

References

Elementary School Studies

Effects of Conflict Resolution Training on Elementary Students. Johnson, D. W., Johnson, R., Dudley, B., & Acikgoz. April, 1994. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, 134(6), 803-817.

Reducing Levels of Elementary School Violence with Peer Mediation. Schellenberg, R. C., Parks-Savage, A., & Rehfuss, M. June 2007. *ASCA*, 10(5).

The Effectiveness of Peer Mediation in a Low-SES Rural Elementary School. Bell, S. K., Coleman, J. K. Anderson, A, Whelan, J.P., & Wilder, C. 2000. *Psychology in the Schools*, 37(6).

Middle School Studies

Six Factors Inhibiting the Use of Peer Mediation in a Junior High School. Theberge, S. K. & Karan, O. C. April 2004. *ASCA*, 7(4).

Conflict Resolution and Peer Mediation in Middle Schools: Extending the Process and Outcome Knowledge Base. Smith, S. W., Daunic, A. P., Miller, M. D., & Robinson, T. R. 2002. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, 142(5), 567-586.

High School Studies

Effects of Conflict Resolution Training Integrated into a High School Social Studies Curriculum. Stevahn, L., Johnson, D. W., Johnson, R. T., & Schultz, R. 2002. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, 142(3), 305-331.

Literature Review Resources

Evaluation of Respectful Conflict Resolution and Peer Mediation Program. Gauley, M. 2006. Community-University Institute for Social Research, University of Saskatchewan.

The Comprehensive Peer Mediation Evaluation Project: Insights and Directions for Curriculum Integration. Jones, T. S. June 1998. *National Institute for Dispute Resolution's Forum*, Volume 35.

Peer Mediation Articles

ARTICLE 1

Effects of Conflict Resolution Training on Elementary Students. Johnson, D. W., Johnson, R., Dudley, B., & Acikgoz. April, 1994. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, 134(6), 803-817.

SUMMARY

92 students in grade 3-6 received half an hour of training each day for 6 weeks focused on skills and procedures relating to negotiation and mediation.

Results: "Careful observation of hallways, the lunchroom, the playground, and the gymnasium revealed that 4 months after training students seriously and carefully used these procedures to resolve highly emotional and prolonged conflicts with fellow students."

Further, the number of conflicts that the teachers and principal had to deal with were significantly reduced and students became more autonomous by managing conflicts more constructively than they previously knew how.

ARTICLE 2

Reducing Levels of Elementary School Violence with Peer Mediation. Schellenberg, R. C., Parks-Savage, A., & Rehfuss, M. June 2007. *ASCA*, 10(5).

SUMMARY

Peer mediation in this study was available to all 825 elementary school students.

The results of this three-year longitudinal study show that out of school suspensions were dramatically reduced after the peer mediation program was initiated.

Results further show that trained peer mediators gained a great deal of knowledge surrounding conflict, conflict resolution, and mediation which was maintained at various follow-ups.

The 34 mediation sessions that were studied during this time period were all successful and participants in the program rated the program as very valuable.

ARTICLE 3

The Effectiveness of Peer Mediation in a Low-SES Rural Elementary School. Bell, S. K., Coleman, J. K. Anderson, A, Whelan, J.P., & Wilder, C. 2000. *Psychology in the Schools*, 37(6).

SUMMARY

In this study, 30 6th-8th graders were trained in peer mediation which was available to 798 of the elementary school students in the studied school.

Mediators gained significant knowledge relating to conflict resolution during their training and this knowledge was retained as evidenced by follow-up tests of their knowledge.

There were 34 mediations in the 6 weeks after the mediators completed their training, and 32 of these mediations were considered successful.

As compared to the 3 years prior to the implementation of the peer mediation program, suspension rates decreased during the year the program was initiated.

The rate at which mediators themselves were referred to the office for disciplinary action were significantly lower than a control group.

ARTICLE 4

Six Factors Inhibiting the Use of Peer Mediation in a Junior High School. Theberge, S. K. & Karan, O. C. April 2004. ASCA, 7(4).

SUMMARY

Notes that little formal evaluation has been conducted on the impact of peer mediation programs on reducing violence or on the quality of the peer mediation programs themselves.

Research indicates that bullying and verbal abuse have not decreased as a result of these programs (Banks, 1997).

The focus of this qualitative, descriptive study was to try to understand the inhibiting and encouraging factors to the students in utilizing the mediation program that existed in the school.

They found 6 inhibiting factors including:

Students' negative attitudes toward mediation due to negative peer pressure around that alternative to traditional discipline.

Students are used to solving conflicts without mediation, so they do not think of it as a realistic option since it is not part of their conflict solving history.

Students' typical behaviors in schools discourage mediation because most of the conflicts encountered by students involve passive-aggressive conflicts such as rumor spreading, and students are skeptical that mediations will be kept confidential, so this leads them to refuse to participate in the program.

School climate is a problem because there are rifts between students and teachers due to factors such as lack of respect on both ends, and if mediators are not viewed as serious by teachers, they cannot be utilized effectively by other students.

Societal issues are the final inhibiting factor to students utilizing the available peer mediation program because there are still behavioral norms and cultural values imbedded in school culture and these are not always compatible with innovative programs such as peer mediation.

The article ends with implications for strengthening the peer mediation program. Implications for change include

Administrators, teachers, and counselors needing to make a commitment to use conflict resolution and mediation at all levels

Administrators should provide leadership and financial support for mediation programs

Conflict resolution and mediation skills should be taught in elementary schools because students in earlier grades are more open to learning strategies for effective interactions with peers during conflict.

ARTICLE 5

Conflict Resolution and Peer Mediation in Middle Schools: Extending the Process and Outcome Knowledge Base. Smith, S. W., Daunic, A. P., Miller, M. D., & Robinson, T. R. 2002. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, 142(5), 567-586.

SUMMARY

This study looked at whether or not student's attitudes surrounding conflict changed in the 2 year period following the implementation of a peer mediation program.

The results indicated that the mediation program did not result in significant change in student attitudes toward conflict.

The number of disciplinary incidents per month declined following the initiation of the peer mediation program.

ARTICLE 6

Effects of Conflict Resolution Training Integrated into a High School Social Studies Curriculum. Stevahn, L., Johnson, D. W., Johnson, R. T., & Schultz, R. 2002. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, 142(3), 305-331.

SUMMARY

This study examined the effectiveness of conflict resolution and peer mediation training among California high school students.

Selected classes received 5 weeks of peer mediation training and control classes did not.

Results of the study indicated that the trained students chose an integrative over a distributive approach to negotiation and developed more positive attitudes toward conflict.

Results also showed that peer mediation training promoted higher achievement and greater long-term retention of the academic learning.

ARTICLE 7

Evaluation of Respectful Conflict Resolution and Peer Mediation Program. Gauley, M. 2006. Community-University Institute for Social Research, University of Saskatchewan.

SUMMARY

This article was used for its literature review section to compile research and statistics on the subject.

ARTICLE 8

The Comprehensive Peer Mediation Evaluation Project: Insights and Directions for Curriculum Integration. Jones, T. S. June 1998. *National Institute for Dispute Resolution's Forum*, Volume 35.

SUMMARY

This article was used for its literature review section to compile research and statistics on the subject.

Literature Review Notes

SOURCE 5 NOTES

According to Shepherd (1994), CR-PM is the fastest growing response to school violence.

Effective, student-centered, preventive programs can reduce teacher stress and increase instructor time (Benson & Benson, 1993).

Training in negotiation and mediation may increase verbal assertion strategies that aggressive children often lack (Lochman, Dunn, & Klimes-Dougan, 1993). Students who learn to resolve their conflicts verbally and constructively may learn to avoid the destructive escalating that ends in physical harm.

In some studies, researchers reported (a) that approximately 85-95% of the mediated student conflicts resulted in lasting agreements and (b) that referrals to administrative personnel for inappropriate student behavior decreased.

Many mediations involve issues about gossip and rumor or about verbal harassment such as name calling, insults, or threats (Burrell & Vogl, 1990).

The social validity of these programs for students and teachers need to be evaluated.

Some mediators interviewed in a study noted that some students chose not to use mediation because they perceived it as negatively affecting their reputation with peers, or causing them to lose face.

SOURCE 6 NOTES

1st peer mediation programs started in the 1960s.

Bodine asserted that "peer mediation programs have emerged as one of the most widely used types of conflict resolution in schools.

PROS OF PEER MEDIATION PROGRAMS INCLUDE:

Johnson et. al. (1992) found that conflict training did reduce the number of student conflicts referred to teachers and principals.

Johnson et. al. (1995) found that negotiation and training procedures were transferred from school to the home.

Lane, et. al. (1992) found that student behavior improves, with at risk students developing more pro-social behaviors.

Multiple studies show that skills learned in peer mediation programs transfer to the home.

Close and Lechman (1997) examined how teaching students conflict resolution skills “empowers them to resolve their own disputes without adult intervention, which results in effective decision making, a valuable life skill.”

Haft & Weiss (1998) say programs reduce school violence, free up teachers to teach more and discipline less, & increase student morale.

CRITICISMS OF PEER MEDIATION PROGRAMS INCLUDE:

Peers cannot effectively mediate all types of conflicts

Emerson (1990) stated that many student mediators were “not properly trained, viewed as policemen and were frequently disliked by other students.”

Webster (1993) suggested that conflict resolution and peer mediation programs have not been proven to work, intrude on academic teaching time, and are not cost effective.

Bickmore (1999) suggested that violence prevention generally involves “narrowly focused training in social skills and anger management.” She indicated that blaming and excluding perpetrators of violence might backfire by reinforcing mutual distrust instead of offering nonviolent alternatives.

INDIVIDUAL STUDIES:

Stevahn, Johnson, Johnson, Laginski, & O'Coin (1996) studied the effectiveness of conflict resolution and peer mediation programs in Canada. The groups of students taught in these programs experienced greater positive benefits in terms of academic learning, knowledge and retention of the conflict resolution procedure in a conflict situation and attitudes toward conflict.

Thompson (1996) did a study in Georgia and found many positive benefits of the program including drastic decreases in suspensions and improved student morale.

SOURCE 7 NOTES

Johnson, et. al. (1995, 1996), found that conventional peer mediation training has been proven to positively influence children’s management of school and home conflicts in elementary schools.