about it; and to not join in

particularly with gossiping. In regards to stopping bullying, Jenny stated, "like normally I am like afraid to do anything when I see someone being bullied but I am going to try to like talk to teachers more instead of like just ignoring it." Gregg stated, "I'm gonna try to not be a bystander as much" and Mark stated, "same as Jeff, if you see someone being bullied stand up and tell a teacher."

Several of the girls referred to gossiping as the main bullying behavior that they see and/or are a part of and which they would like to see change; as Jill stated:

Not listening to the gossip that's being spread about other people because that's a big part of bullying, especially for girls, and so just stop spreading it and stop talking about other people because it's one thing that is really hurtful to other people.

Lisa agreed stating, "well usually if one of my friends starts saying bad stuff about a person I would just like go along with it, but I'm gonna like try not to and try to stop them from saying stuff."

The students were then asked if they had actually seen any changes at the school since being at the challenge course. A resounding response of all 10 students was that people were "nicer" to each other and spending time with different people. Lisa stated:

Well I've seen a lot of change, like a couple days ago I saw two girls talking to each other at lunch, but they usually don't talk to each other like they are two like totally opposite girls, and like they seemed like they have become friends. It was nice to see.

Mark referred to his peers in his classroom, "like in the classroom, um, more people, different people, are working together." Several referred to behavior changes they have made or noticed with their friends. John stated, "Well my friends and I are just being a lot nicer to people we usually don't talk to and stuff like that." Jill very adamantly replied to the question about changes seen stating:

Yes! I have in my friends and stuff, there's actually been like, I don't know it just seems like they're a lot nicer and it's more of an outreach to other people that don't have as many friends. And I have noticed that some of my friends have been really nice to people that don't have friends.

Student Perspective One Month Following the BPCCC

Revisiting lessons learned. The second student focus group started with a question asking if the students had remembered anything from the BPCCC and a resounding response was the notion of depending/trusting others and knowledge of bully behavior. The BPCCC taught the students how to depend on and trust others. Jenny stated, "Well I learned that you can depend on people even though you don't think you can sometimes," and John commented, "You really need other people to rely on to get over tough obstacles and stuff." Sue referred to being able to depend on people for help even though they were not in your group of friends:

I learned that…some people like don't have very many friends, but they are really nice and if you get to know them they'll help you. And they, like even though you don't know them, or are not very nice to them sometimes; they'll always be there to back you up when you get in trouble sometimes.

On reflecting on the BPCCC in regards to right and wrong behavior, Jill summed up her peers' comments when she stated:

I know that I have always known that I needed to treat people right, but I also remember back on 'bullies to buddies' how we learned that and practiced that and so it is important that they see you learn it, then you should follow it.

Behavior changes. All but one of the students were able to recall what they had said about changes they would make after the challenge course. The students recalled that they had said if they saw bullying they would stop it or tell someone about it, and to not join in, particularly with gossiping. . The students then addressed how they had been working towards their behavior goals during the past month. Jill revisited the first focus group in which there was a lot of discussion of gossip and shared her struggles with following through on not gossiping, "I have been trying to do a lot better on that and it's really hard, but it's just a work in progress I guess." Lisa agreed with Mary to "just not spread it" and she stated she and Jill had been trying to help each other reduce gossiping, "Me and Jill have been working together on that and like when I start saying something then we will remind each other to not say that." Two of the students stated they were working on making improvements, but it was difficult due to the reduction in bullying that they noticed. Jenny stated, "One of my changes was not to be a bystander and I would tell someone about it and I followed that but there hasn't been as much bullying that I have noticed," to which Gregg agreed, "I have been working on not being a bystander, but I have not seen as much bullying."

In addition to the behaviors about bullying, the students revisited the notion of being friends with others and noticed that the changes in the student body included different students interacting with others. Sue stated she was, and still is, trying to "hang out with other people that don't have a lot of friends, that don't get to hang out with people a lot, like usually spend breaks by themselves, or just sit by a few other people or usually by themselves." Mark agreed that he has seen others trying this as well, "I see more people playing with different people like out on the soccer field and playing basketball." Jill added:

> I think everyone has their friends that they are like easy to go to, but I do think people have reached out and hung out with other people, I've seen it actually. I've seen it in the cafeteria, I've seen it at like what Mark said, I've seen it when they are on breaks. I really do think it has continued.

As some of them were already alluding to reduction in bullying, the students were asked about any general changes they noticed during the month since the BPCCC at their school. The students narrowed this question down to any changes they had seen in bullying which varied from reduced, "I haven't seen as much bullying;" to the same amount of bullying "I have heard some, not a lot, but some gossip going around because that happens;" to an increase in bullying, "I have to disagree with the bullying because we just had some big fights in our school and that's not a decrease in bullying, which is something we have to work on" and "there was like a really big fight in our school and so I don't think it has gone down I think it kinda flared there for awhile."

The topic of the fight brought on a reflective conversation about the BPCCC as the students in the focus group wrangled with the idea of "certain people" involved in the fight and how that relates to their own experience with the BPCCC. According to the students, those involved in the fight did not attend the BPCCC; however, some also felt, even if they had the fight would have happened because, "the people who were doing the bullying were just like that kind of people." The students were able to reflect upon their own changed behaviors since the BPCCC in relation to the fight, such as Jill's comment, "…it affected me in a way that was really good. It taught me to see other people in a different way and so it's not fair for me to talk about them because if I didn't want to be talked about why would I want to talk about someone else because then I am just pretty much encouraging it."

Only half the students knew about the fight, to which those who did know attributed it to a reduction of gossiping, "you had to know one of the people because we didn't want to tell and we didn't want it to spread" and "certain people who knew the people that were in the fight were involved in anyway and knew about it and they tried to keep it kinda quiet."

Some of the students did not think the changes made since the BPCCC were significant differences. Sue stated, "to be honest I haven't seen anything change that much, maybe a little, but not a lot like not a big difference that you would really notice but just sometimes with some people." Mark and Gregg, however, thought that people working in different groups continued, "It might have gone down a little bit but I think it still continues." Jenny summed up the non-significance of changes she noticed by

stating, "I sort of agree with Sue, I have seen it, and I've been hanging out with different people too. I have seen it but it's not like a gigantic change where you would be like, 'oh my gosh!'"

Despite the lack of changes noted, the students unanimously agreed that the BPCCC should be continued. The reasons why it should be continued resulted in two main themes of: relying on others and learning facts about bullying. As John stated, "I think it should be continued because it's really a great teamwork building activity. Um, and it really teaches you that you can rely on other people to help you sometimes." Gregg thought it should be continued because, "…even if you already know what you should be doing it sort of shows you why." Lisa commented on the impact of learning about the prevalence of bulling:

> That's where I learned how many other people are getting bullied and gossiped about, and have been hurt at least once in their life or whatever, and I didn't really know that because I thought like only me or one of my friends was the only person that was really getting hurt.

Jenny agreed, "I didn't realize how many other people were being bullied and I kind of like agree with her because I felt like I was the only one."

The reasons the students gave for their own class to repeat it were to: revisit lessons learned, get to know more people, and spend more time on the high course. Jenny stated, "I think we should do it again in 8th grade because it is team work building, it was fun, and we needed more time to do stuff." Mark thought they should have the experience twice and equated it to studying for quizzes at school, "we should

take it twice because usually when you do it only one time it doesn't get into your head just like a quiz when you study more than once so it'll get in your head and you'll remember it more." Jill reflected on the importance of doing it in both 7th and 8th grade:

> In 7th and 8th grade you are facing changes in your life, your atmosphere, and who you hang out with and it's just like you learn it in 7th grade and then by 8th grade you forget about it but if you had the course again I think people would just keep an open mind about it because it's like an opportunity to be with new people. I don't know, it really affected me and my friends. I don't know I was able to put a lot of trust in a lot of different people and I didn't think I could.

In summary of the student focus groups, the students gained knowledge about bully statistics, created new friendships and social support networks, were able to overcome challenges and work as a team; some of which continued one month after the BPCCC. The students supported a continuation of the program and also saw a necessity of reminder sessions or even repeats of the entire BPCCC for them to continue towards initial lessons learned.

Teacher and Staff Perspectives One Week Following the BPCC

Initial review of the effectiveness of the BPCCC. All four staff members expressed that the BPCCC had an impact on their students. The staff discussed five effective aspects of the BPCCC including an increased level of communication between different students, a change in social support due to the creation of a

supportive environment, taking on personal challenges, an increase in bully

knowledge, and a common language to use when discussing behaviors.

The change in communication, who communicated with whom, and the

relation to communication around bully behavior stood out to three of the four staff.

Tom stated, "The way they communicated seemed to change or evolve from the first

activities to the end and then even into the afternoon of how they communicated with

one another and that to me seemed to be really good." Jane agreed with Tom and

further expressed the communication around bully behaviors was a positive

experience for the kids, "…the dialog about bullying in the school, and the facilitators

bringing that dialog out into the open brought the communication piece more to the

forefront whereas they would not be talking about it." Amy added, "That the

facilitators asked the students a question before they got on the high ropes and that

made the kids stop and think and equate it with what the main purpose was." In

addition the staff noted that the facilitated conversations with supportive activities

around bully behaviors provided a common language to use when discussing

behaviors, as Tom stated:

> Being out there reminds me and helps reinforce things we talk about here. It
>
> reminds me about the language we want to use and model, have other people
>
> model the same language and reminder to use that same sort of talk that we
>
> used out at the challenge course to use that here. It gives an example of things,
>
> more concrete, that we can remind them about this activity and how it applies

in different situations. So it is not new information but it is an example of how to use what we teach and what we talk about.

Amy and Jane found the main impact was individuals challenging themselves. Amy stated, "I think the main thing was they challenged themselves to reach a new personal goal; could be physical, mental, something they were afraid of, emotional" and Jane stated:

There were also some that really surprised me who came in and looked at the ropes and said, 'I'm not gonna do that' and who by the end of the day were doing the zip line and were doing the high ropes course. It was pretty cool.

These personal challenges also related to the notion of changes in social support specifically by having to form belay teams on the high course, as Amy commented:

Having the students be the belayers, which I found a little scary but they did a good job, forced them into the team role instead of just being a participant like a Disney Land ride. They were part of the whole experience and they all had to rely on each other… they were very proud of being on those teams.

Tom addressed positive peer pressure as a means to challenge themselves:

I think part of it is a positive peer pressure in a way; they see others do it and achieve it and they are having fun, and they want to be a part of that. And I think some of them accepted it truly as a challenge and took it to heart that 'I'm being challenged here personally and by those around me' and they try to rise up to that challenge."

Bob and Jane both agreed with Tom and added the benefits of verbal support from their peers and staff that were there, as Jane stated, "some of those kids don't get that cheerleading at home and so I think some of that went on and they felt well may be I can do it." Bob acknowledged the positive aspect the cheering brought on stating, "…on the high course they get all excited just to cheer each other on like in a real public way, which is kind of a neat thing I think that makes them feel good". The discussion of peer pressure and bonding is expressed in a personal tale by Amy from her first year on the zip line during the BPCCC:

> It definitely builds bonds. When I came back teaching here three years ago and didn't really know Lindsey Haggas and Lindsey tells me, 'all the staff have gone on the zip line' and it's now my turn and I'm thinking, 'wow everyone has done this, kinda like initiation.' And I don't even think about it and all of a sudden I am climbing this pole and I start thinking, 'not everyone has done this' and I am on the top and I am already clipped in and now I have all the 7th graders watching me and I bonded with Lindsey Haggas right then and there! [note: Lindsey was the facilitator at the top of the pole clipping Amy into the zip line]. We've been tight since then and a lot of it because of the zip line. You do bond; I'm glad she pushed me; we've been close ever since.

The staff did not articulate specific activities that were more effective than others in the curriculum, as Tom stated, "for different kids different things work so you have a different assortment of activities going on so for some kids they identify with it and for some they don't." In general, the staff felt that few aspects of the

program were ineffective, however, it was too soon for them to note definitive changes in their students. Bob stated:

In some way I don't think any of them are effective and yet I think they're all effective…Ultimately I think part of the effectiveness of things is to put people in awkward situations where they can help each other out of those and then they learn to care a little more about each other so to me through the whole day I didn't really see one thing that was better than others….if you put people in emotionally and physically difficult circumstances where they have to rely on other people; it builds bonds. It's what war does, what teams do, and what the challenge course does.

In addition, Bob did not think the BPCCC was different from what he does in his classroom, "I don't think there is anything that comes from the activity that I use differently other than just teaching people to be civil and kind."

Lessons learned. The staff were asked if by being on the challenge course and watching their students if they had learned anything about their students as a whole. The most common lesson learned about their students was about the staff's expectations about their students and how the student's behaviors matched or did not match their expectations. Amy, Tom, and Jane all stated they were amazed with who goes up on the high course and who does not. Tom stated:

Some of the kids I expect to be climbing and zipping and jumping really didn't want to, and were saying they were afraid; and other kids had no problem who I thought would have a problem. So that was interesting and was a reminder to

me that what I expect of the kids isn't necessarily what they are expecting and what they expect for themselves. Because my expectation is that they will be able to do it; those are my false expectations.

Amy had been involved with the BPCCC for the past four years and was always surprised by who goes up on the high course and who does not. In her own reflection she found a correlation between students who challenge themselves in the classroom and those who challenge themselves on the high course:

I notice a lot of my students that challenge themselves academically also challenge themselves on the challenge course even though they are not very athletic. And I think that is why I was so surprised with a lot of them because I didn't think they would do it. And then some of them that don't challenge themselves at all did not; so I saw an equilibrium between their academic performance and their challenge course performance.

Behavioral changes. Three of the four staff saw no dramatic changes in their students and one teacher noted improved group work. Two of them noted that the students at the school are overall well behaved and supportive so the expectation of changes was slim, "I think we have really good kids at this school, they are friends, they know each other so it's not like we have terrible behaviors that are all of a sudden magically changed" and from the school counselor, "…we have good kids here we don't have huge instances of bullying every week so it's hard to say there hasn't been a huge impact."

Bob, Tom, and Jane agreed that there may be subtle changes, but could not definitely state that it is directly related to the BPCCC, especially only one week after the experience. There was not a consensus among the teachers as to changes that had occurred in their classrooms. Bob stated:

To me it's a very short term thing and ya know it supplements all the things that we do; kinda like Tom was saying. I think it's just another input into their lives of being positive, being thoughtful; some kids made connections out there that they didn't already have but I don't notice it in an overwhelming sense.

Amy noted changes in group work specific to her classroom:

I've been doing a lot more group work, and usually I give them one or two minutes to choose their groups and there's usually a couple kids who were left out. Now nobody's left out and people who I wouldn't expect to work with other people just work together and it's not always the same groups that it used to be…so I don't know if it's because we are doing more group work and I just give them a short time to pick or if it is because of this. Group work has just been tons easier for me I haven't had the drama, people have just gotten to work; it's been great! It could be the students that I have in my room too; I don't know.

Amy continued to remind students of the challenge course experience and bully behaviors through journaling activities, which the other teacher did not.

Suggestions for improvement. The staff verbalized two main components to be continued or improved upon; belay teams and adult involvement. In regards to the

belay teams, all four of the staff found the teams a means to include students who would not or could not do the high course and to continue the notion of working with others, "no one was just standing around; like in years past, just observing. Everyone was participating; and that was really good." The following quote came from Amy about teacher involvement with the recommendation of involving parents:

My students really enjoy the fact that other teachers participated, adults participated in the challenge course. They love that, they love to see what our weaknesses are, our strengths, and what we challenged ourselves to do. I also told them that the staff did some of the teambuilding exercises that they did in the morning and we talked about that a little bit, but they loved it that it wasn't just for the students and they wanted to know how we did. I think that was really good because it was a wide variety of ages that participated; that it wasn't just seventh graders. That was really special. I don't know if parents could be incorporated in the future or not, not to change their group dynamic, but it's neat for them to see and kinda bridges the generation gap a little bit.

Continuation of the BPCCC. Three staff would recommend the BPCCC be continued and implemented in other schools. One staff stated that middle school is the perfect time because "that's when students are starting to discover who they really are." Bob had concern of the benefits not outweighing the cost, "I think it's good but it's all economics and I do think we can accomplish a lot of these things in our building partly because of the staff we have." Jane expressed the desire to continue the

program because of the unique opportunities it presented to the students regardless of

the cost:

> Many of the students will not have the opportunity to ever do this again so yes
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> maybe it costs two thousand dollars to send all of these students this year; but
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> in my opinion it is money well spent because the students will not have the
>
> opportunity to do this again, probably at least 98% of them won't ever have the
>
> opportunity to do a challenge course again or to challenge themselves in this
>
> type of way or to bond with people in this way in outdoor recreation, in an
>
> experiential way, again in their school years so this is their only chance.

Despite not seeing explicit changes in the student body, all four recommended its

continuation and also supported a program just for all school staff to experience the

challenge course.

Teacher and Staff Perspectives One Month Following the BPCCC

Revisiting the BPCCC: The two staff actively involved in the focus group

stated improved group work and reference points were the lasting changes from the

BPCCC. Amy stated, "We have been doing group projects and so I often preface it

with if there is a problem we talk about challenge course" and Jane also revisits the

BPCCC when, "I am problem solving with students." Similar to the students, both

Amy and Jane noted different students worked with various different people and group

work continued to go well for Amy, "in my class it has gotten better, groups are

strong; feelings have gotten stronger."

Two classroom teachers were asked if they purposely revisit the challenge course day. One teacher does through journaling and the students verbalize the events from the day in relation to classroom discussions. In the other class, the BPCCC is not revisited and the students do not refer to it. At the end of the school year, the seventh graders compete in a field day during which several of the activities from BPCCC are repeated. The teacher who revisits the challenge course has won for the past two years, "…my group falls into team work and that is why the trophy is in my room (laughter) and has been for the past two years" to which the other teacher replied, "she cheats." Amy summed up her reflection of the BPCCC by stating, "I know it is supposed to be anti-bullying but it is actually pro-team." Jane summed up her reflection of the benefits of the BPCCC as opportunities for the students to challenge themselves in a supportive environment while still keeping the focus on the bully curriculum.

Despite being able to verbalize benefits of the BPCCC, two of the three staff involved had a difficult time connecting any changes to the BPCCC. Bob stated that in his class the students verbally support each other with "nice job" but he does not think that relates to the BPCCC, "as much as it is just something I encourage them to do. Ya know I do it to, 'nice job' and encourage them, but I did see it from them." Jane noted she didn't like trying to connect the BPCCC to changes in harassment as she was currently dealing with some of her 8th grade students picking on one student; she found this frustrating because they had been involved in the BPCCC in the year prior. Amy pointed out that the focus is on the seventh grade and not the eighth grade, and that for the seventh grade she has noted a decrease in bully behavior in her classroom:

I had a situation in my classroom with some bullying before the challenge

course and I think it has gotten a lot better in the last few weeks. Actually I

have noticed that people are including this person in their groups whereas

before this person was not included. So that is *very* encouraging and makes the

whole school day easier.

Suggestions for revisiting the BPCCC in the classroom: The staff were asked

about the feasibility of implementing components of the BPCCC into the classroom

based on the recommendations by the students; all of them liked the idea, but none of

them thought it was feasible due to their already full loads. One made a

recommendation to have it during a special planning class the students have but the

others thought that would be too difficult because of the facilitation skills needed. Bob

noted the uniqueness of going to the challenge course as having some power behind

the lessons learned, but ultimately it is working together with different people that

increases understanding:

I think kids have a ton of opportunity to do team building stuff in classes, at

least in the class I teach, I mean there are group activities and there are

opportunities to enrich that experience, but it certainly isn't like getting to go

for the whole day to the challenge course. That's special, that's unique… the

idea behind it I think is neat, shared experiences build bonds with kids, that's

why kids bond, they just do…it's not so clearly defined as 'ok we are going to

team build now." It's more strategic and subtle, like I am going to partner that

kid with that kid because they don't always get along. I do that all the time in

my fitness class, then they are workout partners and two weeks later they

discover that they are just normal kids with the same fears and the same wants.

In summary the faculty and staff involved in the BPCCC noted improved team

work and communication immediately after the experience and that this continued to

some extent one month later. Three out of four staff used the experience to address

behavioral issues with their students and the BPCCC allowed for open communication

and a common language about bully behaviors and expected behaviors within the

school. Despite not being able to state specific correlations, three of four staff would

definitely recommend the BPCCC to others and one would recommend it if the cost

were appropriate.

Discussion

This study aimed to explore the BPCCC through four proposed purposes: identification of victimization in the schools studied, goodness of fit of Harter's mediation model of self-worth in relation to victimization, the effectiveness of the BPCCC on several psychosocial dimensions, and finally an assessment of the effectiveness of the BPCCC in the words of the students and teachers who participated in the program. Results indicated that victimization was present at both schools prior to the intervention, that the data did not fit the conceptual model, and psychosocial changes were not present after the intervention; however, the students and faculty/staff verbalized effectiveness of the program and a desire for the program to continue.

The prevalence of moderate to high victimization (43%) in this study is much higher than the finding of Nansel and colleagues (2001) of 23% self-reporting being a victim or a bully-victim "sometimes" to "frequently." Specific to Oregon, prevalence of moderate to high victimization in this study is also higher than the Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS, 2004) finding that 32% of Oregon youth are harassed in some form. In addition, the findings of the significant difference between gender in regards to physical victimization supports the findings in the bully literature that boys tend to experience more direct bullying and girls more indirect bullying (Brown, Birch, & Kancherla, 2005; Mynard & Joseph, 2000; Olweus, 1993; Olweus, 2003; Piek et al., 2005).

The second purpose of this study was to determine if Harter's mediation model of self-worth (1987, 1999) would apply to victimization because of the similarities of

characteristics of victims found in the literature such as low self-conceptions (Nation et al., 2008; Safran, 2007), poor sense of social support (Holt & Espelage, 2007; Safran, 2007), and a depressed affect (Safran, 2007) being similar to the components of Harter's model. Despite these common characteristics, the data did not fit the model perhaps for several reasons. One plausible explanation may be that the measures used did not represent the constructs of the model as accurately as possible; that is there may be a better way to measure victimization or the depression scale may not encompass all of the feelings that relate to victimization. In addition, to be true to the model, it is the discrepancies scores (that take into account perceived importance and could not be assessed in this particular investigation because of an inadequate sample size) as opposed to self-conception scores alone that are expected to predict self-worth. Another possible reason for lack of fit is the notion that the model may have fit better if bully behavior was the outcome variable as opposed to victimization and /or if the outcome measure differentiated between the three categories of victim, bully and bully/victim to determine which outcome might fit the model the best because despite similar characteristics of the three categories the outcome behaviors are different (see: Leff, 2007; Solberg et al., 2007; Unnever, 2005). A third conceivable reason for lack of fit is that Harter's model does not transfer well to victimization and other theoretical frameworks may more accurately explain why youth are victimized.

In addition, the hypothesized model was not statistically compared to an accurate alternative model due to an inadequate sample size. The alternative model that aligned with Harter's (1987) original work suggested: a direct path from self-

conceptions and perceived social supports to victimization; a path from global self-worth to affect; a path from self-conceptions and perceived social supports to affect; and, finally, a path from affect to victimization. This proposed alternative model may have had a better goodness of fit in that self-conceptions and perceived social supports do in fact influence victimization but not through global self-worth as the tested model proposed. For example, Nation et al. (2007) found some relationship between parenting style and potential to be a bully or a victim in that children whose parents are over-involved and over-protective are more likely to become victims; however, children may perceive this as parental acceptance explaining a direct path to victimization despite other characteristics. Unfortunately, this proposed model has 35 parameters and thus a need for 350 participants ideally and definitely no less than 165 (see Kline, 2005); therefore, the sample size for the present study was not adequate test the model's goodness of fit.

There were no changes found in psychosocial changes from those participating in the BPCCC despite the literature supporting a program designed to develop social support systems and improve conceptions about one's self (Holt & Espelage, 2007; Leff, 2007; Nation, 2008; Reid, Monson, & Rivers, 2004; Smith, 2004; Unnever, 2005). Perhaps there were no changes despite the intervention because relatively all mean psychosocial scores were already quite high (example global self-worth had a mean of 3.3 out of 4 at Time 1) and to improve upon these already high means would prove to be quite difficult. As was noted in the teacher/staff focus group, "we have really good kids at this school, they are friends…" In addition, perhaps significant

relationships would have been found if measures such as depression were worded specifically within the context of victimization.

The BPCCC did have an effect on the knowledge base related to bullying immediately after the intervention. This finding is also consistent with the student and teacher/staff focus groups. The students expressed knowing more about bullies and the teachers expressed creating a common language that all understand around bully knowledge. The findings that this study found changes in knowledge, but had limited impact on psychosocial and behavioral changes, supports Hunt's (2007) findings that an educational program alone has little impact on changing issues around bullying and provides some understanding that knowledge alone may not impact behaviors. Despite this initial change in bully knowledge, knowledge was not maintained three months later at follow-up.

Both the student and teacher/staff focus groups provided unequivocal information about the effectiveness of the BPCCC in the words of those who participated in the intervention directly. Their discussions of the effectiveness of the BPCCC provide some insight into the program in regards to improved self-concepts, development of new social support systems, and an understanding of bully behaviors.

In regards to self-concept, several of the students addressed feelings of pride in overcoming fears as well as an increased ability to trust themselves more. The teachers reiterated this in their amazement of which students attempted high course activities as well as watching the belay teams in action. Both the students and the teachers also witnessed a clear development of social relations amongst the students. The students

acknowledged that less students spent time alone in the cafeteria and/or in the halls and that different groups played sports together. The staff noticed an easier time with group work in the classrooms. The student and teacher/staff comments support the use of the BPCCC as an intervention in that several studies have found the most effective interventions around bully behaviors include a means to create positive social networks (Holt & Espelage, 2007; Hunt, 2007; Nation et al., 2007; Smith, 2004) and to effectively use these networks (Hunt, 2007; Nation et al., 2007), which one could argue the students displayed on the challenge course and then replicated at school. In addition, Smith (2004) recommends future programs implement role playing as a means to understand different bully roles; although the BPCCC did not use role playing directly, the activity in which students displayed the statistics by walking across the circle if they had ever been a bully or victim was eye opening to several of the students and specifically insightful to the students who felt they were "the only one" being bullied.

The discussions in the staff focus group about having a shared language with the students in regards to appropriate behavior and a common ground to solutions based on how the BPCCC activities were metaphorically framed also supports the literature of teacher involvement (Nation et al., 2008; Safran, 2007; Smith, 2004). Smokowski and Kopasz (2005) found successful bully reduction programs rely on teachers and staff to be role models in developing a warm school environment and places limits and consequences on unacceptable behaviors both of which, it could be argued, were created in the BPCCC according to the comments of both the teachers

and the students. The notion of shared experience and development of a joint effort between students and teachers have been found to be important when decreasing bully behavior (Nation et al., 2008). In addition, the common language that the students create on the challenge course supports Nation and colleagues' (2008) study in which they recommend the involvement of the students in the school rules about bullying as a means to augment the success of a bully prevention program.

In regards to effective bully prevention programs, Smith (2004) states, "Arguably, the most important factor is the extent to which schools take ownership of the anti-bullying work, whatever form it takes, and push it forward effectively and persistently" (p. 101). Thus the verbalized support of three out of four staff involved directly with the BPCCC reinforces the notion that the BPCCC is, in their view, effective and that they will be persistent in pursuing a continuation of the program. In addition, the students were in resounding agreement that the BPCCC should be continued; which can elude to its effectiveness.

Conclusion

From the perspective of the students, the BPCCC was effective in bringing awareness to bully behaviors, knowledge on how to address bullies, development of new social groups, and a common language to use when behavioral issues arise in the school. It is unfortunate that the quantitative analyses did not support these findings; however, this study is not without limitations.

One limitation was the total time it took to complete all of the questionnaires; for some students, it took longer than expected and perhaps these students were the ones who did not complete the surveys thus eliminating their data from analyses; it is unclear if this group of students fit a profile of bully, victim, or bully-victim. Perhaps there are better measures to be used, such as a broader measure of affect, that more accurately explain the constructs this study was examining.

Another limitation was the use of a victimization measure only; there was no bully measure or measure that addressed both bullying and victimization. The victimization measure was used because it suited better than a measure of bully behavior to test Harter's mediation model of self-worth as the literature suggests that the main characteristics of victims include poor social support, poor sense of self, and a depressed mood (Nation, 2008; Safran, 2007); this is in opposition to the bully literature that is inconclusive of bullies feeling poorly about themselves while it suggests bullies may experience high levels of social engagement, albeit this interaction may not be positive (Holt & Espelage, 2007; Nation, 2008; and Safran, 2007). Another consideration was the researcher not wanting to further burden the

respondents in the current study by having them complete an assessment of both victim and bully behavior; however, future studies might examine the effect of the BPCCC on bullying behavior to more fully explore the potential impact of the program. In addition, future studies should attempt to find a theoretically accepted model of why one becomes a victim or why one is a bully and then utilize a large enough sample size to test this hypothetical model.

Perhaps, as suggested by Solberg and colleagues (2007), Leff (2007), and Unnever (2005), students who are bullies, who are victims, and who are bully-victims need to be studied and worked with separately as they are distinct groups. It may be that this study, in attempts to include the whole student body as suggested in the literature (Holt & Espelage, 2007; Nation et al, 2008; Olweus, 2001; Smith, 2004; Smith et al. 2004), was less effective with regard to those students who truly needed the intervention. Therefore future studies should examine the use of the BPCCC separately for each of the distinct sub-groups.

Future studies should also include a continuation of the BPCCC throughout the school year, as a one-time intervention may not create immediate changes in the participants (Hunt, 2007; Safran, 2007). This idea was supported strongly in the student focus group in which students verbalized a need for the continuation and repetition of the BPCCC. As was so eloquently stated by one student, the curriculum should be repeated because, "it'll get in your head and you'll remember it more." The teachers also supported the notion of incorporating the BPCCC into the school day during a planning period; however, the teachers struggled with the staff having the

knowledge of the activities and ability to "pull off" using metaphors as the trained

facilitators did. Thus training of teachers on how to facilitate the BPCCC would be

beneficial and perhaps make the BPCCC more practical and cost effective, which was

a concern of at least one staff member. For example, pictures taken at the ropes course

during the BPCCC could be revisited at different times throughout the school year to

remind students about the experience and reinforce different lessons that were

emphasized. In addition, the teachers discussed all staff experiencing the challenge

course and having direct exposure to the BPCCC thus expanding the common

experience to all school staff and faculty creating a school-wide understanding of the

problem and ways to address it with their students as recommended by Nation and

colleagues (2008).

Despite the concern of the cost of the program and the number of non-

significant quantitative findings with regard to program effectiveness, it is interesting

to note that as this document is being written the school is preparing to run another 7th

grade class through the BPCCC, the fifth consecutive year it has run, supporting the

statements of the teachers that they do in fact find it beneficial to their students and

also supporting the views of the students that all students should have the opportunity

to be a part of the BPCCC.

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Table 1: Means and (Std) for Victimization Variables by Experimental Condition and Gender

Variable	Pretest		Posttest		Follow-up	
	Treatment	Control	Treatment	Control	Treatment	Control
Verbal Victimization	3.69 (2.80)	4.17 (2.40)	3.19 (2.60)	3.33 (2.70)	3.61 (2.90)	3.91 (2.90)
Male	4.09 (2.66)	4.32 (2.51)	3.60 (2.42)	3.00 (2.75)	3.90 (2.68)	3.29 (2.73)
Female	3.38 (2.98)	4.22 (2.41)	2.89 (2.63)	3.45 (2.63)	3.30 (3.17)	4.43 (2.90)
Social Victimization	2.26 (2.60)	2.91 (2.7)	2.02 (2.50)	2.53 (2.90)	2.15 (2.60)	2.52 (2.80)
Male	2.09 (2.41)	2.59 (2.46)	1.73 (1.94)	1.83 (2.52)	1.87 (2.90)	1.79 (2.41)
Female	2.52 (2.92)	3.49 (2.76)	2.34 (2.88)	3.24 (2.92)	0.50 (3.10)	3.23 (3.05)
Physical Victimization	1.40 (2.20)	1.77 (2.3)	1.00 (1.70)	2.91 (2.20)	1.46 (2.00)	1.12 (2.00)
Male	1.27 (2.27)	2.67 (2.39)	1.37 (1.94)	1.72 (2.17)	1.55 (1.98)	1.20 (2.14)
Female	1.95 (2.28)	1.08 (1.96)	0.69 (1.30)	1.15 (2.28)	1.30 (2.04)	1.03 (1.79)
Attack on Property	1.99 (2.20)	2.18 (2.30)	1.45 (2.00)	1.93 (2.60)	1.98 (2.30)	1.66 (2.20)
Male	2.07 (2.05)	2.52 (2.50)	1.70 (1.91)	1.83 (2.65)	2.45 (2.47)	1.71 (2.14)
Female	1.95 (2.28)	2.05 (2.08)	1.23 (2.03)	1.94 (2.49)	1.40 (1.90)	1.70 (2.41)
Total Victimization	9.45 (8.00)	11.39 (7.60)	7.78 (6.98)	8.64 (7.80)	9.15 (8.16)	9.24 (7.71)
Male	9.95 (7.51)	11.94 (7.95)	8.40 (6.65)	8.38 (8.25)	9.77 (7.63)	8.00 (7.59)
Female	8.93 (8.44)	10.89 (7.23)	7.24 (7.32)	10.23 (8.14)	8.50 (8.76)	10.40 (7.76)

Table 2: Correlations among the Variables Harter's Mediation Model of Self-worth in Relation to Victimization

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1.scholastic competence	---											
2.social acceptance	0.28*	---										
3. athletic competence	0.23*	0.42*	---									
4. physical appearance	0.43*	0.35*	0.31*	---								
5.behavioral conduct	0.54*	0.11	0.03	0.38*	---							
6. global self-worth	0.53*	0.30*	0.26*	0.61*	0.62*	---						
7. parental support	0.35*	0.26*	0.18*	0.42*	0.32*	0.48*	---					
8. classmate support	0.33*	0.70*	0.42*	0.33*	0.20*	0.36*	0.36*	---				
9. teacher support	0.37*	0.21*	0.25*	0.29*	0.34*	0.28*	0.36*	0.33*	---			
10. friend support	0.19*	0.28*	0.05	0.19*	0.18*	0.15	0.25*	0.45*	0.34*	---		
11. affect	0.38*	-0.31*	-0.22*	-0.53*	-0.26*	-0.49*	-0.47*	-0.48*	-0.15	-0.26*	---	
12. total victim	0.25*	-0.28*	-0.15	-0.35*	-0.28*	-0.30*	-0.22*	-0.50*	-0.11	-0.15	0.60*	---

$* \ p < .05$

Table 3: Means and (Std) for Variables by Experimental Condition and Gender

Variable	Pretest		Posttest		Follow-up	
	Treatment	Control	Treatment	Control	Treatment	Control
Global Self-Worth	3.33 (.55)	3.27 (.66)	3.35 (.51)	3.27 (.65)	3.27 (.57)	3.18 (.63)
Male	3.28 (.53)	3.25 (.74)	3.27 (.47)	3.14 (.76)	3.20 (.56)	3.13 (.79)
Female	3.37 (.59)	3.25 (.66)	3.46 (.58)	3.23 (.67)	3.33 (.61)	3.11 (.59)
Scholastic Competence	2.95 (.73)	2.65 (.74)	2.92 (.72)	2.86 (.67)	2.93 (.73)	2.81 (.75)
Male	2.85 (.76)	2.72 (.83)	2.81 (.71)	2.89 (.78)	2.88 (.74)	2.86 (.79)
Female	2.97 (.77)	2.65 (.75)	3.03 (.71)	2.85 (.86)	3.01 (.72)	2.68 (.76)
Social Acceptance	2.97 (.75)	2.99 (.68)	3.04 (.77)	3.00 (.70)	2.91 (.81)	3.06 (.67)
Male	3.03 (.65)	2.94 (.88)	2.94 (.71)	3.02 (.80)	2.89 (.72)	3.03 (.88)
Female	2.94 (.83)	2.94 (.72)	3.01 (.81)	2.98 (.71)	2.93 (.89)	3.02 (.52)
Physical Appearance	2.84 (.78)	2.86 (.81)	2.95 (.75)	2.91 (.85)	3.03 (.70)	2.91 (.83)
Male	2.92 (.67)	2.98 (.88)	3.05 (.60)	2.99 (.83)	3.08 (.61)	2.99 (.94)
Female	2.77 (.87)	2.84 (.80)	2.94 (.87)	2.89 (.86)	2.97 (.77)	2.75 (.76)
Athletic Competence	2.94 (.68)	2.92 (.71)	2.96 (.64)	3.00 (.69)	2.86 (.69)	2.95 (.74)
Male	3.06 (.54)	2.99 (.68)	3.04 (.59)	3.06 (.73)	2.88 (.69)	2.98 (.81)
Female	2.71 (.80)	2.90 (.70)	2.79 (.72)	3.01 (.68)	2.85 (.68)	2.81 (.76)
Behavioral Conduct	3.14 (.61)	2.98 (.62)	3.22 (.61)	3.06 (.64)	3.06 (.73)	2.95 (.65)
Male	2.91 (.58)	2.90 (.67)	2.99 (.64)	2.98 (.69)	2.93 (.75)	2.81 (.70)
Female	3.38 (.60)	2.96 (.62)	3.46 (.54)	3.03 (.64)	3.19 (.68)	3.02 (.63)
Parental Support	3.52 (.52)	3.42 (.62)	3.46 (.58)	3.40 (.68)	3.35 (.68)	3.04 (.70)
Male	3.52 (.49)	3.52 (.58)	3.39 (.65)	3.45 (.71)	3.37 (.64)	3.45 (.70)
Female	3.52 (.59)	3.43 (.62)	3.52 (.55)	3.38 (.67)	3.32 (.73)	3.11 (.73)
Teacher Support	3.35 (.51)	3.23 (.62)	3.34 (.58)	3.26 (.65)	3.21 (.64)	3.21 (.64)
Male	3.35 (.50)	3.01 (.65)	3.21 (.60)	3.08 (.72)	3.10 (.66)	2.99 (.74)
Female	3.38 (.52)	3.22 (.63)	3.45 (.50)	3.23 (.66)	3.30 (.61)	3.40 (.54)
Classmate Support	3.17 (.63)	3.13 (.66)	3.13 (.67)	3.07 (.62)	3.04 (.67)	3.15 (.58)

Variable	Pretest		Posttest		Follow-up	
	Treatment	Control	Treatment	Control	Treatment	Control
Male	3.15 (.49)	2.97 (.82)	3.09 (.65)	2.99 (.75)	2.93 (.60)	3.07 (.65)
Female	3.10 (.75)	3.09 (.68)	3.09 (.70)	3.07 (.62)	3.15 (.72)	3.22 (.49)
Friend Support	3.42 (.74)	3.31 (.73)	3.36 (.80)	3.33 (.65)	3.31 (.77)	3.30 (.72)
Male	3.40 (.71)	2.96 (.76)	3.25 (.89)	3.02 (.72)	3.28 (.71)	2.93 (.74)
Female	3.43 (.78)	3.30 (.74)	3.44 (.67)	3.32 (.65)	3.32 (.83)	3.64 (.50)
Depression	14.7(11.6)	17.6 (13.7)	12.4 (11.8)	14.8 (13.2)	14.8 (13.2)	15.9 (13.8)
Male	12.6 (9.0)	16.2 (14.6)	9.1 (5.5)	13.3 (13.6)	11.6 (8.6)	12.0 (13.6)
Female	17.3 (14.6)	18.1 (13.6)	15.6 (15.4)	15.2 (13.0)	17.9 (15.9)	20.0 (12.8)
Bully Quiz	9.12 (1.05)	8.29 (1.41)	9.27 (1.12)	8.14 (1.54)	8.85 (1.17)	8.34 (1.68)
Male	9.07 (1.22)	8.2 (1.55)	9.08 (1.50)	7.93 (1.69)	8.74 (1.32)	8.30 (1.79)
Female	9.07 (1.02)	8.22 (1.45)	9.21 (1.26)	8.03 (1.61)	9.06 (3.01)	8.30 (1.62)

Figure 1: Path Diagram of original hypothesized model of Harter's mediation model of self-worth in relation to victimization. * denote *p*<.05. Dashed lines indicate model specification without antecedents.
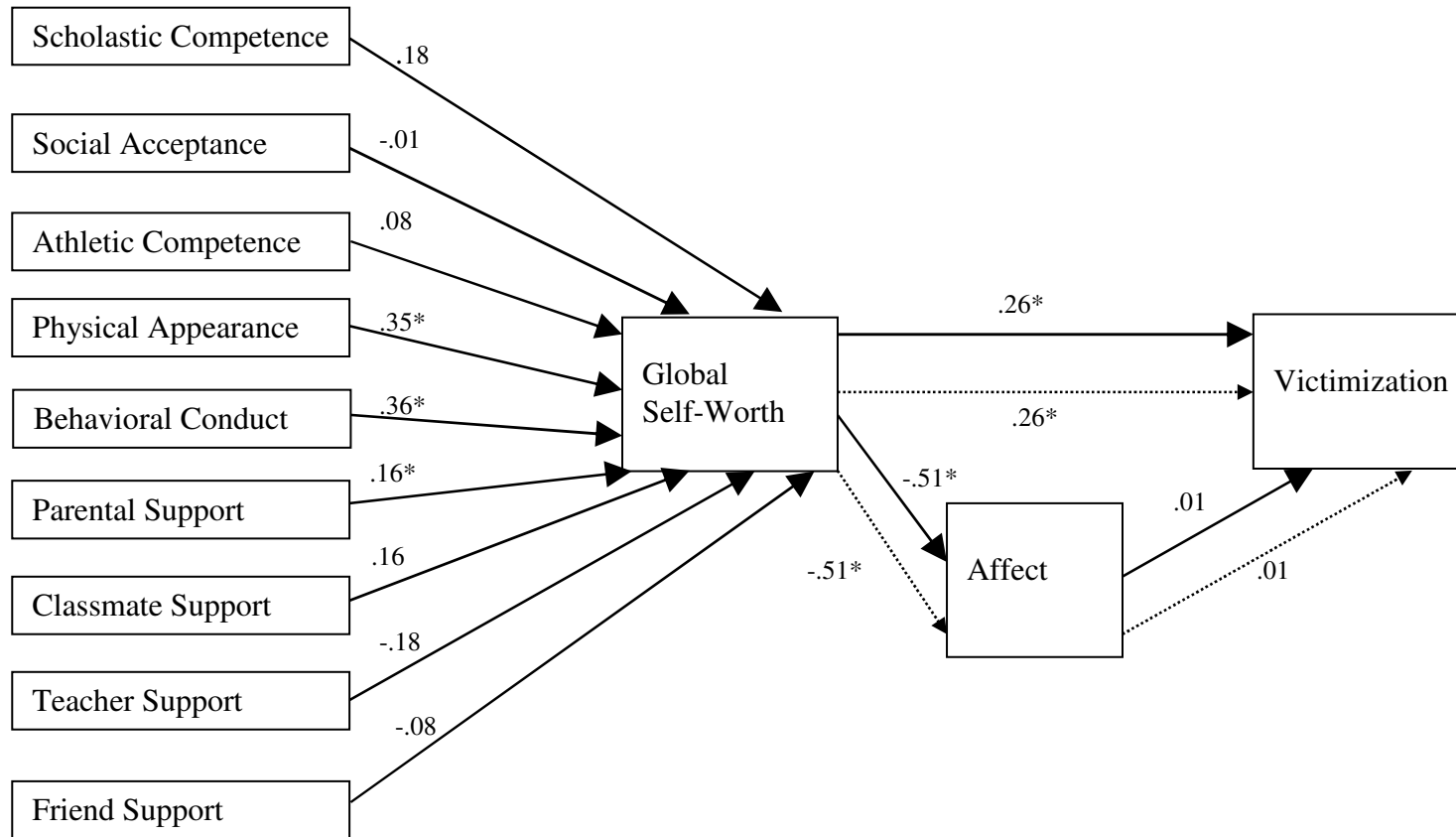
Appendix A

Expanded Literature Review

This study stemmed from my personal involvement as one of the small group facilitators in the original implementation and creation of the BPCCC. In addition, I was a Colorado resident during Columbine and the discussion around bully/victim behavior and lack of safe school environments further intrigued me about this topic; working as a challenge course facilitator, I felt there were some possibilities for changing the school environment using this medium.

Peer-victimization in schools causes lasting and devastating problems for both the victims and the perpetrators (Bowles & Lesperance, 2004; Nansel et al., 2001; Olweus, 2003). Adults may minimize the impact of bully behaviors and, "fail to intervene appropriately when they are aware of the problem and tend to underestimate the serious nature of the harm that can result from being bullied" (Bowles & Lesperance, 2004, pg. 95). Perhaps it is difficult to ascertain the significance of behaviors because the relationship between the bully and victim is a blurred line in which some youth are bullies, some are victims, some are both, and some are neither (Bowles & Lesperance, 2004; Nansel et al., 2001). This range of behaviors clearly has ramifications for creating a safe school environment; since one cannot have a victim without having a bully, addressing victimization behavior will also address bully behaviors. Despite the continuum of behaviors, there are some very distinct characteristics of bullies, victims, and students who engage in both behaviors.

<center>Bullying Characteristics</center>

Nansel et al. (2001) found 30% of American youth are engaged in some form of bullying behavior and in Oregon these numbers may be slightly higher. The Oregon

Department of Human Services (ODHS, 2004) in the "Eighth Grade Healthy Teens

Survey" found 32% of Oregon youth were harassed in some form, over 70% were

verbally assaulted, and 19% had damage done to their property. Of particular concern,

however, are the six percent of Oregon eighth graders who refuse to attend school for

fear of being a victim and the six percent who carry some form of weapon to school.

One percent of those weapons are guns (ODHS, 2004). These findings are

discouraging, however, even more discouraging is the understanding that bully

behaviors are rarely reported (Lodge & Frydenberg, 2005; Olweus, 1993; Unnever &

Cornell, 2004). Unnever and Cornell (2004) found students who are more likely to

report bullying are those experiencing chronic attacks. In addition, the researchers

discovered that the school climate influenced reporting in that, if the student felt the

school supported bullying or did nothing to it, they were less likely to report the

victimization. This is pertinent to this study in that one of the main goals is to alter the

school environment such that students feel comfortable reporting bullying behaviors.

In their pinnacle study of peer-victimization in American schools, Nansel et al.

(2001) found that both bullies and victims and bully/victims suffer psychologically

and socially. All three groups have a distorted sense of self and poor peer relations.

Consequences of peer-victimization have been found to be long lasting and

traumatizing to the individuals involved (Olweus, 1993, 2003; Smokowski & Kopasz,

2005; Safran, 2007). In order to clearly understand the consequences, one must know

the characteristics and attempt to make changes in negative behaviors.

Bowles and Lesperance (2004) conducted a phenomenological study about being victimized. Themes derived from the personal comments made by the three adolescent males in the study revolved around the need for personal connections to others and ways to address bullies. In their own words, the students expressed the need to have strong connections with their peers in order to reduce teasing. In addition, the youth found they were more likely to be bullied when they perceived they lacked peer social support. The researchers also found that two of the three victimized youth struggled with a sense of self; as one of the participants stated, "It really makes you feel very bad about yourself when the kids are making fun of you." (Bowles & Lesperance, 2004, pg. 97). All the youth reflected on how bullying made being successful in school quite difficult. These findings support characteristics of victims found by other researchers.

Safran's (2007) extended review of literature on bully behaviors summarized study characteristics of victims to "daily demonstrate poor social and emotional adjustments" (p. 60). In addition victims tend to feel poorly about themselves, have difficulty making friends, and do not engage in self-protective behaviors (Safran, 2007). The overweight and obese victim has been found to be the victim of both indirect and direct bullying more than their normal weight peers (Janssen, Craig, Boyce, & Pickett, 2004; Safran, 2007). Gender differences of victims have also been found. Safran (2007) discusses the silent victim common in girl victims in which girls find the need to remain silent and not engage with others for fear of being a potential

victim. Olweus (2003) found half of adolescent girls who claimed to be victimized reported their perpetrators were male.

Fox and Boulton (2003) discovered five common social skill problems among victims that included: being socially vulnerable such as looking scared; lacking assertive behaviors; rewarding the bully with their responses such as crying; being withdrawn and showing solitary behavior; and showing provocative behavior such as annoying other kids. In their more recent study, Fox and Boulton (2006) discovered "strong evidence for 'number of friends' as a moderator" between these social skill problems and being victimized.

Bullies tend to engage in destructive behaviors including drinking, smoking, and fighting (Nansel et al., 2001; Olweus, 1993, 2003; Smokowski & Kopasz, 2005). Nansel et al. (2001) found those who bullied also perceived school as a negative environment. Olweus (1993, 2003) found bullies tend to have a positive attitude towards violence. In addition, gender differences have been found in both the type of bullying and the amount of bullying (Nansel et al., 2001; Olweus, 1993, 2003). Olweus (2003) noted that females tend to bully other females whereas males did not discriminate between genders. Bully behaviors and attitudes may accompany the person into adulthood through antisocial and criminal behaviors. Olweus (1993) reports 60% of young male bullies are arrested at least once by the time they are twenty-four.

Of interest is also the group of students who are both the bully and the victim, for example the Columbine shooters (see Brown & Merritt, 2002). These students tend

to reflect several similar characteristics of bullies such as destructive behaviors and propensity for fighting; however they differed in their ability to make and keep friends (Brown et al., 2005; Nansel et al., 2001). Brown and colleagues (2005) obtained opinions about bullying behavior from 1229 students ages 9-13. They found that "many bullies claimed to be victims of bullying" (pg. 390).

In addition to students actively involved in the bully-victim cycle are those students who are neither bullies nor victims, but who witness bully behaviors and merely stand by and watch; referred to in the literature as bystanders (Brown et al., 2005; Lodge & Frydenberg, 2005; Unnever & Cornell, 2004). Bystanders play a role in reinforcing the bully's behavior, assist the bully in their efforts, or may help defend the victim (Lodge & Frydenberg, 2005). Male bystanders tend to support and encourage the bully, whereas females tend to support the victim. Lodge and Fydenberg (2005) described Australian youth bystander behaviors and found specific characteristics of those who support the bully, join the bully, support the victim, or who do not get involved. Bystanders who supported or assisted the bully had low self-esteem, limited emotional support of friends, low self-restraint, and fewer effective coping skills. Those who assisted the victim were usually friends with the victim and/or had high self-esteem, high emotional support, and effective coping skills. Those who were passive did not consider themselves friends with either the bully or victim and had high self-restraint. Lodge and Frydneberg (2005) found conflicting emotions expressed in bystanders such as: "guilt, anger, confusion, lack of knowledge regarding what to do, and fear of becoming the next victim" (pg. 332). The researchers

also found that those who did do something to assist the victim and prevent the bullying experienced pleasant feelings about assisting. In the conclusion of their findings, Lodge and Frydneberg (2005) recommend teaching coping skills to students to address bullying behavior at the peer level. In light of these findings, the current study is promising with its potential to improve coping skills, perceived social support, self-esteem, and to teach the students how to support the victim.

Bully Prevention Programs

Ideally teaching youth how to assertively stand up for themselves and their peers, to be respectful, develop friendships, and develop positive concepts of self will potentially change the behaviors of the students and thus change the school environment (Bowles & Lesperance, 2004; Brown et al., 2005; Fox & Boulton, 2006; Lodge & Freydenberg, 2005; Smokowski & Kopasz, 2005; Unnever & Cornell, 2004;). Several anti-bullying programs have been created, however none as prominent as Olweus's Bully Prevention Program (see Olweus, 1993) created in the eighties in Norway in response to several suicides by students claiming to be victimized. The original program resulted in 50% reduction in bully-related problems, including antisocial behaviors, and an increase in school satisfaction and positive social relations in the schools from 4th-9th grades (Olweus, 1993). However, these results have not been replicated despite the program being implemented elsewhere (Smith, Schneider, Smith & Ananiadou, 2004).

Smith et al. (2004) reviewed 14 school-wide anti-bullying programs from around the world that encompassed primary and secondary schools; three of these

were American schools. The results of the review are difficult to ascertain due to several drawbacks including: various degrees of implementation and integrity of the programs, limited control schools, self-selected experimental schools, program components being optional, different time periods, and varied self-report bully/victim measures (Smith et al., 2004). The majority of studied bully prevention interventions have occurred outside of the United States (see Elsea & Smith, 1998; Mooij, 2005; Olweus, 1993; O'Moore & Minton, 2005; & Salmivalli, Kaukiainen, & Voeten, 2005). However, with the growing concern of increased level of school violence, there is a need for interventions to be implemented and reviewed in American schools (Vossekuil et al., 2002). The knowledge provided by other countries and the reduction of bullying behaviors in their schools can be the guiding force for programs in American schools. In order for an anti-bullying program to work, there must be buy-in by all those involved in the program and the extent to which they participate must be clearly stated. One problem with Olweus's program is that the focus is on the adults changing the environment when research shows that bullying tends to happen away from adults (NEA, 2006). In addition, if youth tell anyone about their bully problems, they are more likely to tell a friend not an adult (Unnever & Cornell, 2004). Therefore, it seems reasonable to expect a more successful anti-bullying campaign would begin with the youth emphasizing coping skills, respect, enhanced self-worth, and the development of peer support systems.

Fox and Boulton (2003) studied a program based on the development of social skills that focused on victims and found the program to increase individual's global

self-worth, which maintained for three months after the intervention. As victims tend

to have lower self-worth this heightened self-worth may be seen as a protecting factor

against bullies (Fox & Boulton, 2003). Salmivalli (2001) examined an anti-bullying

campaign that intervened at the peer level to address bystander behavior. This program

was unique in that it was peer run; however the findings were only positive for the

females showing a reduction in incidents of victimization while the males developed

more of a bullying attitude than prior to the program. The researchers attribute the

differences to the peer counselors all being female.

When considering aspects of programs that were successful and the

characteristics of bullies, victims, and bystanders, common themes emerge

establishing what a solid anti-bullying program should entail including: addressing the

individual students as well as the school environment; teaching respect for differences,

pro-social skills, and effective coping skills; and providing means to increase self-

worth perceived as well as social support.

Bully Prevention Challenge Course Curriculum

This study focused on a specific bully prevention program, Bully Prevention

Challenge Course Curriculum (Haggas, 2006), which was created under the premise of

finding a program that fits the needs of addressing bullying behavior by addressing the

individual student's behaviors and promoting "cooperation, communication, trust, and

problem-solving skills in a supportive and adventurous environment" (pg. 13). The

program is written for one full school day on a challenge course; however, it also has a

revised version that can be implemented as a unit within a physical education

program. The curriculum is divided into four progressive sections of get-to-know-you types of games, problem-solving cooperative games, low course elements, and high course elements. Get-to-know-you games, commonly referred to as icebreakers, allow students to laugh and engage with each other and to identify as well as accept one another's differences. Problem-solving cooperative games involve small group work to solve problems and accomplish tasks requiring communication and cooperation. Low course elements are activities requiring a higher level of teamwork, including trusting each other physically, mentally, and emotionally, as the challenges progress in difficulty. An example of a low course element is a trust fall which requires students to stand on a platform off the ground, turn their back to the group and fall into the arms of their peers who will protect them from hitting the ground (Rohnke et al., 2003). High elements are more individual than the previous activities and require participants to be connected to a climbing rope and to be belayed up a pole or tree several feet off the ground and perform some sort of task. An example of a high element would be the "Pamper Pole" in which participants climb up a tree or pole with staples usually 20-40 feet off the ground and proceed to jump to a hanging object six feet away, they then drop from the object and are lowered safely to the ground (Rohnke et al., 2003). High elements require individuals to trust themselves and their belayer and to challenge themselves in a unique environment.

Specifically for the BPCCC, the activities are setup by the facilitators to replicate a type of bullying behavior or a means to combat bullying behaviors. Following the activities are facilitated discussions that revolve around the activity

itself, feelings and emotions of participants, and how their behaviors relate to being a bully, victim, or bystander. For example, in the low element commonly known as "Nitro Crossing" students are required to start behind one line, swing on a rope and land inside one of three hula hoops placed on the opposite side. The group is required to support each other verbally and physically to accomplish the task. In the BPCCC this activity is framed with metaphors in which the original side represents a bullying situation, the rope represents a coping skill to leave the situation, and the hula hoops represent people students can talk to for help (i.e.: one hula hoop represents parents, another teachers, and another peers). Only a certain number of group members can fit in each hula hoop; therefore there must be some discussion about who will land in which one. The students choose to leave the "bullying situation" (the original starting line) by using their "coping skills" (the swinging rope) to get to "someone they can talk to" (the various hula hoops); during this, all students are encouraging success to get to the other side as well as support in landing in the hula hoops safely. The discussion that follows is led by a trained challenge course facilitator directing questions around what coping skills the rope might represent, why students choose or didn't choose certain hula hoops, how the support of the peers in getting to the hula hoops was helpful, etc. In this manner, the students can begin to make a connection between the fun activity of swinging on a rope to using appropriate coping skills to escape a potentially harmful situation.

Challenge course programs in general follow experiential education theories (e.g., Joplin, 1981; Kolb, 1984; Pfeiffer & Jones, 1980; Walsh & Golins, 1976) that

trigger learning and transfer of lessons learned from a unique medium to a common

daily situation. Few individuals have experienced these types of activities and the

novelty of the situation presents a new learning experience where students become

actively engaged and are excited about what's to come. In addition, the unique

environment presents opportunities for the students to challenge themselves, either

physically or socially, and to feel supported while doing such things. Two

philosophies of adventure learning are: "Challenge By Choice" and "Full Value

Contract" (Rohnke & Butler, 1997). "Challenge By Choice" offers participants a

means to accept a challenge at the level they feel comfortable while still remaining

part of the group, whereas the "Full Value Contract" gives group-directed and often

group-created ground rules as to how everyone will be respected and respectful of

each other (Rohnke & Butler, 1997). Studies involving programs using experiential

learning philosophies have found improved self-concept (Griffin, 2003; Hattie, Marsh,

Neill, & Richards, 1997; Socha, Potter, & Downey, 2003) and improved social

support/acceptance (Green, Kleiber, & Tarrant, 2000; Haras & Bunting, 2005; Sochaet

al., 2003) in participants after the programs. These findings support the hypothesis that

the BPCCC will help develop improved peer relations and self-worth; this may, in

turn, assist the students in addressing bullying behaviors.

Two thousand seven was the fourth year the BPCCC program had been run

with several of the same facilitators running the program; it has since occurred again

in October of 2008. The funding for this program has been ascertained by Lindsey

Haggas, the Physical Education teacher and creator of the BPCCC, by presenting it to

the school's student government and gaining approval from the students for the

program. In 2006, despite lacking empirical support for its success, the student

government approved on-going funding to continue the program on a yearly basis. The

principal at the time was encouraged by the changes he had witnessed in his school.

New students have commented on differences with the school on how "everyone is

nice to each other here" (Haggas, personal communication, August 18, 2006). This

research study provides some empirical support to the testimonials of the students and

staff who have experienced the program first-hand and who stand by its benefits.