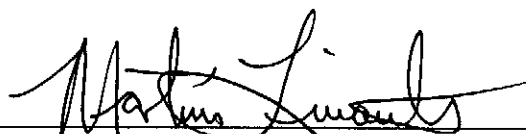


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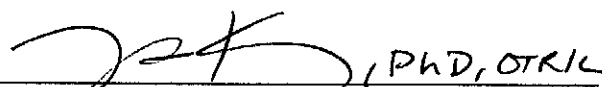
Occupational Therapy Tool To Reduce Social Bullying In A School Setting

May, 2013

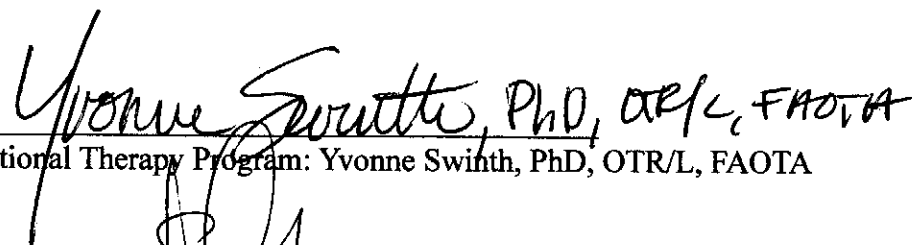
This project, submitted by Ariel Schwencke, has been approved and accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Occupational Therapy from the University of Puget Sound.



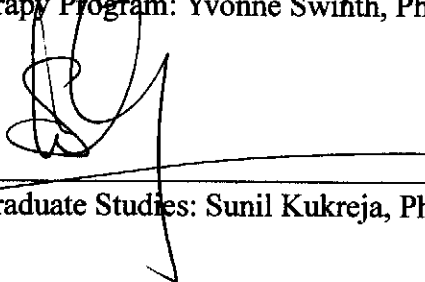
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### **Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this project was to create an anti-bullying program kit to enable faculty and staff at Highland Elementary School to decrease social bullying by encouraging positive social behaviors, teaching interpersonal skills, and facilitating appropriate group play at school.

### **Literature Review**

Recently in the media, bullying has been a popular topic of discussion and clearly there needs to be a way to decrease bullying in schools. With the story of Phoebe Prince and others, who were students that committed suicide due to social bullying, there is an awareness that social bullying has impacted students more than previously assumed (Kennedy, 2010). The goal of this literature review is to understand the definition of bullying, how social exclusion and bullying has impacted students, student and teacher perspectives of the seriousness of bullying, characteristics of bullies and victims, and the effectiveness of school-wide anti-bullying programs. Through this paper, bullying will be explored by discussing what bullying is, its impact on students, and ways in which occupational therapy might contribute to minimizing social bullying in schools.

### **What is Bullying?**

To effectively decrease bullying in schools, it is important to know the definition of what bullying is and also what it is not. The term “bullying” was first defined in 1993 by Olweus, who was a pioneering psychologist in bullying prevention, and stated, “A student is being bullied or victimized when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative action on the part of one or more other students” (as cited in Dake, Price, & Telljohann, 2003, p. 173). Bullying is

most commonly defined with the following three characteristics: aggressive, an imbalance of power, and repetitive (U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, 2012). Behaviors such as playful teasing, a one-time fight, or play fighting should not be considered bullying because they are not continuing behaviors (Sullivan, 2000).

Not only is it important to know the definition of bullying, but it is also necessary to know the different types of bullying, and where bullying is most likely to occur. Rigby (1996) suggests that bullying takes place in four settings (in highest to lowest frequency): the playground, the classroom, on the way home from school, and/or on the way to school. There are different types of bullying that can include but are not limited to: physical abuse, verbal abuse, social exclusion, and cyber-bullying (Violence Prevention Works, 2011). While physical and verbal bullying are outwardly damaging, the impact of social bullying on children is inwardly damaging but minimally recognized.

### **Social Exclusion as a Form of Bullying**

Social bullying or social exclusion is a form of bullying that is often misunderstood or seen as harmless. Examples of social bullying include gossiping, rumors, ignoring, or excluding someone in a group activity (Craig, Pepler, & Atlas, 2000). Social bullying can damage students' sense of self-esteem, increase their likelihood of anxiety and/or depression, and even lead to suicidal ideation (Dake, Price, & Telljohann, 2003). Wheeler (2004) expresses the concern of social bullying/exclusion:

Peer support or rejection is a powerful social force. Socially accepted children have high self-esteem and self-confidence; enjoy the company of others; and have mutual loyalty, respect, trust, and support. Children who are rejected by

peers are often disliked and ignored. Rejected children are perceived to be aggressive in peer interaction and demonstrate inappropriate social responses (p. 32L).

To children, it is important to be socially accepted by their peers, and in some cases, they will do anything to belong to a group, even if it means continuing social bullying.

Bullying behaviors can be influenced by group norms, motivating those who belong to the group to continue bullying to fit in (Duffy & Nesdale, 2009). A study conducted by Duffy and Nesdale (2009) sought to understand how peer group, social identity, and children's bullying behaviors are interrelated. The researchers based their study on a concept known as social learning theory, which seeks to learn how social behaviors are learned within a social context. Duffy and Nesdale (2009) explain that individuals seek to belong to a group because it increases their positive social identity and that individuals may seek membership in a group that is considered more superior than other groups. The study concluded that social learning theory was apparent and stated, "Children belonging to groups with a norm for bullying were also found to display more bullying behaviors than those who belonged to groups with an anti-bullying norm" (Duffy & Nesdale, 2009, p. 133). There is reason to believe that children are influenced by their peers, because there is an inherent need to fit in or be part of a group. Further research is needed to conclude why groups with a norm for bullying perpetuate the bullying behaviors and whether the group members comprehend how bullying may impact their victim(s).

### **The Bully, the Bullied, and the Bystanders**

A child's social identity can be impacted by social bullying, and it is important to be aware of what ages and grades are more likely to experience bullying. Current research seeks to

understand the prevalence of victimization within each stage of school. In a study conducted in the United States, researchers detailed the prevalence of victimization and found that elementary schools reported the highest prevalence of victimization at 19%, with middle schools and high schools reporting lower percentages of victimization (Dake, Price, & Telljohann, 2003).

Elementary age students are more at risk to be involved in bullying either as a victim, bully, bully/victim, or as a bystander (Craig, Pepler, & Atlas, 2000). It is important to recognize how peers intervene when bullying is present on the playground, because research has shown that bullying behaviors are twice as frequent on the playground as in the classroom (Craig et al., 2000). Hawkins, Pepler, and Craig (2001) used a naturalistic observation study spanning 3 years to observe how peers intervene in bullying situations at two Toronto elementary schools. Participants in this study were children ranging from ages 6 to 12. The goal of their study was to describe the frequency and duration, the type, and the effectiveness of peer interventions during bullying incidents. Hawkins et al. (2001) found that “Peers were observed to intervene in 19% of the 306 bullying episodes” (Hawkins et al., 2001, p. 520). In a continuation of the study, it was noted that there were a few gender differences; boys were more likely than girls to be present during an observed bullying situation (Hawkins & Pepler, 2009). Boys were more likely to intervene than girls and did so in an aggressive or verbal way towards the bully. Hawkins et al. (2001) concluded from their observations that “Peer interventions were effective in stopping bullying within ten seconds over two-thirds of the time” (Hawkins et al., 2001, p. 522). To effectively decrease bullying school-wide, it is important to acknowledge the complexities of peer groups. If taught appropriate intervention methods for bullying situations, peer groups could

help prevent future bullying on the playground. If bullying is not prevented, there can be serious impacts to a student's emotional, physical, and mental health.

### **How the Bullying Cycle Impacts Students**

In the past decade, suicide among youth has been observed as a rising statistic. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC] (2011) reported that, "For youth between the ages of 10 and 24, suicide is the third leading cause of death." Marr and Field (2001) first coined the term "bullycide" in their book titled *Bullycide: Death at Playtime*. It is a term that has taken on serious meaning as more bullying-related deaths have taken place. In the Collins English Dictionary (2012), "bullycide" is defined as, "the act or an instance of killing oneself intentionally as a result of bullying."

Recently, child suicide resulting from bullying has greatly impacted the public's view on the topic. In early 2010, the suicide of Phoebe Prince hit the headlines and created a shockwave of reactions throughout the world (Kennedy, 2010). Phoebe was a victim of social exclusion and bullying at her Massachusetts high school and her story has expressed to the world the pains of bullying. Her story has also brought to light many other students who have also committed suicide due to bullying, including Jared High in 1998, Ryan Halligan in 2003, Megan Meier in 2006, Eric Mohat in 2007, Carl Walker-Hoover in 2009, and Alexis Skye Pilkington in 2010 (The Week, 2010). It is crucial to recognize how bullying negatively impacts a student's emotional, physical, and mental well-being in order to prevent students from feeling like suicide is the only option to escape from bullying.

Understanding the correlations between bullying behaviors and suicide is needed for professionals working directly with the student population. Klomek, Sourander, and Gould

(2010) sought to review longitudinal research to determine if suicide and bullying could be linked. In their cross-sectional results, they found that students who were bullied were more likely to be at risk for suicidal ideation and that victimization could lead to suicide depending on the sex of the victim, boys being the most likely to commit suicide (Klomek et. al., 2010).

Bullying has the potential to impact a victim's emotional, physical, and mental well-being, and research has been conducted to identify the impacts bullying can have on its victims. Research has shown that victims have higher rates of anxiety and depression (Espelage & Swearer, 2003). Williams, Chambers, Logan, and Robinson (1996) conducted a study based on 3,000 London students and found that victims of bullying were not only impacted mentally, but also had physical medical issues as a result of bullying. Williams et. al. (1996) reported results suggesting that victimized children were more likely to experience health problems such as sleep disturbances, bed wetting, headaches, and stomachaches. Awareness of the signs of bullying is important for school staff, faculty, and peers to further prevent the damages of bullying.

### **Perspectives of the Seriousness of Bullying in Schools**

Bullying can be examined through the perspective of teachers and students, and research has been conducted in order to compare the perspectives. Dake, Price, and Telljohann (2003) wrote an article that analyzed the nature and extent of bullying within schools after comparing two studies and on how the perspectives of students and teachers differ. According to Dake, Price, and Telljohann (2003, p. 177) "Though teachers reported lower levels of student bullying behavior than the students themselves, teachers still considered bullying a serious student behavior, second only to drug use." Teachers consider bullying to be a serious problem but may be unaware of the ways they can intervene when bullying situations arise. By creating more



awareness at school, faculty and staff can better assure the overall well-being and safety of students by intervening when bullying occurs. In a study conducted in Canadian schools, researchers asked teachers and students how often teachers would intervene in a bullying situation (Pepler, Craig, Ziegler, & Chdrach, 1994). Teachers reported higher rates of intervention while students reported less intervention by teachers (Pepler et al., 1994). If teachers actively intervene when bullying situations occur, students may feel safer at school knowing that someone is advocating for their safety. This sense of safety could ultimately give a struggling student the opportunity to perform at their optimal academic level and flourish in the school environment (Dake, Price, & Telljohann, 2003).

### **Characteristics of Bullies and Victims**

For teachers and staff to better serve the student population and safeguard the well-being of students from potential emotional, physical, mental damage, it is vital to know which students are more likely to be categorized as bullies or victims. Bullies are more likely to come from homes in which there may be one or more of the following; child abuse, parents using an authoritarian parenting style, and an overall harsh home environment (Dake, Price, & Telljohann, 2003). The CDC (2008) reports, “An estimated 30% of kids between 6th and 10th grade report being involved in bullying.” The report also outlines risk factors for youth violence including decreased performance in school, association with delinquent peers, poor family functioning, a history of violence, and poverty in the community (CDC, 2008). There is reason to believe that bullying will continue to increase due to direct bullying at school, but also indirect bullying through the internet. As technology becomes more advanced and widespread, it is important to

know who is at risk of being a bully in order to reduce the likelihood of these occurrences in and out of school (CDC, 2008).

Fox and Boulton (2005) sought to understand if victims with perceived poor social skills were more likely to be bullied than those with perceived good social skills. Researchers used a convenience sample of students aged between 9 and 11 years old and asked them to complete forms indicating who was a “victim” or “non-victim” and the behaviors identified with each. In the results, researchers found that students rated as having poor social skills were more likely to be victims of bullying (Fox & Boulton, 2005). Research done by Olweus led him to believe that physical disability, obesity, lack of personal hygiene, poor facial expression or posture, and poor dress did not make a person more likely to be a victim. He found that the only physical characteristic that made a person more likely to be victimized was the small stature of the student (as cited in Dake, Price, & Telljohann, 2003). It is complex to define what characteristics make a student more likely to be a bully or a victim. This is due to contradicting research with no solid explanation or way to predict a child’s likelihood of being a bully or victim. More research should be conducted to identify the characteristics that make a person more likely to be a bully or victim.

### **Are School-wide Anti-bullying Programs Effective?**

There is evidence to believe that school-wide anti-bullying programs have the potential to be effective, but success is dependent on the structure of the program. Ferguson, Miguel, Kilburn, and Sanchez (2007) completed a meta-analysis of school-wide anti-bullying programs used with at-risk youth versus not at-risk students. Ferguson et al. (2007) found that anti-bullying programs were most effective for at-risk youth but there is more research needed to determine

why other students were not as impacted. Research suggests that when a particular population is targeted, the anti-bullying program can become more effective. Rather than focusing on a particular population, the aforementioned school-wide anti-bullying programs aimed to decrease bullying behaviors.

Merrell, Gueldner, Ross, and Isava (2008) completed a meta-analysis on school-wide anti-bullying programs and whether or not they have an impact on bullying behaviors. Merrell et al. (2008) found that anti-bullying programs did not necessarily change the bullying behaviors, but they positively influenced students and heightened their awareness about how to deal with bullying. In another meta-analysis by Farrington and Ttofi (2009), results suggest that anti-bullying programs are effective in raising awareness and in reducing bullying behaviors and victimization in schools. The two meta-analyses had contradicting results of how bullying behaviors were impacted, though both sets of researchers concluded that programs that raise awareness of bullying could continue to influence bullying behaviors as the anti-bullying programs are continued.

The role of a professional working directly with the school population also needs to be considered. Vreeman and Carroll (2007), in their meta-analysis, found that whole-school approaches (incorporating an approach into all aspects of school, e.g. classroom and playground), were effective in decreasing bullying along with programs that included school social workers. There is reason to believe that school-wide anti-bullying programs can be effective in raising student awareness and decreasing bullying behaviors, especially when a professional is working directly with the student population. Research also indicates that there are three different intervention methods used to decrease bullying behaviors at school that may

also be effective when used with a school-wide approach; 1) positive behavioral interventions, 2) peer-led and classroom interventions, and 3) playground interventions.

**Positive behavioral interventions.** Maggin, Chafouleas, Goddard, and Johnson (2011) describe a token economy as a form of behavior management that uses “tokens.” These tokens are earned by exhibiting certain positive behaviors and are typically traded for meaningful reinforcements that could include toys, candy, and/or more recess time. Maggin et al. (2011), after completing their systematic review of the effectiveness of token economies in classrooms with disruptive kids, presented results that showed students positively responded to token economies, and that teachers saw a decrease in disruptive behavior in the classroom. A token economy was also used and found effective in a study that was conducted during recess. Dougherty, Folwer, and Paine (1985) used a peer monitoring system coupled with a token system to decrease aggressive behaviors in a student with special needs. When a peer monitoring and token system was used, the results were a decrease in negative interactions with peers (Dougherty et. al., 1985). Token economies have been shown to be effective in the classroom and on the playground to decrease disruptive or aggressive behavior.

**Peer-led and classroom interventions.** Kia Kaha is an anti-bullying program developed in New Zealand that serves to help students, teachers, and parents learn how to develop interpersonal skills to use when bullying occurs. The kit contains a teaching guide, video, and examples of bullying situations (Sullivan, 2000). The materials are used in the classroom to teach children the facts about bullying and provide opportunity to learn how to use interpersonal skills when responding to a bullying situation (Shariff, 2010). Raskauskas in 2007 conducted an evaluation of the Kia Kaha program by comparing schools that did and did not use the program,

and included survey data collection from teachers and students. Survey results between groups were compared and suggested that schools using Kia Kaha were positively impacted. Kia Kaha schools reported that the program created a positive school environment, helped improve attitudes towards victims, and the school-wide approach was related to a decrease in bullying (as cited in Shariff, 2010). Teaching interpersonal skills was proven effective in decreasing bullying, creating a positive school environment, and improving attitudes towards victims (as cited in Shariff, 2010). Further research is needed to understand if an interpersonal intervention program such as Kia Kaha would be effective in the United States.

**Playground interventions.** Murphy, Hutchinson, and Bailey (1983) implemented a playground intervention, due to the high prevalence of bullying behaviors on the playground, that included organized games and adult supervision for 344 kindergarten to second grade students. The outcome of the intervention showed a decrease in aggressive behaviors, property abuse, and rule breaking on the playground (Murphy et. al, 1983). These results suggest that organized games and adult supervision could lead to more appropriate play because aggressive behaviors, property abuse, and rule breaking are minimized. Encouraging students to interact with one another in appropriate play during recess could decrease the likelihood of social bullying because students would be involved in purposeful activities as a group (Murphy et. al, 1983; Elksnin & Elksnin, 1998). Research suggests that unconventional materials such as hay bales, old tires, or items not typically seen on the playground were effective in motivating children to create new games and participate in appropriate play with one another (Bundy et al., 2008). Playground intervention, including adult supervision, may be effective in decreasing unwanted bullying behaviors by encouraging organized games or new games that would increase

motivation to participate appropriately as a group. Interventions that are aimed to increase positive group play behaviors have the potential to decrease bullying behaviors on the playground (Bundy et al., 2008).

Research supports the idea that a three tiered school-wide intervention method including a positive token economy or reward system, classroom taught peer-led interventions, and playground interventions would be effective in decreasing social bullying at school. A positive school-wide reward system would supplement and support the interpersonal skills and assertiveness learned in the classroom because children would understand the expected behaviors that would be positively reinforced with motivating incentives. Interpersonal skills learned in the classroom could be used on the playground to provide students with appropriate methods to prevent bullying and encourage appropriate group play. Incorporating these intervention approaches into all contexts of school (e.g. classroom and playground) will reinforce the transfer of desired behaviors between contexts. There may be opportunity for occupational therapy to contribute and more effectively address social bullying by using a holistic approach to implement an anti-bullying program to be used throughout the school day.

### **Occupational Therapy and Role in Preventing Bullying**

Social bullying is prevalent throughout the school year at Highland Elementary but often goes unnoticed until the bullying situation increases in severity. Mr. Hodson, the principal at Highland Elementary, has noticed that bullying increases during the month of October and March, causing faculty and staff to become overwhelmed. He explained that bullying behaviors worsen and may be due to the increase of snow during October and March and the inability for students to play outside. He expressed interest in using a school-wide approach that addressed

ways to decrease social exclusion in and out of the classroom (personal communication, February 24, 2012). To decrease social bullying at Highland Elementary, an occupational therapist would be effective in creating a program to teach students how to be a friend rather than a bully by increasing opportunities for appropriate group play. This would promote a safe school environment, improve positive social behaviors towards self and others, and encourage students to develop a healthy social identity as a student at school.

### **Implications For Occupational Therapy**

Bullying is an emerging practice area in the field of occupational therapy. The American Occupational Therapy Association [AOTA] (2006) released a societal statement on youth violence, suggesting that occupational therapists become involved in the efforts against violence/bullying: “The profession of occupational therapy has the societal duty and expertise to respond to youth violence by promoting overall health and well-being among youth.” As a way to help address this issue, occupational therapists can promote participation in appropriate play in order to prevent social exclusion (Pereira, 2010) and bullying behaviors. The purpose of this project was to educate faculty and staff at Highland Elementary School on how to use the anti-bullying kit and manual to encourage positive thinking towards self and others, to suggest classroom interventions used to teach interpersonal skills, and also to provide playground activities to encourage group play.

### **Theoretical Model**

The Model of Human Occupation (MOHO) is a model that has evolved as the profession of occupational therapy has made a push towards evidence-based practice. MOHO describes

three basic components, including volition (motivation to participate), habituation (roles and habits) and performance capacity (personal experiences) that interact with an environment to either support or constrain participation (Law & Dunbar, 2007). Therapists who incorporate the components of MOHO in their clinical reasoning treat a person holistically, and the better these components (volition, habituation, performance capacity, environment) are understood, the better the therapist can create interventions that will increase a person's participation in occupations. These concepts describe what drives people to participate in meaningful occupations (Law & Dunbar, 2007).

MOHO also describes three levels of occupation, known as "dimensions of doing," that describe how people interact and participate in their world. MOHO uses a top-down approach that focuses on the person as a whole to understand the progression from occupational *participation*, to occupational *performance*, and finally to occupational *skill* (Law & Dunbar, 2007). The first level begins with occupational *participation*, which is a person's involvement in daily life activities including work, play, and school. Occupational *performance* involves a person engaging in goal-directed activities, and by doing so, can lead to occupational *skill*, in which a person can demonstrate the actions required to accomplish the task/occupation. When people gain confidence in their ability to participate in different occupations, they gain occupational *competence*. This confidence can establish a sense of occupational *identity* that can help a person to see themselves as an occupational being with an ongoing occupational future (Law & Dunbar, 2007). Occupational competence and occupational identity lead ultimately to occupational *adaptation*, which helps a person to transfer learned occupational skills to different contexts (Law & Dunbar, 2007).



### **Application of Theoretical Model**

Applying the model's core concepts to a school setting narrowed my focus to student motivation to participate in activities (volition), roles and habits of students (habituation), the students' strengths and weaknesses in participating in school life (performance capacity), and how the school environment either supports or constrains participation (environment). The project's goal is to increase participation in the school-wide anti-bullying program in order to educate elementary students on how to effectively decrease social bullying by gaining confidence in their ability to be a friend rather than a bully. In this project, I address student confidence (occupational competence) in communication and social skills (occupational skills), and also aim to increase emotional regulation. Learning these skills will afford students the opportunity to participate as a social group (occupational participation), create a social context that encourages positive social interaction and group play (occupational performance), and give students the opportunity to develop a healthy social identity (occupational identity) as a student at school. This will enable students to use and adapt communication and social skills, as well as emotional regulation skills to future education settings (occupational adaptation) in junior high and high school. The desired outcome is to assist in decreasing social bullying by encouraging positive social behaviors and appropriate group play at school by way of increasing student motivation to engage in positive occupations in a school setting.

### **Application of the OT Practice Framework**

Occupational therapy's scope of practice is outlined in the Occupational Therapy [OT] Practice Framework and Domain. The document details the Framework of the profession and how occupational therapists can help influence individuals' health and participation, especially as

they are engaged in meaningful occupations (AOTA, 2008). Examples of meaningful occupations include, but are not limited to play, leisure, social participation, and self-care activities. Occupational therapy intervention takes into account the importance of the dynamic interaction of the domain to increase a client's health, participation, and overall well-being (AOTA, 2008).

This project attends to the social environment. Context and environments, such as the social environment, is the setting in which the client participates in a similar occupation as a group of people (AOTA, 2008). The first section of the kit's manual entails a positive school-wide reward system encouraging positive attitudes towards self and others to promote a safe social environment at school.

This project also attends to emotional regulation and to communication and social skills. Performance skills, such as emotional regulation and communication and social skills, are behaviors that are developed through practice that allow individuals to participate appropriately in their environment (AOTA, 2008). The second section of the kit's manual entails classroom interventions that can be used to teach interpersonal skills that will contribute to better emotional regulation as well as communication and social skills that can be used in and out of the classroom.

Finally, this project attends to play and social participation. Areas of occupation, such as play and social participation, are organized activities that provide enjoyment and also help an individual gain awareness of what behaviors are expected in a social setting (AOTA, 2008). The third section of the kit's manual entails playground activities used to encourage social participation and facilitate positive group play during recess. Through this kit, Highland

Elementary School will be equipped with school-wide, classroom, and playground interventions to help decrease social bullying at school.

### **Procedure**

Beginning the project required connecting with an elementary school that would support the development of my project and be interested in implementing it school-wide. My mother works in the Alpine School District at Highland Elementary School (Highland, Utah) and suggested that I contact Mr. Hodson, the principal. Mr. Hodson, recognizing the benefits of an anti-bullying program, quickly agreed to support and implement my project.

The next step in my procedure was to create a program that was different than other school-wide anti-bullying programs currently being used within schools. I did this by researching several current anti-bullying programs being used within elementary schools. I found common themes within these programs that included focusing only on bullying taking place in one area of school (e.g. classroom or recess), aimed to decrease bullying without a replacement behavior, and required too much classroom time. With this information, I met with Mr. Hodson to discuss my proposal for Think Twice, Play Nice, a school-wide anti-bullying program. He provided me with feedback to ensure the project would be sustainable at Highland Elementary.

Mr. Hodson and I continued to communicate as my project evolved. Over the course of five face-to-face meetings, we discussed the information to be included in the manual, manual design and formatting, ease of use of the manual, how the project would be implemented, and secured a date for an in-service. Prior to the in-service on March 20th, 2013, I completed the project manual and met with Mr. Hodson to discuss what would be presented in the in-service.

During the after school in-service, attended by 25 individuals, faculty and staff were educated about the definition of social bullying, its impacts on students, and how to recognize signs of bullying. A pre-test and a post-test were distributed to assess learning and usability of the manual. The faculty and staff were also educated about the kit's manual and how it will be used at Highland Elementary to decrease social bullying.

Planning and creating the program, Think Twice, Play Nice, required an understanding of the current research on social bullying in elementary schools, knowledge of Highland Elementary School's population needs and wants, resources available at Highland Elementary, Occupational Therapy Practice Framework & Domain and theoretical models, and how to incorporate occupational therapy into the activities to promote a student's ability to succeed in their role as a student at school. To ensure the completion and sustainability of the project, I applied for funding through the University of Puget Sound from the University Enrichment Committee and also from the Occupational Therapy Program. Funding allowed me to provide the needed materials to Highland Elementary, including the following: 40 classroom clickers, printed and bound program manual, and other paper materials (e.g. kit box, flyers, and stickers).

### **Products**

The kit and manual were completed for Highland Elementary School to provide the faculty and staff with an anti-bullying program. In addition to the print manual that will be provided to the school, an electronic version was also included so that faculty and staff have easy access to the proper information to implement the anti-bullying program. The electronic manual is downloadable to Apple products to allow the manual to be accessible to all faculty and staff.

The kit also includes hand-held clickers used to implement the positive school-wide reward system.

The manual, comprised of 4 sections, includes information detailing 1) a positive school-wide reward system to reinforce positive social behaviors, 2) classroom activities to teach interpersonal skills, 3) playground activities to facilitate group play, and 4) resources. The first section of the manual explains the characteristics of social bullying behavior and how the positive school-wide reward system is used to motivate students to engage in positive social behaviors by using hand-held clickers to record positive thoughts and/or actions. The clickers will be used as a means to record and promote positive thinking and/or actions towards self and others. The number of positive thoughts/actions will be used as points towards a school or classroom reward. The clickers will be used during transitions (e.g. waiting to go to lunch or preparing to go home) to allow teachers the opportunity to choose the time that works best. The clickers will be monitored by the teacher while the class is sitting in a circle and/or at their desks. In order to facilitate discussion, each student will report a positive thought and/or action and then click and pass it on to the next student.

The second section of the manual provides faculty and staff with classroom activities used to teach interpersonal skills including team building, leadership, assertiveness, conflict resolution, and negotiation skills. Each classroom activity focuses on one of the five interpersonal skills using bullying awareness activities, “what would you do?” scenarios, and team building activities. The layout of each activity includes the interpersonal skill that the activity focuses on, step by step directions, materials needed, set up required, and time to complete activity.

The third section of the manual details activities and materials that will be used by recess volunteers during recess to facilitate appropriate group play and decrease social bullying on the playground. Utah's seasonal conditions were taken into consideration and recess activities were developed to accommodate these seasonal changes. Activities are divided into the following categories; Spring/Fall recess activities (e.g. capture the flag and fruit salad), Winter recess activities (e.g. freeze tag and snow critter zoo), and indoor recess activities (e.g. mouse trap and freeze n' dance).

Lastly, the fourth section of the manual provides further anti-bullying resources for faculty and staff including reading, internet, and video resources.

### **Outcomes**

Overall, goals and objectives for the in-service were met. Results suggest that staff and faculty demonstrated understanding of the program and have the knowledge needed to implement the program successfully during the following school year, 2013-2014.

#### **Goal 1**

After staff /faculty have attended an in-service, they will demonstrate understanding of the definition of social bullying and how to use a positive school-wide reward system to decrease bullying behaviors.

**Objective 1.** After staff /faculty have attended an in-service, they will be able to identify three examples of social bullying (e.g. exclusion, starting rumors, etc.) to show understanding of how social bullying can be expressed in elementary school.

**Objective 2.** After staff /faculty have attended an in-service, they will be able to identify three examples of positive social behaviors to show understanding of when it would be appropriate to issue a “click” for the school-wide reward system.

**Objective 3.** After staff /faculty have attended an in-service, they will be able to report three examples of times during the day at which they could utilize the school-wide reward system using “clicks” when a student shows a positive social behavior.

**Progress towards goal.** The pre-test results suggested that staff and faculty were unfamiliar with the definition of social bullying and most frequently described social bullying as name calling, hitting, and teasing. On the post-test, staff and faculty demonstrated newly acquired understanding of social bullying, and most frequently described social bullying as ignoring, excluding, and gossip/rumors. On the post-test, staff and faculty demonstrated understanding of when it would be appropriate to issue a “click,” for example, positive thoughts about self or others, including classmates in games, and/or turning a negative situation into a positive. Staff and faculty also reported times during the day when they could utilize the hand-held clickers for the school-wide reward system, with results ranging from indicating one transition time to indicating all examples of transition time suggested on the post-test. Goal 1 and objectives 1, 2, and 3 were met.

## **Goal 2**

After staff /faculty have attended an in-service, they will identify signs that a student may display when he or she is being bullied, and demonstrate understanding of how to educate students about appropriate ways to intervene when such bullying behaviors occur.

**Objective 1.** After staff /faculty have attended an in-service, they will be able to identify three signs a student may display when he or she is being bullied.

**Objective 2.** After staff /faculty have attended an in-service, they will be able to identify three classroom activities that will educate students about skills to use when a bullying situation arises.

**Progress towards goal.** On both the pre-test and post-test, staff and faculty demonstrated the ability to identify three signs a student may display when he or she is being bullied. On the post-test, staff and faculty demonstrated the ability to identify three classroom activities to educate students about the skills to use when a bullying situation arises. Goal 2 and objectives 1 & 2 were met.

### **Goal 3**

Upon reading the manual, recess volunteer staff will demonstrate understanding of how to prevent bullying behaviors on the playground through use of activities that encourage appropriate group play.

**Objective 1.** After recess volunteer staff have received and read the manual, they will be able to independently implement three activities from the recess section of the manual during recess to encourage appropriate play in groups where social bullying is apparent.

**Progress towards goal.** This goal is in progress as recess volunteer staff have not yet received and read the manual.



### **Limitations**

The most significant limitation of this project was the date and time of the in-service, which had to be scheduled during University of Puget Sound's Spring Break so as to allow travel to Utah. The March 20th date conflicted with scheduled meetings for eight teachers, and Mr. Hodson noted that the late afternoon time (3:30-4:30 p.m.) would be a challenge due to typical stress encountered by teachers and staff at the end of term, thus impacting participants' level of attention during the presentation. A secondary limitation of the in-service was the format of the pre- and post-tests, wherein participants may not have realized the post-test was double-sided and therefore they did not respond to the questions on the second side, thus impacting the overall outcome of the post-test.

### **Recommendations**

It is recommended that the principal at Highland Elementary School start the program at the beginning of the 2013-2014 school year by raising awareness during a faculty meeting and a school-wide assembly. During implementation, it is suggested that classroom "clicks" be counted weekly or monthly and be rewarded on the same schedule. Classroom(s) with the most points accumulated throughout the year can be rewarded with a grand prize or trophy. It is recommended that the principal establish a school-wide "click" goal that can be tracked using a number board posted by the office to be used as a visual reminder of the program. During National Bullying Prevention Month, in October, it is recommended that there be another assembly to revisit the purpose of the program and raise awareness through an anti-bullying video/essay/or poster competition and "clicker" competition between classes. To ensure that this

program is sustainable, it is recommended that the principal at Highland Elementary stay in contact with the project creator during program implementation during the 2013-2014 school year. The principal can provide feedback as the program is implemented and suggest changes to be made to the manual.

## Resources

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### **Human Resource**

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