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CAN'T FIGHT THE MUSIC: UTILIZING IMPROVISATIONAL MUSICAL PERFORMANCE TO COMMUNICATE WITH CHILDREN ON THE TOPIC OF BULLYING

by

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April, 2013

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This thesis examines the utilization of improvisational music techniques as a form of communication to address bullying in the Pitt County Community Schools and Recreation after - school program at Wintergreen Intermediate School in Greenville, NC. The study is based on a three week performance workshop conducted by the researcher with 17 students. The goal of the workshop was to teach children ages seven through eleven strategies to prevent, resolve and cope with bullying using improvisational music. Chapter 1 discusses previous literature on bullying, and improvisational music and performance. It lays the theoretical groundwork and provides the research methodology, while discussing the project's assumptions and limitations. Chapter 2 chronologically discusses the events of the workshop by week, highlighting and analyzing key moments. Chapter 3 discusses the follow up interviews, findings of the study, and recommendations for future projects.

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A Thesis

Presented To the Faculty of the School of Communication

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In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts in Communication

by

Kristin E. Smith

April, 2013

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CHAPTER 1

WHERE IT ALL BEGAN

A nine-year-old little girl named Kristin began her morning like any other. She sat alone on the bus ride to school, waited in line to get in to the building, and went into homeroom with Mrs. Richardson. After what seemed like hours of schoolwork, it was time for recess, the most dreaded 30 minutes of her day. Not only was she not invited to play with any of the other kids, but if Kristin tried to get on the swings or play on the jungle gym the kids would laugh at her and tease her. Sometimes they would call her fat and ugly. They would taunt her about the way she dressed and carried herself.

This particular recess it was Madison Jones who decided to torture Kristin. Madison wouldn't let Kristin finish her game of tetherball. She told Kristin to stop playing or she would kick her. Kristin didn't stop playing, and Madison pushed, shoved and kicked Kristin until she stopped playing and began to cry. Madison called Kristin a cry baby and a "short fat girl who dresses in the dark." Madison and her friends frequently belittled Kristin and made all sorts of mean and hurtful comments to her. They pushed and shoved Kristin so much she couldn't stand going to school. When Kristin would tell a teacher what happened, the teacher would tell Madison and her friends to stop and that their behavior wasn't nice. Unfortunately, this would never get to the root of the problem. Day after day, Kristin explained the situation to Mrs. Richardson, and soon the teacher didn't believe Kristin. She was a smart student in her classes and loved learning, but she couldn't handle recess and often tried to avoid it. Several times she attempted to fake sick so she wouldn't have to worry about recess and the awful things said and done to her.

I lived this story and many others in my childhood. The teasing, taunting, pushing, and shoving did not stop until I retaliated against the bullies. I got in trouble for screaming back at them; meanwhile, they never received any punishment for "egging me on." It is for this reason that I have chosen a master's thesis project that combines my love of music with my experiences with bullying to help other kids in similar situations.

This thesis project seeks to implement an improvised musical performance approach to communicate with children about the topic of bullying. Utilizing performance-based action research, I conducted a three-week workshop with volunteer participants between the ages of seven and eleven who are enrolled in the Pitt County Community Schools and Recreation after school program at Wintergreen Intermediate School in Greenville, North Carolina. The three week workshop utilized theatrical and musical improvisation as an entry point for speaking with children about bullying, not just to bring awareness to the issue, but also to work toward finding positive preventative and coping measures for the problem of bullying. In this introductory chapter, I begin with a review of related studies. I then offer a framework for the project, drawing upon performance theories and research methods. I conclude with my understandings about the assumptions and limitations of my project.

Review of Research on Bullying

According to Dan Olweus (n.d.) of the National School Safety Center, "American schools harbor approximately 2.1 million bullies and 2.7 million of their victims." Sullivan, Cleary, and Sullivan (2004) define bullying as "a negative and often aggressive or manipulative act or series of acts by one or more people against another person or people usually over a period of time. It is abusive and is based on imbalance of power" (p. 3-5). According to Stacey Baier (2007), there are two types of bullying behavior, direct and indirect. She explains that:

> Direct bullying can be either verbal or physical in nature. Verbal bullying includes such behaviors as taunting, teasing, name calling, and spreading rumors. Physical bullying encompasses behaviors, such as hitting, kicking, pushing, choking, and destruction of property or theft. Indirect bullying is often more subtle and can include behaviors such as threats, obscene gestures, excluding others from a group, and manipulation of friendships (p. 9).

Observation of bullying has led to many distinct definitions of bullying behaviors exemplified by Sullivan, Cleary, and Sullivan (2004), who explain that bullying is defined by the following elements:

1. The bully has more power over the victim.
2. Bullying is concealed, systematic, and organized.
3. Bullies are often opportunistic, but they generally continue to bully over time.
4. Bullying usually occurs over a period of time, yet it can be isolated.
5. Bullying can be physical, emotional, or psychological.
6. Bullying comes in many forms of abuse and it is frequently seen in grades 2 through 6, but it increases and becomes more serious in grades 7 through 9. (p. 5)

Whether direct, indirect, verbal or nonverbal, bullying is a serious issue for young people. It creates a situation in which bullies, bully victims and bystanders are at risk.

Additional forms of bullying are rapidly appearing as technology is advancing. One such form includes cyberbullying which is done electronically through social media networks, emails and on-line chat rooms (Baier, 2007, p. 10). This allows for bullies to not only create hostile school environments, but also invade the victim's personal home space. With the ever-growing forms of social media, bullies are now attacking their victims by posting pictures and spreading rumors and taunts on social networks for others to see. This can damage a young person's sense of self-worth, self-esteem, and perhaps even his or her future. In some cases information that is posted on the Internet is hard to remove. According to Kohut (2007), "By using the Internet, bullies are 'removed' from their victims instead of confronting them personally. It is much easier to cyberbully another child as a faceless, voiceless, and nameless victim" (p. 27). Bullies are now

able to penetrate the home environment and torture their victims with just a few clicks on a computer keyboard.

To fully understand bullying, one must look at the ones who do the bullying. According to Stacey Baier (2007), bullies tend to have common characteristics, including: a lack of empathy or concern for others, a strong need for domination, being easily angered or hot tempered, and a tendency to be defiant. Bullies are also inclined to pick their victims based on peers who have poor social skills, are not a part of the "in" crowd, are non-confrontational individuals, dress or look different or possess other forms of vulnerability (p. 11-12). Bullies also tend to target students with special needs and students who are perceived to be bisexual, lesbian or gay. Additional targets include students from low socio-economic status and those who are overweight. Bullies often bully others out of insecurities, failure, rejection and immaturity and lack of self-esteem (Baier, 2007).

Bullying is a growing issue that impacts children in various ways. Children who are bullied may fear attending school, which not only interferes with their learning, but impedes social interactions and can lower self-esteem. Sullivan (2004) offers the startling fact that "everyday approximately 160,000 children in the United States are absent or skip school out of fear of being picked on, humiliated or beaten up by a bully" (p. 5). Bullying can result in severe consequences, with some victims not completing their high school degrees and others taking their own lives. There are various short-term and long-term effects of bullying. The short-term effects include overall unhappiness, anxiety issues, feelings of insecurity, loss of friends, withdrawn/antisocial behaviors, depression, thoughts of potential suicide, painful and humiliating reactions, and loss of self-esteem, all of which can lead to stress and confusion and negative long-term effects. According to Swearer, Espelage, & Napolitano (2009), "Without

intervention, these students are at risk for developing clinical levels of depression, anxiety, and in some rare cases anger problems" (p. 98).

Then there are the students or peers of the bullying victims (known as bystanders) who often experience guilt due to the fact that they feel they cannot help the victim for fear of being hurt, threatened, or bullied themselves (Baier, 2007, p. 10). These children simply don't know how to handle the situation. They often are heard saying they don't want to become the "tattletale" and make themselves a target for bullies. The bystanders observe the behavior so they do not mimic it for fear of being bullied as well. Others impacted include the siblings and parents of bully victims. Siblings of bully victims could potentially be a target of the bullies or their friends simply because they are related to the victims, or if the sibling stands up to the bullies on behalf of the victim.

How a school handles bullying can make a big difference in the amount of bullying that goes on. According to Sullivan, Cleary, and Sullivan (2004),

> The school's response to bullying sends a message to others in the school. If the school handles it well, it gives a clear message that bullying will not be supported or allowed to hide in the school; if it handles it poorly, it sends a message to bullies that they can continue to bully with impunity and to everyone else that they may not be safe. (p. 23)

Additional messages are sent to the community about the way the schools are safeguarding their children against hurt and potential crime. Sullivan, Cleary, & Sullivan created a model depicting the ripple effect of bullying (see figure 1.1). This model shows just how far-reaching the impact of bullying can be for an individual, a school, a family, and a community.

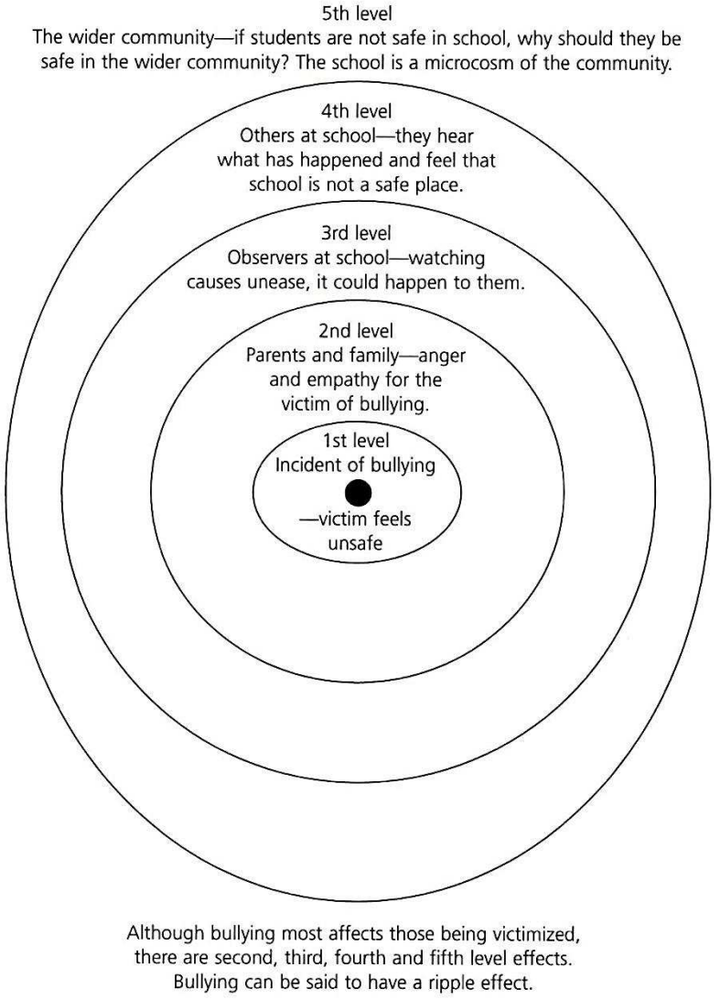


Figure 1.1. The ripple effect of bullying. Adapted from *Bullying in Secondary Schools* by K. Sullivan, 2000.

Bullying prevention programs and mediation techniques are the keys to stopping the bullying epidemic occurring throughout the United States. According to Orpinas and Horne (2006), three values which promote a positive climate and develop a basis for a bullying prevention program include the beliefs that all children can learn, that people should be treated with respect and dignity, and that there is no place for violence in the school (p. 85). These core

concepts of a bullying prevention program speak to the importance of maintaining a safe place for students and teachers within the school.

Additional practical strategies to reduce bullying include punishment, mediation, state legislation, and individual interventions. Punishment strategies include suspension, expulsion or zero tolerance strategies for extreme disruptive or aggressive behaviors (Swearer, Espelage & Napolitano, 2009). Mediation strategies are utilized in schools when a disagreement or bullying instance occurs. Mediation strategies use peer-to-peer interaction with a mediator conducting the interaction. Peer mediation operates with the mediator being a trained student who is often around the same grade level as the students involved in the disagreement or conflict (Lupton-Smith, 1996). The mediator also stands as an intermediary if conflict arises between the bully and bully victim or anyone involved. The mediator helps the involved parties reach a resolution or understanding of the situation.

Anti-bullying legislation has increased over recent years as states and many school districts have adopted anti-bullying policies. According to Swearer, Espelage, & Napolitano (2009), "Although only 11 states currently require their state departments of education to create model anti-bullying policies, a number of other states (or state organizations) have made available model or sample policies to guide local administrators" (p.42). States often implement these model anti-bullying policies as a way to encourage teachers and administrators to utilize the recommended anti-bullying statements or language in schools. Of course, the model and sample policies are not always strictly enforced. North Carolina has a Board of Education policy, but did not have statutes or department of education models or sample policies as of 2009 (p.43).

Another form of practical strategy against bullying is individual intervention. Individual intervention names a range of behaviors. Each bullying situation warrants different strategies

depending upon the specific issues that arise. In cases of one-on-one bullying, it could be best for an intermediary to take both parties aside and confront the issue seperately and follow up with peer mediation. Programs such as the Olweus Bullying Preventing Program (2007), Pacer's National Bullying Prevention Center's curriculum toolkits (Hertzog, 2011), and The Bullying Academy (Evers, 2010) offer a range of other strategies. Commonly taught in such programs are methods including: walking away from the bully, knowing the signs of bullying and telling an adult or teacher, peer mediation or mediation strategies, and punishment for the bully. Individual intervention can include use of mental health professionals such as psychologists or psychiatrists (Swearer, Espelage, & Napolitano, 2009).

Review of Performance Theory and Research

In this section, I review research related to the study proposed here. Because I am proposing a musical performance-centered thesis on the topic of bullying, I review research on social and stage dramas, improvisational performance, and improvisational music relevant to this project.

Social Drama/Stage Drama Model

Victor Turner and Richard Schechner theorize a relationship between social dramas and stage dramas. The relationship was co-constructed by the scholars when Schechner borrowed the social drama concept from Turner. Turner then borrows the social drama/stage drama model after its first appearance in 1977 in Schechner's *Essays on Performance Theory.* Figure 1.2 below indicates a lemniscate shape or a figure-eight loop of the model. This lemniscate figure identifies the continuous folding and overlapping of social drama and stage drama. The model is divided by a bisecting line indicating the hemispherical segmentation. The hemisphere above the

line indicates the public or overt manifestations of drama, and the hemisphere below designates underlying social structures and/or processes undergirding dramas.

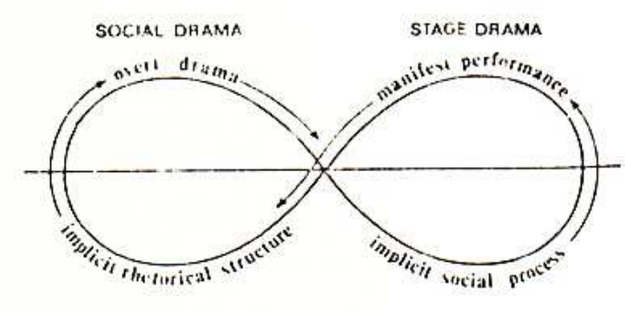


Figure. 1.2. Social drama/stage drama model. Adapted from V. Turner, *From ritual to theatre: The human seriousness of play,* 1982, p.73.

I will describe and apply the foregoing model as it pertains to my project on improvisational performance and bullying. The upper left quadrant, social drama, is the overt drama one experiences socially as open conflict. The conflict becomes public knowledge, and opposing sides are taken, such as in the case of political battles or even playground squabbles. Turner theorizes a social process which occurs in a dramatic context in four phases. The four phases of social drama include breach, crisis, redress, and reintegration. A breach is an offending act leading to a crisis in which sides are taken. After the first two phases, the individual or group who has been offended stops or hinders the further spreading of the issue which leads into the fourth phase known as the reintegration phase. This phase identifies the intent to move toward reconciliation between the two opposing sides, which can also be made public if so desired. It is important to note that social dramas are those dramas that play themselves out in public, as bullying situations often do.

The bottom right quadrant names the implicit social process that takes place in the making of any kind of stage drama. Traditionally, this may take the form of a playwright sifting

through the details of his or her world to write a play. Our performance workshop offered this kind of sifting. In improvisation one calls upon knowledge, experiences, and stories to create a scene. This scene allows for those pre-conceived understandings to manifest within an individual and ultimately appear through scenes. In relation to an improvisational performance about bullying, within this quadrant we are mining the underlying reasons, thoughts, behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes towards bullying. The social process within this quadrant allows the youth participants to delve deep, gaining insight leading to a rich knowledge of the issue.

Following the implicit social process, the model directs one to the upper right quadrant of manifest performance, or stage drama. Here issues are translated into public performances, opening ideas to further consideration and conversation. The underlying reasons, thoughts, feelings, beliefs, or attitudes of bullying from the creative process are made manifest in performance in this quadrant. As children share their creative products with peers, teachers, and family members, they may reflect on what it means to them and their future as well as the future of others. This leads into the last quadrant of the model, the bottom left quadrant known as the implicit rhetorical structure.

The bottom left quadrant indicates the implicit rhetorical structure through which change takes place. Individuals, groups and communities are reshaped through their understandings, conversations, and considerations of what has been performed. My hope for my workshop was that it could serve as a catalyst for discussions between my participants and their peers and mentors. I hoped my students would take those things learned back into their everyday lives to work on the problem of bullying. Perhaps the children would see bullying in a different light, which could impact how they notice, understand, and address it in their social interactions. As more children talk about what bullying is and the effects of it on others, this can serve to increase

understanding of bullying and what youth can do if they witness or experience bullying behaviors.

Theatrical Improvisation

Now that I have discussed the theoretical model underlying my project, I turn to the specific performance traditions and practices that my project utilized. Within my project, children were involved in hands-on activities utilizing improvisational music and theater to address bullying. As Neumark-Sztainer et al (2006) note, “The performance of a play offers children a peer leadership opportunity in which they get to teach others, possibly increasing their sense of self-empowerment and ownership of the messages” (p.408). The authors continue to explain that “theater, or more specifically a play production in which children are the actors, offers a unique tool to bring behavioral messages into the home by getting parents to pay attention to those messages” (p. 408). Children are able to learn through the interactions they co-construct through improvisational theater and music.

Theatrical improvisation creates a space in which individuals identify and utilize creativity, allowing the potential for personal growth and development. Shouse and Thomson (2009) write, “Improvisation is a form of play that encourages an awakening of our creative spirit” (p. 19). This creative spirit unlocks the door to new understandings as one learns and develops throughout the improvised scene or musical piece. According to Halpern, Close, and Johnson (1952), “An improviser must consider what is said, and what is left unsaid, as well. He must think, ‘Why was that said? What does she mean by that? How does it make me feel?’” (p. 63). This inner dialogue allows the actors to build on each other’s creativity and create a scene. Improvisation can provide an individual with an outlet to express emotions, fears, likes and

dislikes, or a venue for working through problems or trying on new identities. The creative imagination of an individual is ignited as the scene or musical piece develops.

The form of improvisational theatre I based my workshop on comes from the work of Augusto Boal (1979). Boal distinguishes his "Theatre of the Oppressed" (TO) from traditional theatre in the model of Aristotelian drama, critiquing what he saw as an artistic form that relied upon a passive audience being purged of their emotions (and their desire for social change). Augusto Boal's (1979) *Theater of the Oppressed* is a theoretical and practical framework for using improvisational theatre for social change. Boal writes that "theater, in particular, is determined by society much more stringently than the other arts, because of its immediate contact with the public, and its greater power to convince" (p. 53). The interactions between the actors and the audience allow for collaborative improvised solutions to problems.

Within TO, Boal's "Forum Theatre" operates by actors creating a scene based on a situation in which a group or individual is oppressed. The scene is acted out until the point when an audience member feels they can finish the story and/or provide a solution. The actors allow the members of the audience on stage to take the place of a character at this stage of the scene. This role changing method empowers the audience member, now an "actor," to become an agent of change, one Boal hopes will carry over into the social world (as in the Schechner model above).

A similar improvisational theatre form is Playback theatre. In Playback Theatre a member of the audience tells a story about something that happened to them, and then chooses members of the acting troupe to "play back" the story through improvisation. According to Jo Salas (1996), "Playback theatre is intimate, informal, unpretentious, and accessible. But it *is* theatre: we are consciously entering an arena that is different from day-to-day reality" (p.97).

Playback theatre can be a good way to enrich the personal growth and development of individuals and also help them understand the lived experiences of others. In the case of children and bullying, a child may describe an experience with bullying and allow the other participants to act out the story, offering a chance for the group to reflect on the causes and consequences of the bullying event, in addition to considering what might have happened differently to prevent it.

Musical Improvisation

Improvisational music acts in much the same manner as improvisational theater. The music is co-constructed by the musicians and is determined in the present time. Improvisational music can conjure a mood or intensify action by the expression of the musical experience. Improvisational music is constantly shifting and transforming with each beat, measure, and piece. The music created is indicative of the moment, the musicians, and the lived experiences of the musicians. Once the music is played, it is often difficult to re-create it in its entirety. The musicians creating the piece co-constructed or lived the reality of the piece as it occurred. The musicians bring different ideas, thoughts, beliefs and attitudes each time they perform together thereby creating the beauty of improvisation through the lived experience.

Music has long been an influential part of people's lives. Some feel music "is more than just a medium of entertainment. It is a powerful tool that can capture attention, elicit long forgotten memories, communicate feelings, create and intensify moods, and bring people together" (Davis, 2010, p. 127). It has been a "way for people to connect, celebrate, entertain, remember, and mourn. This may be especially true for school-aged children and adolescents who often define themselves through pop culture, in which music plays a major part" (p. 126). Music plays a major role in children's lives through the various ways in which it is present.

Davis (2010) suggests that the expressive techniques within the arts can be utilized in both internal and therapeutic processes. In a study of improvisational music with children following the trauma of a tornado, participants engaged with the instruments provided and formed “feelings ensembles” delving into the feelings of the children after the devastation. Participants were asked questions including, “How did your musical composition relate to your feelings about the tornado?” and “How do your feelings affect other people around you?” The instruments used included drums, bells, shakers, and tambourines, among others. The purpose of the musical activity and processing was to aid the children and some of their parents in the transition back into school and life after the tornado. Davis (2010) concludes by saying that even though the particular intervention took place after a natural disaster, and its musical methods can easily be adapted to a variety of developmental life issues faced by school-aged children.

Barrera, Rykov, and Doyle (2002) suggest that interactive music therapy may engage a child and elicit positive feelings which could lead to an increase in play as well as a reduction of stress. Their study consisted of 33 girls and 32 boys ranging from 6 months to 17 years old living in the Hematology-Oncology unit of an urban teaching hospital. The children engaged in music by signing, song writing, singing or playing camp songs, listening to pre-recorded music and improvisation. The study concluded that there was a positive effect on hospitalized Hematology-Oncology pediatric patients.

Other improvisational techniques involve various forms of creativity. Nachmanovitch writes, “The heart of improvisation is the free play of consciousness as it draws, writes, paints, and plays the raw material emerging from the unconscious” (1990, p. 9). This conscious effort to explain the feelings, ideas, and thoughts from the unconscious is exactly what improvisational

music can do in the lives of children affected by bullying. The question how does one learn to improvise music is based on several factors within the individual. According to Nachmanovitch,

> How does one learn improvisation? The only answer is to ask another question: What is stopping us? Spontaneous creation comes from our deepest being and is immaculately and originally ourselves. What we have to express is already with us, is us, so the work of creativity is not a matter of making the material come, but of unblocking the obstacles to its natural flow. (1990, p. 10)

Nachmanovitch describes the process to overcome the obstacles which hinder the natural flow of improvisation. One must delve into and understanding the issues which block or hinder creativity.

Consider the creativity involved in using a drum or a cymbal. A child could clang the cymbals together in various rhythms, or drum using different mallets with different vibrations and timbre. These sounds can be made into melodies and countermelodies creating original pieces based upon the emotions and feelings of the child. According to Maratos, Crawford and Proctor (2011) “music therapy builds on people’s capacity for communicative musicality, that we are hard-wired for this kind of engagement and interaction, and that through music-making we experience a kind of relating that is very different from that which talking has to offer” (p. 93).

Improvisational music and theatre have the ability to convey emotion and enhance the participant’s emotional development, shape the direction of a scene, create a unique atmosphere, re-create a real-life experience, and aid in an individual’s personal growth. This thesis project explores the possibilities generated when applying improvisational music and theatre to the topic of bullying. Below I detail the research method and questions I will utilize as I approach this important topic.

Research Questions and Method

The primary research question guiding this thesis is "how can improvisational musical performance be used to communicate with children on the topic of bullying?" Several other questions present themselves in relation to this research project. What kinds of stories do children tell when presented the opportunity to talk about bullying in a performance workshop? In what ways does music facilitate discussion about bullying? Can the performance process empower children to want to address the problem of bullying within their social environments? Can it provide participants a greater understanding of bullying and/or skills they can use to protect themselves against bullying? Can the performance process also provide the participants a helpful outlet for current struggles with bullying?

I approached this project as a work of performance-based action research, drawing upon reflexive autoethnography to assist me in my description, analysis, and evaluation of my performance workshop. Action research is defined by Richard Schmuck (2006) as "planned inquiry, a deliberate search for information, perspectives, or knowledge. It consists of both self-reflective inquiry, which is internal and subjective, and inquiry-oriented practice, which is external and data based" (p. 29). This method focuses on creating individual and social change. Some of the goals of action research, according to Stringer (1999), are to "unleash energy, stimulate creativity, instill pride, build commitment, prompt the taking of responsibility, and evoke a sense of investment and ownership" (p. 25). My hope for this project was that it would serve as a social intervention, following Schechner's social and stage drama model outlined above, as participants became agents of change within their school and community.

Action research helps participants solve social issues and focuses on developing plans to deal with them. Ernest T. Stringer (1996), identified action research with the "look, think, act"

spiral shown in Figure 2 below. The figure indicates the process a participant experiences during action research. This process demonstrates phases of observation, reflection, and action that are constantly fluctuating. The participant will often repeat the spiral several times before achieving the goal or direction most desired. The improvisational workshop structure exemplifies Stringer's model, as participants consider examples of bullying, reflect on these situations, and act through improvisational creations.

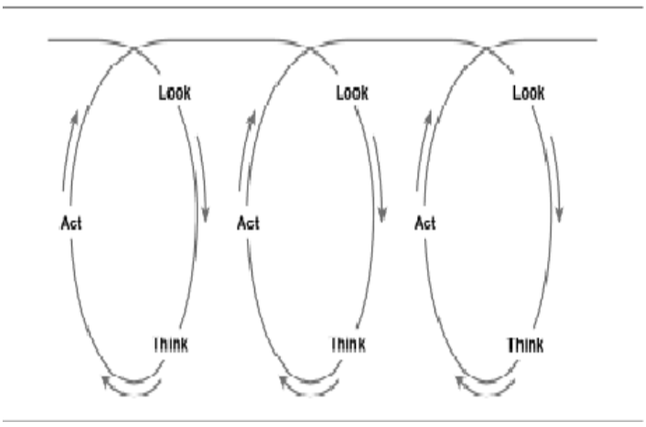


Figure 1.3. Look, think, act model. Adapted from *Action Research A Handbook for Practitioners*. by E. Stringer, 1996.

I took on an active participant observer role within this study, participating with the children as a workshop facilitator while recording their behavior through video and reflective journaling. Participant observation has two purposes in mind. The first is to observe features of a situation such as activities, people, and physical aspects. The second is to participate in activities that are appropriate and provide useful information for the situation (Mills, 2007). During the workshop, I used the journal to reflect on the day's activities, such as the children's stories, actions, and shared thoughts and feelings. I also reflected on how I felt about the workshop, noting areas where I was excited, concerned, or just downright frustrated. I began my journal

prior to the start of the workshop, and made entries after every workshop session, and at the conclusion of the workshop. I reflected on questions such as:

> What was I feeling during the workshop?
> What did the participants appear to be feeling? What did they share with me?
> What responses to my questions or activities occurred throughout the session?
> What was most interesting about the responses?
> How did the activities help (or not help) me achieve my overall goals of the workshop?
> What did the participants take away from the workshop session?
> What did I observe throughout the session?

I followed Geoffrey Mills' suggested style of engaging in reflective journaling and taking field notes by indicating observations and recording everything. Mills explains that, "During these observational periods, you can start with a broad sweep of the classroom and gradually narrow your focus as you gain a clearer sense of what is most pressing" (2007, p. 60).

In the writing of my thesis, I draw upon the method of autoethnography to delve into my personal experiences with the project as well as my shifting, overlapping, and sometimes conflicting roles as researcher, bully survivor, and adult mentor. According to Ellis and Bochner in the Handbook of Qualitative Research, "autoethnography is an autobiographical genre of writing and research that displays multiple layers of consciousness, connecting the personal to the cultural" (p. 734). I drew upon a type of autoethnography called reflexive ethnography, in which a researcher's "personal experience becomes important primarily in how it illuminates the culture under study" (2000, p. 740). One of the goals of reflexive ethnography is to explain the personal connection to the research being conducted through narrative. In what follows, I tell the story of my performance workshop from my perspective, while trying to unpack what I learned, and hope others can learn, from my experience.

The participants involved in the study were children between the ages of seven and eleven, recruited from the Pitt County Community Schools and Recreation (PCCSR) after school

program at Wintergreen Intermediate School. PCCSR operates 12 after school programs in schools across Pitt County. The Wintergreen location was chosen in consultation with Rita Roy, Director of PCCSR, because of ongoing problems with bullying at the school. Participants were enlisted on a voluntary basis after IRB approval was obtained. To recruit participants, I created a flyer which I distributed to after-school students. I also time prior to the workshop start date speaking with students and their parents about the workshop. I was able to recruit 17 students into the workshop, although the number of participants in the workshop on any given day fluctuated due to a variety of constraints such as parents picking their children up early or anxiety about performing before their peers, which I will discuss more extensively in the chapters that follow.

In addition to the data my journaling would provide, I utilized video recording to document what occurred in each session. I used a simple flip camera, usually placing it on a table near where we were operating. My original intent was to hold a final performance for the families, teachers, and peers of the participating students, to record this performance, and to make copies of the recording for the participants and PCCSR. However, during the second week, as we felt the pressures of live public performance--very different from the relative freedom our closed sessions afforded us--it looked like some of my participants were going to drop out. The workshop was in danger of imploding. I resolved this by working with my participants to create a video performance composed from the recordings done during the workshop. Instead of a concluding performance, I held a viewing of the video, followed by a reception with refreshments. Approximately two months following the conclusion of the workshop, I returned to the after-school program to conduct follow-up interviews with my participants. I present my findings from these interviews in Chapter 3.

Following the completion of the workshop, I began to enter what Madison (2011) describes as the "autumn" phase of performance fieldwork: sifting through recordings and journals to code and log data and look for themes. Madison writes:

> What do you do with this mass of information? Keep in mind that every project and every researcher is unique, so it is expected that you will pick and choose, select and sort, and blend and combine what is useful for you. Coding and logging data is the process of grouping together themes and categories that you have accumulated in the field. (Madison, 2011, p. 43)

In my "autumn" themes began to emerge. Some of these themes included challenges such as space and working with community partners. Other themes evolved such as the students' knowledge on bullying and music and past experiences. These themes and also various events of the workshop proved to both hinder and help me as well as the students throughout the workshop.

Scholarship of Engagement

The "scholarship of engagement" is a term used to describe a mutually beneficial relationship between a researcher representing an academic institution and a partnering organization out in the community. Community–Campus Partnerships for Health (2005) define the scholarship of engagement as

> Scholarship that involves the faculty member in a mutually beneficial partnership with the community. Community-engaged scholarship can be transdisciplinary and often integrates some combination of multiple forms of scholarship. For example, service learning can integrate the scholarship of teaching, application and engagement, and community-based participatory research can integrate the scholarship of discovery, integration, application, and engagement. (p. 12)

The purpose of the scholarship of engagement is to tackle a community need or concern. Outreach is different from the scholarship of engagement because it is unidirectional; it is done for the community but not with the community. Outreach is like volunteer-work. It serves the

community recipient, but does little for the research agenda of the scholar. Arts-based engaged research projects function to benefit both the scholar/artist and the community partner. According to Sullivan and Sequiera (2009), "popular arts and education projects lend themselves to problem-solving—or problematizing—and allow community members to take a lead role in conceptualizing how they want to live in the future, and to redesign their neighborhoods to better approximate these dreams" (p. 403).

As a community-engaged thesis project, a community partnership needed to be gained and maintained throughout the workshop. Small and Uttal (2005) discuss how action-oriented research approaches, "involve some type of collaboration between researchers and community partners" (p. 938). They continue by stating that, "action-oriented research calls for heightened attention to how power and trust shape the relationship between partners (relationality) and how this relationship shapes what is learned and concluded (the findings)" (Small & Uttal, 2005, p. 938). In the beginning of the planning stages, my thesis advisor and I discussed possible community organizations to partner with for mutual benefit of the community and my academic project/thesis. This discussion led to the discovery of Pitt County Community Schools and Recreation (PCCSR). As Dr. Thomson had already worked with the organization and its founder, we chose to utilize pre-established relationships to develop the partnership. Once initial contacts were made, we set up a meeting with Rita Roy, Director of PCCSR. During this meeting we discussed the project, the timetable of events, and the possibility to combining forces to make this project happen. During this process the proposal of the thesis was finalized, the IRB process was conducted, and a community partnership was born.

In order to discuss the nature of the partnership with PCCSR, I must first discuss what a community partnership entails. According to Cress, Collier, and Reitenauer (2005), community partners are:

> members of the community in businesses, government agencies, and social service organizations that agree to work with students individually or collectively in order to meet community needs. Partnerships are designed to create a service to the community while addressing educational opportunities for students. (p. 18)

The partnership is designed to benefit both parties involved. The partnership with PCCSR promoted bullying awareness while benefitting as a resource for my thesis project. With this partnership, a need for constant communication was set in place. Headed by Rita Roy and her staff, we worked closely through email and phone conversations in order to get the logistics fleshed out. During this process, I created a flyer for the workshop and acquired IRB approval.

Assumptions and Limitations

This thesis project is based on a number of assumptions. When I defended my thesis proposal the first assumption I recognized was that the children who volunteered to be a part of the project would have had some experience with bullying and that they would want to talk about it. While I found that all of my participants had some experience (as participant or bystander) with bullying, it may be that a performance workshop was not where my participants would discuss such experiences. I assumed that they would, but I have no way of knowing how much they did reveal.

I also came into this project with the assumption that the workshop would have a positive impact on the children's lives. I assumed that participation in the project would lead to discussions between and amongst the children and their families or peers, and that it would energize a movement against bullying in their school, or at least some steps to be taken toward

that end. I used post-show interviews to gauge the extent to which this was the case, but within these interviews, participants may have been telling me what they thought I wanted to hear. They may not have recalled accurately. They may have become uninterested in talking to me about the project two months after its conclusion. I also assumed that the workshop could prevent future occurrences of bullying, but this may also not be the case, and measuring short or long term impact of the project is outside of the scope of this study.

I assumed that music and improvisational performance could be a useful approach to addressing the topic of bullying. Another assumption I held is that the student participants would have some musical knowledge or desire to experiment with music. While assuming the students had prior knowledge turned out to be true, I was extremely impressed on how much knowledge they had about musical concepts such as various beats, rhythms, and musical instruments. Some students had a desire to experiment with musical instruments during free improvisation and jam sessions. The prior musical knowledge aided in the discovery of and development of emotions in the workshop.

After conducting the workshop, I learned I had assumptions about the project, the students, and the idea that the students would be comfortable performing publicly. As I reflect on the workshop, one of the major assumptions I held was that a public performance valuable and essential for a successful workshop. As I have been accustomed to performing and talking publicly, it did not occur to me that the students would have stage fright. These fears seemed to stem from the students not feeling comfortable performing in front of their parents, teachers, and (especially) their friends in the after school program who were not in the workshop. This public speaking and performing fear threw me for a loop as I scrambled to consider other options.

Another major assumption I had was about the nature of the project. It did not occur to me until the middle of week one that one individual facilitating the sessions was not enough. In my mind I did not want to have too many students, but I did not think 17 students were too many or too overwhelming until I was knee-deep in the workshop. This stemmed from my assumption that 3rd-5th graders would respond well to instructions because they were older and more mature elementary school students. Another assumption I held was that I would easily be able to maintain the attention of the students with various activities and a consistent routine. This routine changed every time I stepped through those cafeteria doors. Many changes stemmed from the space limitations and also with the various dynamics of the students within the workshop, as I will discuss in the chapters to come.

My study is limited in its scope and is not intended to produce results that can be generalized. One limit of the study is the population. The participants represented only a very small sample of Pitt County Schools' students, and were those whose parents can afford to pay for after school care at one of the area's lower cost after school programs. The participants were also students who self-selected to participate in performance work. They may have been more outgoing or even less likely to be bullied.

One of the limitations of performance-based research is that it is difficult to assess the impact of this kind of work. As a researcher I did not have access to what happened outside of the performance workshop, other than through what the participants reported. Many times the effects of performance happen well after a performance has ended, even months or years later. Peggy Phelan (1993) speaks of this as "reckoning," the process by which our initial response to performance changes over time with our ongoing experiences (p. 162). I hope that my participants have these reckonings in the days, months, and years to come.

Overview

In this first chapter of my thesis, I have attempted to give the reader some insights into my motivation for taking on this project. I have provided a review of scholarship related to my project, along with a detailed explanation of my theoretical framework and chosen research methods. I have also discussed some of the limitations of my study. In Chapter 2, I discuss the events of the workshop by week. In Chapter 3, I analyze and reflect on what my participants and I learned through the project. My IRB approval form is Appendix A. The Informed Consent form and Assent script is Appendix B. The journal that I kept during the process is Appendix C.

CHAPTER 2

CAN'T FIGHT THE MUSIC: END BULLYING

Chapter 2 discusses the events of the workshop by week. I "set the stage" for this chapter by discussing how important and challenging space was for the workshop. I then chronologically discuss week one, week two, and week three of the workshop, sharing insights and analyzing the experience along the way. I conclude with a discussion of two specific students' bullying experiences.

Space: Setting the Stage

I begin this chapter with a discussion of space because it was the most prominent theme in my analysis of the workshop, and one that I had not anticipated during my planning. I also chose to begin this way to give the reader a sense of the challenges the workshop faced from the start. To be successful in leading a group of 3rd-5th graders through a creative process, we needed to have a home space, one we could consistently and reliably return to, create in, and make into our theatre. Wintergreen's multipurpose room was an ideal space for performing, creating music, and playing openly without the intrusion of other eyes. The space contained a stage with curtains and a large open area for spreading out, conducting group improvisations, or whatever else we might think up. And, most importantly, this was a space away from the other after school program groups. Unfortunately, this space was infrequently available to us.

To understand the issue this project faced with space, it will be helpful to understand the relational constraints that bear upon that space. Pitt County Community Schools and Recreation's after school program is a multi-pronged partnership between PCCSR and Pitt County Schools. I call it "multi-pronged" because the relationship is not just between the administration of two entities, Pitt County Schools and PCCSR. The relationship is one between

PCCSR and each school's administration. So if a principal is supportive of having an after-school program, the relationship can be very collaborative. But some principals, based on my observations and discussions, were not as supportive of the after-school programs in their schools run by PCCSR, or at least were not actively supportive and engaged. I say this because the primary space that we had requested, that perfect multipurpose room with the stage, was frequently being taken away from PCCSR's use by the school administration.

The primary space in which PCCSR conducts its after-school program at Wintergreen Elementary is the school cafeteria. The school's cafeteria is laid out in a long triangle, crowded with tables with their attached hard metal seats. This area is designed to allow for board games, homework, and snack time. Students often intermingle in this area with conversations ranging from discussing homework to teachers to friends and movies. In this space, I often saw students doing homework quietly which was enforced primarily by the after school leaders. Some other activities I noticed were students drawing and playing board games or various activities. When I first entered the cafeteria, I noticed the traditional cafeteria tables to the right, the check-out line to the right, and the "My Plate" nutritional poster on the wall to the left of the check-out line. When entering the building through the cafeteria one enters from the back side. I observed that there were several students in the cafeteria at all times. This was mainly due to the cafeteria being known as the home base for the after school program activities. When the weather was nice outside, the leaders rotated their groups of third, fourth, and fifth graders to play outside. If the weather was raining or too cold they would use the gym space instead. For example, the third and fourth grade groups were in the cafeteria while the fifth grade group was playing outside on the playground or in the gym. The cafeteria was the most challenging space to work in because

of the noise from the other groups in the space and also because of the in-and-out traffic of parents picking up their children. In other words, this space was frequently noisy, crowded, and chaotic.

On the days when we had to conduct the workshop in the cafeteria, we were placed in the back of the cafeteria near the door where the parents filtered in and out. The plethora of cafeteria tables in this area only allowed for a small space to move around. So many of the improvisational activities requiring movement were not able to be facilitated on days when we were in the cafeteria. Also, several of the board game and activities groups played near this area; this caused several students to divert their attention to their friends playing board games, talking and playing. This also made it impossible to do any scene work. The students were not only distracted by their non-workshop peers, they were reluctant to improvise in front of them.

The third space available to us was the gymnasium. The gym contained bleachers on both sides, with one of the sides folded up for space (and very likely for safety). The gym had bright and loud florescent lights which made workshop activities like listening to music very difficult. The loud hum from the gym lights was very distracting not only when we were trying to hold the workshop, but it also made parts of our eventual video difficult to hear. The activities performed by the students was often hard to record on video for the loud and annoying hum from the gym lights, distraction of other groups, and echoing atmosphere created by the gym. I would often not be able to hear students during their scenes because of the humming sound coming from the bright florescent lights overhead. The gym space was not an ideal place to have the workshop. Also, because this was a gym, it is probably not surprising that the students frequently went into "gym class mode" when in this space. Some interactions I noticed from the other students not

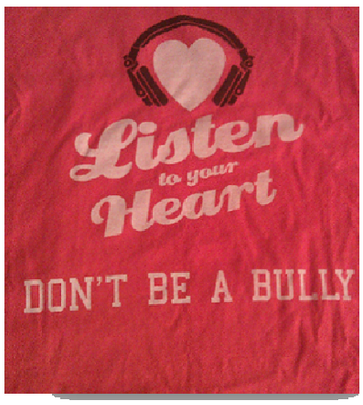
involved in the workshop included playing basketball, jumping rope, and climbing the bleachers. These activities were distracting both to me and the students in the workshop. Also, when we were in this space, the students in the workshop started to climb the bleachers when they noticed their friends, who were not involved in the workshop, climbing on them. As I noticed this occurring, I told them to please come back to the workshop activities. They continued to take their shoes off and run in their socks up and down the bleachers. I also was told by one of the program leaders that they cannot be climbing on the bleachers without their shoes on which sparked the need for a re-group of these students. The program lead instructor aided in helping me revert the students attention from the bleachers. I mention this example to give the reader a sense of just how important space was to the improvisational work we were doing. These instances made me think about just how important space is to conducting a performance workshop, especially in the context within which I was working: children in a school building.

Getting to Know You: the First Week

During week one, my first goal was to recruit students for my workshop. My goals for Week 1 were for us to get to know one another, to create an environment in which participants were comfortable, to get familiar with instruments provided, and to begin to talk about bullying experiences. I also wanted to get an initial sense of each student's musical knowledge and skills. My plan for this week was to do some icebreaker games like musical chairs, some improvisational games like rhythm rain storm, music box or traffic jam pile up, and utilize some playback theatre activities.

The first day I stepped into Wintergreen Intermediate to recruit students I was immediately welcomed by the familiar scent of a school cafeteria. The scent hadn't changed.

Dressed in my anti-bullying t-shirt and excitement printed on my face, I proceeded into the after school area. The cafeteria tables were similar to those in my elementary school. I had arrived planning to be there from 3-6pm in order to reach as many parents as possible. I felt very excited and nervous at the looming workshop, as I was now prompted to confront parents with the flyers and consent forms I had created and printed.



Front

Back

Figure 2.1. Me with my anti-bullying shirt.

As I was welcomed back to the school environment, I walked towards the leaders of the after school program. Just then, I noticed a situation had just occurred including three students. What I observed struck a chord with me, because it appeared that a student may have been bullied. From what I gathered, a student had been playing on the climbing rock wall on the playground and had been pushed off by two other boys. These two boys had been put in time out, and the injured boy sat in the corner talking to one of the staff members. He kept saying "I don't want to go back to school for a while." He had been hurt and was crying. The staff members then had to explain what had happened to the parents and fill out an incident report. As I watched this unfold, I thought back to the bullied me from elementary school and how I felt and dealt with

such bullying. I also thought about how this instance made me more motivated and focused on the workshop I intended to carry out at the school.

The goal for my participant recruitment day at the school was to meet the after school program leaders, talk with them about a timeline of events to come, and work through the mechanics of distributing parental consent forms and flyers. As I waited for parents to arrive to pick up their kids, I practiced my welcoming speech in my head and prepared for what was to come or what I thought was to come. During this distribution, I mingled with a group of students. I introduced myself to them and also drew pictures with them. Some students drew hearts, flowers, spirals, and other squiggles, while the rest of us decorated our names in block letters and bubbled letters. After discovering that I was from ECU, the students began coloring their names in purple and gold or outlining my name in purple and gold. While drawing, we conversed on topics such as favorite teachers, what school I was from, what I was doing there, and what music they liked. I received many welcoming words from these students. They seemed enthusiastic about the workshop. One student in particular, Cadence, seemed to be really excited about the workshop saying, “I will tell my mom about it and she will totally understand and let me do it.” Other comments from the table included, “I like music,” “I have been bullied before,” and “Oh, when does it start?” As I answered these questions, excitement rose within me as well.

As I approached parents with IRB consent forms, I received a range of responses. I had several parents who seemed interested in the workshop, but others who seemed distracted. I encountered frazzled parents who took the forms and didn’t ask questions or respond. I also had some grandparents, babysitters, and family friends or relatives picking up students who responded with “I’m not the parent, but I will give this to them.” Some parents seemed happy or

excited about the workshop, asking questions such as “is it okay if my child misses a day or has to leave early?” As I answered these questions, I emphasized the limited amount of time available with the students and that we would need as much time as possible. I also answered questions such as “Is this free?” “Does my child need instruments?” “Where are you from?” “Why are you doing this?” I referenced the forms on several occasions in order to make sure the parents understood that this was a research project and they would be required to give informed consent for their child to participate. I was optimistic as I collected forms, and I hoped that the parents felt comfortable enough with me to allow their children to be a part of the workshop.

I started the workshop with 17 students. I had Cadence, the bubbly and responsive girl, who took every activity in the workshop and ran with it. She and was invested and involved. She proved to be a leader during many activities as the weeks progressed. I also had Alice, the enthusiast, who brought her recorder and responded with excitement to each activity. She made the activities more lively and interesting. Then came Marie, the questioner, who aided in discussions and with the overall workshop by asking questions to get everyone thinking about directions in which to take the activities. She seemed full of ideas of ways to respond to bullies. She questioned why bullying happens at several points within various activities we performed. There was quiet Hazel who enjoyed drawing and being involved within every activity. Then there was quiet Harmony, who welcomed me with a hug every time I arrived. She enjoyed working with Cadence while incorporating cheerleading and dance moves with many of the activities. Another involved student was Melody, who seemed to pay attention throughout the activities and added humor to the discussions. And last but not least we have Catherine, who seemed to be another natural born leader. She enjoyed the musical sections of the workshop and

knew much about bullying. She aided in discussions and demonstrated creativity with the development of some dance moves and song lyrics. While the workshop held many interesting participants, these students, Cadence, Alice, Marie, Hazel, Harmony and Melody proved to be the key players of the workshop.

The workshop also had some members who were less invested, less involved. They were John, Daniel, Colleen, and Louis. Daniel and John tended to joke or play around while Colleen was shy and reserved. Louis was involved in other extracurricular activities and tended to show up on occasion. These students participated in the workshop but were not as engaged or did not take the workshop as seriously as the others. This could be in part due to the parents. I say this because Colleen did not show that much interest in the workshop, and she often referred to her mom "signing her up for this." I had Daniel and John, who made silly, unrelated comments, and frequently tried to get the group off topic. These students did not seem as invested or interested in the workshop compared to the rest of the group.

The first full day of the workshop began by delving into what the students already knew about music. We were in the multipurpose room which allowed us to spread out on the floor, sit in a circle, and make some music. We discussed various instruments, what they sounded like, and began improvisational "jam sessions," a term I use to describe free improvisation with each person building off of the person before until there is a cacophony of sounds. We got to know each other through a few improvisation games, which included "Dance a Name" and "Sell a Fella" (Owens, 1975). The Dance a Name activity started with one student making a gesture or short dance to their name in order for students to associate the name and dance together to learn names. This met with many smiles and laughs. The Sell-A-Fella icebreaker activity I modified in

order to learn more about the group. The original activity is designed to find out attributes of a partner and say them out while auctioning the partner to the audience. I modified the activity to Tell-A-Fella which included finding out characteristics, dislikes/likes, and attributes of the partners and discussing them with the group, in a show and tell like fashion. For the activity, my partner was Colleen who expressed that she enjoyed reading the Harry Potter books, while others noted their favorite colors, interests, and hobbies.

After our theatre games, we sat on the floor in a circle and I took out instruments that I had borrowed from the school's music teacher, and invited students to come up and grab an instrument. I asked the students how many played instruments. Some students had instruments at home and played them often, while others had limited access to instruments outside of music class. I held up various instruments and asked the students if they knew what they were: "This is a boomwhacker. Does anyone know what a boomwhacker is? A boomwhacker makes an actual note when you hit it on the floor or yourself. So what is the note that each of you have?" The students, who were holding boomwhackers, replied, "F, B, E, C," reading them off the boomwhackers in their hands. "Those are the notes that they play when you hit them," I said. I had the students pass their instruments to the person on the right, which continued until each student had looked at each instrument. At one point I asked them about the maracas they were playing: "what do they sound like?" A student replied, "water!" Another student replied, "Rice!" A third student, Catherine, chimed in with, "it sounds like a rainstick." I replied, "Very good. Now for this one. Can anyone tell me what this is?" "A xylophone, which looks like a piano," a student replied. I was excited to see that they knew what a xylophone was, because this showed some of their prior musical knowledge. This initial discussion of instruments and musical sounds

was the launching point to an ongoing conversation about music that would deepen over the course of the workshop. As the workshop progressed, more and more students began to open up and share their musical knowledge and experiences. As I assessed their musical knowledge, I began to think about where to take them next.

At the end of this first session we broached the topic of bullying. I asked the students if they knew what bullying was, and a conversation took off. Hazel replied by stating "I was bullied by a boy in kindergarten." Melody said she had been bullied by other kids in her class. Daniel said "the third graders call me fat." Cadence said "my brother threw a needle at me, and he calls me a brat." We discussed why bullies act the way they do. Louis said "bullies want to be in power." Cadence said "or they have bad self-esteem." As we began to discuss bullying behaviors, how they made us feel, and what to do about bullying, we also discussed music and how it makes us feel.

I asked participants about the various emotions kids feel when being bullied. The common emotions were sad, angry, alone, and upset. Some talked about what they did when they were bullied. Marie said she would "scream into pillows," Melody said "punch a pillow," and Cadence said she would "punch walls." I was worried by Cadence's wall-punching comment, as this was not something I wanted to condone. As I later reflected on her comment, I wondered was she performing this suggested violent act for me or, perhaps, for the other children in the group? How much of what the children were saying was motivated by a desire for recognition, attention, or reactions from the group?

I then asked the students how they could use music when dealing with bullying. Cadence said that music could calm you down, and Marie said "or you could meditate like this." Marie sat

with her hands upturned on her knees in a meditative pose and said “Om.” All of the kids in the circle laughed and immediately started imitating her by striking a meditative pose and making their own meditation sounds. As I noticed students being diverted to other activities, such as rolling around on the floor, I decided it was time to do an activity.

I played a modified version of the improvisational theatre game “Freeze and Exchange” with them, prompting the students to act out bullying scenes. I prefaced this with the ground rule that players could not actually hit or punch each other. I explained that two players would begin an improvised bullying scene, and I would call “freeze!” Both students would then freeze, allowing us to discuss what had happened, and how to respond to or solve the bullying situation. Melody and Cadence volunteered to begin. The scenario, which was suggested by Cadence, involved Cadence and her brother. Cadence chose to play her brother, while Melody played Cadence. The scene entailed Cadence chasing Melody around the multipurpose room, acting as if she had something in her hand and attempting to punch her with it. The students began laughing at the running around and goofing off within the scene. I then called “Freeze,” and they both stopped. Harmony then replaced the Cadence character, while Melody flipped to the brother. When I said go, Melody began to chase Harmony. Harmony stopped mid run, and called “mommy!” I stopped the scene, and tried to create some order from the chaos by remarking on how Harmony had sought help from a parent or adult. When I tried another scene, this time with Louis and Daniel, the same thing happened. They chased each other and attempted to punch and kick one another. At this point in the workshop session, I was starting to lose my participants. This was not going as I had hoped. Their improvisations needed more structure.

Cadence then spoke up with a comment that startled me. She said, “my dad told me that if somebody is bullying you and nobody is around, just get some rope if you are on the ground and are in a dock yard somewhere that you could tie the wrists together and slip under the legs and go ‘whoop’.” She made a gesture that suggested, as she pulled her imaginary rope, that the bully had just been strung up on the dock. The students all laughed but her comment worried me. I responded, “well that isn’t good.” After reflecting on the experience, I wish I would have said something more along the lines of, “We don’t want to retaliate and hurt others, even if they bully us. We need to get away from the situation as quickly as possible and go tell an adult.” This workshop was going to be a lot more challenging than I had thought.

Turning Points and Pressures: Week 2

My goal for week two was to expand on the work of week one, while using music to explore the experience of bullying. During this week, I had planned to discuss emotions with the emotional chain exercise, delve into music as a form of coping with emotions, and preparing material for the final performance. We were able to accomplish some of this, but were faced with major challenges of space and time, as I discuss below.

Each day when I arrived at school, the leads would gather my participants, as they were in three separate groups. Once everyone was there, we would move to whichever space was available for the day. If we were in the multipurpose room, I would set up beforehand. When we were in the cafeteria or gym, I would do my best to set up the camera in a direction that was not going to capture the children in the rest of the program. On this particular day as we were walking to the multipurpose room, I was chatting with the students. I asked if the school had a process for reporting or dealing with bullying. Melody spoke up and said that there was a form

that you fill out through the guidance counselor. Cadence said “yeah, you fill it out and they pull you out of class.” I wanted to pursue this further, but by this point we were in the multipurpose room and it was time to begin our activities.

We began our session by talking about where the students had seen bullying occur or where they themselves had experienced it. These environments included: on the playground, at home, in class, in the cafeteria, and in their neighborhoods. As a former bully victim, I often was bullied in the cafeteria, on the playground and in my neighborhood, but being bullied at home was a shock to me. They identified this bullying as being performed by siblings and other family relatives such as cousins. As they identified sibling bullying, I thought back to my experiences of bullying which did not include siblings as my siblings were at the age where they had moved out of the house.

It was then time to, once again, improvise some bullying scenes. Having learned the lesson of the “Freeze” chaos, I assigned partners and then charged each pair with creating a scenario in which they enacted a bullying scene. In my instructions, I made it clear that no actual pushing, shoving, etc. should happen in the scenes. Two students chose to demonstrate bullying by a girl having her beanie baby taken away from her. Two others performed bullying with pushing someone off of a bicycle. In their improvised performance, Leah and Catherine demonstrated how bullying occurs at home, with two brothers playing monopoly. When one wins, the other pinches him. The bullied sibling then tells his mother. Following this scene, we talked about how telling an adult is a good technique, and also how walking away could have helped out that situation. The structured improvisations went far better than the unstructured Freeze! game.

I led the group through the “Emotional Chain” (Owens, 1975) activity. The goal of this game is to interpret facial expressions by identifying the emotion conveyed and then to discuss the misinterpretations of emotions, facial expressions, and body language. The students began by standing in a line facing me. I whispered an emotion to the first student who then made a facial expression and/or gesture to the next person in line until the last person saw the emotion. That person then had to verbally explain what emotion was being conveyed by the rest of the group. I started off the activity with “happy.” I smiled a perky smile. This activity created many laughs and giggles amongst the group when incorrect answers were given. This allowed for me to explain how everyone views facial expressions differently and how easily they can be misconstrued for something else.

During this session, I told the students it was time to do some musical improvisation. I was surprised to learn that the students had no prior knowledge of the term “improvisation.” So I explained that improvisation was like the “jam sessions” we had been doing, when there are no set guidelines about what notes to play, what beats and rhythms to play, or how the song will go. I told them that it changes every single time and that no two jam sessions, or improvisations, sound alike. I defined these improvised sessions as “jam sessions” because I was encouraging the students to play what they felt, telling them they could “jam out” when they are angry or upset. These moments in our workshop were designed to let the students get familiar with the instruments and familiar with their emotions by playing them out.

During week two, I decided to ask the students if there were specific songs they would want to listen to if they were bullied. I wanted to see if they could identify emotions in songs they listen to. I gathered the students in a circle around me and proceeded to ask them what

songs they liked. I had my laptop with iTunes, so when they mentioned a song, I was able to call it up. I have 4,000 songs on iTunes—I'm a bit of a music junkie. We listened to a few of their selections, including *Firework* by Katy Perry, *Keep your Head Up* by Andy Grammar, *Who Says* by Selena Gomez, *Lights* by Ellie Goulding, and *Walking on Sunshine*, a version done by Aly and AJ from the Disney Channel. I was surprised to find out that not one participant liked Justin Bieber!

For each song they liked, I asked them to listen closely to the lyrics. I asked them to tell me what the lyrics said, what they meant to them, and how they might apply or be useful to a bullying situation. For example, when we talked about the song *Firework*, students interpreted the song as meaning that you should be all you can be and should strive for the best. They said the song meant you should not let anything get you down and keep moving on. They also identified feeling happier when listening to *Keep Your Head Up*. They felt that both of these songs would be good to listen to as a way to cope with the emotions felt when being bullied. After we listened to the songs, they picked out three of their favorites, which I bought karaoke (instrumental) versions of later that evening for song creation in our next workshop. I had planned for us to devise original lyrics about bullying to these songs. The major karaoke track they worked on was to *Keep Your Head Up*. Most of the lyrics stemmed from the theme of *Keep Your Head Up* They sang, "Don't be a bully oooh, bullies are bad ahey, I know it's hard it's hard to remember sometimes but bullies are bad." However, the students seemed more interested in singing the actual lyrics to the song than they did creating their own lyrics. For instance, the students would be listening to the karaoke version of *Firework* and would begin singing the lyrics to *Firework* instead of creating new lyrics, which would then turn into singing lyrics from

another song such as *Lights*. The students would then ask to listen to *Lights* and the cycle would continue. Much was not achieved through lyric creation. But the group did seem enthusiastic about singing popular songs they liked. Unfortunately, however, attention spans and the distractions of working in the cafeteria prevented this activity from creating much material.

Throughout week two, we played only a few of the twelve activities I had planned for the workshop because of time and space. This week was fraught with challenges. Monday was the only day that we could use the multipurpose room. On all of the other days I had to conduct the workshop in the corner of the cafeteria. Not only that, but Wednesday was Halloween, when many students were being picked up early. On Thursday I was told that Friday's workshop would have to be cancelled because of an unexpected governmental site evaluation for the after school program. My advisor called our community partner to try and explain how important the day was to the workshop, particularly since we would be performing the following week! Our partner then allowed me to come, but I was asked to conduct the workshop sitting at a cafeteria table. I made the best of it, using the time to talk with the participants about cyberbullying. But I was incredibly frustrated. My workshop was designed to inhabit a large space. We needed space to move about, dance, sing, and act, but on three out of four days this week we had been placed in a corner of the cafeteria, even being confined to a single cafeteria table at the end of the week. On that Friday I noted in my journal, "Today felt very strange as the evaluation was occurring and the students didn't seem with me."

On that Friday, we discussed what cyberbullying is and how to identify it. Most students knew what cyberbullying was and some stated that they had experienced it or had a friend who had experienced it. They defined cyberbullying as bullying through the Internet using mean

words and name-calling. Because we were not able to use improvisation on this day, I asked participants to draw pictures about bullying. One drawing depicted two kids on a playground, one of whom is hitting the other. Overhead an airplane flies by with a banner stating “Don’t be a bully!!!” Another drawing depicted three children on a playground, with one kicking sand on another. Above the picture is the word “bullys” in a circle with a line through it. Below I share one of the drawings done by one of my students and offer my interpretation.

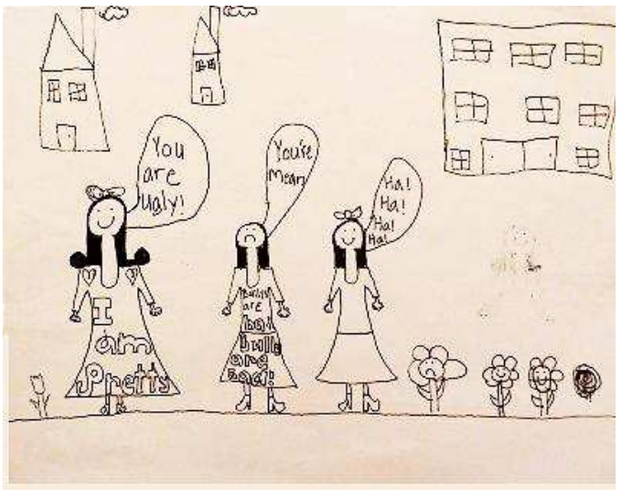


Figure 2.2. Drawing of bullying by Colleen

The drawing in Figure 2.2 depicts three girls with buildings in the background. This could be an outside school setting or perhaps a neighborhood setting. The three girls are all saying something with caption boxes above. The girl on the left is saying, “You are ugly,” while the middle girl states, “You’re mean.” The girl on the right appears to be laughing with “Ha!Ha!Ha!Ha!” Notably, two of the three girls have writing on their outfits. We might interpret this as the inner dialogue, or what the girls may be thinking or feeling. The girl on the left has “I am pretty” written on her, while the girl in the middle is thinking “Bullys are bad! Bully are

bad!" This depicted bullying behavior of name-calling was representative of the types of bullying behaviors my participants reported seeing or experiencing in their school. The picture also demonstrated Cadence's ability to discuss bullying as an issue of self-esteem. The bully wants to make herself feel superior to her peer by calling her ugly. But the bullied student recognizes the bullying, and speaks back to her bully with a "you're mean!"

Although much was done during week two, I noticed the number of students attending tapering off and some of the students who were attending were not *attentive*. Some of the students had become, what seemed to me, apathetic. This was perhaps not surprising, since we had spent most of the week in the cafeteria. This was definitely the case on Halloween when students were more focused on candy and trick-or-treating and less on the workshop. I remember a 5th grade student (who frequently looked out the windows of the cafeteria) seemed to space out. I heard comments like "when are we through? I want to get candy" or "when are we through, I want to go outside." It would begin with one student and spread like a plague within the group. I could feel my students slipping away from me. The researcher in me was upset and also worried for the coming week. The students were worried about having to perform for their teachers, parents and after-school peers. Elise mentioned having a fear of performing, and other students joined in on the discussion and expressed fears about the performance. Too many questions were unanswered. Can I get the students ready for a performance? Do they even want a performance? And will I have enough students to have a performance? Confusion and worry overwhelmed me as week two came to a close.

To Perform or Not to Perform? That is the Question: The Discussion of Week 3

During week three, which progressed to week four, many events occurred including the change to a video instead of final performance. At the end of week two, I was nervous about the final performance that was scheduled the following week. After hearing comments about stage fright and while discussing it with my advisor, I felt the best option was to change our live performance to a recorded one. There was not enough material, not enough time left, and I was concerned about the dwindling number of participants. On Monday, I gathered the students in the cafeteria and before we reached the multipurpose room doors, they were asking me questions about performing and telling me how worried they were about the upcoming performance. It was at that point that I knew that changing the performance to a video was the best decision for the workshop and this group of now 10 students. After we entered the multipurpose room we sat in our circle. I began the conversation by stating that we had done many activities in previous sessions and that from what I had heard the students did not want to perform. They confirmed this with me and I asked if they would like to make a video in place of the live performance. I explained how we could create material for the video this week and go into the following week if needed. They really seemed to react well to this idea. Anticipating that the students would be on board with this new idea, I had created flyers which I handed to each student to give to their parents or guardians discussing the change from a live performance to a video.

At that point, I noticed the behaviors of the students change. They seemed more relaxed and interested in playing again. After canceling the final performance, I felt a little more at ease but continued to be nervous about the idea of creating and editing a video. I was familiar with editing video although not with the kind of professional skills that a thesis project would need.

Also, the video recordings that I had taken up to that point had been made for research purposes, certainly not as a kind of documentary film. I sought advice and direction from one of my committee members, Dr. Glenn Hubbard, a professor specializing in multimedia journalism, to help me make the video.

As we sat around the circle in the multipurpose room, I introduced Dr. Michele Hairston's (date) original chant-song "Don't Be a Bully." The chant goes:

> Don't be a bully (snap), don't even laugh (snap)
> Re(fuse) to join in, and (work) on their behalf,
> Get away quick (stomp stomp), tell right away (stomp stomp)
> (You) can help others, it's the only way (snap, snap, snap)

I asked the students to follow my lead, and I performed the chant for them with the stomps and claps that accompany the lyrics. I then asked them to repeat what I had just done. They seemed to enjoy the chant, so I had them pair up with another student and come up with gestures or dance moves and even additional lyrics if they wanted to. I told them that if they wanted to involve the instruments they could. As the excitement in the group grew I noted in my journal that, "They really took interest in this activity so it lasted the whole hour with multiple solos and a few duet sections. I recorded several groups making up words, playing instruments or dancing to the song/chant. They were all eager to redo or change up their routines." John and Daniel seemed to really like the boomwhackers, and with each beat of the song they struck the boomwhackers together making the notes sound. Hazel and Marie sang and danced to the song while Harmony and Cadence did cartwheels or Cadence and Scarlett did hand stands. Melody recited original poetry to her bullies, and other students used instruments to the beat of the song. Cadence created her own song and sang it while doing cartwheels and hand stands. Enthusiasm grew each time an individual or pair performed! This was the energized group I had been hoping

for in Week 2. The enthusiasm grew by each pair wanting to continue to perform or correct their previous performances. The researcher in me felt elated at the enthusiasm of the group. The adult mentor and prior bullying survivor was also ecstatic witnessing these young people finding creative ways to express and embody an anti-bullying message, incorporating it into their voices and bodies, making it their own. I felt like they had fun, and I also had fun.

Week three continued with more space frustrations, as we were now unable to use the multipurpose room and were relegated to the gym. During our time in the gym the students re-created and added to their scenes from earlier weeks and created new ones for the video. One scene included three characters: a student, a bully, and a teacher. The scene played out with the bully hitting the student and the student telling a teacher who had not seen the bullying occur. The teacher then told the bully to "stop it." I was happy to see the students embodying the message of responding to bullying by telling an adult who takes action. But the teacher's simple two word answer did not seem to be much of a response. I do not know if this was representative of what these students experience when they report bullying. I would hope that they get more than a "stop it" from a teacher. As we continued to develop footage for the video, I encountered stories of bullying that I was not anticipating.

Melody's Story

When Melody opened up to me about her bullying experiences, she asked that I not audio or video record her experience, which I immediately honored by turning off the camera. I noticed that Melody seemed withdrawn in all of the activities of the workshop that day and appeared upset and non-enthusiastic compared to usual. She made comments such as, "I don't

want to do that today," or "Can I do that alone?" I was worried about her and towards the end of the session she asked to talk to me alone after the workshop activities were over.

She disclosed to me that she had been bullied by two of her friends who were also in the bullying workshop. I wanted to delve into her experience. I wanted to discuss how it made her feel. I wanted to find out what had happened that she now chose to define within the context of bullying. Was she only choosing to talk with me about this as bullying because we were in a bullying workshop? I also wanted to explore her definition of a friend. Were these girls really her "friends" if they were teasing her and calling her names? Although all of these questions occurred to me, I felt very humbled by the fact that the workshop environment and the open conversations within the workshop had created a space in which she felt comfortable enough to come to me with this experience. I was nervous going into the conversation because of the delicate nature of disclosing bullying and my past experiences being bullied. I knew it was tough to tell someone. As a kid being bullied, I was not taken me seriously by the adults I told. It was shrugged off as "normal" kid behaviors. I did not want that happening with Melody.

I was now in a space where I was negotiating the difficulty of switching between roles, the researcher who wants to gather data, the adult mentor who wants to teach, and bully survivor who wants to stomp out bullying wherever it bubbles up. I listened to her discuss her experience. As she described what happened, she did not seem scared to tell me, nor did she ask that I keep it a secret. She wanted me to do something about it. She wanted my advice, my adult mentor role, to do something about her bullies. As I listened to Melody, I felt the need to support her by thanking her for sharing her experience. I suggested we meet with her bullies individually and discuss how each party felt, let each side discuss the situation, and come to an understanding

by using mediation. I felt this was the best way for me to do something as an adult mentor. I couldn't just ignore the situation. I felt compelled to act. After all, this was what we had been talking about for three weeks.

The next workshop session, I met with Melody and her bullies at the end of the session in the cafeteria. First I met with Melody and Marie. I asked Melody to explain her side of the story/situation and discuss why we are here talking with each other. I noted in my journal, "The issue occurred when Marie, who is friends with one of Melody's friends, ignored and mocked Melody. They all three had never all played or hung out together. It was always either Marie and the friend or Melody and the friend. Melody was feeling left out after Marie and the friend made a comment about Melody (Marie and friend thought it was funny). After the comment was made it hurt Melody's feelings and they ignored her and isolated her." After she explained her side, I allotted time for Marie to talk. Marie said that she didn't mean to leave her out and stated that if Melody feels that way next time to tell them. This struck me as more of a misunderstanding than a case of bullying, because of the miscommunication that each felt they had experienced. The mediation seemed to work. The two said they were sorry for everything that had occurred and "hugged it out."

The second mediation was between Melody and Lena. The passage below details the experience from my journal:

> Lena was the goalie and Melody wanted to be the next goalie. Lena said some mean things to Melody and hurt her feelings. They never said what the mean things were but said she had called Melody a beep in the process. (Beep is a code word in the workshop for one of the bad words.) We discussed the situation from both perspectives and talked it out once again.

As the students discussed the situation it became clearer to me that Melody had wanted to be goalie in soccer and so did Lena. Lena called Melody some bad words which hurt Melody's feelings. As we proceeded through the mediation, I suggested that we discuss the emotions and talk it through without using words that can hurt people. We also briefly touched on how we must be careful what we say when we are angry or upset. I felt by discussing the situations in a mediation type style that this aided Melody. After I excused Lena from the conversation, I asked Melody how she felt that our conversation had gone, and she said it made her feel better. So all in all, the mediation felt like a success.

Harmony's Story

Harmony came to me on the last day of the workshop. She had been upset prior to the start of the workshop that day. Cadence had been consoling her as Harmony was crying, and when I asked what was wrong Cadence spoke up and said that Harmony was being bullied. Harmony nodded in agreement, and after she calmed down we proceeded. She also did not want to be audio or video recorded, so I listened. During this conversation, I once again was faced with the dilemma of my three roles. The researcher role felt elated that another student was sharing personal bullying experiences and questions kept popping into my mind. I wanted to console Harmony who had always been a bubbly student with enthusiasm for music and performing, while the mediator in me wanted to repeat the process that seemed to work for Melody. While this internal battle was occurring, I listened to Harmony tell her bullying experience. I felt upset for her, because her closest friends were isolating her and calling her names. These bullying activities were similar to my experiences at her age. All I could do to help her was listen until we figured out how she wanted to handle the situation. Once she finished

discussing her experience, I asked her what she wanted me to do. Her reply was “I don’t know, I just felt I should tell you and see what you think.” She also expressed that she did not want to sit down and talk with her bullies like Melody did. I told her to try to ignore the students when they say the mean things and if by ignoring them they continue to tell an adult such as a teacher or the guidance counselor. I also mentioned listening to music as an immediate way to cope with the situation and suggested she let the day’s activities within the workshop help her cope with the issue. Throughout the workshop that day, Harmony’s mood appeared to lighten and become more energetic. Also, according to my journal, “Cadence offered to play with Harmony during recess from now on.” This also helped Harmony feel better.

The experiences that Melody and Harmony shared fit with the characteristics of bullying I outlined in Chapter 1. As I discussed in Chapter 1, bullies directly and indirectly bully others. They hit, kick, push, shove, call each other names, and seize any opportunity to bully their victims. Bullying ranges from physical bullying behaviors to emotional and psychological. The acts performed by Melody and Harmony’s bullies show characteristics of emotional and psychological bullying as described by Sullivan, Cleary, and Sullivan (2004). Both situations had more than one bully and more than one occurrence. I feel that because the workshop environment allowed for open discussions of bullying, Melody and Harmony were primed to see their encounters as bullying and to report them to an adult. I wonder if they would have reported these incidents to their instructors in the after-school program, their teachers, or the guidance counselor if they hadn’t been with me talking about bullying. I hope through participation in the workshop, each participant will be able to recognize bullying, name it as such, and take action, even if that action is individual coping.

Concluding the Workshop

As the workshop came to a close, I began documenting specific moments I wanted to use in the video. In the three weeks following our last session, I edited the video and made arrangements with PCCSR to show the video to the students, their parents, and the rest of the after-school group. I created informational flyers to give to the parents, and PCCSR staff distributed them amongst the parents and guardians of all of the program students. I made copies of the video for each workshop participant, along with a CD of the songs we worked on, danced to, and created lyrics to. I made arrangements for food and drinks. On the day of the viewing, Dr. Thomson and Dr. Hubbard arrived to help with the set up.

We set up the projector and screen, laid out the popcorn, pretzels and drinks on the table, and welcomed in the students. A few parents came, but not as many as I hoped for and even expected. I was also disappointed that no one from my partnering agency came to the video showing. The students seemed to enjoy our screening, with many giggles and smiles. As the video ended, I distributed the music CDs and the DVD copies of the video to each student. I gave one of the leads the remaining CDs and DVDs for the students who were absent that day. I cleaned up and headed home with a sense of happiness as I realized I might have just made a difference in some students' lives.

CHAPTER 3

PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES AND LESSONS LEARNED

In this chapter I analyze the follow-up interviews that I conducted with the participants in my project, in order to suggest some possible outcomes and impacts of the workshop. I offer reflections on how my assumptions going into the project were challenged by my experiences during the workshop and by what my participants told me in follow up interviews. I conclude with a summary of the most significant discoveries or insights gained through the workshop and its analysis in the thesis, along with suggestions for future research and for future projects of this nature.

What They Told Me—Assessing Performance Outcomes from Follow-up Interviews

Before delving into the transcripts of the follow-up interviews, I first discuss the process I took to conduct the follow-up interviews. At the conclusion of workshop with a video showing in mid-December 2012, it occurred to me that my initial plan to conduct follow-up interviews the week after the workshop ended was not going to happen since that was when students would be on their holiday break. As the students would not be back for weeks, the follow-up interviews were postponed to early in the spring semester, necessitating an amendment to my IRB. As this process took longer than expected, so did the time frame between the workshop, video, and follow-up interviews. At this point, I was nervous I would not find the same students I had for the workshop, (as sometimes children switch after school care during the holiday break.) I was also worried that the students might have forgotten many of the events that occurred during the workshop. I hoped what we had done was still fresh enough in their memories to make the interviews worthwhile. After the IRB approval, I contacted PCCSR in order to schedule dates for

interviews. We made arrangements for a Friday afternoon in early February and the interviews began!

Because I was not allowed to be with a student unsupervised, I was faced with interviewing students in the back of the cafeteria. Because the distractions of the cafeteria (among other space issues) had been one of the major challenges of conducting this research project, I made sure to face the participants away from their peers in order to direct their attention on me and the interview questions. However, the cafeteria continued to pose problems as students stared out the window, as parents wandered in to pick up their children, and as children became distracted by extra noise from the other program students. Because of these distractions, I feel the interviews may have been hindered from reaching their full potential.

I had hoped to be able to conduct all of the interviews in one visit to the school. However, on the date when I had scheduled the interviews, I learned from the program leads that two sessions of interviews would have to be conducted as many students were not there that day. I was able to conduct three interviews on the first session date. At the conclusion of the first day of follow up interviews, I contacted my community partner Rita Roy of PCCSR to schedule an additional session. I once again visited Wintergreen and conducted four interviews, where I completed a two-day total of seven follow up interviews. Some students I had hoped to interview, I learned, were no longer a part of the after school program, were no longer at the school, or had gone from attending every day to once a week, which varied by the parent's schedules. This limited the amount of interviews I was able to conduct. During the interview process, I asked each student the same set of questions, which are listed below.

With the follow-up interviews, I hoped to learn, first and foremost, what the students took away from the workshop. I wanted to know what they recalled. I wanted to know what they learned. I wanted to know if they had made use of what they had learned. Some of my educational goals for the workshop were that students learn what bullying behaviors are, how to report bullying, how to cope with bullying utilizing music, and also how to use music improvisation in other areas of their lives. I hoped to get a sense of where the students stood in their thinking about bullying, particularly if they felt more prepared to identify and report bullying and if they felt they would be able to cope with such behaviors in the future. I attempted to take in-depth interview approach to the follow up interviews with the goal of providing new insight and exploration into what the students learned. According to Boyce and Neal (2006), "in-depth interviewing is a qualitative research technique that involves conducting intensive individual interviews with a small number of respondents to explore their perspectives on a particular idea, program, or situation" (p. 3). With in-depth interviewing in mind, I went into the interviews with the following questions:

1) What did you learn from the workshop?
2) Did you talk to anyone about the project after it was over?
3) What did you tell them?
4) What was most memorable?
5) What would you like to do more of?
6) What would you do differently?
7) Have you been bullied since the workshop?
8) If so, how did you cope with it? Did you use music?
9) Have you witnessed bullying since the workshop? Did you do anything about it?
10) Do you feel like you will handle a bullying situation differently now than before?
11) Have you sung the *Don't Be a Bully* song again? If so, when?
12) What has the school told you to do to report bullying?
13) Do students use this process?
14) (If no) Why not?

In the following sections, I go through each of the questions, summarizing the responses I received, and offering my analysis of what participants shared.

What did you learn?

For my first question, I asked participants "what did you learn from the workshop?" As I interviewed each student, the responses to this question varied in their wording, but maintained the same theme: bullying is bad and you shouldn't be a bully. Only one participant, Harmony mentioned music, stating, "I learned that bullies are not nice and you can solve problems with singing and listening to songs." I was happy the students mentioned learning about bullying but a little disappointed to note that only one student mentioned music. I was expecting music to be more central to what students discussed in the follow up interviews. As a researcher, I was elated to note that the students were making strong statements against bullying, by saying, as Marie put it, "you should never bully."

While conducting follow-up interviews I also reflected back to the video in which I featured a "what have we learned" section. The answers provided by the students in the "what have we learned" section of the video were very similar to the answers provided to the questions in the follow up interviews. For instance, Hazel noted in the video that she learned "don't be a bully, bullies are bad and you can stop the bullying by telling a teacher," while Marie stated that she learned to "not be a bully and learned what bullies are" These answers from the video mimic the responses given in the follow up interviews as they relate and repeat the same information in both sections.

Did you tell anyone about the project?

“Did you talk to anyone about the project after it was over? What did you tell them?” I asked my interviewees. To be honest, I was fearful the video and/or workshop had not sparked any conversations concerning bullying amongst peers and family. However, I found that most of the students had spoken to a friend or parent about the workshop, and some had shared the video. Part of the goal of the performance workshop was to spark conversations about bullying and create more windows for preventing and bringing awareness to the issue of bullying.

Hazel, Lena, Harmony, and Cadence all stated that they had spoken with their mothers about the workshop and bullying. Cadence stated, “I talked to my mom about it and told them that being bullied is very sad and that I would never do it.” As Cadence described her experience with her mom I felt her enthusiasm from the workshop shine through. Cadence, the bubbly girl, was always making her own lyrics about bullying, actively participating in discussions, and leading activities like the *Firework* dance with Catherine. She was now excited to report to me that this conversation with her mom had taken place. I asked what her mother had said in return, and Cadence stated, “She said well that’s great.” I was happy to know the conversation continued within the family structure, but disappointed that not much else seemed to have been discussed between mother and daughter. Lena, who also recalled a conversation with her mother, said that she had talked to her mom: “About what we did and that we can get through bullying with music.” I was excited to hear Lena’s response. This comment suggested that Lena now considered music as a possible method for dealing or coping with bullying. As a bully survivor, I thought back to my past experiences and reflected on my own bullying coping methods. I often sought refuge within books and music.

For Melody, a conversation about her participation in the project elicited a moment of bullying self-disclosure from a friend. Melody told of talking with her friend about the project, when the friend revealed that she was being bullied. The following is from our interview:

> Me: What did you tell them?
> Melody: I told her how to handle a bully because she said she had a bully at school.
> Me: What was the situation she was in?
> Melody: She said that he was making fun of her.
> Me: And what did you tell her to do?
> Melody: I said just ignore him or tell a teacher.

As, I listened to her friend's experience I was elated at Melody's response. We had discussed telling an adult as a bystander and bully victim. I was proud she mentioned this to her friend and shared this experience with me. During the workshop we discussed walking away as an immediate coping method and I was happy Melody relayed this to her friend. I was saddened she did not mention music as a form of coping, but she did give her friend advice about the situation. This experience gave me a sense of comfort as a bully survivor, a sense of what Melody had learned as a researcher, and as an adult mentor a sense of accomplishment.

What was most memorable?

I decided to ask the students what they found most memorable from the workshop to get a sense of what my participants valued most and what most stuck with them. The students' responses varied with this question and ranged from Lena's response of "just watching it on the video" to Elise's comment "Music… That you can face your problems by playing instruments." Lena, Cadence, and Hazel all stated the video was the most memorable. I was surprised that so many students found the video most memorable, since the making of a video was a quick fix to the problem of finding ourselves unable to get a live performance together. Cadence stated that her favorite moment was "sitting down and watching the video and seeing what we all did." For

Cadence, watching the video together served as a culminating act that marked "what we all did," the accomplishments of the group and the workshop.

Elise, Melody, and Marie all referred to musical moments as most memorable. For Elise, it was more general when she answered, "Music…That you can face your problems by playing instruments." Elise had made the connection between bullying and music, and she had extended it beyond bullying to a more general coping in "facing your problems." Problems come in all shapes and sizes and Elise's bold claim indicated that she feels that music can be used to cope with all areas of life. This statement made by Elise offered affirmation that I had, to some degree, achieved one of my goals for the workshop. I hoped the students would be able to use music as a form of coping and communication. I wanted to make that connection between music and bullying, and Elise reinforced this.

What would you like to do more of? What would you do differently?

I decided to then ask the students what they wished they could have done more of or what they wish we had done differently. I felt as if this question caught most of the students off guard since many responded with "I don't know." Surprisingly, Harmony noted that, "making more songs or maybe a talent show," would be of interest to her. While I agree making more songs would have been a good activity for the workshop, we were limited by the constraints I discussed in Chapter 2. I welcomed the idea of a talent show. Perhaps this kind of framing of the public performance could have served to diminish the tension felt over the idea of having to perform in front of others outside of the workshop.

Cadence responded to this question with, "Probably cyberbullying, because you didn't get to a lot about it." The more I reflected on this statement, the more I agreed with her. I spoke

about cyberbullying during the state evaluation day where we were confined to the cafeteria table. I also remember briefly discussing cyberbullying towards the end of the workshop, but wish I had gone in more detail. Cadence's comment made me realize this was a real missed opportunity, since cyberbullying is clearly something these children have to deal with. I had not been cyberbullied as a child. There were no social media such as Facebook and Myspace when I was growing up. I grew up in the Y2K age of emerging home computing, where AOL, dialup tones, and limited web access were the norm. These students are of a different--technologically challenging--era, and cyberbullying is certainly a prevalent and serious issue. It may be that because my experience did not mirror theirs in this way, I did not fully recognize what a problem cyberbullying is for their generation and seize the opportunity to learn from them about their experiences. An "Aha!" moment occurred for me.

Have you been bullied and how did you cope?

I asked each student if they had been bullied since the workshop. Cadence, Melody, and Marie stated that they had experienced some form of bullying since the workshop, while Hazel, Elise, Lena, and Harmony reported no bullying experiences. Melody told of getting bullied by neighborhood children. Cadence stated she was bullied by a girl, but she wasn't specific about the experience, and seemed distracted during the interview. Marie reported being bullied by her sister. Marie noted that she had listened to the CD songs after telling her mom about the bullying sister. In my thesis proposal defense, Dr. Hairston had suggested that I give the participants something tangible to take home and reinforce the messages and goals of the workshop. Here Marie demonstrated just how vital this piece was for her learning.

Melody stated that she had been bullied since the workshop. Her experience involved friends from her neighborhood who told her she was ugly. This resonated with me, as I was also bullied by my neighborhood, so-called "friends". These kids called me fat, made fun of my clothing, and mocked my sensitivity. As I listened to her, I felt the emotions of my own bullying experiences coming back. An excerpt from our conversation follows:

> Melody: They are saying that I'm ugly.
> Me: That you are ugly?! Well what do you tell them?
> Melody: I tell their parents.
> Me: What do their parents do?
> Melody: They tell them to come in and that they are grounded.

Melody said this in a manner that suggested that she was not pleased with the results. She was shifting in her seat and her voice expressed sadness rather than the kind of tone that would signify that problem had been resolved. Of course, all of this is based on my perceptions, which were filtered by my emotional response to her story and its similarity to my own.

> Me: So that really didn't solve it a whole lot did it? What do you think would have helped to solve it?
> Melody: Umm if they had talked with us or something. Or if they said that if we can't get along that we couldn't play together.
> Me: Have you told your mom or dad or anybody at school?
> Melody: Not anyone at school but my mom and dad.
> Me: What did they say?
> Melody: They said to maybe not go to his house anymore.
> Me: Gotcha. How do you feel about it? Does it hurt your feelings or make you sad?
> Melody: Yeah.
> Me: Have you listened to music or anything like the CD?
> Melody: Yeah.
> Me: Does the CD help?
> Melody: Yeah.

Toward the end of our conversation, Melody seemed to be shutting down. After she revealed that her parents "said to maybe not go to his house anymore," she responded to me with sad, single-

word answers: “Yeah.” Her parents saying not to go to his house could have meant for Melody that she had lost a friend. This seemed to sadden her. It saddens me too that the parents didn’t take further action to help resolve the situation, but instead avoided it.

Even though Melody may not have had the situation completely resolved, I was proud of her for taking action. She spoke to the other child’s parents in addition to her own. She went to an adult after being bullied (something we had talked about in the workshop), and thankfully the adults took her seriously. This was all too frequently not the case when I was a child being bullied. I feel that talking to me about her experience had helped her cope with it some, too.

Lena had stated that she was not bullied since the workshop but added “well it really wasn’t bullying she didn’t call me names or anything she just didn’t want me to go on a ride and I wanted to go so I did. She called me later and apologized though.” As she spoke, I noted that it appeared as if she was able to differentiate between bullying behaviors and friendship conflicts in this situation, although this became less clear as the interview went on, as I describe next.

Have you witnessed bullying since the workshop? Did you do anything about it?

When I asked Lena if she had witnessed bullying since the workshop, she told me that she saw some boys fighting at the fair (she said “probably over girls”). She said that she “told them to stop it,” and it “sorta worked,” and I was excited that she did not idly stand by and watch the situation continue. It is difficult to know from what Lena told me if the situation she described was bullying or an interpersonal conflict. I now wish I could ask Lena how she defines bullying. Clearly she didn’t feel that it had taken place in her case, yet that is the name she gives to a conflict situation she observes without knowing the context. I wonder how the students now

define bullying, and if the workshop gave them a heightened awareness that makes them hypersensitive to seeing conflict as bullying.

I asked the students if they had witnessed bullying since the workshop and if they had done anything about it if they had. Five of the students--Hazel, Marie, Cadence, Harmony and Melody--had not witnessed bullying since the workshop while the remaining two students, Elise and Lena had seen bullying occur. Elise described seeing a classmate being mean to another classmate. I asked her what she did, and she responded that she told the teacher, who then addressed the situation. Both Elise and Lena took action when presented with an opportunity of intervening in a potential bullying situation. Originally I was happy to hear Lena say that she had taken action when she had encountered what she saw as bullying. But upon further reflection I wonder if it is always a good idea to do that. Without knowing the context of the situation, it is hard to determine if her actions could have been putting her in potential danger.

Do you feel like you will handle a bullying situation differently?

I asked the students if they felt they would handle a bulling situation differently now than before the workshop. In response, all of the students said yes. Unfortunately, because I had phrased this as a closed question, I did not elicit the depth of response I had hoped for. This question could have been more fully answered by additional probing questions. This did not occur to me until late into the interviews, when I tried to extend the conversation with Marie:

> Me: Do you feel like you will handle a bullying situation differently now than before?
> Marie: Yes.
> Me: What could you do?
> Marie: I could go tell someone like a teacher.
> Me: Gotcha…That's good.

While I was glad to get more than a simple "yes" response here, this was still not much more. I wondered if the traffic of parents filing in to pick up their kids, noise from their peers, and other distractions could have played a part in the one-word responses I received. Reflecting on this experience I think that my lack of probing questions was one reason for the one-word responses. This was my first time conducting in-depth interviews, and my lack of experience could have played into the brevity of the responses I received. As I am reflecting on the process, I wish I could have asked the students to explain specific examples with the yes responses or framed the question again later in the interview. I also wish I would have thought to ask students if they had been cyberbullied since the workshop, if they could define bullying and cyberbullying for me. It also occurred to me that I could have built into my study interviewing parents about what their children told them about the workshop or their responses to bullying situations their children encountered after the workshop and how they handled it

Have you sung the *Don't Be a Bully* song again? If so when?

I hoped to gain more insight into what the students took away from the workshop with this question. I hoped this question would bring out those rich responses, and indeed this question prompted some interesting discovery. Lena, Elise, and Marie all replied in the negative. Marie even stated that she had forgotten the song. The remaining four students had in some form continued to perform the song. Melody and Cadence performed the song/chant in front of their parents while Hazel and Harmony both responded that they had performed the song for themselves in the privacy of their bedrooms. Harmony even used the song to create a pretend music class in her room, as she explained when she said, "I have a white board with markers and I pretend it's music class." For Harmony, the workshop had generated a secondary site of

improvisational play, one which may have reinforced the anti-bullying message of the workshop. And while I was excited to hear this, I was disappointed that more students had not remembered or sung the song.

When I found out that Cadence had performed the song again, I asked the follow up question, "Did you sing it by yourself or with someone?" Cadence responded: "After the video, I told my mom all about it, because the way the camera was and when we were doing it she couldn't see it really. So I did it and then I did it upstairs in my room. I still have the paper. And I have a chalkboard in my room so I write it down" I understood Cadence to mean that she had performed the song for her mother and then she had performed it for herself in her room, writing the lyrics on her chalkboard. I had distributed the lyrics on a piece of paper to all of the students, and Cadence had kept the paper, using it to refer back to in these subsequent performances. (Or even if she hadn't needed the paper to recall the lyrics, she did want me to know that she had kept the paper.) It is interesting to note here that *the video* (its lack of accurately representing the workshop performance) was what seemed to spur these home performances. As Cadence states, "because the way the camera was…she couldn't see it really." As I said in Chapter 2, the video was originally intended to be used for data collection. It was not planned as a documentary work. But here it had an added benefit of getting a child performing and talking about bullying with a parent.

What has the school told you to do to report bullying? Do students use this process?

After discovering in the workshop that the school's process for reporting bullying was not known to the students, I decided to learn more about this in the interviews. I asked what the school had told them to do to report bulling and if students used this process.

As the students answered this question, the responses were very scattered. The responses ranged from Hazel and Elise who said to tell a teacher or walk away, to Cadence and Melody who said report it to the guidance counselor, to Lena and Marie who suggested that the school had no process in place. I felt the wide and inconsistent range of responses suggested that there is confusion among students at this school over how to formally respond to bullying. It appeared that there were not many proactive and preventative measures being taken by the school. Melody and Cadence both mentioned going to the guidance counselor concerning bullying issues, but no one else mentioned the process the school has in place. As I thought about this, I realized I did not confirm the guidance counselor process as being the actual (or only) school policy in place for reporting bullying. During our interview I reminded Marie about the guidance counselor process, and she responded, “Oh yeah. I forgot about that.” This indicates this process may not be discussed or used enough within the school. Marie did mention that, “there’s posters in the halls about bullying saying don’t be a bully and stuff and they are from troops of girl scouts I think.” However, these posters did not indicate what a student should do if they experience bullying. Cadence described the guidance counselor process by explaining, “you fill out a little sheet and then he comes and pulls you out of class and he talks to you and you tell him everything and stuff.” Although she had never had to use the process, she knew of one student who had but did not know what else occurred from there. I wondered how effective this procedure for reporting was. It seems to me that the longer the process is drawn out and made public (the more people who find out), the less likely a student may be to report the bullying.

As I questioned the students on the school process, Melody did note that she had used the guidance counselor to report her bullying experiences. A section of her interview follows.

Me: What has the school told you to do to report bullying?
Melody: Um I can talk to my student counselor.
Me: Have you done that?
Melody: Yeah.
Me: What has he or she said?
Melody: They tell me just don't play with that person.
Me: So just kinda avoid them and stay away from them. Have they told you what to do if they continue it?
Melody: Um he told me to stay away from him.

Melody's comments worried me, because I felt that measures other than avoidance could be identified in order to address the kind of bullying situation Melody has faced at school. While staying away from a bully might help, it is not a cure-all method. If I was put in place of the guidance counselor, I would have mentioned not only staying away from the bully but also would have utilized peer mediation and discussion one-on-one with the bully. Of course I am not a counselor nor do I have the education to be one, but from my perspective I feel I would also discuss with the bully what bullying is and educate both parties involved on bullying behaviors and how harmful they can be. Then if the problem persisted I would discuss the issue with the parents or guardians. I would also mention to Melody ways to cope with bullying such as music, performance, extracurricular activities, etc.

As a result of Melody and Cadence's interviews I was aware of the process and felt that students may not be as familiar with it. Because this is an action-research project, I want to follow through on Stringer's (1996) "look, think, act" model and share the information gathered with the school's administration. This has prompted me to write a letter to the principal of the school in order to make her more aware of the students seeming confusion over the process the school has in place for intervening in bullying situations. This letter will hopefully provide useful

feedback for the school in the event that they choose to review their processes for reporting bullying.

Lessons Learned and Work Still to Do

I conclude the thesis in the sections below by discussing some of the lessons learned in this project. I discuss the complexities of performance-based action research, with its tension between action and research. I discuss what I felt were the most significant insights and outcomes of the thesis project, and I offer suggestions for future research, as there is much work left to do. Some of my findings were unexpected and had more to do with my method and use of community-engaged research than they did my research question, as I explain below.

Overlapping Roles: Researcher, Mentor, Survivor

As I progressed through the workshop and the follow up interviews, my three overlapping roles opened up some opportunities and closed down others. I had several students confide in me as an adult mentor and even trust me enough to mediate a bullying situation. This opportunity provided insight into current bullying problems and how students handle them. I also was able to reflect as a former bullying victim on my experiences as students shared their experiences. But sometimes this role of the mentor collided with the role of researcher. For example, I would sometimes give answers to questions I posed rather than listening to what the students had to say. Take the conversation with Melody (quoted two pages above) in which I ask her about the process of reporting bullying to the school. Following that bit of the conversation, I slipped into the role of mentor. Our conversation continued:

> Me: Well you know if you still get bullied and people are still coming up to you saying these things remember that they are just saying these things to make themselves feel better. And if it still doesn't stop make sure you tell their parents or your parents and they can help fix the situation.

Melody: Yea.
Me: How do you feel about the situation?
Melody: Better.
Me: Good.

In this case my mentor role took over as a teaching opportunity arose within my researcher role. But this teaching comes at the expense of using that time to learn from her. Instead of probing in the conversation with Melody, I wanted to give her counsel. As I reflect further on my experience with Melody's bullying revelations in particular, I realize how much of my motivation to counsel her comes from the resonant emotional impact of being a bully survivor. When I was bullied I constantly told teachers and the teachers said to ignore it. In particular there was a clique of girls who were calling me names and belittling me, and after I had had enough I told a teacher. She never once pulled them aside or even spoke to them. She simply didn't deal with the situation when she said, "oh you kids and your girly fighting, just ignore them." As in Melody's situation, I wasn't taken seriously by my teacher or wasn't told any ways of coping with the bullying. I found music and through music found my strength to keep going. The situation Melody shared resonated with me and moved me deeply. But these emotions and my compelling need to help Melody, in particular, made it difficult at times to ask questions rather than giving counsel. This is perhaps one of the drawbacks of action research.

Findings on the Use of Improvisational Music to Talk About Bullying

I found that many of my students had a good deal of prior knowledge of music coming into the workshop. Students seemed to learn how to express their emotions through musical improvisation, and learned that this could be applied to bullying. The theatrical improvisations, when truly improvised (without a defined scene) were chaotic, but when students were given time in groups to come up with a scene, they demonstrated bullying behaviors from within their

experience that we could delve into and discuss. The students were very invested in and knowledgeable about popular music and were excited to work with their favorite popular songs. The creation of anti-bullying lyrics to popular songs was not as successful as I had hoped, in part because of the space limits I have addressed previously. The "jam sessions" we held were high points of the workshop; they allowed the free flow of emotions that we were then able to reflect on and identify. Our very first workshop in the multipurpose room seemed to provide some of the best data on bullying; the students were still fresh and excited and really opened up about bullying.

I believe that my thesis experience supports the value of using improvisational music and theatre as a means for talking with elementary school students about bullying. This was nowhere more apparent than when my own participants entrusted their bullying experiences with me. The workshop had created an atmosphere of trust in which students felt they could privately approach me to share their bullying experiences. Both Melody and Harmony's bullying situations may not have been discussed with another adult were I not around and were we not talking about bullying. My experience supports just how important it is for teachers, school administrators, after-school leaders, parents, and other adults in children's lives to be talking to them about bullying, creating those spaces of trust to be open to hearing those stories.

In taking on an action research thesis project, I sought to bring awareness to the issue of bullying amongst my project participants, their parents, their teachers, and their peers. It was my hope that the children would take away valuable tips for combating, coping with, or preventing bullying through improvisational music and performance. I hoped that would also find use for lives. As a researcher it is hard to identify all of the aspects that impacted the students both

short-term and long-term, but I hope the study will provide the participants with fun memories to revisit in years to come. By providing the CD and DVD copies for the students, they will be able to share the memories and lessons learned for many years. In my follow up interviews I learned that many participants had gone back and listened to the CD, and that this tangible artifact had a lasting impression, continuing to reinforce the messages of the workshop after it had ended.

The Challenges of Community-Based Research

As I noted in the beginning of Chapter 2, space was an issue throughout the workshop, limiting us in ways that hampered our ability to improvise, create, and perform. As I looked back at the calendar provided in Appendix C, I noticed that we were in the multipurpose room for only four days of the twelve-day workshop. We were in the gym twice. And the other six days we were in the cafeteria. It is my opinion that more consistency in our space would have created a more consistent workshop. I have to wonder how much different the workshop would have been if I had been able to work with my group for twelve days in the multipurpose room. How many more of my activities could have been performed? What could my participants have created if they were not being distracted by the commotion of the cafeteria? What might we have accomplished if my participants had been able to sing, dance, and jam freely and playfully outside of the gaze of their non-workshop peers and in a space not crowded with cafeteria tables?

The nature of my partnership with PCCSR and the Wintergreen Intermediate after-school program changed and evolved throughout the workshop process. The communication between my partner and me ebbed and flowed, becoming particularly tense during the crisis over space. At times I would communicate my frustrations to my advisor, who would then share them with Rita Roy at PCCSR, adding even more complexity to the communication. To make matters more

confusing, the communication between the administration of Wintergreen and PCCSR has its own problems. While PCCSR has access to three spaces: the cafeteria, the multipurpose room, and the gym, they are at the will of the school administration and can be bumped out of a space at any time for a school function. The school owns the multipurpose room space during school and after school activity hours and permits PCCSR to inhabit the space when it is not in use by the school. But, as there was never a clear schedule for the use of the multipurpose room by the school, its use by PCCSR could never be guaranteed. As I faced these challenges, I learned some hard lessons about community partnerships including the need for open, clear, and ongoing communication and a clear understanding of roles and responsibilities. Partnerships are ever-changing and developing throughout the course of the project at hand.

I would recommend for future community-based performance research that the research facilitator make communication with the community partner a priority. This could best be accomplished with a Memorandum of Understanding. According to Seifer, Shore and Holmes (2003),

> these agreements can specify the problems and issues to be addressed; the goals and expected outcomes; the activities or strategies to be conducted; the specific roles and responsibilities of each partner; and the terms of funding and performance" (p. 13).

It seems clear that a Memorandum of Understanding was needed between ECU, PCCSR, and Wintergreen Intermediate School, in particular, to be able to secure the space required to conduct the workshop. If we were not able to come to an understanding between our three organizations, it would have been wise to look for another location for conducting the workshop.

Improving the Workshop

Upon reflection on the workshop and the materials used, I feel the musical component could be strengthened. More materials and structure would have yielded better results. I would have liked to have introduced the participants to other kinds of music. A music day session with the exploration of various genres (instead of letting students pick their favorites) would have provided a more well-rounded view of music. I also would have liked to go more in-depth on musical concepts such as various rhythms. This could have been conducted through reading music compositions. I would have also liked to implement more sessions on song/lyric creation. Researching ways to create lyrics and the order of a typical song would have proven beneficial for the workshop. These were all ideas that occurred to me after I had concluded the workshop.

I feel that the workshop could have benefited from more attention to the contexts in which students experience bullying. For example, a student in our follow up interview suggested for improvement that the workshop address cyberbullying more. We could have created improvised scenes depicting cyberbullying for our analysis and interventions. If space had not been such a constraint, I would have utilized more improvised scene work using techniques from Augusto Boal's *Forum Theatre* and Salas' *Playback Theatre*. Additionally, I would have liked to develop take home materials for students and parents on bullying in order to provide conversation starters. With improvisation, there is so much potential to create, perform, and discuss. The opportunities are endless.

Improving the Data Collection

As I went back through my video recordings, I realized how many moments from the workshop were lost in the recording process, either because the action was happening off

camera, or the echo of the space made voices inaudible, or even that the battery went dead and I hadn't brought a backup method of recording. Also, because I was the camera operator and the workshop facilitator, this constant back and forth hindered the flow of the workshop and quality of video recorded. Future researchers should consider having a camera operator who is dedicated to filming the process and whose job it will be to capture as much of the relevant material as possible on camera. Researchers should also consider utilizing an external microphone or secondary recording device either on the research facilitator or near the workshop participants. These secondary sources could supplement poor audio quality and give the researcher access to more reliable data.

Also, delving into in-depth interviews through practice runs and mock interviews would have helped develop me prepare for the follow up interviews. As a first-time interviewer I too frequently let short answers go when follow up questions could have added more material for analysis. It could also have been interesting to interview the parents to see what they had observed in terms of participants responses to the workshop. It could have been interesting to interview Rita Roy of PCCSR or the program leads at Wintergreen Intermediate to get their perspectives on bullying and on how the workshop was functioning with regard to bullying. It also would have been potentially beneficial to conduct two follow up interviews with my participants, once immediately following the workshop and then again two months later, to see what messages had resonated with them.

What did I find?

As I explored the topic of bullying through improvisational music with these students, I found just how vulnerable this age group is to bullying. Many of the students had experienced

bullying firsthand, and two came forward confiding their bullying stories privately. I also found that students are not clear about what they should do when they experience bullying at their school. Based on this, I would recommend that all schools in Pitt County pay more attention to the problem of bullying, putting clear guidelines in place for how to address it when it happens, and making sure that those processes are well known to the students.

This project found that music could be used to help students understand the emotions associated with bullying and that students were receptive to the idea of using music as a coping mechanism to deal with bullying. Activities such as "the Emotional Chain" helped students learn that emotions are easily misidentified and misunderstood by their peers. Students developed the ability to create improvised music expressing emotions associated with bullying. While improvisational performance was found to be useful in creating within the safe confines of the workshop, it was not found to be helpful in creating a public performance. The pressures associated with live public performance may have undermined the creative freedom of the workshop, as participants demonstrated stress at the idea of performing before their teachers, peers, and parents. After discovering the group consensus of not wanting to perform publicly, we resolved the problem of a performance product by producing a video recording of the work participants had done throughout the workshop. The video seemed to work well for these students. Future projects may elect a video or a final performance, depending on the participants' comfort with public performance.

One unexpected finding had to do with the structure of the workshop and the nature of partnerships in community-based research. I discovered the necessity for partnership guidelines and how important this relationship can be to performance projects out in the community.

Throughout the course of the workshop, space played a major role in determining the productivity of a given workshop session. Improvisation requires playfulness and risk-taking. Participants clearly did not feel free to do this in the cafeteria, where peers who were not in the workshop could see them. For future performance workshops, there must be a defined space and a "plan B" if that space is unavailable.

Concluding Thoughts: More Work to Do

More efforts are needed to combat the problem of bullying in our schools across the United States. My project was a small one, with limited impact, but impact nonetheless. I noticed these students responding to music through song and dance. I noticed these students discussing bullying and what they have experienced. With regards to Melody and Harmony who shared their bullying experiences, I noticed the use of music as a coping method first hand. The project also had an impact on me, helping me to work through the emotional scars left by my own years of being bullied. Not only that, it made me a better scholar, a better thinker, and a more engaged citizen.

I return to a quote from Chapter 1 as I conclude my thesis. Davis (2010) tells us that music "is more than just a medium of entertainment. It is a powerful tool that can capture attention, elicit long forgotten memories, communicate feelings, create and intensify moods, and bring people together" (p. 127). I couldn't agree more, having created and facilitated the workshop that I did, and having written the thesis you have just read. By applying music to bullying situations, we can more deeply understand the feelings that accompany bullying. Music can also help heal our wounds. As Plato is said to have mused on the nature of music (Watson,

1991, p.45), “Music gives a soul to the universe, wings to the mind, flight to the imagination and life to everything.

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APPENDIX A: IRB APPROVAL FORMS

EAST CAROLINA UNIVERSITY
University & Medical Center Institutional Review Board Office
4N-70 Brody Medical Sciences Building· Mail Stop 682
600 Moye Boulevard · Greenville, NC 27834
Office **252-744-2914** · Fax **252-744-2284** · **www.ecu.edu/irb**

Notification of Initial Approval: Expedited

From: Social/Behavioral IRB

To: Kristin Smith

CC: Deborah Thomson

Date: 10/19/2012

Re: UMCIRB 12-001728

I am pleased to inform you that your Expedited Application was approved. Approval of the study and any consent form(s) is for the period of 10/19/2012 to 10/18/2013. The research study is eligible for review under expedited category #6, 7. The Chairperson (or designee) deemed this study no more than minimal risk.

Changes to this approved research may not be initiated without UMCIRB review except when necessary to eliminate an apparent immediate hazard to the participant. All unanticipated problems involving risks to participants and others must be promptly reported to the UMCIRB. The investigator must submit a continuing review/closure application to the UMCIRB prior to the date of study expiration. The Investigator must adhere to all reporting requirements for this study.

The approval includes the following items:

Name	Description
Final script to students.docx | History	Consent Forms
Kristin Smith informed consent form revised 2.doc | History	Consent Forms
Kristin Smith Thesis Proposal Sept 28.docx | History	Study Protocol or Grant Application
Questions | History	Interview/Focus Group Scripts/Questions

The Chairperson (or designee) does not have a potential for conflict of interest on this study.
IRB00000705 East Carolina U IRB #1 (Biomedical) IORG0000418
IRB00003781 East Carolina U IRB #2 (Behavioral/SS) IORG0000418 IRB00004973

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Notification of Amendment Approval

From:	Social/Behavioral IRB
To:	Kristin Smith
CC:	Deborah Thomson
Date:	1/29/2013
Re:	Ame1_UMCIRB 12-001728 UMCIRB 12-001728 Improvisational music techniques involving children affected by bullying

Your Amendment has been reviewed and approved using expedited review for the period of 1/29/2013 to 10/18/2013. It was the determination of the UMCIRB Chairperson (or designee) that this revision does not impact the overall risk/benefit ratio of the study and is appropriate for the population and procedures proposed.

Please note that any further changes to this approved research may not be initiated without UMCIRB review except when necessary to eliminate an apparent immediate hazard to the participant. All unanticipated problems involving risks to participants and others must be promptly reported to the UMCIRB. A continuing or final review must be submitted to the UMCIRB prior to the date of study expiration. The investigator must adhere to all reporting requirements for this study.

The approval includes the following items:

Name	Description	Modified	Version
Interview Questions Post Workshop | History	Interview/Focus Group Scripts/Questions	1/22/2013 11:15 AM	0.01

The Chairperson (or designee) does not have a potential for conflict of interest on this study.

IRB00000705 East Carolina U IRB #1 (Biomedical) IORG0000418
IRB00003781 East Carolina U IRB #2 (Behavioral/SS) IORG0000418 IRB00004973

APPENDIX B: INFORMED CONSENT FORM AND ASSENT FORM

Study ID:UMCIRB 12-001728 Date Approved: 10/19/2012 Expiration Date: 10/18/2013

East Carolina University

Informed Consent to Participate in Research

Information to consider before taking part in research that has no more than minimal risk.

Title of Research Study: Utilizing improvisational music techniques to dialogue with children on the topic of bullying
Principal Investigator: Kristin Smith
Institution/Department or Division: School of Communication at ECU
Address: 102 Joyner East Greenville, NC 27858
Telephone #: 252-328-4227

Researchers at East Carolina University (ECU) study problems in society, health problems, environmental problems, behavior problems and the human condition. Our goal is to try to find ways to improve the lives of you and others. To do this, we need the help of volunteers who are willing to take part in research.

My project is a 3 week performance workshop in which children will use music and theatre to create a performance about bullying. We will be creating our own songs about bullying and improvising scenes about bullying. My hope is that our workshop and performance will be a great experience for your child, as she or he grows in confidence as a performer while addressing a very important topic that effects everyone in elementary school—bullying.

Why is this research being done?

The reason for doing this research is to see how music and theatre can be used to talk about bullying.

Why is my child being invited to take part in this research?

Your child is being invited to take part in this research because we want to know if music and theatre are valuable tools for talking about bullying, or even to help stop bullying. If you decide to allow your child to be in this research, you child will be one of about 7-15 people taking part in it.

Are there reasons my child should not take part in this research?

There are no specific reasons unless you feel uncomfortable with your child participating in the research study or if the child does not want to participate

What other choices does my child have if they do not take part in this research?

You can choose for your child to not to participate. In this case, your child would continue with regularly scheduled activities provided by the after school program

Where is the research going to take place and how long will it last?

The research will be conducted at Wintergreen Elementary School during the after school program timeframe. It will last three weeks with a final performance to follow. The workshop will be on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday of each week leading up to the final performance on Thursday Nov. 8 at 5pm.

What will my child be asked to do?

Your child will be asked to do the following:
Talk about bullying and what they know or have experienced. Talk about their musical knowledge. Participate in musical and theatrical activities to discuss bullying. I will be audio recording the workshop sessions and video tapping the final performance for you and your families to enjoy.

What possible harms or discomforts might my child experience if he/she takes part in the research?

Your child might experience embarrassment in front of peers when performing or talking about instances of bullying. Students may recall memories or instances of bullying that should be brought up in another forum, such as with guidance counselors, parents/guardians, or teachers. If this is the case, I will tell your child to speak with you about their bullying experience, and I will follow up with you to let you know to speak to your child about this.

What are the possible benefits I may experience from taking part in this research?

Sometimes good things happen to people who take part in research. Your child might have fun! Your child may enjoy the games we will play with music and theatre. Your child may take away more knowledge of bullying and may play a part in stopping bullying in their school.

Will I or my child be paid for taking part in this research?

Neither you nor your child will be paid for this study.

What will it cost me to take part in this research?

It will not cost you any money to be part of the research.

Who will know that I took part in this research and learn personal information about me?

We will be making a public performance, and it will be open to your family, and your child's friends and teachers. The performance will be recorded and made public. The video recording of the final performance will be a public document available to you, the school, and the public within my Master's Thesis. I will be making DVDs of the performance to give to all participants. I will also be writing about our three weeks together and sharing some of these moments in the thesis with whoever reads it. In my writing I will use pseudonyms for all students to ensure that any personal information that is shared in the workshop remains confidential.

How will you keep the information you collect about my child secure? How long will you keep it?

We will be making a public performance, and it will be open to your family, friends and child's teachers. The performance will also be recorded and made public within the thesis. The audio and video recordings of the workshop will be destroyed after the written thesis is complete. A DVD of the performance will be made public. You and other parents will get a copy. The school and after-school program will get a copy. The performance will also be available as a DVD accompanying the Master's Thesis.

What if I decide I do not want my child to continue in this research?

If you decide you no longer want to be in this research after it has already started, you may stop at any time. You will not be penalized or criticized for stopping. If this occurs please notify the researcher as soon as possible.

Who should I contact if I have questions?

If you have questions about the research, you should ask the people listed on the first page of this form. If you have other questions about your rights while you are in this research study you may call the Institutional Review Board at 252-744-2914.

I have decided I want my child to take part in this research. What should I do now?

The person obtaining informed consent will ask you to read the following and if you agree, you should sign this form:

- I have read (or had read to me) all of the above information.
- I have had an opportunity to ask questions about things in this research I did not understand and have received satisfactory answers.
- I know that I can stop taking part in this study at any time.
- By signing this informed consent form, I am not giving up any of my child's rights.
- I have been given a copy of this consent document, and it is mine to keep.
- I understand that the public performance at the end of the workshop will be made public via video recording and that copies of the performance will be distributed to parents, the school and after-school program, and included in as a DVD in the written Master's Thesis.

_____ _____

Parent/Guardian Name (PRINT) **Student's Name (PRINT)**

_____

Parent/Guardian Signature **Date**

Person Obtaining Informed Consent: I have conducted the initial informed consent process. I have orally reviewed the contents of the consent document with the person who has signed above, and answered all of the person's questions about the research.

_____

Person Obtaining Consent (PRINT) **Signature** **Date**

_____

Principal Investigator (PRINT) ***Signature*** ***Date***
(If other than person obtaining informed consent)

Script to students/children:

Welcome everyone! I am excited to tell you about a project I am doing, and you can see if you want to join!

I am going to be offering a performance workshop here in your after school program for three weeks. We will meet for an hour on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. We will be using music and theater to talk about bullying. We will have a lot of fun with performance games and activities during the three week workshop. Then after the three weeks, we will be performing for the parents, teachers, and friends who can come to our show here.

I am doing this performance workshop as research for my school project. I want to learn how music and theatre might work together to help talk about bullying and learn how to prevent it. Because this is research, I will be recording the workshop using a tape recorder or video camera. I will also be recording the performance that we make, and will give a copy of this to all of the participants. This video will also be part of my thesis.

You are not required to go to this workshop. Your participation is totally up to you. If you decide to give the workshop a try and then decide you don't want to continue, you can stop at any time. You would continue with your normal schedule for the after school program if this happens.

If you are interested in being in my workshop let me know by the end of the day today so I can give your parents or guardians the forms to fill out.

APPENDIX C

CALENDAR OF EVENTS AND JOURNAL

Calendar of Events

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
10/15	10/16	10/17	10/18	10/19 Cafeteria: Recruiting Day
10/22 Cafeteria: Consent Day	10/23 Cafeteria: Icebreakers	10/24 Multi Room: Music Intro	10/25 No workshop	10/26 No workshop: Teacher workday
10/29 Multi room: Improv games	10/30 Cafeteria: Scene work, chose songs	10/31 Cafeteria: Statues, Lyrics	11/1 No workshop	11/2 Cafeteria: Drawings (PCCSR site visit)
11/5 Multi room: Don’t be a Bully	11/6 Multi room: Song lyric creation Firework dance	11/7 Gym: Scene creation; Student bullying conversation	11/8 Gym: Filming scenes; bullying mediation in cafeteria	11/9 No workshop
11/12	11/13	11/14 Cafeteria: Filmed reporters; drawings	11/15	11/16 Cafeteria: Finished filming

Thesis Journal

Oct. 18

As I've prepared for my thesis project, I have noticed some struggles organizing the project, like contacting PCCSR and Wintergreen Intermediate's music teacher, submitting IRB and also figuring out what activities and games I actually want to do. I want to be able to provide a wide variety of activities and games, and make a difference in these kids' lives. I want these kids to take away a better understanding of bullying. I want to reduce the amount of bullying in this school. I have noticed I have many high hopes for my project, the kids, and myself. I hope to change these kid's lives and better society. I am patiently awaiting IRB approval. The IRB process was delayed and I hope to start recruitment as soon as I get the "go ahead" from IRB. The flyers have been made and the consent forms are ready. I am anxious and nervous about starting the project, mainly nervous because various events could occur to continue delaying the start date and also for various situations I may run into during the project. I am also nervous that I won't have enough interested students or willing parents. We shall wait and see.

Oct. 19

I received IRB approval today! Yay! The flyers and parental consent forms were printed (all 50 copies). I went to Wintergreen Intermediate and distributed the flyer/parental consent form package at 4pm. Dr. Thomson met me there. I distributed 43 copies. During my time distributing the information to parents, I had many interested parents and some not as enthusiastic. During the breaks between parents, I spoke to some of the kids in the after school program. I wanted them to know who I was and what I'm doing there. Also, during my time at Wintergreen I noticed the program leaders "writing up/reporting" an incident that had occurred prior to my arrival. A young boy was pushed off the climbing/rock wall and had some injuries to his stomach. He got in a fight with other boys which made the leads intervene. While the boys were in time out, the injured boy sat in the corner talking to one of the leaders (staff members). He kept saying "I don't want to go back to school for a while." After they called the injured boy's mom, he sat in the floor, crying, until his mom came to pick him up. I gave her a flyer/consent form and she seemed very glad. It is my hope that my project helps not only this boy but the other kids bullied at this school. I also noticed the process set in place when an incident occurs in the after school program. I am eager to start the activities and games I will use for recruitment on Monday and Tuesday.

Oct. 20

As I have been reading the various activities and games, I have had a hard time narrowing down which ones to choose. As my first week goals and activities suggest some activities, I hope to use those either Tuesday or Wednesday (as icebreaker activities). Some of the activities I liked were "Dance a Name," "Emotional Chain," "Get your Act Together," "Death of the Elocutionist," "Foot-Tapping," "Musical Walk," "Comic Book Creations," "Freeze and Exchange," "Sell-A-Fella," "Life Cycle," and "Your Hit Parade." (These games are listed in the book titled Theater Games by Fred Owens. I also have noticed "Rhythm Rainstorm" and "Zap" (ball of energy) would be good ideas as well. Hopefully, I can use some of these games

and activities in the workshop. I have printed more consent forms in case students or parents forget them on Monday or in case I missed some parents on Friday.

Oct. 21

Today, I have been reviewing games and activities for Monday/Tuesday. I thought I should prepare 4 activities and most likely I would get to do 3. The activities I chose are "Zap," "Rhythm Rainstorm," "Dance a Name", and "Emotional Chain." These activities will show the students what the workshop will entail. I am reviewing the activities and determining what materials I need to do them. I am excited and nervous to begin tomorrow.

Oct. 22

Today, I went to Wintergreen to collect parental consent forms and perform activities. I was unable to do any activities for some students had been picked up, some were doing homework or the rest were not there. I felt very discouraged today as I felt unwelcomed at the school. I think something, some incident must have occurred prior to my arrival, for the atmosphere felt negative and the looks negative. In any case, I collected the parental consent forms and left additional forms for parents I may have missed. Hopefully tomorrow will be a better day.

Oct. 23

Today, I was unable to do some activities. We did the "Zap" game which was pretty fun and allowed me to get to know the participants. They seem kinda embarrassed to do "Dance a Name" but seemed to have fun with it. I was in the back of the cafeteria and only had 30 mins with them. I described what we would do in the workshop and how much fun it would be. Hopefully, I will be able to do more activities when I officially have all of my participants tomorrow. (Plus I will have them for an hour tomorrow). I'm getting nervous about the workshop and hope it is successful. I'm also hoping to be in the multipurpose room soon. I will have Dr. Hubbard's camera tomorrow and will start recording the sessions.

Oct. 24

Today, after setting up the video camera and getting the instruments from the office, I started delving into what the students already know about music and what they know about bullying. We were in the multipurpose room instead of the noisy cafeteria. I feel the workshop went very well in the multipurpose room. The students seemed to focus more on what we were doing instead of having their friends look at them in the back of the cafeteria. The space was perfect because it was quiet and fostered a sense of performance and fun. I opened the session by having everyone grab an instrument, play it, describe it, and discuss it. We traded instruments around until everyone had each instrument and could play it. Alice brought her recorder which we didn't get to hear today. After discovering and discussing the instruments, I had everyone re-introduce themselves for the students who were added today. I now have 18 students, 15 of which I had today. After the re-introductions, I had the students pair up and talk about what their partners liked and had them list good characteristics about each other. Then we talked about music and bullying. Every student spoke and discussed their experiences with music or bullying. I was surprised to hear that most had recorders for music class and knew what the terms beat and

rhythm meant. The students mentioned getting bullied in kindergarten, by siblings, and by other third graders. Most had stories with siblings. We talked about the various emotions they felt when being bullied. The common emotions were sad, angry, alone, upset and they said crying (which I consider a form of sad). They also talked about what they did when they were bullied. Some mentioned screaming into pillows and punching walls. I am a bit worried about the punching wall comment along with another comment made by a girl about advice she was given if she was near rope or on a dock. Tying up the bully was her comment. I hope to discuss that further sometime throughout the workshop. I would like to explore their emotion definitions and discuss ways to better cope with bullying. "Emotional Chain" or "Freeze and Exchange" may help this. We also played "Freeze and Exchange." but it seemed the energy level of the students wouldn't allow them to concentrate on it. I also think I need to create scenarios if and when I do that game again. So far I am very pleased with the turnout, feedback, and discussions with the participants. My week 1 goals were met. We discussed music, bullying, and got to know one another. We also explored the instruments. The instruments used were maracas, shakers, tambourines, boomwhackers, hand drums, cymbals, a triangle, and a xylophone. Over the next few days I hope to determine the activities, goals, etc. and fine tune the workshop for the upcoming weeks. I cannot continue the workshop on Friday because not all of the students are signed up for the teacher workday after school program day.

Oct. 29

Today, I looked over the activities I liked from the Fred Owens text. I also reviewed the goals for week 2. My plan for today was to talk about emotions and improvisation. The students did not know what improvisation meant so we discussed what it is and played the instruments in a free play improv jam session. We also did the emotional chain exercise by Owens. They explained the emotions they feel when being bullied as angry, sad, upset and embarrassed. This remained consistent with the other day, although no emotions were added. They explored angry and sad with the emotional chain exercise. We talked about what music instruments they had at home and how they could play them after being bullied and play out the emotion they were feeling.

They really enjoyed acting out bullying scenes but they tend to get goofy or their attention is elsewhere. We reintroduced ourselves again since it had been almost a week since I saw them. We discussed and played the emotions on the instruments. They said angry sounds loud, and sad is soft. Crying is slow, soft, and sounds like sadness. Some students brought recorders again today. I hope to have them listen to songs and identify the emotions then pick 2 or 3 favorites. Whatever those songs are, I want to find the karaoke versions in order for the students to make lyrics, dance to them or create improv jam sessions with them. I intend to look into more music improv activities and discuss it tomorrow. If I do not get to do that I will use one of the activities I picked out from the Owens text or work on Augusto Boal's activities with theater.

Oct. 30

Today, the multipurpose room was full so I had to stay in the cafeteria. We were in the back of the room and my video camera died at the end of the session. Overall, it was an okay session. The students seemed very distracted.

Oct. 31

Today, we were in the back of the cafeteria again. The attendance was low based on today being Halloween and the parents were picking up their kids early to get ready for trick or treating. I only had eight students today. Some were apathetic and ready to leave to go trick or treating or to go play outside. With the distraction of Halloween and being in the back of the cafeteria, the outcome of today's activities was low. We had some free improv jam sessions with the various instruments rotating around in a circle. (Catherine really stepped up at the end along with Cadence by providing most of the lyrics to the songs) The major song they worked on was to the karaoke version of Andy Grammar's *Head Up* song. We listened to the songs they had picked out yesterday as their favorites and also listened to the instrumental tracks I retrieved from online. We danced and talked about the final performance. We wrote down potential lyrics to the songs and talked more about emotions. We played Boal's statues and I think it would have been more effective with more groups and students, but overall it went well. They created emotional statues in groups of 2. They had a hard time working together because of the apathy of the group but finally found their niche once we got into it a bit more. I hope to provide the students with an opportunity to add to the lyrics they have created so far on Friday and to act out the bullying scenes or make more statues of bullying. These along with the week's events have been successful in reaching my week 2 goals. I emailed my committee, Dr. Kean, and Dr. Prividera about the final performance inviting them all to it. I hope I can create a flyer to distribute to the students on Friday and possibly Monday of next week informing them and their parents of the final performance.

Nov. 1

Today, I created a flyer to give to the students, peers, parents and program leaders. I made copies of the flyer and printed crossword puzzles and word searches to give to the students. Today, I also received an email saying I could not go to the after school program tomorrow because of a surprise site visit (where the after school program gets graded). I saw this email while in class and immediately forwarded it to Dr. Thomson. I responded saying that I am on a strict timeline and I could go earlier or later if needed. I also mentioned I had flyers to give out. After many email correspondences and a few phone calls later, I was allowed to go tomorrow at 4pm instead of 3:30pm.

Nov. 2

Today, I went to the school at 3:45pm to prepare to start at 4pm. I was again unable to get into the multipurpose room. The lead program coordinator said the school locked them out. So, I was once again in the cafeteria. Since they had the governmental site evaluation going on, I had some activities that could be done at a table so we worked at a cafeteria table. I handed out the flyer/crossword/word search packet which they worked on. I also had them draw or write about bullying and cyberbullying. We had a brief discussion about cyberbullying and what it is. Most of the students knew what it was and had either experienced it or had a friend who had experienced it. While doing so, we listened to the 3 songs they chose from the other day. After everyone was finished we shared them with each other. We then worked on the song lyrics. Today felt very strange as the evaluation was occurring and the students didn't seem with me. I

was worried about the future of the project and performance since several students have been "bored," or expressed that they did not want to perform in front of their peers and parents. Some students wanted to drop out. They told this to a program lead who advised them to talk to their parents about it. I emailed Dr. Thomson expressing my concerns. If the students drop out then I will do my best to avoid the stage fright of the remaining students. Maybe a video showing the students and the parents all about the workshop. I will mention this to the students on Monday and see what they think. I would see if they had things in mind for a video or if they had any other ideas we could combine together.

Nov. 3

Today I conversed via email with Dr. Thomson about the possibility of changing the final performance into a video type performance project. We are meeting on Monday to discuss specifics. I reviewed the games/activities I have done and feel I should revisit some. I would like to revisit the acting out sessions, statues, and add Dr. Hairston's "Don't Be a Bully" song. My goals for this week include making and developing material for the video, notifying the parents, leads, etc. about the change from final performance to video, pumping up/motivating the students to create material, then deliver a fun packed video. I want to incorporate "Don't Be a Bully," the songs from the past week, activities and some discussion. I am feeling better about the project compared to yesterday.

Nov. 5

Today, I informed the students that there would be no final performance and that we are doing a video instead. Some of my goals for today's session were to work on lyrics and develop material for the video. I also distributed letters to each student to give to their parents discussing the change to a video. One activity I used was Dr. Hairston's activity "Don't Be a Bully". I turned it into a chant which the students seemed to enjoy. They really took interest in this activity, so it lasted the whole hour with multiple solos and a few duet sections. I recorded several groups making up words, playing instruments or dancing to the song/chant. They were all eager to redo or change up their routines. Melody read some of her lyrics to the chant which I also recorded. Cadence created a song as well. They seemed to have a lot of fun today. Hopefully the positive energy and excitement will continue. We were also in the multipurpose room which definitely helped foster the creative energy and low distraction environment.

Nov. 6

Today, we were in the multipurpose room ☺ yay! I was informed today that I would not have the room tomorrow or Thursday. I went into the school's office to have them unlock the multipurpose room door and the secretary informed me that the school had a fundraising event scheduled for Wednesday and Thursday. This put a kink in my plans for I need a quiet space. It was apparent yesterday that the multipurpose room is the best place for the students for the low distraction environment. I emailed and spoke with Dr. Thomson who spoke to Rita from PCCSR. Rita said I could use the gym which wouldn't be as distracting as the cafeteria. I'm a bit worried because it echoes in there.

Today's activities went well. The students came up with some dance moves to Firework. These students include Catherine, Marie, Melody, Harmony and Scarlett. They used pompoms in

the routine. Hazel and Colleen drew pictures about bullying. I'm hoping to get more scenes and songs plus some improv for the video.

Nov. 7

Today, we were in the gym for the first time. It echoes really badly and the lights also have a sound that interfered with my video footage. I still managed to conduct "what have we learned videos" from a few students. We took a group photo but not everyone was here so hopefully I'll get another one tomorrow. The students love these pompoms they found. They were very energetic today and I think being in the gym didn't help the energy level. I recorded some of the scenes the groups created. They were really good. I had issues recording them because Hazel and a few others speak very low. Hopefully, I can get more good footage and pictures tomorrow. I also was asked by Melody to be pulled aside privately to discuss a bullying problem she has. I will be sitting down and talking to Melody and her bullies tomorrow. I will take a mediation tactic here by allowing them to talk it out in a one-on-one fashion with me moderating the conversation.

Nov. 8

Today we were in the gym. It was an early release day so we began earlier than usual. I conducted a few more "What have we learned" interviews and also sat down with Melody and her bullies. Melody had expressed to me yesterday that she was bullied by Lena and Lily (who are in the workshop). Before I discuss the mediation, I want to talk about Hazel and Colleen. They both continue to be shy and express their bullying experiences or heard stories through drawings. Colleen drew a letter puzzle while the rest of the group worked on scenes and dances to the songs. I took several pictures to include in the video and another group photo.

Now, on to discuss Melody being bullied. We discussed before meeting with the bullies what has happened leading up to now. She wanted to talk with Lena then talk with Marie. Melody said the problem with Lily was resolved so we met with the other two girls. Melody was in an upset/sad mood throughout the session today. Once we were finished, I pulled Melody and Marie aside in the back of the cafeteria. I acted as a facilitator/mediator while they talked it out. The issue occurred when Marie, who is friends with one of Melody's friends, ignored and mocked Melody. They all three had never all played or hung out together. It was always either Marie and the friend or Melody and the friend. Melody was feeling left out after Marie and the friend made a comment about Melody (Marie and friend thought it was funny). After the comment was made it hurt Melody's feelings and they ignored her and isolated her. We talked about the situation one at a time and discussed how it made each other feel and that we should be careful what we say because words can hurt someone's feelings. They said they were sorry for misunderstanding and then hugged. After the session with Melody and Marie, I pulled Melody and Lena aside. Their issue was completely different. It was over being a goalie in soccer with a side of isolation. Lena was the goalie and Melody wanted to be the next goalie. Lena said some mean things to Melody and hurt her feelings. They never said what the mean things were but said she had called Melody a beep in the process. (Beep is a code word in the workshop for one of the bad words.) We discussed the situation from both perspectives and talked it out once again. We discussed the emotions and talking it out and not using bad words because they can hurt people. We also briefly discussed how we should be careful what we say when we are angry.

Nov. 14

Today, we were at a table/corner of the cafeteria because they were short staffed. I had only a few students. Hazel and Marie wanted to be my reporters for the video and I recorded their sections. I also recorded another "What have we learned" video, this time with Nora who had been absent a lot the week before. We worked on Firework and more drawings. I took a lot of pictures and was able to capture a lot of video. I had plans to do improv with the instruments but Robin had forgotten to leave them for me since we went over the three weeks. I was sad we were unable to do more jam/improv and the students didn't want to do the statue activity by Boal. Although, if we would not have had the session, I wouldn't have recorded the reporter sections (I have many bloopers for that too). Hopefully, after I email Robin (the music teacher), I will have the instruments for Friday's session.

Nov. 16

Today was my last day at Wintergreen until the video showing. As many students had homework or didn't feel like coming, my group was fairly small. Marie was leaving as I was setting up. I was in the back of the cafeteria today, since the multipurpose room was locked, lights off, and no one to let me in. I contemplated using the gym but with the echo, loud lights, and other groups in the gym, I figured it was best to stay in the cafeteria. Hazel, Harmony, Cadence, and Colleen were excited to get going so we began with a music improv session. We also had a jam session. We mainly played the instruments to describe emotions after. At the beginning of the session, Harmony was quiet, reserved, and appeared sad. I pulled her aside and Cadence helped her explain to me that she was being bullied by her so called friends Emma, Elise, and Lena. They were saying mean things about her, leaving her out of games etc. and made her feel alone and isolated. She said, "I've had to play by myself during recess." We talked about what she could do (tell a teacher, parent, or guidance counselor) and I also asked if she wanted to talk to Lena and Elise who are involved in the after school program. She did not want to talk with them so I told her to let the music we play today make her feel better. Cadence offered to play with Harmony during recess from now on. After Cadence offered to play with her, I told Harmony to tell an adult if it continues to be a problem and not let what they say get to her. Harmony is a very sweet and normally chatty girl but did not feel like talking today. I let her expose her emotions through the music and instruments. During the improv and jam sessions her mood lightened and she seemed to be very happy. Harmony and Cadence worked together on the statue exercise and also with the songs. Hazel and Colleen played together as well. At the end of the session Harmony came over and hugged me. She said thank you for talking with me and skipped back to her after school group. This made me feel great and that what I have been doing in the workshop has been beneficial to Harmony and Melody who have shared their stories but also to the rest of the group. I feel I brought awareness about cyberbullying and bullying to these kids in a fun way and allowed for them to share these experiences.

Dec. 8

Today, I created the CDs for my students. The songs included Firework, Gotta Keep Your Head Up, Born This Way, Lights and several others. I wanted to create a CD for the students to remember the songs we worked on and also to refer to if in fact they get bullied. This

allows for the students to remember the workshop and utilize the songs in order to cope with bullying. I made 18 copies of the CD which took several hours. My computer, iTunes, and Windows Media Player ran constantly. After many hours the CDs were finished and I put them into sleeves with each student's name on them. I worked on editing the video some today as well. I have been editing the video with Edius 6.5. The software acts just like Final Cut Pro except this copy is for Windows. I want the video to be around 25-30 minutes long. I have been editing the video a little every day. I went through all the videos and pictures and determined which ones I wanted to use then added them into the video. I have spent countless hours arranging, editing, organizing, emailing and meeting with Dr. Hubbard and Dr. Thomson in order to finish the video. It should be finished in time for Monday when I burn the copies to DVD discs.

Dec. 10

Today, Dr. Hubbard and I worked about 8 hours on finalizing the video and burning the copies to DVD discs. We met around noon and finished the video by around 1:30pm. I had a few questions to ask him about the software and doing some minor edits. We had to finalize the video to my computer which took 3 attempts. Each attempt took about 30 minutes each. On the third try we have a successful copy on my computer from the software. We burnt one DVD which I was to take over to FEDEX Kinkos. Upon arriving at Kinkos, they said it would be over 200 dollars to duplicate the DVDs. I called Dr. Hubbard who said we could set up base camp in the computer lab and burn the copies until we had all 25 copies. This process didn't take much time at all compared to the rest of the process and we were done fairly quickly. I have organized the CDs and DVDs so that each student has a copy and also created a document for the leads to have determining additional copies.

Dec. 12

Today was the video showing. It went quite well. I had coordinated with the leaders of the after school program to have the multipurpose room. I also coordinated with Dr. Hubbard and Dr. Thomson for the equipment and snacks needed for the showing. I had contacted Rita with a letter to distribute to the parents stating the video would be shown today. About 5 or 6 parents showed up for the viewing. The students enjoyed the popcorn, pretzels, juice boxes, and water Dr. Thomson and I provided. The other students in the after school program went as well. I showed the video at 5pm and after it was over distributed the CDs and DVDs to the students. The remaining copies or absent students' copies were given to the leads who would distribute them at a later date. I think the students really enjoyed the video. They were laughing and giggling during it at each other, so an overall success.

Dec. 20

I went to Wintergreen today to check on the document I left with the leads and to check on the distribution of the CDs and DVDs. No additional copies have been requested as of today. I will check back after school returns from Christmas break.