



'KNOCK OUT VIOLENCE' PROGRAM EVALUATION

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The Background

The Knock Out Violence Program (KOV) is an initiative of Southern Family Life. The overall aim of the Knock Out Violence Program (KOV) is to reduce damaging and hurtful behaviour by young people. Being on the receiving end of violent or bullying behaviour can result in depression and suicide and so, indirectly, the KOV program is also a suicide prevention program.

The Knock Out Violence program has been developed *by* young people *for* young people. The two Youth Project Workers aged between 18 and 22 present sessions in schools on the themes of violence and bullying. A typical presentation for year 7 students consists of an interactive performance that incorporates role plays, games and discussions focussing on the issues of bullying and feelings surrounding the bully and the bullied. Strategies to respond to situations of bullying are explored. The Primary School Program has been extended and includes four forty-five-minute sessions following the initial presentation with in depth discussions and strategies to deal with bullying situations. The performances have been developed by the presenters over time and use youth-friendly language and activities.

At the end of the performance, show bags are distributed to students. These contain information about services for young people and 'discussion starters' for sharing the KOV experience and the anti bullying message with family and friends. The performances and materials are also designed to make students and families aware of the helpful services they (and their friends) can access if they contact Southern family Life when they are having difficulties, especially with violence and bullying.

The Evaluation Brief

The aims of this evaluation were to:-

- Assess the impact of the KOV presentations on students and teachers
- Make recommendations for improvement of the program.

This evaluation was funded by the School Focussed Youth Service Brokerage in 2003 as part of the funding that was made available to the participating primary schools below. It was conducted over November 2003 –February 2004.

The Reviewer

Dr Helen McGrath is a part time senior lecturer in psychology in the faculty of Education, Deakin University. She is also a psychologist in private practice in the bayside area of Melbourne. She is the author of sixteen books, most of which are based around the theme of developing positive relationships.

The Evaluation Review Process

The reviewer:-

- met with the Youth Services manager of SFL for an overview of the KOV program and its context.
- met with the two youth project workers of the program
- read and analysed documentation and materials related to the presentations.

- conducted a focus group discussion with four primary teachers whose classes participated in the KOV program..
- analysed collated data from written evaluation sheets completed by 211 year five/six students from four primary schools, namely:-
 - Cheltenham East Primary School
 - Hampton Primary School
 - Dingley Primary School
 - St Catherine's Primary School
- analysed collated data from the written evaluation sheets completed by 320 year seven students from four secondary schools, namely:-
 - Westall Secondary College
 - Brighton Grammar School
 - Sandringham Secondary College and
 - Kilbreda Girls College
- analysed data in written evaluation sheets completed by eleven teachers from three secondary schools, namely:-
 - Brighton Grammar School (N=3)
 - Sandringham Secondary College (N=3)
 - Kilbreda Girls College(N=5)

Analysis of Evaluations by Secondary Students and Teachers

- 82% of students found the presentations to be informative , 79% entertaining, 90% easy to understand, 83% relevant, and 76% of benefit to them.
- 92% of students reported that they believed that the presentations would be of benefit to other students
- 80%students felt there was adequate audience involvement in the presentations
- 60% of the students stated that they knew more about the issue of bullying after the presentations
- 63% of the students reported that they were now aware of different forms of bullying, 51% felt that they now understood *why* people bullied
- 56% of the students reported that they were now aware of strategies for dealing with bullying
- 58% of the students stated that they now understand that bullying is a form of violence
- 40% reported that the presentation had made them reflect on their own behaviour

An analysis of the student responses by specific schools suggests that the boys-only school (and the teachers) responded less positively to the presentations and the girls-only school responded more positively than the three other schools. It is very likely that the female presenters made less impact on secondary-aged boys.

The comments by the eleven secondary teachers that were analysed reflect the main trends in the students' data.

Discussion and Recommendations

There are opportunities to improve the educational component of the presentation by:

- Providing more information about what is and what is not bullying and why people bully.

- Focusing more on strategies for dealing with bullying.
- Making the point more strongly that bullying is a form of violence
- Include more 'boy' scenarios in the presentations.
- Encourage and/or stimulate student self reflection.
- Providing further opportunities for the messages to be repeated again to students by their teachers
- Providing follow-up KOV discussion session as with primary schools

Analysis of Evaluations by Primary Students

- 90% of students found the presentations enjoyable
- 88% felt included
- 83% of students perceived that they knew more about bullying after the presentations
- 77% of the students reported that they would ask for help if they were being bullied. Their main preference of people to seek help from were in order
 - teacher,
 - parent
 - friend
- 78% of the students reported that they thought it had been helpful to talk about their strengths.

Some of the individual spontaneous comments made by students were:-

- *I really thought that it was a good presentation and they should do it for every school because it really helps.*
- *I really liked today because even though I have been bullied since Prep, it will help me get over it more.*
- *I think that it was excellent and it makes people really think about what it is like to be bullied.*
- *I thought that today was fun and I'm sure it will help us deal with bullying in the future.*

It would appear that the KOV program's objectives are being met more effectively for more students with the longer 5 session primary school program. The observations by the primary teachers in the focus group also support this trend.

Primary Teachers' Focus group

All the teachers were very positive about the impact of the presentations on student understanding and behaviour. They liked the showbags. They commented positively on the ability of the presenters to engage the students. They felt that the first and last sessions were the best of all the presentations.

Suggestions for improvement can be summarised as follows:-

- Fewer areas covered in more depth rather than a wide range of areas. Fewer but sharper and repeated messages about bullying.
- More extensive use of multimedia facilities eg videos. Powerpoint etc
- Presenters to check in with the teachers involved beforehand to ascertain:-
 - whether or not a particular group of students were 'ready' for the kind of group work carried out in the presentation

- which students were more sensitive and would respond in an anxious way if called upon to take part without warning
- They believed that the girls were a bit more engaged than the boys because the presenters were girls and acted out (mostly) 'girl' situations and responses. This trend was supported in other data which is discussed later in this report.

Recommendations in Relation To the Content of the Presentations

1. The presentations to place more emphasis on:-
 - Consolidating the message that bullying is a form of violence
 - The reasons why people bully
 - Portraying bullying as everyone's problem, not just an individual's predicament
 - The importance of support and compassion for others
 - A range of specific practical strategies for responding to being bullied
 - Strategies for not making yourself an easy target for bullying
 - Strategies for responding as a bystander to situations where someone else is being bullied
 2. Material to be added to the presentation which highlights the difference between:-
 - *dobbing (ie just trying to get someone into trouble)*
 - *acting responsibly (ie letting someone responsible know what is happening in order to help someone who is in trouble because they are being bullied)* and
 - asking for support
 3. Changes to be made to the presentations which will appeal more to boys and reflect the 'boys' picture' as well as the 'girls' picture'. Some suggestions are:-
 - Involve a male presenter
 - Use male actors to perform in videotaped scenarios which can then be shown to students
 - Use a commercial video which contains segments of boys in bullying situations
 - Add typical 'boy' scenarios in which the presenters adopt some 'boy' props eg cap, cricket bat and act as boys
- The four sessions to only focus in depth on issues related to bullying
 - Consideration could be given to the development of a second four-session presentation based around the themes of pro social behaviours and include strategies on anger management, self control, conflict management, assertiveness and resilience.
 - Consideration could be given to providing teachers with a clear outline of the four sessions and material which makes suggestions for teacher follow up.

Recommendations In Relation To Future Evaluations

- Ask all students to complete a simple attitude survey and a knowledge test about bullying in the week before the first session and then again in the week after the last presentation. This will enable knowledge and attitudes changes to be more accurately assessed

- Ask teachers and students to complete a simpler more focused sheet after each session. This could include questions about level of engagement, what the key messages were, and ease of understanding.
- In the last session, also add several general questions with a wider range of response options eg:-
 - *How confident do you now feel about dealing with bullying*
 - Much more confident
 - A bit more confident
 - Not confident at all
- After the last session, put together two primary student focus groups and two secondary student focus groups (3 girls and 3 boys in each).
- Maintain the focus groups for both primary and secondary teachers.

Conclusions

The presentations have so far been very successful in many ways. The students relate well to the young presenters and the impact of their presentation message is substantial. However, there are several ways in which this impact can be made even stronger as suggested above.

APPENDIX

**Table 1:
A Summary of Written Evaluation Responses by All Secondary School
Students in Year Seven (N=320)**

QUESTIONS	TRUE/YES	FALSE/NO
I found the presentation informative	261 (82%)	59 (18%)
I found the presentation entertaining	253 (79%)	67 (21%)
Did you think the audience involvement was adequate?	256 (80%)	64 (20%)
I feel that I know more about the issue of bullying	192 (60%)	128 (40%)
I think this program would benefit other students	295 (92%)	25 (8%)
I am aware of strategies for dealing with bullying	180 (56%)	140 (44%)
I understand why others bully	162 (51%)	158 (49%)
Did you benefit from the KOV presentations?	243 (76%)	77 (24%)
I am aware of the different sorts of bullying	203 (63%)	117 (37%)
The presentation made me think about my own behaviour	127 (40%)	193 (60%)
Did you understand the information in the presentation?	306 (96%)	14 (4%)
Was the information in the presentation relevant?	267 (83%)	53 (17%)
I now understand that bullying is a form of violence	186 (58%)	134 (42%)
Were the presenters easy to understand?	288 (90%)	32 (10%)

**Table 2:
A Comparison of Written Evaluation Responses by
Secondary School Students across Schools**

Questions	Brighton Grammar (N=113)		Kilbreda (N=101)		Westall (N=51)		Sandringham (N=55)	
	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
Did you find the performance informative?	77%	23%	91%	8%	75%	25%	80%	20%
Did you find the performance entertaining?	65%	35%	97%	3%	73%	27%	80%	20%
Did you think the audience involvement was adequate?	73%	27%	95%	5%	61%	39%	82%	18%
I feel that I know more about the issue of bullying.	60%	40%	62%	38%	61%	39%	55%	45%
Do you think this program would benefit other students?	91%	9%	97%	3%	84%	16%	93%	7%
I am aware of strategies for dealing with bullying	56%	44%	56%	44%	53%	47%	60%	40%
I understand why others bully	46%	54%	46%	54%	61%	39%	60%	40%
Did you benefit from the KOV presentations?	68%	32%	89%	11%	78%	22%	65%	35%

Comparison of Written Evaluation Responses by Secondary School Students across Schools (*Continued*)

Questions	Brighton Grammar (N=113)		Kilbreda (N=101)		Westall (N=51)		Sandringham (N=55)	
	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
I am aware of the different sorts of bullying	58%	42%	69%	31%	53%	27%	60%	40%
The presentation made me think about my own behaviour	33%	67%	41%	39%	51%	49%	42%	58%
I now understand that bullying is a form of violence	66%	44%	56%	44%	55%	45%	47%	53%
The presenters were easy to understand	85%	15%	98%	2%	82%	18%	93%	7%

Table 3:
Written Evaluation Responses by All Primary School Students (N=211)

QUESTIONS	YES	NO
Did you enjoy the presentations?	189 (90%)	22 (10%)
Did you feel included in the presentations?	186 (88%)	25 (12%)
Do you think you know more about bullying?	175 (83%)	36 (17%)
Do you think it was useful to talk about your strengths?	164 (78%)	47 (22%)
If you were being bullied, would you ask for help?	162 (77%)	149 (23%)

Who would you go to for help if you were being bullied? (More than one response box could be selected)

Teacher	96
Parent	81
Friend	59
Other (family)	22
Principal	8
Other (general)	5
Nobody (eg I can handle myself OR I would just walk away)	3
Someone who understands what's it like	1
Southern family life	1
Student welfare coordinator	1

**Table 4:
Written Evaluations by Secondary teachers across
Four of the Five Schools (N=11)**

	YES	NO
Do you feel that students who participated in the KOV presentation benefited?	11	0
The students involved know more about the issue of bullying	8	3
The students involved have taken away some strategies to deal with bullying	5	6
The students have an increased understanding of why others bully	4	7
The students involved are more aware of the different forms of bullying	8	3
The presentation encourages students to reflect on their own behaviour towards others	10	1
The students now understand that bullying is a form of violence	4	7
Were the presenters easy for the students to understand?	11	0
Was the presentation informative for students?	10	1
Would this program benefit other students?	10	1
Was the presentation relevant to bullying issues within the school?	11	0
Was the presentation entertaining for students?	10	1