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ABSTRACT

The effectiveness of a high school girls group was examined using a pretest-post-test group design with young adolescent girls identified as having low self-esteem.

Individuals were identified by teachers and counselors as having low self-esteem or being at risk for having low self-esteem. This research project includes a literature review that explored self-understanding and its dimensions of self-concept and self-esteem, as well as how this research relates to development. The curriculum used came from the Girls In Real Life Situations (GIRLS) group program created by Julia V. Taylor and Shannon Trice-Black (2007). The research study was conducted at a high school in a rural west Texas town. A total of 12 adolescent females with a mean age of 17.0 years completed a pretest before the start of the 12-week program and a post-test at the end of the program. The GIRLS program provided support for participants to understand more about themselves in relation to the typical issues that individuals their age often experience. There was a significant difference in the predicted direction between post-test and pretest scores.

The Effectiveness of a High School Girls Group on Self-Esteem and Leadership

A Thesis

Presented to

The Faculty of the School of Social Work

Abilene Christian University

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Science in Social Work

By

Esperanza M. Harper

May 2020

This thesis, directed and approved by the committee for the thesis candidate Esperanza Marie Harper, has been accepted by the Office of Graduate Programs of Abilene Christian University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

Master of Science in Social Work

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This thesis is dedicated to my family, friends, and teachers who encouraged me, believed in me, and prayed for me every step of the way. I could not have done this without you.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank Cooper High School and their administration team for allowing me the opportunity to conduct this group study with their students and for the use of their conference rooms for meetings. I would also like to thank Communities In Schools of the Big Country for the opportunity to intern with them and develop this pilot study, along with all the support that they have offered me in completing this project.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to synthesize established research and information that has been conducted concerning the relationship between self-esteem peer-groups for high school girls to determine if the self-help groups increase scores from the pretest (i.e., if post-test scores are higher than pretest scores). Adolescent years are a vital period in establishing a positive sense of self-worth and self-esteem in the minds of youth. Many studies exist that seek to understand the role of and change in self-esteem in this particular population (Birndorf, Ryan, & Auinger, 2005; Shen & Armstrong, 2008). Likewise, several groups or programs exist that specifically target issues such as self-esteem in adolescents (Best, 2010; Egbochuku & Aihie, 2009; Somerville et al., 2017). The question of this study is “Do school-based self-esteem groups help increase self-esteem levels for female adolescents?” The goal of this research is to see what actions within programs have been successful in increasing self-esteem within the school environment. This paper addresses this question and examines what current research is relevant to this topic by describing interventions and programs that are associated with increased self-esteem within middle school and high school environments.

In order to measure and evaluate the effectiveness of the self-esteem/leadership group provided for high school girls, the following research question will be addressed: Are self-esteem support groups associated with positive academic success and belonging? Specifically, this research seeks to determine if high school girls feel more confident in

their self-esteem after being involved in a leadership group that primarily focuses on building and maintaining self-esteem. The group offers lessons and self-esteem building activities that promote healthy self-awareness for adolescents.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

This review will attempt to outline factors concerning self-esteem and broadly define *self-esteem*. The search procedures included accessing the Abilene Christian University Brown library database, specifically OneSearch, which can be located on the ACU Brown Library website. The database provided many journal articles and studies that were beneficial to the purpose of this research. The terms “self esteem high school girls” were entered into the database to locate articles that are related to the theme. Other key words included “program” or “curriculum” or “education” to see what research had been conducted. When researching information on factors that affect self-esteem, published literature between 2005 and 2019 only was taken into consideration.

There were criteria that each article was required to meet to be included in the research. Articles had to be peer-reviewed and provide full text of the study. Only literature that were peer-reviewed, from academic journals, or available in full-text were reviewed. The study had to be focused on and/or around the presence of self-esteem in high school girls, and how it affects their learning/education, along with programs that focus on building self-esteem to be considered in the research process. The review includes studies from the U.S. and abroad.

Definition of Self-Esteem

Self-esteem is derived from the notion of self-concept. Self-concept embodies the belief that an individual’s thoughts and feelings are solely about him or herself.

Rosenberg (1989) composed this definition for *self-concept*, but also created the definition of *self-esteem* as a specific dimension of self-concept that involves judgements that an individual makes about his or her own self-worth and competence. Another valuable definition of self-esteem is described as how much value an individual places on *themselves*, which closely correlates to Rosenberg's definition (Orth, 2017). Rosenberg ultimately created the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES) in the 1960's after rigorous research dedicated to understanding the full spectrum of all that is human self-esteem.

The Role of Self-Esteem

In today's society, there is a strong need to focus on the self-esteem of youth during adolescence, the most critical developmental time of their lives (Egbochuku & Aihie, 2009), as it is a crucial period for self-esteem development. Self-esteem is an important psychological concept. Numerous studies concentrate on deficiencies in adolescent skills for maintaining healthy self-esteem. These studies typically focus on programs for developing self-esteem in middle schools and high schools (Virtanen, Lerkkanen, Poikkeus, Kiuru, & Kuorelahti, 2016). Yildiz, Baytemir, and Demirtas (2018) evaluated the role of self-esteem with teenagers and concluded by recommending that cognitive skills be taught as an aid in increasing their levels of self-esteem. There are many factors that affect a person's self-esteem level and their ability to see value in themselves. Critical cognitive thinking are important skills that should be considered to be adapted in any educational system. Comparable to the recommendation from Yildiz et al., (2018), another study was conducted examining the effect of critical thinking education on the self-esteem of female high school students, which resulted in a positive

correlation between the two as a measure to cultivate and increase the level of self-esteem of adolescents (Azizi, Sedaghat, & Direkvand-Moghadam, 2018).

The various components that influence the role of self-esteem in the lives of adolescent individuals are primarily social and psychological. Research by Phan and Ngu (2018) acknowledged two elements that affect the role of self-esteem: perceptions of their relationships with others and their perception of their own self. Both of the elements have the ability to affect the role of self-esteem in an individual's life. This is especially true during adolescence.

Despite attempts to keep a positive self-outlook for teenagers, a lack of self-esteem or low self-esteem are common traits in individuals who engage in risky behaviors which have the ability to become habits into their adulthood. Maladaptive behaviors such as lying, bullying, and aggression are prevalent in high schools, and are often expressions of having low self-esteem/self-concept (Egbochuku & Aihie, 2009). Providing social support and encouragement by focusing on the consequences of every action and reaction, whether it be good or bad, is a way to influence at-risk adolescents to think about their choices. Savi Çakar and Tagav (2017) believed that increasing an adolescent's self-esteem is one way to protect that individual from associating and engaging in risky behavior. Their research concluded with literature indicating that social support can function as a buffer to protect the individual against his own risky behaviors. Professionals working with adolescents have the ability to provide effective prevention and intervention programs that can reduce serious long-term and life-threatening risky behaviors. Establishing a strong foundation of positive influences during early

adolescence will provide lifelong skills in setting the stage for maintaining confident self-esteem levels.

Some research has been done in determining the role of self-esteem and the effect on academic success. Wang, Yu, Pedram, and Chen (2018) evaluated the link between self-esteem and academic achievement in students. Low-achieving students had significantly lower self-esteem due to the lack of believing in their own self-worth. On the other hand, higher self-esteem scores were associated with greater academic success. The correlation between self-esteem/self-concept and academic success has been shown to affect each other. These studies found that a statistically significant association exists between these variables. Specifically, increased self-esteem was positively associated with higher academic achievement.

Self-Esteem in Middle and High School

Middle school and high school campuses encompass the prime ages for educating youth on the importance of maintaining self-esteem and promoting ways to build up self-esteem in individuals who lack it (Shen & Armstrong, 2008). As there are many developmental changes (physical, emotional, biological, psychological, social, etc.) that happen during these crucial developmental years, this is where the foundation work of establishing strong self-worth values should begin to create prevention/intervention programs that strengthen self-esteem (Pickhardt, 2010; Shen & Armstrong, 2008). There are some activities that have been proven to be effective in improving self-esteem in junior high students such as participating in child-centered expressive arts and play therapy, which offer the opportunity to express any concerns about the physical and emotional changes that are occurring that might be difficult to talk about. Perryman,

Moss, and Cochran (2015) revealed the benefits of expressive arts/child-centered play therapy as an effective intervention method for junior high ages as they transition into adolescence and adulthood: increased self-awareness/self-esteem, sense of accomplishment and pride, increased expression of feelings, stress relief, increased group cohesion, etc. Another way to promote self-esteem in junior high students is through student engagement, specifically through the use of the Student Engagement Instrument (SEI), one of the most widely used measures of active student engagement (Virtanen et al., 2016). Virtanen et al. (2016) primarily concentrated on the aspect of student engagement with the main focus on observable behavioral indicators of engagement. The observable indicators of engagement include attentiveness, school compliance, and school attendance. Middle school education is challenging due to the developmental changes that occur; however, there are supportive options in place to assist students in recovering their confidence and ultimately lead to their educational success (Mann, 2013). Encouraging a positive environment creates a positive influence on students to boost their confidence in themselves as well as their self-esteem.

High school-level education contains more experiences and circumstances that can affect a student's self-esteem than primary and middle school educational expectations. Secondary school students often struggle with self-esteem levels, as they feel they are defined by being on (or off) target in their studies. There is extreme pressure on adolescent students to do well in school, which is a factor that leads to fluctuating levels of self-esteem and self-confidence. Self-esteem and academics at the adolescent developmental level generally affect each other and vary based on other factors such as: bad grades, the anticipation of taking the SAT/ACT or other college prep exams, and

applying to or getting accepted into college. The emphasis on succeeding academically often places extreme stress and anxiety on students. However, “academic success positively affected self-esteem scores” in a study involving test anxiety and self-esteem for high school students (Sari, Bilek, & Celik, 2018, p. 87). The correlation of academics with self-esteem levels is due to the individual feeling as if they have failed or let everyone down if they do not get a good grade or pass a test. Coincidentally, self-esteem levels seem to soar when a student is doing well academically, which leads students to try and ride the self-esteem “high” as motivation to continue doing well in school.

Positive ways to build and maintain self-esteem for high school students include social involvement and engagement, both in the home and at school. A study regarding self-esteem in female high school students found a high correlation between family functioning and self-esteem, as self-esteem is cultivated in the home (Rezaei-Dehaghani, Paki, & Keshvari, 2015). Schumacher and Camp (2010) also agreed that maintaining healthy family functioning was a predictor of having higher self-esteem levels in adolescence and into adulthood. As youth grow up and develop, they are often a product of their environment. In cases where there is instability within the family home and broken relationships within the family unit itself, the chances of a child maturing on target with no positive support or reinforcement is very slim. Children who have poor relationship skills often report having low self-esteem as well, as there was no example of healthy ways to gain and maintain positive self-esteem. The opposite of individuals with low self-esteem are those with high self-esteem who have supportive and active participants in their home life who actively contribute to building their self-esteem in a productive manner. There are established programs on high school campuses that allow

the use of mentoring as a way to boost individuals in a positive direction (Cavell, Gregus, Craig, Pastrana, & Rodriguez, 2018) if they are not able to receive that positive encouragement and support within their own homes. Programs aimed at developing positive skills and behavior in individuals are simultaneously building and promoting self-esteem levels.

Gender Conceptualizations in Self-Esteem

Self-esteem does not differentiate by gender. Both males and females possess self-esteem, whether it is high or low. Bleidorn et al. (2016) found that, “for both genders, self-esteem is relatively high in childhood, drops during adolescence, rises gradually throughout adulthood before it tends to decline in old age” as a way to combat the belief that possessing and acknowledging one’s self-esteem is gender specific to females (p. 397). However, adolescent females often deal with fluctuating self-esteem levels at a higher rate than adolescent males do, as there are many influential factors going on during this developmental period. Research by Horn, Newton, and Evers (2011) supports the distinct difference by stating that girls are “particularly vulnerable” to declines in self-esteem and body image across the adolescent years as girls experience increased chances of developing an eating disorder and internalizing problems such as low self-esteem and depression (p. 384). Diseth, Meland, and Breidablik (2014) also acknowledged and observed that the “decline in self-esteem during adolescence is particularly strong for girls” (p. 1). Even with many negative factors affecting self-esteem levels, “schools and peers, as well as parents, have been found to influence a child’s self-esteem” (Cribb & Haase, 2016, p. 108).

Group Intervention Program and Training

There is promising growth in the area of literature and research that is aimed at finding productive training and/or interventions that will increase and strengthen self-esteem in adolescents (Westergaard, 2013). By giving youth the opportunity to learn about ways to manage and promote their self-esteem and become aware of factors that may be affecting them, it could produce effective long-term results. In an article that analyzes the effectiveness of mentoring programs on youth, this approach was proven with “rigorous evidence” (Rodríguez-Planas, 2012, p. 481) that such programs developed positive effects on participants. There have been other studies on intervention programs and trainings that have proved successful and provided positive outcomes, such as feelings of a stronger increase in cognitive coping (Tak, Kleinjan, Lichtwarck-Aschoff, & Engels, 2014), the presentation of higher self-esteem levels (Freire, Lima, Teizeira, Araujo, & Machado, 2018), the establishment of positive benefits for adolescents’ self-concept (Parray & Kumar, 2017), a rise in girls’ self-confidence levels (Thakore-Dunlap & Van Velsor, 2014), successfully improving self-esteem levels among girls from culturally diverse backgrounds (Tirlea, Truby, & Haines, 2016), and providing an appropriate use of a group setting for emotionally struggling adolescents (Tomyn, Fuller-Tyszkiewicz, Richardson, Colla, & Tomyn, 2016). Although there are many proven intervention programs and training, not all have been successful. However, with the increase in research and useful information of limitations from less successful studies, there soon may be a universal program that can be implemented.

Conclusion of the Literature Review

The literature review explored and concluded that there are many factors concerning the role of self-esteem, self-esteem in middle and high schools, gender conceptualizations in self-esteem, and group intervention programs and training for self-esteem. Self-esteem is a broad and extensive subject that affects adolescence, the most vulnerable life stage. As an important developmental period, it is crucial to fully understand the role of self-esteem and all of its attributes that affect youth.

An increasing amount of data has been collected on various ways to brainstorm resources and offer support groups for adolescents. A multitude of studies have been conducted to see precisely what affects self-esteem and what programs have been effective in building self-esteem in high school girls. The amount of literature on this topic is wide and needed specific information to be analyzed for this review. Literature on this topic has begun to surface within the last 30 years as something that can be tested and surveyed to determine successful results. A majority of the literature on these programs that had specific causes for the lack of success also include an equal amount of literature deeming programs successful based on initial assessments and end results of the participants.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Purpose

The Girls in Real Life Situations (GIRLS), a small-group curriculum designed by Julia V. Taylor and Shannon Trice-Black, was utilized as a guide for weekly lessons and activities for the participants. The material is designed to enhance leadership skills and promote self-efficacy. Each group meeting consisted of a different activity that addressed 12 different themes. The 12 themes are: Who Am I?, Body Image, Choices, Communication, Emotions, Friendships, Relationships, Self-Esteem, Stress, Reaching Out, Tough Times, and Who I Am! Participants were encouraged to share feelings and struggles as they openly discussed important issues in a safe and supportive environment. In order to evaluate the effectiveness of the GIRLS group curriculum, this quantitative research study used a pretest-post-test observational design to assess the end results of the group.

Research Design

In order to examine the effectiveness of the girls group, this quantitative study followed the GIRLS small-group curriculum for the 12 weeks that the group met. This study used a pretest before the start of the 12-week program and a post-test at the end of the program. Each participant received a pretest and post-test to complete at the appropriate time.

Participants

Participants included female students enrolled in the Communities In Schools (CIS) program at Cooper High School who expressed a willingness to participate in a girls' lunch group. The participants varied in grade level from 9th grade to 12th grade. Ages ranged from 15-19 years of age. The group met once a week, on an agreed-upon day during lunch for approximately 30 minutes. The group consisted of 12 girls. The group lasted approximately 13 weeks, with a week for introductions. Participating students were informed of the risks and benefits of participating in the research activity (informed consent).

Data Collection

This study collected data through the use of the GIRLS program pretest and post-tests to determine the program's effectiveness. The effectiveness was explored by comparing scores on a pretest, which was taken during the first group meeting, to a post-test taken during the last group meeting. The primary research hypothesis is that post-test scores will be significantly higher than pre-test scores.

To protect the anonymity of participants, names were coded with numbers so that pre- and post-tests matched. No identifying information was recorded in the electronic dataset used for analysis once the electronic data set was created, and original paper documents were stored in a locking file cabinet for which only the CIS campus success coach has a key. Similarly, informed consent documents were stored in a locked file cabinet in the CIS office at Cooper High School.

Measures

The GIRLS pretest/posttest was designed and developed by program authors, Julia V. Taylor and Shannon Trice-Black. Measures included an instrument developed specifically to measure the outcomes of the GIRLS curriculum. The instrument was designed to be completed in a short amount of time and is considered minimally intrusive. The GIRLS assessment instrument consists of 12 questions, with three possible responses: Yes, No, Sometimes. The curriculum included a scale to measure any differences that occur in the pretest scores as compared to the post-test scores. Both assessment tools will be given and assessed upon the first and last group meeting.

Procedure

The first time the group met was for introductory reasons and team bonding. The second time the group met, the curriculum began. Before any lessons were discussed, the participants completed the pretest and used their own chosen numerical codes to ensure confidentiality. For the remainder of the 12 weeks that the group met, group leaders delivered a lesson from the curriculum. The final week of lessons, the participants completed the post-test.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

A total of 12 participants are included in these results. The average age of these participants was 17.0. As Table 1 shows, the largest group of participants were in the 12th grade with smaller proportions in each of the other grades. Table 2 shows that the largest proportion identified themselves as Hispanic/Latino with the smallest proportion identifying as White.

Table 1

Frequencies of Participants by Grade

Grade	<i>n</i>	Percent
9 th	2	16.67%
10 th	3	25.00%
11 th	2	16.67%
12 th	5	41.67%
Total	12	100.00%

Table 2

Participants by Ethnicity

Ethnicity	<i>n</i>	Percent
Hispanic/Latino	9	75.00%
Not Hispanic/Latino	2	16.67%
White	1	8.33%
Total	12	100.00%

Table 3 presents the results of the paired-samples *t*-test of the primary research hypothesis. As the table shows, the post-test mean (i.e., 19.33) was significantly larger ($\alpha = 0.05$) than the pretest mean. Therefore, the test of the null hypothesis indicates that the null hypothesis can be rejected in favor of the research hypothesis.

Table 3

Means and t-Test Results

Variable	Mean	N	SD	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
Pretest	17.11	9	3.66	1.22	-2.365	8	0.046
PostTest	19.33	9	3.39	1.13			

Table 4 shows the average scores by item and the change in scores for the GIRLS Pretest/Posttest. As shown in the table, the greatest change was on items 1, 5, 9, and 11. In contrast, there was not a change on the average scores on items 10 and 12.

Table 4

GIRLS Pretest/Posttest Averages by Item Number

Item Number	Pretest	Posttest	Difference
1	1.33	1.67	0.33
2	0.78	1.11	0.33
3	1.78	1.89	0.11
4	1.33	1.44	0.11
5	1.22	1.56	0.33
6	1.89	2.00	0.11
7	1.67	1.67	0.00
8	1.22	1.44	0.22
9	1.00	1.33	0.33
10	1.78	1.78	0.00
11	1.56	1.89	0.33
12	1.56	1.56	0.00
Overall	1.43	1.61	0.19

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

According to GIRLS pretest/posttest, it was determined that the outcome was a significant difference in the post-test, as compared to the pretest scores. The data suggests that the girls group is effective in helping girls learn about themselves and their internal self-feelings, such as self-esteem and leadership skills, over the course of the 12-week program.

Based on the mean data provided, the GIRLS program was helpful for participants to learn coping skills to help themselves with social and emotional issues that they are experiencing during this point in their critical development. According to the mean data, there is a connection between participating in the group and increased results of the post-test. The data of the GIRLS group program produced results that were in the predicted direction suggesting that the group was helpful in improving the participants' coping abilities as related to the topics discussed within the program's weekly lessons. However, it is unclear if the participants' increased self-awareness was solely due to the program and the topics discussed.

Implications of Findings

With a growing number of programs and organizations that exist to ultimately help students succeed and grow in their self-understanding, there are important implications to consider regarding this study. These implications will hopefully address some of the factors that affect a student's emotional well-being. The outcome of this

research shows one way in which self-understanding can be addressed: a psychoeducational group such as the GIRLS program.

Implications for Practice

The results imply that the group was possibly effective in this specific setting with high school girls; however, implementing the program and being successful in other practice settings, including public community centers for youth or group therapy sessions in counseling centers, is the challenge. This program can be carried out in these practice settings just as easily as it was in a high school environment for adolescent girls. The setting must include consistent group attendance in order to adequately go through all 12 lessons that the program offers. The end results of this practice curriculum have the potential to show significant results if carried out properly and consecutively. Group facilitators will be able to see what works and does not work for their groups and make adjustments as needed. Group therapy facilitators will be able to lead a group of adolescent girls who have developed sound skills for cultivating and building their self-understanding within themselves. Youth community leaders will build up adolescent girls in their understanding of their emotional wellness as well as establish lasting skills.

Implications for Policy

When conducting research for this study, it was indicated that there are not many policies for promoting the emotional wellness of adolescent female youth. With the use of this psychoeducational program in settings such as schools, group therapy, community youth outreach centers, etc., a general policy of youth emotional well-being can be put in place. With the implementation of the GIRLS group as well as the creation of other similar programs, the need for a policy concerning the emotional health of adolescents

(female and male) will become more relevant as results prove to be successful. Primarily school policies would be able to would be most effective by creating school-wide policies for those students most at-risk in their emotional health.

Implications for Research

As more programs are created and implemented for the purpose of developing and improving the emotional well-being, specifically the self-understanding, of adolescent females, there will be more opportunities to conduct research. Research is a vital aspect in determining what is effective and what is not, as well as how this approach can be improved. A wider range of research for these programs can offer more specific details in how the results are achieved. At the moment there are only few programs running, but the potential for programs to expand in various practice settings is evident. When more programs are implemented, the ability to specify research data from different populations (groups individualized based on ethnicity) and age groups (within adolescent range) will be able to provide detailed results for each individual group on a larger scale. In future studies, it would be beneficial to have multiple small groups (no more than 10 participants) going on at a time, meeting on different days of the week. With the additional groups, there would be an abundance of participants' pretests/post-tests from which to gather data. More experimental research is needed to establish the complete effectiveness of this program.

Limitations

Several limitations to this research should be noted, specifically the conclusion that the participants' end result of improved self-understanding is primarily due to the GIRLS group curriculum. The data did show that participants improved their self-feelings

in the post-test as compared to the pretest, but it cannot be concluded that it was solely due to the program curriculum. This is attributed to the fact that there was not a control group in place. The group offered participants the opportunity to be around girls their age to discuss issues that each of them have experienced or will experience, letting them know they are not alone. High school can be a tough time for many young girls, but by offering them a safe place to talk and discuss issues in a non-judgmental context with other girls, it allows ability to break down the emotional barriers and build up positive self-understanding and affirmations.

Another limitation present would be that there was only one group of 12 participants from which to collect data. Since this program was a pilot program at the school, it was not well advertised to the student body, providing information that would explain exactly how the group would be operated and what would be involved.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to identify if the GIRLS group program was effective when administered to a high school small group. The data revealed that participants gained a deeper understanding of themselves in relation to the topics discussed throughout the program. The curriculum provided adolescent females with lifelong skills to address their feelings and thoughts (self-esteem) about themselves and encourage their ability to cope with certain emotional situations. Factors affecting adolescents' sense of self-worth were discussed in the literature review as a preview of possible reasons why adolescents experience low self-understanding (self-concept/self-esteem) more than any other age group.

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APPENDIX A
IRB Approval Letter

ABILENE CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY
Educating Students for Christian Service and Leadership Throughout the World
Office of Research and Sponsored Programs
320 Hardin Administration Building, ACU Box 29103, Abilene, Texas 79699-9103
325-674-2885



December 10, 2019

Esperanza Harper
Department of Social Work
Box 27866
Abilene Christian University

Dear Esperanza,

On behalf of the Institutional Review Board, I am pleased to inform you that your project titled "Evaluation of a leadership growth group for girls offered in a high school setting",

(IRB# 19-134) is exempt from review under Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects.

If at any time the details of this project change, please resubmit to the IRB so the committee can determine whether or not the exempt status is still applicable.

I wish you well with your work.

Sincerely,

Megan Roth

Megan Roth, Ph.D.
Director of Research and Sponsored Programs

APPENDIX B

GIRLS Pretest and Posttest

G.I.R.L.S. Pretest/Posttest

Name _____ Date _____

Directions: Read the following questions and choose only one answer. Think about your answers and be really honest with yourself!

1. I feel that I know myself and the things that make me happy.
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Sometimes
2. I am happy with the way my body looks.
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Sometimes
3. I practice good decision-making skills and don't feel pressure from my friends to do things I don't want to.
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Sometimes
4. I feel that I can talk openly to my friends and family about my true feelings.
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Sometimes
5. I am in touch with my emotions and always know how I am really feeling.
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Sometimes
6. I feel that I am always a good friend and can be trusted.
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Sometimes

From *Girls in Real Life Situations: Group Counseling Activities for Enhancing Social and Emotional Development—Grades 6–12*
© 2007 by J. V. Taylor and S. Trice-Black. Champaign, IL: Research Press, 1800-519-2707, www.mssacpress.com.

G.I.R.L.S. Pretest/Posttest (continued)

7. I know who I want to date or "go out with" and choose them according to what I like.
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Sometimes
8. I feel good about myself.
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Sometimes
9. I know how to handle stress.
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Sometimes
10. I know who to go to when I need support.
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Sometimes
11. I know that other girls often have trouble with the same issues that I do.
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Sometimes
12. I am confident, secure, and know that I am an important part of this world.
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Sometimes