

**Bullying in Schools:
Using Drama as an Alternate Approach to Bullying Education**

A Thesis

**Submitted to the Faculty of Education
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of
Master of Education
University of Prince Edward Island**

**Sherri Matthews
Charlottetown, PE
January, 2006**

© 2006 Sherri Matthews



Library and
Archives Canada

Bibliothèque et
Archives Canada

Published Heritage
Branch

Direction du
Patrimoine de l'édition

395 Wellington Street
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada

395, rue Wellington
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada

Your file Votre référence

ISBN: 0-494-10367-1

Our file Notre référence

ISBN: 0-494-10367-1

NOTICE:

The author has granted a non-exclusive license allowing Library and Archives Canada to reproduce, publish, archive, preserve, conserve, communicate to the public by telecommunication or on the Internet, loan, distribute and sell theses worldwide, for commercial or non-commercial purposes, in microform, paper, electronic and/or any other formats.

The author retains copyright ownership and moral rights in this thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's permission.

AVIS:

L'auteur a accordé une licence non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque et Archives Canada de reproduire, publier, archiver, sauvegarder, conserver, transmettre au public par télécommunication ou par l'Internet, prêter, distribuer et vendre des thèses partout dans le monde, à des fins commerciales ou autres, sur support microforme, papier, électronique et/ou autres formats.

L'auteur conserve la propriété du droit d'auteur et des droits moraux qui protègent cette thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.

In compliance with the Canadian Privacy Act some supporting forms may have been removed from this thesis.

Conformément à la loi canadienne sur la protection de la vie privée, quelques formulaires secondaires ont été enlevés de cette thèse.

While these forms may be included in the document page count, their removal does not represent any loss of content from the thesis.

Bien que ces formulaires aient inclus dans la pagination, il n'y aura aucun contenu manquant.


Canada

SIGNATURE PAGE(S)

Not numbered in thesis

REMOVED

Table of Contents

Acknowledgments	1
Abstract	2
Chapter 1	
Introduction	
Research Problem	3
Research Questions	4
Significance of the Study	4
Chapter 2	
Literature Review	6
Bullying: What is it?	6
Characteristics of a Bully	8
Characteristics of Children who are Bullied	9
Characteristics of a Bystander	10
Bullying and the Home	10
Repercussions of Bullying	12
Bullying and School	14
Programs Predominantly used in Prince Edward	
Island Elementary Schools	17
Drama in Moral Education	19
BullyBuster's Drama	21
UPEI's Anti-bullying Initiative	22
Conclusion	26
Chapter 3	
Methodology	
Introduction	27
Research Design	27
Sample	30
Ethics	31
Data Collection	32
Questionnaire	32
Journals	33
Open-ended Questionnaire	34
Analysis of Data	35
Limitations of the Study	36

Chapter 4	
Analysis, Results and Discussion	38
Learning that took place	38
What are bullying behaviors?	39
Why do people bully?	40
The role of the bystander	42
What impact did the project have on students?	44
Long-term consequences of bullying	45
Feelings Involved	47
Proactive Behavior	49
Perceived benefit of Learning Environment	53
Difference in this type of learning	53
Learning using drama	57
Educational Implications	60
Possibilities for Future Research	62
 Appendix A – Focus on Bullying website	 66
 Appendix B – UPEI Ethics Approval	 68
 Appendix C – Questionnaire	 70
 Appendix D – Sample Journal Entry	 72
 Appendix E – Sample Reply of Open Ended Questionnaire	 74
 Appendix F – Sample categorization of themes	 76
 Appendix G – Don’t Laugh at Me! Lyrics	 78
 References	 80

Acknowledgements

It is a pleasure to thank the many people who made this thesis possible.

I can't say thank-you in enough ways to Dr. George Belliveau, my thesis advisor. He has helped me every inch of the way through this writing and given me encouragement and guidance when I needed it most. His great effort, ideas and advice were invaluable and I would have been lost without him.

I would also like to thank Dr. Kamini Jaipal, who was my second reader and gave me the direction I needed and confidence in my writing.

There are many other people (Jennifer Stewart, you have no idea how much you helped!) who helped me at various stages of this research. Stacy, Kelly and all the UPEI pre-service teachers helped in a million ways. I couldn't have done it without them.

Abstract

In recent years, bullying has become a serious problem in our schools. The consequences of these behaviors can be devastating for both the victim of bullying and the person who bullies. This study investigated programs implemented in Prince Edward Island Schools to help reduce the occurrence of bullying, with a focus on UPEI's Anti-bullying Drama Initiative. In analyzing the drama anti-bullying program and its effect on the elementary students who participated, many educational implications were identified. Throughout the study, students reported on:

1. What type of learning took place during the project.
2. What impact the project had on the feelings of the participants involved.
3. How students felt about the dramatic learning environment.

The results of the intensive three-week anti-bullying unit conducted in PEI elementary classrooms suggest that the interactive nature of drama was able to alter the student's perceptions of bullying. As well, the findings point to positive group relations among the students who participated.

Chapter 1

Introduction

Research Problem

When I was in school in rural Newfoundland, I rarely heard of bullying. I was raised in a small community where most everyone grew up together and got along. When I finished high school and left Newfoundland to attend university I was amazed at some of the stories of bullying I heard. Then came Columbine! After the incident at Columbine High School, bullying was brought to the surface. People talked openly about it and the general public realized that bullying is a real problem in schools. Throughout my university education, I often thought about bullying behaviors and possible solutions to the problem. When I was given the opportunity to work with Dr. George Belliveau on his anti-bullying initiative, I accepted with enthusiasm . From there, this thesis emerged and I have learned more than I could ever have imagined I would.

Although bullying has been taking place for years, it has only been seen as a serious threat to children and youth since the early 1990s (Neary & Joseph, 1994). The impact of bullying behaviors, goes beyond the individual bully and victim, it extends to the peer group, the school and into the community. With a more in depth understanding of factors surrounding this issue, a better prevention and intervention program can be designed. The following research is a close examination of a bullying education program, developed and implemented by members of the University of Prince Edward Island's Bachelor of Education program in 2004. Specifically, the research study focused on a three-week drama anti-bullying unit used by four grade six teachers, who were

employed at two different PEI schools, in conjunction with eleven pre-service teachers from UPEI.

Research Questions

For this research, it was important to find out if the UPEI anti-bullying program was a benefit to the grade six students involved in the three-week program. The program was designed with the hope of teaching important information about bullying, to enable students to find strategies to help themselves if they were ever involved in a bullying situation. It was also important to determine the elementary students' perceptions of the learning that was taking place. This study therefore investigated the following:

1. What kind of impact, if any, did the anti-bullying program have on the grade six students that were involved/participated in the program?
2. What were the grade six students' perceptions of the program?
3. Did the students feel they benefited from the drama program?

Significance of the Study

Because bullying is so prevalent an issue, schools across Canada are implementing mandatory bullying programs in their schools. Prince Edward Island is no exception. School administrators, teachers and councilors are working hard to find relevant and effective programs to promote anti-bullying behaviors. If successful, a program such as the UPEI drama initiative would be a great asset either alone or in conjunction with programs already in place to any school. It is an interactive and experiential way to get a very important message across to students. Up to this point,

bullying literature has little mention of a dramatic approach to bullying education aside from role-playing or small one off activities. No other study focused on drama anti-bullying initiatives has been done that I am aware of.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

The literature review is not exhaustive because much has been written over the last number of years on the topic of bullying. However, I was able to initially read a wide range of material on the topic through published studies and accounts. I then focused the research more specifically on bullying in schools and in particular at the elementary levels. I also take a close look at moral education and the use of drama in teaching.

Bullying: What is it?

It is very hard to define bullying. Siann, Callaghan, Lockhart & Rawson (1993) say that there are conflicting theories. There is material that states that bullying is physical and therefore does not include such behaviors as teasing, name-calling or excluding children from groups and activities. There is disagreement as to whether the focus should be on lone bullying or group bullying. The research is also inconsistent when considering the duration of the episodes and when they should be termed bullying. Olweus (1979) believes bullying has three criteria to categorize bullying behaviors, an imbalance of strength, a deliberate and unprovoked act to hurt the victim and repeated negative activities toward the victim.

One widely used definition of bullying comes from Dan Olweus (1993) who is a pioneer in bullying research. He states:

A student is being bullied or victimized when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more, other students...Negative actions can be carried out by threatening, taunting, teasing,

and calling names. It is a negative action when somebody hits, pushes, kicks, pinches or restrains another...It is also possible to carry out negative actions without the use of words or physical contact, such as....excluding someone intentionally from a group, or refusing to comply with another person's wishes.

Salmivalli, Lagerspeitz, Bjorkqvist and Osterman (1996) found that it is possible to look at bullying as a group phenomenon, where most children have a role. In many bullying situations there seems to be a lot of excitement. This level of excitement tends to draw in people who are not normally aggressive (Pepler & Craig, 1995). Salmivalli et al (1996) concluded that victims, generally have the lowest social status in bullying situations and the defender of the victim have the highest status.

Pepler, Craig and Charach (1997) did research over a six-week period and reported Canadian children, grades one to six, admitted to bullying others "more than once or twice" during this time. 15% of the 4743 students surveyed reported being victimized at the same rate. This research is consistent with other surveys done in Canada, as well as in many European countries (Olweus, 1991). Craig and Pepler (1997) observed children, both on the playground and in the classroom and they reported bullying occurred once every seven minutes on the playground and once every twenty-five minutes in the classroom. Although these numbers are high, teachers and school administration often do not seem to notice the bullying problem. Many of them report that their schools do not even have bullying problems. This is why it is important to bring the issues to light and have effective education programs in place, for teachers and students.

The occurrence of bullying, aggression and hurtful behavior is a serious topic of discussion in today's schools. This type of behavior is seen as detrimental to youth (Olweus, 1993b). The occurrence of bullying behavior seems to increase through elementary school and junior high but declines in high school (Smith & Sharp, 1994). Although physical aggression may stop, often times verbal abuse continues throughout high school (Batsche & Knoff, 1994). This research indicates that it may be beneficial to aim intervention programs at elementary students when bullying seems to be at its peak.

Characteristics of a Bully

There is not one particular type of person who becomes a bully. Boys and girls both bully, although boys report more physical types of bullying while girls tend to bully in more indirect ways (Craig & Pepler, 1997). In Canada, eleven- and twelve-year-old children have been found to bully more than younger or older students (Pepler et al., 1997). Bullies are often impulsive, have a strong need to show dominance of their peers and show little or no empathy for their victims (Olweus, 1987). They show little or no remorse for their actions (Olweus, 1987). Contrary to popular belief, bullies typically have average self-esteem and popularity (Slee & Rigly, 1993). Many children who bully believe the victim provokes the attack and that they are tough and strong (Boulton & Underwood, 1992).

Children who bully often have a conduct disorder or do not feel they can control their actions. There are short - term negative effects of bullying but the child who bullies also may later have problems with alcohol abuse, domestic violence and violent crime in the community (Olweus, 1991).

Characteristics of Children who are Bullied

Children are also bullied for different reasons, and boys and girls both report being victimized by bullies (Charach, Pepler & Zielger, 1995). Research supports the idea that children who are bullied often have unusual physical traits (Olweus, 1993); however, this is not the only reason children are picked on. Students who are bullied are typically anxious, insecure, cautious, and suffer from low self-esteem (Batsche & Knoff, 1994). These children often display certain characteristics such as being clumsy, having learning difficulties and other unpopular traits, including being unpopular with their peer group (Lowenstein, 1994). They rarely defend themselves and may lack social skills and friends. They may also feel socially isolated (Olweus, 1993). Bullied students are often close with their parents and sometimes describe their parents as overprotective (Batsche & Knoff, 1994). Many of the child's peers report that the person who is bullied is responsible for his or her own victimization, which may account for the lack of support by classmates (Batsche & Knoff, 1994).

Olweus (1992) identified that approximately 80% of bullied youth are more anxious and insecure than other students. They often do not have a favorable view of themselves, and they see themselves as failures and feel stupid or ashamed. They are often loners. They do not usually exhibit aggressive or teasing behaviors and therefore send a message that they will not retaliate if attacked, which makes them an excellent target for a bully.

Characteristics of a Bystander

Much of the literature surrounding bullying refers to the role of the bystander, observer or witness. Bullying most often occurs at school and in the presence of classmates, teachers and other school personnel. Because of the reactions, or lack thereof, of many bystanders, victims of bullying do not often feel safe.

The bystander may, at the same time, be impressed by the bully's power and scared of being the bully's next victim. This further removes the victim from the peer group and makes it very difficult for others to stand up for the victim because they are afraid as well. The people who are watching also provide an audience for the bully. They reinforce the bullying behavior just by being there, by showing positive attention, making comments, and sometimes joining in.

Bullying and the Home

Schools cannot be held totally responsible for working to combat the bullying problem. Although many of the incidents occur at school, many of the issues begin at home and are brought into the school. Parents can affect bullying behaviors in their children directly and indirectly. Sometimes parents may encourage children to behave in certain ways without even being aware of it. Olweus (1980) did interviews with boys and their parents. He found the parents of boys who bully, reported higher negativism toward their child, high levels of permissiveness toward aggression and very power oriented behavior management techniques. The parents of victims revealed mothers who were overprotective and required close contact with their son (Olweus, 1980). In these families, parents also reported a weak relationship between the son and dad (Olweus,

1980). Having clear definitions of violence and harassment is essential, because bullying may be a result of denying, rationalizing, justifying or minimizing the effects of violence (Neufeld, 2002). Children can get confused when they are taught one set of beliefs from their parents and another at school. Children develop defenses of blaming, withdrawing, stifling anger, frustration, fear and guilt, which can all lead to bullying behaviors (Neufeld, 2002). Parents have to be careful not to model bullying behavior to their children.

Fighting between brothers and sisters is the most common form of family violence (Patterson, 1996); therefore, children with more than one sibling are more likely to bully than others (Eslea & Smith, 2000). Sibling interaction may be the training ground for bullies (Patterson, 1996). Therefore, it is important for parents to help siblings develop social interaction and conflict management skills (Patterson, 1996).

Children may also bully because of a failure to bond with the parent figure, making the child feel insecure and suspicious of others (Rigby, 1994). When a child grows up in a home where interactions are often negative and there is little communication, they learn to internalize feelings, and come to believe that relationships are most often non-caring and hostile. This helps to explain why some children behave the way they do (Rigby, 1994). Regardless of gender, students who report low levels of emotional support from their families, for example not understanding or not showing sympathy when the child is sad, were more prone to bully their peers (Rigby, 1994). Cold, negative attitudes from parents toward their children are, at least partially, responsible for bullying behaviors (Olweus, 1980).

When adults tolerate teasing and bullying by not intervening, they send the message that hurtful words and remarks are acceptable (Neufeld, 2002). Poor parenting skills play an important role in bullying problems (Curtner-Smith, 2000). Parents may also support bullying by accepting it as just a normal part of growing up, and leave children to solve their own problems. This could lead to more serious problems in the future. It could also lead to victims keeping their problems a secret because they do not feel they will get any help or may even be made to feel bad if they report the problem to their parents. Parents need to know how to bring these issues to light. Finally, when victims are brave enough to tell, they will more often go to parents than teachers or school officials (Patterson, 1996). Authority figures are vital in a child's life (Bretherton & Eunyoung, 1997). Parents must support their children by working with the school to ensure the child's safety.

Repercussions of Bullying

Existing research shows that bullying has many emotional, academic, and social consequences for the victim. In school, the victim's grades may suffer and they may be pushed to extremes to protect themselves, such as bringing weapons to school (Hazler, 1994). Children and adolescents, who are victims of bullying in their school environment, tend to see their educational experiences as negative and are more fearful than those students who do not encounter these types of problems (Roberts & Coursol, 1996). Because of this, they might avoid being in these situations by skipping school, running away, and in extreme cases, resorting to suicide (Olweus, 1993b). Many times, these students end up showing poor academic results, most likely because they are often

absent from school (Roberts & Coursol, 1996). They show more apprehension, loneliness and abandonment from their friends (Roberts & Coursol, 1996). Bullying may contribute to many antisocial behavior patterns, such as withdrawal from family and friends, avoidance of school and psychological distress for victims. The sooner the bullying behavior is stopped, the better the long term will look for the victim.

An important finding from Olweus (1993) is that most students who are bullied either do not report the bullying to adults, or they wait a very long time before doing so. This may be because the child feels ashamed, or it may be because he or she fears the bully will retaliate. It may also be because the student does not believe there is anything the adult can do to protect them, or that the adult may not take them seriously. This is an important reason why parents and teachers need to be prepared to speak to their children about these issues.

There may be many lasting problems for the bully as well, and these are important to note. Olweus (1991) found that people who bully in their youth tend to try to have the same type of power relationships in their adult lives, and they are unsuccessful in maintaining healthy relationships. Bullies have also been found to be five times more likely than their peers to end up in juvenile court (Hazler, 1994). Bullies tend to become aggressive adults and are more likely to obtain multiple criminal convictions (Olweus, 1979). Bullying may lead to criminality, marital violence, child abuse and sexual harassment for the child who bullies (Farrington, 1993).

Since bullying behavior is often said to be one of the predictors for antisocial, criminal and maladaptive behavior, the reduction of bullying will improve socialization

in the bully and victim, promote higher academic interest, self-esteem and confidence (Lowenstien, 1995).

Bullying and School

Children involved in bullying, whether as bullies or victims, may have negative attitudes, poor social skills and emotional difficulties, which begin at home (Pepler, Craig, Ziegler & Charach, 1994). These problems are then brought into the schools and communities where they are often reinforced (Pepler et al, 1997).

Although research shows that actual physical injury is uncommon, it is clear from this research that there are many short and long term negative consequences of bullying. All children, including those that are not active participants in bullying behavior, are affected. Children who observe violent behavior and see that it has no negative consequences for the bully will be more likely to use aggression in the future (Pepler et al, 1994).

Although bullying tends to be more prominent in the elementary age years (Olweus, 1979), the elementary years are also when children seem to be able to empathize more with the victim than the children in higher grades (Rigly & Slee, 1995). Rigly and Slee (1995) found that as children get older, their sympathy steadily decreases. They conclude that bullying intervention programs would be more likely to succeed if implemented during the elementary years when students are more pro-victim.

Schools are important in shaping children's development yet they must have clear, consistent discipline and warm, supportive relationships. It has been found that bullying is reduced if the principal is committed to addressing these issues (Charach et al,

1995). It is necessary for a principal to be consistent with consequences for bullying and have an open door policy for victims with empathetic responses to their concerns (Charach, et al., 1995). Olweus (1991) maintains that one of the main ways to reduce bullying in our schools is to have a clear policy in place with consistently applied consequences.

Schools that emphasize academic success without respecting the student's individual strengths and weakness also tend to report higher incidences of bullying (Tattum, 1982). There is no evidence that the size of schools or the class affects the frequency or level of bullying (Olweus, 1991).

Students report high incidences of bullying on the school playground and these behaviors typically occur when there is little supervision (Olweus, 1991). It has been helpful in some cases to use peer mediators on the playground (Cunningham, 1997); however, adult intervention is still vital to resolving bullying problems.

Intervention programs have been implemented in several different countries to remedy bully/victim problems (Stevens, De Bourdeaudhuij & Van Oost, 2002). The outcomes of studies of anti-bullying intervention programs have been diverse. Through these types of programs, it has been found that peers, school and family all contribute to the risk of peer aggression and victimization (Stevens et al., 2002).

Research by Arora & Thompson (1987) concluded that bullying is perceived as a natural part of life and is something we cannot do a lot about, so we should not worry about it. Oliver, Oakes & Hoover (1994) found that bullying is usually accepted by students as part of the normal day, and there is little done to stop it. In a study of perceptions of bullying by students, Hazler, Hoover & Oliver (1991) found that student

by-standers of bullying incidents, reported that school professionals handled the situation poorly. Similarly, Slee (1993) found that between 11% and 35% percent of students surveyed in three schools reported teachers “hardly ever” or “never” try to stop bullying. It has also been found that school counselors do not do their part to intervene on behalf of the victims (Roberts & Coursol, 1996). School personnel may not interfere with bullying because some feel that if they ignore the problem it will go away (Batsche & Knoff, 1994). This is often the perception of parents as well (Patterson, 1996) and, unfortunately, this is easily communicated to their children. In order to effectively reduce the bullying problem school personnel must understand the depth of the issue. This is not something that will resolve itself or go away. Bullying follows those involved throughout their lives. Schools need to implement effective strategies to ensure the students feel safe and secure in their learning environment. Before this can be done however, they need to be educated on the issue. Given the reaction of bystanders, it is not surprising that many victims do not feel safe in the school environment. If this is to change, teachers, administrators and other school personnel must address the issue and refuse to tolerate any bullying behavior in their school.

There is a need for research surrounding different programs aimed to reduce the occurrence of bullying behaviors. Without working on the problems associated with bullying, we can never improve the situation. Many children will never feel safe and will continue to suffer long-term negative effects. The research in this study identifies methods of teaching elementary students about bullying that suggested positive growth. If teachers and school personnel have a better understanding of bullying issues, they will be better equipped to handle the situation successfully.

Programs Predominantly used in Prince Edward Island Elementary Schools

On Prince Edward Island, many schools have started school wide plans to help reduce incidents of bullying. Three widely used programs are the “League of Peaceful Schools,” “Second Step” and “Focus on Bullying.”

The “League of Peaceful Schools” was developed in Nova Scotia in response to the growing concern of violence among youth and antisocial behaviors among youth. In 1998 it was registered as a nonprofit organization and it has continued to expand since then. In its first two years of operation over 170 schools in Nova Scotia signed on, and now it is being adapted for French schools and schools in Saskatchewan and Prince Edward Island have also joined. This program provides support, resources and encouragement to its members to empower them on their own journey to create a peaceful atmosphere in their school. Before schools can join, they must meet criteria for membership. Schools involved in the League of Peaceful Schools program usually have peace assemblies, classroom lesson plans and peace mentors. The program is a wonderful vehicle, that encourages schools to actively teach and model peaceful ways of living and learning together.

The “Second Step Program” was developed by the United States Department of Health. Its goal is to help students work together, resolve disputes peacefully, recognize and understand feelings, keep anger from escalating and make positive and effective choices. Its four main focuses are to teach empathy, impulse control, problem solving and anger management. The lessons provided are easy to teach and require little teacher planning. The lessons should be delivered, twice a week for 30 minutes and they tie into

other areas of the curriculum. The lesson plans help students practice pro-social behaviors and also help understand emotions and how to respond to them. The lessons include seat- work, photo lessons, videos, puppets and classroom posters.

The most widely used program in PEI schools is “Focus on Bullying.” It was developed in a Vancouver school, and was later adapted by the BC Department of Education. It is available through their website (Appendix A). The purpose of “Focus on Bullying” is to help schools develop and implement an action plan that will make their school safe and reduce the occurrence of bullying. The program is aimed toward educators who want to expand their efforts to create a supporting and respectful atmosphere for their students. It contains information for teachers about the nature of bullying and common myths and stereotypes surrounding the issue. The program focuses on the implementation of a school wide plan and collaborative work between parents, teachers, students and the community.

“Focus on Bullying” provides a school wide seven step plan that thoroughly describes each stage and includes helpful hints for implementation. The seven steps are:

1. Establishing a working group
2. Involving parents
3. Involving students
4. Creating a school statement
5. Building a supervision plan
6. Developing a response plan
7. Implementing and monitoring the plan.

The program contains ten detailed lesson plans that are divided into three modules (Defining Bullying, A School Plan, and Dealing with Bullying). Classroom teachers are expected to deliver these lessons while they continue teaching interpersonal skills in the classroom. Grade six lessons presented in the “Focus on Bullying” modules were looked at closely for the purpose of this study, because this was the grade focused on by the UPEI program. The lessons focus on what bullying is, the dynamics of bullying and dealing with bullying behaviors if they occur. These lessons are presented mainly in a question and discussion format within the group. There are some exceptions where students do group work, summarize material, do visualization exercises and brainstorm. The program also includes some use of fine arts although it is only in one of the ten lessons, and it is not particularly well explained within that lesson plan.

The anti-bullying programs available to schools are generally well developed and feedback from teachers is that the programs are helpful. The question remains though, do these lessons enable students to empathize more with their peers and encourage positive intervention?

Drama in Moral Education

Dramatic art is often overlooked and underestimated in teaching moral behaviors, as well, it has not been adequately defined or understood (Henry, 2000). Although drama education is not yet a mainstream teaching strategy, drama has been recognized as a way of learning (Henry, 2000). By improvising, students develop emotional intelligence, negotiating skills and the ability to translate ideas to a new situation (Henry, 2000). It

can also determine moral choice and conduct (Basourakos, 1998). Drama can be very important to student's ethical education. It can help them express, explore and develop complicated moral understanding (Edmiston, 2000). Learning about emotion is urgently needed, but for the most part ignored. Research on fifth grade students found that students are able to make meaningful inferences from dialogue in a play. Bouchard (2002) found drama serves to educate morally and stimulates the moral development of students through stories or plays that carry a message.

Edmiston (2000) states becoming an ethical thinker cannot be done individually, but through dialogue between people and text. Becoming ethical, he believes, involves shifting our imagination to experience more than one view, and often conflicting views of events. Drama can enable students to adopt multiple positions in addition to those they already hold. They can then explore how their actions may have been different from these varying positions. They can evaluate their position from the viewpoint of those affected by the consequences of their actions.

Witkin (1974) was interested in the feelings that emerge in the artistic process where emotion and rational thinking join to construct meaning. Repeated use of imagination, through drama, is likely to make shifting positions feel normal at other times and in other circumstances (Edmiston, 2000). Ethical imagination can give us a vision of how the world could be different if we acted in a different way (Edmiston, 2000).

One way in which drama is unique is that it allows us to operate from our imagination, without having to live with the consequences of the actions we imagine taking (Edmiston, 2000). Drama encourages us to shift positions, and we imagine and act from the point of view of a person affected by our behaviors (Edmiston, 2000). It means

learning from experience and not intellect. Knowledge emerges then from our action in the play or in drama (Henry, 2000). Drama gives freedom to experience and explores human issues and concerns. As well, according to Henry (2000), drama is driven by feelings, and feelings are strengthened by thought. Exploring and rehearsing various behaviors helps teach students empathy (Henry, 2000).

Bully Busters' Drama

School counselors and administrators in a United States school met to try to find a way to help combat the widespread problem of bullying in their school. The school drama teacher approached the counselors and wanted to help. They came up with an idea to have students perform dramatic scenes to reinforce the material they were learning. This activity ultimately led to writing the play *Bully Busters*, focusing attention on how to identify and deal with bullies.

Drama was selected as the main medium for communicating the bullying message. The students would gain new knowledge and skills by observing other students and without engaging in the behavior themselves, so without any direct consequences. The drama dealt with real life situations, which allowed students to respond to issues more freely because they could be discussed in relation to the play. While the play portrayed many important issues, the most meaningful part of the process, according to Beale (2001), was the classroom discussions following the performance. This gave students the opportunity to clarify their own opinions and find different ways to deal with bullying.

The program was well received and the elementary schools where the play was performed had a 20% reduction in the number of incidents reported during the program's first year of existence. Teachers were more sensitive to bullying, children were coming forward more freely to report incidents and students seemed to be more aware of the problem.

UPEI's Anti-Bullying Initiative

Dr. George Belliveau, a former Assistant Professor in the Faculty of Education at the University of Prince Edward Island, over the course of two years, facilitated two different groups of pre-service teachers in collectively developing a dramatic play on anti-bullying. The university's B.Ed. program offers four practicum components. One of these practicum components can take place outside of a formal education setting, the placement is called an Alternative Placement, this is where the anti-bullying initiative took place.

In 2002/2003, eight second year pre-service teachers created a play titled "*Wasn't Me*" that was geared towards a grade eight level audience. This play focused on a bullying situation through the eyes of a bully. It showed how bullies often do not realize what they have done or are doing to others around them. Along with the presentation of the play, post-activities were used to debrief the strong anti-bullying message presented. It was extremely well received across PEI and the Maritimes and the initiative received the PEI Crime Prevention and Social Justice Award in 2003.

In 2003/2004, twelve second year pre-service teachers wrote and presented a play titled "*You Didn't do Anything!*" geared for grade six level students. This play focused

largely on showing students the crucial role and power that a bystander holds in a bullying situation, and how a bystander can help stop bullying from happening. It was presented to over 3000 students in more than thirty public schools across Prince Edward Island.

Along with the thirty-minute play, elementary (and some junior high) students were involved in pre- and post- production activities that focused on the elements that are involved in bullying. These activities were developed by the pre-service teachers in an attempt to build on the messages offered through the dramatic performance. The pre-activities allowed young students to physically and mentally explore the complexity of bullying and understand how to identify it. The pre-service teachers developed lessons that included warm up activities along with drama based group work. Within the groups, students were given materials labeled as "evidence" that would be seen in the play. With this "evidence," each group was then asked to think of how such things would be used in a bullying situation. They could create a commercial, a role play/scene, an interview or a news cast using this "evidence" to show how it could be used by a bully, bystander or victim. Many of the presentations given by individual student groups involved physical and emotional bullying situations.

Throughout the post activities students again had the opportunity to be interactive. They did another kinesthetic warm up activity, followed by brainstorming about the roles of various characters in the play and how these characters related to today's bullying situations. Then each student wrote anti-bullying words and slogans on their individual peace sign which was to be attached to a *Bully-Proof Bus* that was given to each school at the end of the post-activities. In some schools, students acted out certain parts of the play

that involved bullying and then re-acted those parts turning it into an anti-bullying situation. This last activity was developed to parallel Boal's Forum Theatre approach (Boal, 1979). Ideally, the pre-service teachers were trying to focus the young students' attention on the power that a bystander does not realize they have.

The 2003-2004 project also took on a new challenge. The pre-service teachers worked in teams with four elementary classes in two different schools. They worked between six and eight hours a week for a period of three weeks in these two schools. During this time, the pre-service teachers worked with the grade six students to develop their own anti-bullying scenes. Two of the four classes involved were French Immersion, and so some of the following activities were done in both official languages.

The lessons varied in the four classrooms where the project took place, however, some of the common activities included:

- Writing and reading poetry - students read poems published by students who had been bullied, were bystanders or who admitted they were once bullies. Then, they developed and wrote their own poems using acrostic or other types of poetry models.
- Writing Dialogue – students were presented with sentence starters and asked to finish the sentences in their own words (ex. when I see someone bullied I feel....or in my family, bullying is...).
- Understanding the message through music - listening to popular songs of today and reading the lyrics to hear what the groups/singers are expressing.

- Expressing their own thoughts and personal bullying experiences – individual journals were written about feelings about bullying and learning. These journals were read only by the pre-service teachers involved in that class and the classroom teacher.
- Presenting bullying situations - Students did tableaux and had others in the class discuss what bullying situation was portrayed.
- Creating a Scene in Groups – developing and playing out scenes with a possibility of changing the outcomes.
- Creating a Final Play – as a class, with the pre-service teachers, all students worked together to create a final product. All students who wanted to had an acting part.

The development and writing of the play covered many areas of the curriculum such as:

1. Reading, writing, speaking, listening, viewing and representing.
2. Understanding and appreciation of poetry and music terms and patterns.
3. Understanding and appreciation of drama, some dramatic terms and patterns.
4. Group skills.
5. Performance skills.
6. Deeper understanding of social justice.

This research study focuses on perceptions of learning about bullying that took place during an anti-bullying drama initiative where pre-service teachers led four elementary classes for three weeks.

Conclusion

It is vital that we no longer view bullying as a harmless activity that can benefit the victims by making them tough. Studies have documented many negative consequences of bullying, the most extreme involving depression and possible suicide, as well as violent retaliation by the victim. In recent years, efforts to reduce bullying have been aimed at the adolescent population. Perhaps it is time we aimed our efforts more for elementary level students. Studies have shown that students at this level are more pro-victim and show more empathy than older children. Schools cannot be totally responsible for the eradication of the bullying problem but they can certainly help. As researchers and educators, we need to explore and commit ourselves to addressing and facing the bullying challenge in schools.

Children need to feel free to express their opinions but must also consider the feelings of others (Rigby, 1994). If communication is open, honest and caring it is not likely bullying problems will be as large an issue. This is why it is important to maximize the openness and honesty in communication where it has been lost or failed to develop (Rigby, 1994). This will increase sensitivity to the feelings of others (Rigby, 1994).

It is insufficient to only organize general informational sessions and classroom discussions, which up to this point has been the norm. The UPEI pre-service teachers put a new and exciting spin on teaching this important topic by incorporating a drama bases approach. The following research documents the project and the perceived learning results gained from the elementary students during the program.

Chapter 3

Methodology

Introduction

The purpose of this research was to examine the UPEI anti-bullying initiative and to determine the program's impact on the elementary students involved with the project. It is important to evaluate any educational program to ensure it is making a difference in the students' learning. This chapter outlines the research that took place for this study, as well as describes the process of choosing the students, data collection, analysis and the researcher's role.

Research Design

Many people believe that scientific inquiry simply means laboratory experiments. However, it is not possible or desirable to study all topics in this type of controlled way (Creswell, 1994). Creswell (1994) describes quantitative analysis by stating it begins with an identified problem and is based on testing a theory. The goal is also to develop generalizations that contribute to theory and enable the researcher to predict, explain and understand a phenomenon. It must then be determined if these generalizations hold true in that particular situation. The hypotheses are tested in a cause and effect order. The premise of quantitative research is that reality is something that can be studied objectively. It is based on deductive forms of logic and theory. The researcher remains distant and independent of what is being studied and the research is value free.

Qualitative research emphasizes processes and meanings that are not experimentally examined or measured in terms of amount. It is descriptive and allows the researcher to study his or her topic in depth and in detail (Patton, 1990). In this study, I was looking to find the impact of the teaching methods on the students involved, so it was important to look at their thoughts and comments about the learning environment, as well as the message learned.

When a topic and research methodology is chosen, it reflects assumptions of the social world, how scientific research should be conducted, and what constitutes legitimate problems, solutions and criteria of proof (Mason, 1996). Qualitative inquiry takes place in a natural setting and involves building a complex and holistic picture of the topic of interest (Mason, 1996). The process of inquiry has the goal of understanding a social or human problem from multiple perspectives (Mason, 1996). It is important to realize that multiple realities exist in any given situation by the researcher, the people in the study and the reader, and in qualitative research these multiple voices can be included in the study (Creswell, 1994). The researcher in these situations interacts with the study and actively works to minimize the distance between the researcher and participants and recognizes and acknowledges that this type of study is value laden and context bound (Creswell, 1994).

The goal of qualitative research is to uncover and discover patterns or theories that help explain the topic of interest (Creswell, 1994). It is based on inductive forms of logic. Categories of interest emerge from subjects rather than being identified by the researcher. Determining the accuracy of the study can involve verifying the information

with subjects among different sources of information and collecting data from different sources (Creswell, 1994).

Janesick (1994) compares qualitative research with a dance. She describes the three stages of research with the stages of dancing. First the researcher must warm up. During this stage he or she must make beginning research design decisions. This first set of design decisions focus on what will be studied; under what circumstances the study will take place, for what duration of time and with whom. She states the importance of starting with a research question. For the present study, it was important to understand if the elementary students involved with the anti-bullying program were benefiting from the program. The program was developed to teach the students about bullying and enable them to help themselves. It was therefore important to determine if this learning was taking place and to understand the perceptions of the students who were involved.

In the second stage of dance and qualitative research comes the total work-out. During this time, the researcher makes design decisions throughout the study. He or she must question their beginning decisions and ensure they are still working in the same direction. Questions that guide the study will include:

- Selection of the site and participants.
- Access and entry to the site and agreement of participants.
- Timeline for the study.
- Selection of appropriate research strategies.
- Identify researchers own bias and ideology.
- Identification of appropriate informed consent and ethical issues.

It is important to note there is no value or bias free design. The researcher must simply incorporate the role of the researcher and bias into the study. In the present study, I had been involved with the development of the three-week anti-bullying program. I developed methods to effectively measure the outcomes of the program and I worked to categorize and incorporate my prior knowledge of bullying issues with the data collected from the students in the program.

The third stage according to Janesick is the cool down. The researcher has been developing categories from the data collected. As the research continues, relationships are identified that connect portions of the description with explanations offered by other researchers and working models. The data is presented in narrative, supported by evidence from statements and behaviors recorded during the research. The researcher needs to provide some interpretive commentary in framing the key findings in the study. He or she must be sure to include a description of the role of the researcher in the writing, because this is a critical component in the writing. During the research stage of this study many prominent categories and themes emerged from the students. These were categorized and compiled according to themes.

Sample

The participants were 87 elementary students in four separate classes in two different schools in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island. According to research (Olweus, 1993; Craig & Pepler, 1997) bullying is more prominent during the elementary years. This is also the time when students are more empathic towards the victim of bullying (Slee, 1995 & Rigby, 1994). For these reasons, it would be beneficial to

implement a bullying program during these years, when students are more pro-victim (Belliveau, 2004). With this in mind, grade six classrooms were selected.

The schools were selected by the team leader, Dr. George Belliveau, mainly because the schools were central and easily accessible to the pre-service teachers who would also be doing a touring component of their practicum during the afternoons. The group was also interested in working with French immersion and both Oak Street School* and Winter Avenue School* had French programs. Dr. Belliveau approached the school principals who, in turn, approached the teachers to see if anyone would be interested. Four grade six teachers, two from each school, volunteered and those four classes were selected. Two classes were English and two were French Immersion. The sample used is that of the 87 students who were directly involved in this three- week intensive play-building program.

* names of schools are changed to protect identity

Ethics

When researching children, it is important to consider their feelings at all times. In a situation that can evoke strong feelings, children need to feel safe and not threatened. For these reasons, extra precautions must be taken when doing a project such as this to ensure that the children receive no physical or psychological damage and that they feel comfortable in the environment. Before the program began, UPEI ethics approval was completed (Appendix B). After this approval had been given, approval from other areas were obtained. Letters were written to the Department of Education and Eastern School Board superintendent who in turn gave their consent. Next, school principals were

consulted and when the four classrooms were selected, letters to the parents of these students were sent home with contact numbers in case there were any ethical questions or concerns. Students were informed that their participation in the program was voluntary and if they did not wish to participate in the research aspect (surveys, journals...) they were free to decline at any time. All students participated.

Data Collection

There are many different ways in which qualitative researchers can obtain data. Triangulation is the use of several methods of data collection or data sources in a study. Investigator triangulation is the use of different researchers or evaluators, and methodological triangulation is the use of different methods to study a single problem or issue. In this study, three different types of data collection were used. Students were given (1) a traditional survey, (2) asked to record thoughts and feelings in journals and (3) at the end of the three-week time frame, the participants were given an open-ended survey questionnaire to complete. These methods were developed and tested by myself and two pre-service teachers before being administered in each individual classroom. The three methods of gathering data were used to provide an overall picture of student perceptions, beliefs and feelings during the three-week program offered in their class.

Questionnaire

Because two classes from each of the two schools were involved with this program, one class in each school was designated to complete a pre-test before the teaching began and the two remaining classes would complete a post-test when the three

week block was finished. The pre-service teachers distributed the questionnaires (Appendix C) to each student. They went through the items one question at a time, giving the students time to complete and ask questions before going to the next. Students were told that the survey would be anonymous and that they could stop answering at any time if they didn't feel comfortable. Extra time was given at the end so students could write comments or ask the pre-service teachers any questions they had about the research or the program. All 87 students responded to the questionnaires either before or after the project.

Although data was collected by three different means, two of the three fall under the umbrella of open- ended questionnaires. Patton (1990) describes quantitative research as succinct, systematic, standardized and easily presented. In contrast, he describes qualitative methods as longer with more detail and variable content. He believes that open- ended responses allow the reader to see the world as seen by the respondents and to capture their point of view. The hope of this research was to reveal emotion, thoughts about what is happening and the basic perceptions of the students participating. The task of the researcher is to provide the framework within which people can respond in ways that will accurately represent their view (Patton, 1990).

Journals

During the three weeks the pre-service teachers were in the classrooms, students were asked to complete at least 6 journal entries. The teachers usually gave the students a suggestion for their journal writing. Examples of the types of questions asked included:

- Talk about a bullying situation in one of your favorite TV shows.
- If I saw someone being bullied, I would....

- When it comes to bullying....
- Read another student's poem, if you were the author's close friend, what would you say to them after reading their poem?

Again, students were told their writing would be confidential. Students wrote about what they learned in the class and about their experiences and their interpretations of the learning which was taking place. Students were also asked to write letters explaining to their parents or a friend who was not in the class about what they learned and did in class and about what they should know about bullying and more. The entries were usually one page, double- spaced. (Appendix D)

Open Ended Questionnaire

At the end of the three-week period, each student involved in the program was asked to answer two questions. The pre-service teachers chose to do this in different ways, however each gave the same questions.

1. In 3 or 4 complete sentences, describe what you learned and what you understand about bullying and intimidation after having had 3 full weeks of activities with your pre-service teachers.
2. Tell us if drama helped you learn more about what bullying really is. If so, give three examples of things that were done in class that you found helpful in learning about social, verbal and physical bullying (Appendix E).

Analysis of Data

Patton (1990) makes the claim that analysis of the data finally makes clear what is most important to the study. The challenge, he states, is to make sense of the massive amount of data, reduce the amount of information, identify patterns and find a way to clearly communicate the importance of what the data reveals. The research done for this thesis was sparked by an interest in issues surrounding bullying in our schools. How can it exist without us trying to do everything we can to reduce its occurrence? Current research enables administrators and school boards to see the gravity of the problem and most schools are now implementing bullying programs. Education students at UPEI saw a need and decided to use this window of opportunity to help elementary students learn, not just about bullying, but the things they can do to help. The question remains, are elementary students learning from this type of program? Are they benefiting from using drama to learn, and what do they feel is the impact of this type of program? The results from the questionnaire, journal entries and an open-ended questionnaire were thoroughly reviewed to uncover the thoughts, understandings and feelings of the 87 students involved in the study. Their perceptions, thoughts and insights are described using themes and patterns that emerged from the data analysis and are in line with existing research. A descriptive analysis of the data will answer the basic research questions. In the present study, it is my hope that the research will illuminate the impact of the UPEI anti-bullying initiative. I hope to highlight the perceptions of the participating elementary students from the three- week unit and determine if this type of program intervention positively affects the learning and attitudes of students.

Drama can make learning authentic and similar to real life, and literature suggests that students will better understand the learning if they can relate it to their own lives. Of course, the challenge of analysis of qualitative data is separating the actual findings with the researcher's personal beliefs. In the present study, every effort was made to ensure this was done by first determining themes that were found throughout the findings and secondly by comparing results with other research and researchers.

Limitations of the Study

One important limitation to this research was that much of the material was gathered mainly by written methods. Some students find it difficult to get thoughts and feelings written down on paper. This is a disadvantage of this study and perhaps in the future, it would be recommended that research also might include interviewing individual students in addition to the written components.

The research for this study was limited to only two schools, both of which were in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island. Both schools have a diverse socio-economic student population and because of the French immersion component, the schools attract both urban and rural students. However, using only two schools makes it difficult to conclude that the experiences and perceptions of the students studied are representative of grade six populations elsewhere. Although this is seen as a limitation, it is also important to notice the similarity in responses of the students with the research available.

Elementary students in PEI all took part in different bullying education programs prior to being exposed to the UPEI program. If research was done in another area where students did not have prior knowledge, it could have changed students' reactions to the

pre-service teachers and the material presented by them. The UPEI project was meant to build on this previous work done in schools on bullying.

Another limitation was the timing of the questionnaire. Students were immersed in bullying education for 3 weeks and developed close relationships with the teachers in their classroom. The questionnaire was administered on the last day of the unit, after students had performed the play they wrote during the program. At this time, the students would be excited about the project and very aware of the purpose of the unit. They would want to please the pre-service teachers they had been working with and would possibly write their answers to agree with this.

One final limitation to the study is it would be hard to replicate or transfer the program to schools who did not receive the additional support provided by UPEI's pre-service teachers. It is not often that a teacher has a resource available that is even slightly similar to the UPEI program. The pre-service teachers put a lot of planning and preparation time into the project. They had months to work on the material they would present and in learning the material for the project. Each classroom also had a minimum of 3 teachers at once. This was excellent for student group work and consistent, careful monitoring. This is a rare occurrence and it is not often classroom teachers would have such benefits.

Chapter 4

Analysis, Results and Discussion

To present the material in as clear and as fluid a manner as possible, I have chosen to write according to the research questions and the themes that emerged from the collected data (Appendix F). I will separate each question with headings and use subheadings to address the themes that emerged during the analysis. Students responded about what type of learning took place, such as, what bullying means to them, why people bully, the role of the bystander, consequences of bullying and proactive behaviors that may help them deal with bullying situations. Students also reported on what they felt was different about the way they were learning the information and why they felt drama was an effective way to learn. These comments were very important in determining the impact of the program.

During this program, what, if any, learning about bullying took place for the elementary students involved?

The goal of the anti-bullying initiative was to educate grade six students about bullying. The hope was that through the drama activities and play building exercises the students would gain a solid understanding not only of what bullying is but also long term consequences of this type of behavior and what they can do to help minimize the problems.

What are Bullying Behaviors?

No matter the age, many people believe that bullying occurs only when children kick, hit or punch other children. These, of course, are bullying behaviors, but they are only a part of the bullying problem. Bullying can be verbal threats, teasing or making fun, as well as being physical. Bullying can also be excluding people from your group, stealing, walking away when students try to talk and these are still not an exhaustive list. Bullying is showing power through aggression. Children need to recognize what behaviors are considered bullying before they can change them.

Bullying behavior changes with age and includes playground bullying, sexual harassment, group attacks, dating violence, marital violence and child abuse (Pepler & Craig, 1997). Bullies can gain power over their victims through their size, peer group, by knowing the victim's weakness or by group tactics (Pepler, Craig & Connolly, 1997). Bullying can be indirect or verbal, in the form of gossip or exclusion, and can also be direct in the form of pushing, threatening or fighting (Olweus, 1991).

In the pre-test group (n=44), 40% of students reported on the survey that they had been bullied and an equal amount reported that they hadn't. After the three- week unit and class activities were complete, the same survey questionnaire showed students (n=43) reported that 85% of them had been bullied. This is huge realization for the students. It appears that discussions and exposure to bullying literature during the three weeks made students more aware of what bullying is. When asked have you ever bullied another person, the pre-test group reported 24% had. After the three weeks, students knew more about what bullying meant and 43% responded that they had bullied.

Students wrote in their journals about bullying behaviors with comments such as,
“I’m learning more about bullying and where it happens.”
“I learned about being a bystander, victim and bully.”

When learning about bullying, students need to recognize the impact of their words on others. This type of behavior has far reaching effects on those exposed to it. Students, through their learning, recognized that,

“Words are powerful!”
“Everyone wants to feel accepted.”

This is essential learning to reduce bullying behavior. If students learn the importance of being accepted and not feeling isolated from peers, they can learn to be more accommodating in this area. The majority of students are not leaving people out just to hurt them. They do not realize how much they are hurting others, especially if they have never experienced being excluded or talked down to. The program allowed the elementary students to step into this role and realize the feelings of others.

Why do people bully?

To help students learn how to help reduce bullying behavior, it is important that they understand why the behavior often exists. If the grade six students understand why people bully, they can better know how best they can react to these people and situations. It also makes them feel better if they are personally being bullied to understand that they

are not at fault when the bully is picking on them. The students came to understand that there might be reasons people bully that we know nothing about. Bullies tend to be hyperactive, disruptive, impulsive and over active (Olweus, 1987). They are also often assertive, and are easily provoked; they are attracted to aggressive situations and usually show a positive attitude toward aggression (Stephenson & Smith, 1989). Students recognized at the end of the UPEI program that some people bully because they think it is cool and they are often insecure and will do anything to be accepted. The majority of students also wrote that people bully to show off and get attention.

If a child observes a high level of conflict between his or her parents, they may copy these bullying behaviors (Olweus, 1993). Highly dominating parents are much more likely to have children who harass their peers, most likely because they are copying behaviors “modeled” for them at home (Rigby, 1994). Many students commented on the bully’s home life as a reason why they might bully. One student wrote,

“The bully may have a hard life at home and so they take their anger out on other people.”

The students were taught that this is not an excuse and it does not make bullying acceptable. However, we must realize that sometimes the bully does have things going on at home that we don’t know anything about.

The Role of the Bystander

*Bystander
As I walk to school in the rain,
Some people are fighting, I feel their pain.
I'm not sure how I feel,
If only bullying wasn't real.*

*Grade 6 student, Oak Street School**

The role of the bystander is important to note. Students often do not realize that the person who stands back and watches bullying without doing anything is playing a role in the behavior and that this is the person who holds the power in the situation. In this area, I feel significant learning has taken place. The survey questionnaire asked if students had ever seen people bullied. The results of students in the pre-test group reported 84% of them had seen people bullied, and after the three-week program 98% reported they had seen bullying. This increase suggests that the students learned, during the course of the program, more about what types of behaviors are considered bullying and are even more aware that they have witnessed these.

The students were also asked on the questionnaire who they believed holds the most power in a bullying situation. In the pre-test group, 55% of students answered the bully holds the most power and 30% answered the bystander. After the three week bullying project 43% of students reported they believed bullies held the most power and remarkably, 50% said they felt the bystander held more power. In the open-ended questionnaire given at the conclusion of the three weeks, students also commented on the

importance of the bystander, and on how often the bully gets power from the bystander. This was an important area that was a focus of the pre-service teachers during their lesson planning and delivery.

In their journals students often wrote about things they had learned about bystanders in bullying situations. Students wrote comments such as:

“I realized I am a bystander!”

“Bystanders make me angry!”

“Not helping makes you as bad as the bully, there is something you can do.”

“Being a bystander is hard because you don’t know what you should do or if you should even get involved.”

These types of comments showed up again and again in the results. It appears that the elementary students now had an understanding that they needed to do something and that the bystander can “change everything” in this type of situation.

One student wrote:

“I’ve been a bystander three different times. These times made me feel kind of angry and scared every time. I didn’t do anything because I was afraid that the bully might hurt me and if I tell a teacher, the bully could find out and go after me instead.”

These types of statements help a teacher develop lesson plans to include material on why students should get involved if they see bullying behaviors. Teachers can also let

students know about telling in secrecy or confidentiality. The school might promote a program where students can tell without anyone knowing who told. Through these lessons, the children realize they can help. There is something they can do to minimize bullying in their school. In fact, one student wrote:

“I’m learning how to help people who are bullied.”

This was the learning we had hoped would take place during the program. One of the goals of the three- week program was to assist students in taking a stand against bullying and what they can do to help. These types of student statements reinforce that learning has taken place.

What impact, if any, did the project have on the participants involved?

One purpose of this study is to determine the impact that the UPEI program had on the participating students. A lot of preparation and time goes into a program such as this and careful evaluation is needed to ensure it is serving its purpose. This research was done in the hope that I would discover what students in these four classrooms felt about the project and what they may take away from it.

Long Term Consequences of Bullying

Although bullying is terrible when it is happening, we often do not look at the long- term consequences of such behavior. Research proves that these consequences are terrible and affect both the bully and victim. I have found that when I talk to people about the research I have been involved with during my work with this program, I hear stories of their past and examples of bullying in their lives, which appear to not have been fully resolved. Students who bully need to know the severity of their actions. Victims often experience a loss of self-esteem and show feelings of isolation, which may last into adulthood (Hazler, 1994). Batche and Knoff (1994) also found that victims sometimes become fearful and anxious of being in the environment where the bullying takes place. Students in the pre-test group were given the survey on the first day of the project, before any learning activities had begun. The remaining students completed the questionnaire after the three-week program was finished. On the questionnaire, students were given the statement, "Bullying can affect learning." 33% of the pre-test group and 46% of the elementary students strongly agreed that bullying can affect learning. When asked if bullying affects self- confidence, 45% of the elementary students given the pre-test and 65% of the students involved with the three-week project strongly agreed.

The grade six students at Oak Street School* and Winter Avenue School* learned about how serious bullying is and how it can hurt the people involved. Victims often have very poor self-esteem and they may feel isolated right into adulthood (Hazler, 1994).

Students who are bullied may try to avoid school and they end up showing poor academic results (Roberts & Coursol, 1996). Bullying can often lead to depression for the victim (Slee, 1995). In extreme cases, victims of these behaviors may bring weapons to school or commit suicide. The pre-service teachers included in their lesson plans an overview of some of the short and long term consequences of bullying. We often act without thinking of the consequences of our actions. Almost every elementary student wrote about how bullying makes people sad, and that it can stay with you forever. They wrote about it hurting their self-esteem and that sometimes people are even afraid to try and make friends. The students also learned that verbal bullying is very serious. Sometimes, without trying to be deliberately mean to our peers, we say things that are mean and hurtful. The majority of student responses included that verbal bullying is damaging, and some students felt it was even worse than physical. One student wrote:

“Words can stay with you forever.”

This type of comment changes the idea of “sticks and stones will break my bones but names will never hurt me”.

Feelings involved

*Frighten
I see them as they walk by,
Inside I begin to cry
They're breaking down my self esteem
Have I done something to make them mean?*

Grade 6 student, Oak Street School

Part of the hope of using drama to teach students about bullying is that they will understand the feelings involved when bullying is taking place. A moral dilemma in a play can stimulate student sensitivity toward the situation and allow them to reflect critically on what they are seeing (Basourakos, 1998). People identify with the feelings and imagination of characters and this can help them change their own reality (Henry, 2000). Throughout the three weeks the students were working on this project, they experienced a wide range of emotions. In one class activity, the elementary students role-played that they were people of both high and low status. When portraying people of low status, students acted shy, quiet and withdrawn whereas when they portrayed high status people, they acted energetic and outgoing. The students acted out these situations portraying that they were on a bus and in a cafeteria. They were then asked to record their feelings and reactions in their journals. This activity brought out a range of feelings in the students. They wrote comments such as,

“When I role played the low status person, I felt sad, embarrassed and alone.”

“I felt unwanted in the low status role.”

Young children do not always feel sympathetic to the feelings of others. During this program, students began to get an understanding of how other people may feel in different situations. The song “*Don’t Laugh at Me*”, by Steve Seskin and Allen Shamblin was used by the pre-service teachers to help children understand how people feel may (Appendix G). In this song the lyrics raise many different issues facing children today that often can lead to bullying, such as the kid who gets chosen last, a boy with glasses who is always called a geek, a girl who never smiles because she has braces on her teeth and a person who is slower than others in his class. The song also raises awareness about people who are physically challenged and how they pretend it doesn’t bother them when people point and stare. Many students could personally relate to the song and one student wrote:

“I was bullied because I was short. Some days I wouldn’t want to go to school. What was worse, I never told anybody so the bullying didn’t stop.”

Students were learning empathy and felt safe to contribute personal stories and reactions with their group facilitators. Moral behaviors simply mean the way we behave toward one another or how we treat others (Kurtines & Gerwartz, 1991). Drama can provide different perspectives that result in learning (Henry, 2000). The result of learning empathy through drama is a matter of taking another person’s perspective, and

learning about that person (Henry, 2000). The song was very powerful and one student said:

“The song made me feel empathy.”

“The song made me feel mad and sad at the same time”.

The students were also given other poems and songs with similar meaning. They were asked to think about the songs and poems and to look at them through the perspective of the teller. This allowed the students to become aware of the music they listen to all the time. They have heard the songs before, but, more than likely, they never really reflected on them. This gave them the opportunity to relate to the artists they look up to and bring greater meaning to their learning.

Many students learned empathy during the project. Students made comments such as:

“Today made me think about how people who are bullied must feel. I feel really bad for them.”

Proactive behavior

It is not enough to teach children what bullying is and where it happens. These are important for students to understand but they also need to know what to do if they are faced with a bullying situation. The UPEI program spent time explaining to the grade six students what they could do. Many students had a greater understanding of the things

they could do after the three- week program concluded. When participants were asked on the questionnaire if other students can help when a bullying situation is taking place, the pre-test group had 31% of students strongly agree, while 80% of responses from the students surveyed stated that they strongly agree. When the students were asked if there was something they themselves could do, only 35% of the pre-test group strongly agreed, but after the three-weeks 68% of the students surveyed strongly agreed. These numbers, gathered from the survey, strongly illustrate the positive effects of the UPEI program.

There were also lessons about the importance of involving an adult, especially teachers. Bullying is not as prevalent in schools where there is a supportive staff and where students and staff have warm relationships (Olweus, 1987). Bullying also decreases in schools when students and staff share in decision making and where adults do not model bullying behavior (Olweus, 1987). Bullying is often hidden from teachers; as a result, intervention takes place only four percent of the time (Craig & Pepler, 1997). When asked if the students believed there was something a teacher could do to help, there was again a rise in the results from the pre and post-test survey, an increase was reported from 46% to 62% of participants who strongly agreed. Many students wrote about the importance of telling someone, with most students surveyed reporting the importance of finding someone (mainly an adult) to trust and telling them right away. One student wrote:

“Tell someone you trust or [bullying] will get worse!”

Students wrote in their journals about actions they could take to help reduce bullying. They wrote about the need to stand up to bullying. Students wrote about lessons learned such as:

“Send “I” messages like I don’t like it when you stare at me.”

“Take a stand! You don’t even need to say a thing, you just smile and be yourself.”

Working together is vital in many areas. Students are often required to work alone to perform a task. During the three weeks they were involved with the UPEI program, they worked as a team. This was a learning experience in itself. Students learned from each other and not just from a teacher. From this work they learned that working together can be a beneficial way to combat bullying.

Students also wrote statements like:

“If we all stand together, we can help stop bullying”

“We need to all work together.”

Teaching through drama allows students to think in a different way or through the eyes of another. Through this type of learning, students will see how their behaviors can affect others and with this realization, they hopefully will reform their thinking. One student wrote:

“Today made me think about the way I treat people.”

Others wrote:

“Making good choices in my life now can affect me for the rest of my life.”

“Sports give me good self esteem, people bully to build up their self esteem.”

This latter student not only came to the realization that sometimes bullying occurs because the bully is trying to build self esteem, but also that there are other ways you can achieve self esteem. This was done through an activity where students were asked to write about something they were good at and how they became good at it. Students wrote about such activities as sports, dancing, music and school. They realized, through their writing, that they feel good when they are doing these activities and that they are good at them because they practice and give it their all.

Through their activities, students also learned it is okay to just walk away from a bully. Sometimes children are encouraged to fight back or they feel they have to do something to retaliate. The pre-service teachers taught their students that it is fine to get yourself away from the situation. Students had a great understanding of this type of behavior and made comments in their journals such as:

“When we walk away from bullies, we take away their power.”

“If you don’t answer a bully, they’ll lose the satisfaction of seeing you being hurt.”

How do students perceive the possible benefit of this type of learning environment?

Drama achieves a form of learning similar to real life lessons (Henry, 2000). Research shows that students can gain authentic learning by using drama. Witkin (1974) believed that arts seemed essential for development because of the feelings invoked during the process. It is also important to note what the students think and if they feel they benefit from this type of learning. The students had a lot of ideas as to why this program was successful.

What was different about this type of learning?

It is great that schools are taking the initiative to ensure they have implemented bullying programs. Today, most school communities have such programs in place. Many of them have great material and lesson plans provided for the classroom teachers or guidance people. Most of this material however, is presented by lecture, assigned seat - work and in many cases students receive only one bullying education class per six day cycle. For this reason, I felt it was important to know what students thought was different about the UPEI program and if they felt it was successful for them.

Many of the students responded by saying they got to work together with other classmates. In fact, most students commented about working together throughout the

program. Working with others is often overlooked, but it is a great way not only to educate our students with the material. It also teaches them social skills that will be important later in their lives. Students wrote about how everyone was excited to participate. Not all children feel comfortable participating in class, but in a small group, they can gain the confidence they need to contribute. When the group then uses their ideas, this boosts their confidence for another time. Students commented on how they enjoyed the fact that everyone's thoughts were included in the play. They wrote about how great it was to learn from each other and get the perspective of other students in their group. The grade six students involved in the program may all have been affected by bullying in different ways and through their experiences during this three- week unit, they had the opportunity to share their thoughts and feelings. The students became aware of the feelings of others. They learned to ensure that everyone be included and to work together. One student wrote:

“Creating a play is working together as a group and making sure everyone is comfortable.”

There are many different types of learners in every classroom, however the majority of teaching is aimed toward the child who learns by sitting and listening. Younger children especially, need to have some variation in the way material is presented to them and how they respond to that information. During the three weeks the grade six classes were involved in this program, almost all students made comments about the learning being fun. They enjoyed being active and getting away from their desks. They

loved the hands on approach and most students said they were learning by doing. The students felt this made the material easier to understand. They made comments such as:

“Doing and acting made it easier to understand.”

“It was good to exercise instead of just writing things down.”

“It was more interesting, easy and fun to learn.”

An important part of the teaching by the pre-service teachers was to make the learning real for the students. Through the analysis of stories and by using drama, students can learn to be more honorable in their lives (Edmiston, 2000). They also learn to put themselves into someone else’s shoes. Students need to believe what they are learning and to relate this learning to their own lives. By using drama and stories related to everyday life in our learning, we can become clearer about our own ethical views and those of others (Edmiston, 2000). Our views or positions may change. The grade sixes appeared to really appreciate this throughout the program.

The teachers did activities that required students to go home and watch one of their favorite television shows and to take note of any bullying behaviors within it. They also brought commercials and songs the students were familiar with into the class to discuss. The students responded to these activities saying:

“Everyone loves watching TV so that activity was really helpful.”

“Real life and TV situations taught us how to cope.”

“The commercials and poems were helpful.”

In many cases, the students weren't even aware they were learning so much and at the end of the three weeks, after reflecting on the work they had done, many responded to the open-ended questionnaire by saying:

“We were learning without even knowing it.”

The children felt drama was a positive way to learn because they had the opportunity to be more creative. It is important to note that it is not enough to have children simply present dramatic material, they should be actively involved in creating the activities. Their words become the actions and this will later, in real life, affect their viewpoint and responses (Edmiston, 2000). Research also suggests that when material is presented visually as opposed to being presented in a written format, more material is retained (Rose, Parks, Androes & McMahon, 2000).

The students realized they were learning a lot from the play building activities. They said:

“You will remember this more by drama than writing it down.”

“You learn how to deal with your issues by acting them out.”

Bouchard (2002) believes drama is a way to create and interpret meaning from the situation. It is a social activity that corresponds with real life actions and language but

the activities rely purely on individual imagination. He believes a dramatic activity of this kind is likely to stimulate the moral functioning of the people involved.

Did you learn about bullying through drama?

Drama is often overlooked as a way to educate students. The students, however, felt very knowledgeable about bullying when this three- week unit concluded. After activities the students were often led in discussions about the day's lessons by the pre-service teachers. Students made comments in their journals such as,

"I think our discussions were really good."

"Our discussions made me think about how people being bullied feel."

Although the class discussions were vital, students also believed they were learning by doing the activities. Many of them wrote that memorizing lines helped them remember, that they learned because they were actually experiencing the material and that it is much easier to learn by doing.

"Being in a play, helps you really get into a situation."

An important aspect of drama education is that it can evoke feelings in the participants. Feelings, according to scientific research, are involved in ethical and sometimes higher level thinking (Henry, 2000). The students have to pretend that they

are the person in each particular situation and they have to act how they believe this person would actually feel. The grade six students really gained from these situations and made comments such as:

“We got a taste of real bullying!”

“I know how it feels now to be the bystander, victim and bully.”

One student tied it up nicely by saying:

“You have to put yourself in the other person’s shoes.”

Still others reported:

“I can see different points of view and know how it feels.”

“Drama helps because you really get into the situation. It helps you know what to do in a real situation.”

This last quotation is really important. It is vital that students can transfer their learning to real life and know how to cope in real situations. That is the goal of any bullying education program.

Bouchard (2002) states drama enables moral processing by creating feelings. The student imagines his or herself in the place of the character. This type of drama activity allows the real and the imaginary to exist at the same time, which the author describes as a “risk-free risk”.

Students also wrote about how feeling was brought into the learning quite often. They spoke of their own feelings and could begin to experience empathy for others. The students felt safe in acting and wrote about how it was easier to express their feelings in this type of environment. One student also wrote:

“You don’t have to tell your problem, you can act it out.”

Students also wrote about how other students would respect and pay attention to the play, but possibly would not if the class presented the material in another way. One student said:

“We killed two birds with one stone, we got to experience it and we passed a message onto others.”

This comment refers to the fact that the grade six students shared their drama creation, developed during the three weeks with other classes in their school.

From the large volume of responses received from each of the three methods of research, themes were developed and information was categorized within the themes. The above results show the range of learning that took place during the project and throughout the program. Students reported learning proactive behavior to help them when faced with bullying situations. They spoke about benefiting from the way the material was presented to them and teaching techniques the pre-service teachers used. They talked about feelings the program revealed in them, learning about bullying, and

students especially spoke about learning about the role of bystanders. The students also responded about learning things they had not known before they took part in the UPEI program.

As is illustrated by these themes, the grade six students learned an amazing amount of information during this three-week, play-building process. The use of drama not only helped students get a close look, at the bullying issue and the education that is needed surrounding it, but the experience also unleashed thoughts and feelings involved with bullying which is where the deep learning appeared to have taken place.

Educational Implications

Bullying contaminates the classroom, especially if there is no effective intervention plan in place (Siann, Callaghan, Lockhart & Rawson, 1993). Over several years now, bullying issues have become a national concern, especially in schools. Administrations have been making every effort to reduce aggressive behavior by our students. An important starting point is to educate schools on how much bullying takes place without adults ever finding out (Sudermann, Jaffe & Schiek, 1998). Perhaps a good starting place would be with elementary age students because research shows that this is not only the years when most bullying takes place but it is also when students are capable of feeling more empathy for the victim. It is important that schools adopt an attitude that does not tolerate bullying and that schools are a safe place for students.

Sudermann et al. (1998) report adequate supervision has been found to be very important when trying to reduce bullying behaviors at school. Teachers cannot control individual family issues but they can greatly reduce the frequency and severity of

bullying by appropriate supervision. They found that inadequate supervision at school may lead to the development of bullying problems. Teachers may notice that this can increase the work load at first; however, when students learn what type of behaviors will no longer be tolerated, few incidents will occur.

It is, of course, also vital that schools use appropriate interventions methods when they see bullying. Students need to feel warmth and acceptance at school, there needs to be curriculum, administrative and support policies in place to help reduce the bullying problem. It is also important to have programs that work. Students, especially in younger grades, need to know the difference between tattling and reporting. Often parents and teachers will encourage students to work problems out for themselves. This cannot work in a bullying situation. There needs to be a program in place where students feel safe to report bullying incidents and effective consequences need to be in place for bullies. These consequences need to be immediate and consistent. Furthermore, schools need to develop a social atmosphere that is supportive and inclusive where students learn effective interpersonal skills. This can be done through group work and working together on classroom activities. The three- week program implemented by UPEI did this on a consistent basis and the students involved reacted quite favorably.

Although the program was quite effective, it is important to note that there needs to be more than one type of intervention in place. Teachers need to continue reinforcing material learned in their classes. This needs to be done throughout the year and not just once or at the beginning of the year. A program that would be implemented by the school, home and community can reduce bullying remarkably (Sudermann et al., 1998).

Sudermann et al. (1998) suggest schools review all policies and procedures they have in place and ensure they are appropriate for dealing with bullying perpetrators.

Additional helpful suggestions for school boards include:

- Developing curriculum that promotes communication, friendship and assertive skills.
- Improve communication among the school community and parents and students.
- Listening to bullying concerns of students.
- Avoid emphasis on competitiveness at school.
- Involve the students in helping alleviate the problem.
- Include students in group activities.
- Classes can develop individual codes of conduct.
- Schools and School Boards should look closely at the benefit of teaching through drama and hopefully incorporate more of that type of learning into their programs and curriculum.
- School Boards and Departments might look for other school-university partnerships that can implement similar programs in their schools and districts.

Possibilities of Future Research

Because the program offered by UPEI had such varied components, there are many possibilities for future research in this area. Research focusing on other areas of the project would shed more light on the benefits gained from the project.

There were three groups of people affected by this program, the students, the classroom teachers and the pre-service teachers. Each had different experiences and took something different away at the conclusion of the three weeks. Not only does a program such as this affect the way teachers look at bullying issues, it makes them question their methods of teaching. In conversations with them, many teachers, after experiencing this program, noted how much fun the students had and how much knowledge they obtained. It would be helpful to study the reactions of the classroom teachers to see whether being a part of this unit will affect their teaching methods in the future. It would also be helpful to determine the teacher's perception of the learning that took place for the elementary students in the program. A teacher who has known the students for a full year will be able to uncover things from the students that the pre-service teachers may not be able to after only three weeks. The pre-service teachers had no prior knowledge of the student's behavior. It would also be helpful to compare the attitudes of the teachers about bullying issues before and after the three- week unit. This would be useful in evaluating the program.

The pre-service teachers played a huge role in this program. An interesting study of their reactions and perceptions would also be beneficial. How would this program affect their teaching and how will they look at things differently when they acquire teaching positions? How did the project affect them personally and professionally? How did they feel about the learning which was taking place and what might they suggest for future changes? All of these questions would be very helpful when evaluating the program.

Follow-up interviews or surveys with both elementary students and teachers who were involved in the program would also be helpful to the study. It would be interesting to know if the learning that took place was sustained over time. If another round of testing could be arranged at the beginning, or middle of the next school year, the results would be very informative.

These suggestions cover only the three- week unit that took place in Oak Street and Winter Avenue schools. More research could also be done on the play building stage of the program with the pre-service teachers, as well as the touring stage. The touring of the play written and performed by the pre-service teachers was a large part of the project. The experiences of the teachers and the elementary students who viewed the play would be very interesting to research.

To expand the project further, the role of the school, family, and the community might be examined. In this study, only the grade six students and the teachers and pre-service teachers were directly involved in the project. It would be interesting to involve others in the program. Possibly, the plays could be brought out into the community or maybe the community could be brought into the plays. It would be interesting to see if the involvement of parents and community in the project might advance the learning and the retention of material. It would also be interesting to see if these people would become involved and effective in combating bullying.

Because bullying is such a wide spread problem today, I felt I needed to learn more about why it is happening. More importantly, I wanted to focus on ways to help reduce the occurrence of bullying in schools and outside. Through the three-week drama program offered by UPEI, elementary students learned about bullying through working

together and experiencing bullying education on a different level. It gave students something to think about and something to look back on if they are presented with similar situations in their lives. Drama proved to be an effective teaching tool in this area.

Appendix A

<http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/specialed/bullying.pdf>

Appendix B

Appendix C

STUDENT SURVEY

BOY ☒ GIRL ☐

Please circle your answer.

1) Have you been bullied?

YES ☒ NO ☐ NOT SURE ☐

If you circled YES, how often did it happen? SOMETIMES

OFTEN ☐ EVERYDAY ☐

2) Have you ever bullied another person?

YES ☐ NO ☒ NOT SURE ☐

If you circled YES, how often did it happen? SOMETIMES

OFTEN ☐ EVERYDAY ☐

3) Have you seen other people bullied?

YES ☐ NO ☒ NOT SURE ☐

If you circled YES, how often did it happen? SOMETIMES

OFTEN ☐ EVERYDAY ☐

4) Who holds the most power?

BULLY ☐ BYSTANDER ☒ VICTIM ☐

Please circle the number that best describes your feelings.

1=strongly agree 2=agree 3=disagree 4=strongly disagree 5=not sure

1) Some people deserve to be bullied.

1 2 3 ☒ 4 5

2) There is something I can do to stop bullying.

1 ☒ 2 3 4 5

3) Teachers can help stop bullying.

1 2 3 4 ☒ 5

4) Other students can help if I am bullied.

1 ☒ 2 3 4 5

5) Bullying can affect my learning.

1 ☒ 2 3 4 5

6) Bullying can affect my self confidence.

1 ☒ 2 3 4 5

Appendix D

march 26, 2004

In grade one I was bullied by others just because I was smaller and younger than her.. She'd call me names like "Loser, Short-stuff, Weirdo and throw pebbles at me. Some days I wouldn't want to go to school, but was even worse I never told anybody about it! So the bullying went on 'till that person graduated, and from now on every time I see someone getting bullied I'm going to speak up because I know how it feels to be bullied.

By Sophie Burns

march, 31/04

Creating a play is difficult, frustrating and hard. It's difficult because everyone has their own ideas and feel different on how it should work out. It is frustrating when everyone is yelling and can not agree on one thing. It's hard when we have to come up with a short play in only a few minutes and act it out. Overall hopefully everything will turn out all right. In the second scene I hope I can be a leader of a small group and we can pick on somebody without making it look fake and more realistic. The play the girls are doing needs a lot of work.

Derick

April 7th

Drama Helped me in understanding bullying more by letting me feel what it's like to be a bystander and a bully. I found that the tape of the bullying Commercial helped me understand, and the poems made me understand what some bullying words meant but most of all I think that the peace signs helped the most because I was able to express my feelings on bullying.

So I thank you Joan and Jenny.

Appendix E

Q1

Research Questions

1) Explain what you learned about bullying during the three weeks with the UPEI teachers.

I've learned that there are lots of different types of bullying. Also that the bystander has the most power, and lots more.

2) How is drama a positive and helpful way to learn? Use examples from the last three weeks.

Thank you for teaching me

Yes, because you get to view it from their perspective.

Research Questions

Boy—Girl. ✓

1) Explain what you learned about bullying during the three weeks with the UPEI teachers. Bullying is dangerous and, sometimes you do it without knowing it. Now matter what your Bystander, Victim or bully you should try to Stop bullying.

2) How is drama a positive and helpful way to learn? Use examples from the last three weeks.

By doing drama every one wants to participate. I think that drama helped me alot and I'm glad I am in this class. P.S. Have fun being A Teacher. And good Luck!!
✓

Research Questions

1) Explain what you learned about bullying during the three weeks with the UPEI teachers.

I learned that the bystanders have the most power in a bullying situation. I learned that bullies are usually insecure about themselves. I learned that people will do anything to be accepted, and I learned much more.

2) How is drama a positive and helpful way to learn? Use examples from the last three weeks.

It was positive because now I realize how wrong bullying is.

Appendix F

Journals

In their journals, students spoke candidly about learning that they felt occurred for them during the program. Students wrote about a hope for reduced bullying behavior, and actions they could take to help combat the bullying problem in their schools. They spoke about feelings the project evoked, told personal stories and many wrote about why they feel they learned from this type of program.

Reduced Bullying Behavior

“I like the fact that we are doing a project on bullying. Since we’ve done this, we haven’t had that much bullying.”

“I wish everyone took this class, that way there would be hardly any bullies at school.”

My Role – Proactive Behavior

“Send ‘I’ messages such as: “I don’t like it when you stare at me.””

“If we all stand together we can help stop bullying.”

“When we walk away from bullies we take away from their power.”

“If you don’t answer a bully, they’ll lose the satisfaction of you being hurt.”

“Take a stand! You don’t need to say a thing, smile and be yourself.”

“We should all work together.”

“Tell someone.”

Benefits from the teaching techniques involved

“You learn more from drama than worksheets because you have to memorize your lines and acting out stuff.”

“I think the discussions were really good.”

“Our discussions made me think about how people being bullied feel.”

“Creating a play is working together as a group and making sure everyone is comfortable.”

“The play helps you really get into a situation.”

Feelings

“The song made me feel empathy.”

“Bystanders make me angry.”

“It made me think about the way I treat people.”

“I felt unwanted as a low status person in the activity.”

“Today made me think about how people who are bullied must feel. I feel really bad for them.”

“When I role played a low status person I felt sad and embarrassed.”

“When I was the low status person I felt embarrassed and alone.”

“I felt unwanted in the role.”

“It made me feel sad and mad at the same time.”

Being a bystander is hard because you don’t know if you should get involved.”

Perceived Learning

“Making good choices in my life can effect me in the rest of my life.”

“Not helping a person being bullied makes you as bad as the bully.”

“I’m learning more about bullying and where it happens.”

“I learned about being a bystander, victim and bully.”

“I think people bully because they have been bullied before.”

“Tell someone you trust or it will get worse.”

“I’m learning how to help people who are bullied.”

“Bullies have problems of their own.”

“Sports give me good self esteem. People bully to build themselves up.”

“I realize I am a bystander.”

“Everyone wants to be accepted.”

“Words are powerful.”

Personal Stories

“I was bullied because I was short and some days I wouldn’t want to go to school. What was worse, I never told anybody so the bullying didn’t stop.”

“I used to be a bully. Once I got caught. I felt bad and cried because I was ashamed.”

“There has never been a week I wasn’t bullied by one person. I tell people and let my feelings out, I even talked to him. Now I solved it when he decides to tease me, that’s going to be his problem.”

“I went through a really hard time with bullying and life at home. My doctor had to put me on Zoloft, an antidepressant. So I know what it’s like to be bullied. I think it’s wrong and no one deserves to be bullied. I used to not want to go to school because of bullying. It got the point where I was in the hospital over night because I tried to kill myself.”

I’ve been a bystander three times, these times made me feel kind of angry and scared. I didn’t do anything because I was afraid that the bully might hurt me and if I tell a teacher the bully could find out and go after me instead.”

“ I realize there is bullying at home with my brother.”

Students felt safe sharing their ideas and perceptions in their journals and a lot of valuable information was gathered in this way. Reading about how the students felt and what they thought they were learning was invaluable throughout the project.

Open Ended Questionnaire

The open-ended questionnaire consisted of two questions. Each question elicited a huge response from the students that participated. Although most students had similar responses, there was also a lot of variation throughout the questions. Students not only reported on things they learned about bullying, such as the role of the bystander, but they also responded in such a way that shows they learned the deeper reasons behind bullying and some student responses even suggest empathy for the children who bully, as well as, the children who are bullied.

Question #1 - What I learned about Bullying...

Why people bully

- May have a hard life at home so they take their anger out on other people.
- Just want to show off and get attention (repeated).
- May bully because of their home life (repeated).
- Think it's cool to bully.
- Bullies may have problems of their own.
- Have no friends.
- Insecure
- Will do anything to be accepted.

Bystanders

- People who watch bullying are called bystanders
- Have the most power in a bullying situation (strong)
- The bully gets power from the bystander
- Should and can do something to help (strong)
- Being the bystander, you can change everything
- Should step in and do something

What can be done?

- We can do something to stop bullying (strong)
- Work together
- Walk away from bullies because they just want attention
- Tell an adult (strong)
- Put yourself in the place of the victim and you will not bully anymore
- Make good choices
- Victims should stand up for themselves
- Ignore the bully-they just want to get you upset
- Find someone who cares (adult) who you can talk to

General Learning/Things not known before

- You could be a bully without even knowing it (repeated)
- Very serious problem (repeated)
- There are many kinds of bullying (strong)
- Everyone is different on the outside but on the inside we are all the same.
- The victim has power
- Many people are bullied
- Words can hurt more than being hit (strong)
- If you're mean back to a bully, then you are a bully too.
- It's wrong to bully a person because you don't like them
- Three parts, bully, victim and bystander (strong)
- It's mean, rude and not cool.
- Excluding is bullying

How does bullying hurt?

- It can make people really sad and mad (strong)
- People are afraid to make friends
- Stays with you forever
- Verbal bullying hurts more (repeated)
- Hurts a person's self esteem
- Words can stay with you almost forever

Using Drama as a positive way to learn...

What was different?

- Fun (strong)
- Learned more by doing (strong)
- Everyone loves watching TV so that activity was helpful
- We wrote plays
- Easier to understand when you do it
- Doing things that can really happen
- You can exercise instead of just writing things down
- More creative
- Worked in a group (strong)
- We all put our thought together in it
- Easy, fun to learn
- More hands on
- Real life situations taught us how to cope
- More interesting
- You will remember this more by drama than writing it down
- Everyone wants to participate
- We learned without knowing it
- Doing and acting made it easier to understand
- Commercials and poems very helpful, real
- Learned from each other, writing our own plays
- How to deal with issues by acting them out
- We got other peoples perspective (bully, victims, bystander)
- We were active
- Realistic

Did drama teach?

- We experienced it
- We got a taste of real bullying
- I know how it feels to be a bystander, victim and bully
- Learn by doing
- Memorizing lines helped
- You put yourself in the other person's shoes
- Easier to understand when you do it
- I can see different points of view and how it feels
- You don't have to tell your problem, you can act it out
- Express your feelings in an easier way
- You know how people feel
- People respect and pay attention to plays
- You can see how bad bullying really is
- "Drama helps because you really get into the situation. IT helps you know what to do in a real situation."

What was learned?

- Bullying can happen anywhere
- Learned ways to stop bullying and put them in our plays
- How we can stop bullying
- Realized how wrong bullying is
- How to work things out
- Made me see what bullying can do to people's feelings
- Made me aware of what it would be like in different situations, what to do
- Learned how to act things out and not get mad
- How to cope with real life situations
- Standing up for someone is a good thing to do, without thinking we were learning
- How people feel
- Not to bully
- How wrong bullying is
- Killed two birds with one stone, we got to experience it and we passed a message on to others
- How bullies, victims and bystanders feel
- I got a taste of real bullying

Appendix G

Don't Laugh at Me

I'm a little boy with glasses, the one they call a geek
a little girl who never smiles cuz I got braces on my teeth
and I know how it feels to cry myself to sleep

I'm that kid on every playground who is always chosen last
a single teenage mother tryin to overcome her past
You don't have to be my friend if it's too much to ask

Don't laugh at me, don't call me names
Don't get your pleasure from my pain
In God's eyes we're all the same
some day we'll all have perfect Wings
Don't laugh at me

I'm a cripple on the corner
You pass me on the street
I wouldn't be out here begging if I had enough to eat
and don't think I don't notice that our eyes never meet

I lost my wife and little boy somewhere down that yellow line
The day we laid 'em in the ground was the day I lost my mind
Right now I'm down to holdin this little cardboard sign

Don't laugh at me, Don't call me names
Don't get your pleasure from my pain
In God's eyes we're all the same
Someday we'll all have perfect wings
Don't laugh at me

I'm Fat, I'm thin..I'm Short, I'm tall..I'm deaf.. I'm blind
Hey aren't we all
Don't laugh at me..... Don't call me names
Don't get your pleasure from my pain
In God's eyes we're all the same
Someday we'll all have perfect wings
Don't laugh at me

written by
Allen Shamblin & Steve Seskin, and
recorded by Mark Wills

References

- Basourakos, J. (1998). Exploring the moral sphere through dramatic art: The role of contemporary Canadian plays in moral pedagogy. *Canadian Journal of Education*, 23(3), 265-280.
- Batsche, G.M. & Knoff, H.M. (1994). Bullies and their victims: Understanding a pervasive problem in the schools. *School Psychology Review*, 23(2), 165-174.
- Beale, A. (2001). 'Bullybusters': Using drama to empower students to take a stand Against bullying behavior. *Professional School Counseling*, 4(4), 300-306.
- Belliveau, G. (in press). Using drama to promote social justice: Pre-service teachers Initiate anti-bullying project in elementary schools. *In Universal Mosaic of Drama and Theatre*. Ottawa: IDEA publications.
- Boal, A. (1979). *Theatre of the Opressed*. London: Pluto Press.
- Bouchard, N. (2002). A narrative approach to moral experience using dramatic play and writing. *Journal of Moral Education*, 31(4), 407-422.
- Boulton, M. & Underwood, K. (1992). Bully/victim problems among middle school Children. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 62, 73-87.
- Bretherton, I. & Eunyoung, B.(1994). Attachment and the transmission of values. In J.Grusec & L.Kuczynski (eds.), Parenting and children's internalization of values: *A handbook of contemporary theory* (p.101-134).
- Charach, A., Pepler, D. & Ziegler, S. (1995). Bullying at school, A Canadian perspective. *Education Canada*, 35(1), 12-19.
- Craig, W. M. & Pepler, D. J. (1995). Peer processes in bullying and victimization: An

- observational study. *Exceptionality Education Canada*, 5, 81–95.
- Creswell, J.W. (1994). *Research design: Qualitative and quantitative approaches*.
Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Cunningham, C.E. (1997). The effects of primary division, student mediated conflict resolution programs on playground aggression. Department of psychology, Chedoke-McMaster Hospitals, Hamilton, Ontario, L8N 3Z5.
- Curtner-Smith, M. (2000) Mechanisms by which family processes contribute to school-age boys bullying. *Child Study Journal*, 30(3), 169-181.
- Deeny, P., Johnson, A., Boore, J. & Leyden, C. (2001). Drama as an experiential technique in learning how to cope with dying patients and their families. *Teaching in Higher Education*, 6(1), 99-112.
- Denzin, N. & Lincoln, Y. (Eds). (1994). *Handbook of qualitative research*.
London: Sage Publications.
- Edmiston, B. (2000). Drama as ethical education. *Research in Drama Education*, 5(1), 22-40.
- Eslea, Mike & Smith, Peter (2000). Pupil and parent attitudes towards bullying in primary schools. *European Journal of Psychology*, 15(2), 207-219.
- Farrington, D.P. (1993). Understanding and preventing bullying. In M.Tonry (ed.). *Crime and Justice*, 17. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Hazler, R. (1994). Bullying breeds violence: You can stop it! *Learning*, '94. February, 38-41.
- Hazler, R., Hoover, J. & Oliver, R. (1991). Student perceptions of victimization by bullies in school. *Journal of Humanistic Education and Development*, 29, 62-68.

- Henry, M. (2000). Drama's ways of learning. *Research in drama education*, 5, 45-63.
- Kurtines, W. & Gewirtz, J. (1991). *Handbook of Moral Behavior and Development*. Hillsdale: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Lowenstien, L.F. (1995). Bullying: An intensive and multi dimensional treatment Approach in a therapeutic community. *Education Today*, 45(1), 19-24.
- Mason, J. (1996). *Qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Neary, A. & Joseph, S. (1994). Peer victimization and its relationship to self-concept and Depression among school girls. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 16, 183-186.
- Neufeld, P. (2002). School violence: family responsibility. *Counseling and therapy for Couples and families*, 10 (2), 207-209.
- Oliver, R., Oakes, I. & Hoover, J. (1994). Family issues and interventions in bully and victim relationships. *The School Counsellor*, 41, 199-202.
- Olweus, D. (1979). Stability of aggressive reaction patterns in males: A review. *Psychology Bulletin*, 86, 852-875.
- Olweus, D. (1980). Familial and temperamental determinants of aggressive behavior in adolescent boys: A causal analysis. *Developmental Psychology*, 16, 644-660.
- Olweus, D. (1987). School yard bullying- Grounds for intervention. *School Safety*, 6, 4-11.
- Olweus, D. (1991). Bully/Victim problems among school children: Some basic facts and effects of a school based intervention program. In D.Pepler & K.Rubin (eds.), *The Development and Treatment of Childhood Aggression*, Hillsdale. p. 411-448.

- Olweus, D. (1993). *Bullying at school: What we know and what we can do*. Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishers.
- Olweus, D. (1993b). Victimization of peers: Antecedents and long-term consequences. In K.H. Rubin & J.B. Asendorf (eds.). *Social Withdrawal, Inhibition and Development of Antisocial and Prosocial Behavior: Research, Theories and Issues*. New York: Academic Press.
- Patton, M. (1990). *Qualitative evaluation and research methods*. California: Sage Publications.
- Patterson, G.R. (1996). The contribution of siblings to training for fighting: A Microsocial analysis. In D. Olweus, J. Block & M.Radke-Yarrow (eds.).
- Pepler, D., Craig, W., Ziegler, S. & Charach, A. (1994). An evaluation of an anti-bullying intervention in Toronto school settings. *Canadian Journal of Community Mental Health, 13*, 95-100.
- Pepler, D. & Craig, W. (1997). Bullying: Research and interventions. *Youth Update*. Publication of the Institute for Study of Antisocial Youth.
- Pepler, D., Craig, W. & Connolly, J. (1997). *Bullying and victimization: The problems and solutions for school-aged children*. The National Crime Prevention Council of Canada.
- Rigby, K. (1994). Psychosocial functioning in families of Australian adolescent Schoolchildren involved in bully/victim problems. *Journal of Family Therapy, 16*, 173-187.

- Roberts, W.B. & Coursol, D.H. (1996). Strategies for intervention with childhood and adolescent victims of bullying, teasing and intimidation in school settings. *Elementary School Guidance and Counseling*, 30, 204-212.
- Rose, D., Parks, M., Androes, K. & McMahon, S. (2000). Imagery-based learning: Elementary students reading comprehension with drama techniques. *Educational Research*, 94, 55-63.
- Salmivalli, C., Karhunen, J., Lagerspetz, K. & Osterman, K. (1996). Bullying as a group process: Participant roles and their relations to social status within the group. *Aggressive Behavior*, 22, 1-15.
- Siann, G., Callaghan, M., Lockhart, R. & Rawson, L. (1993). Bullying: Teachers' views And school effects. *Educational Studies*, 19(3), 307-321.
- Slee, P. (1993). Bullying: A primary investigation of its nature and the effects of social cognition. *Early Child Development and care*, 87, 47-57.
- Slee, P. (1995). Peer victimization and its relationship to depression among Australian Primary school students. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 18, 57-62.
- Stephenson, P. & Smith, D. (1989). Bullying in two English comprehensive schools. In E.Roland and E.Munthe (Eds.) *Bullying: An Intervention Perspective*. London: Fulton.
- Stevens, V., De Bourdeaudhuij, I. & Van Oost, P. (2002). Relationship of the family Environment to children's involvement in bully/victim problems at school. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 31(6), 419-428.
- Sudermann, M., Jaffe, P. & Schiek, E. (1998). Bullying: Information for parents and teachers. *The Canadian Association of Principals*, 8(1), 4-11.

Tattum, D. (1982). *Disruptive behavior in schools*. New York: John Wiley.

Witkin, R. (1974). *The intelligence of feeling*. London: Heinemann Educational Books.